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British Literature I: Middle Ages to the Eighteenth Century and Neoclassicism

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BRITISH LITERATURE

Middle Ages to the Eighteenth Century and Neoclassicism

Edited by
Bonnie J. Robinson, Ph.D.
Laura J. Getty, Ph.D.

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University System of Georgia
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1

The Middle Ages

1.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Describe the migration and/or invasion of successive groups into Britain;
- Analyze the ways that Anglo-Saxon literature assimilated Christian themes;
- Compare how various groups and individuals used the story of King Arthur for political, religious, and revisionist reasons;
- Describe the languages used in Britain over time, leading to Chaucer's use of English when composing his works;
- Analyze the similarities and differences between the Anglo-Saxon warrior code and the knightly (or chivalric) code in Middle English literature, especially in Malory;
- Analyze the similarities and differences among the portrayals of women in Anglo-Saxon, Anglo-Norman, and Middle English works;
- Analyze the ways that writers use the concept of courtly love, from Marie de France to Malory.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

Medieval British literature exists because of the waves of successive groups that made the British Isles a melting pot of cultures, with each contributing a piece of the puzzle. The Middle Ages spans over 1000 years of history, which would be impossible to reproduce in much detail in a concise summary; the avid student of history would do well to pick up a textbook (or two) on British medieval history for a more complete picture of events. The purpose of this introduction is to give an outline of major events that affected literature, including who was in Britain at what time, and how literature responded to the changing times. To understand the context of medieval British literature, it is necessary to begin much earlier, in Roman times.

1.2.1 Roman Britain

Although Julius Caesar invaded Britain in 55 and 54 BCE, it was not until 43 ACE that the Romans began a systematic invasion of the British Isles. The inhabitants, called Britons by the Romans, were not a unified group, but rather many different tribes; popularly, they now are referred to as Celts, although archaeologists and historians suggest that calling them Celtic language speakers would be more accurate. The Celts were not the original or only inhabitants of the island (archaeologists have found evidence of settlements dating back to the Stone Age), and even some sites now associated with the Celts, such as Stonehenge, predate them. Although these Celtic tribes had an oral culture, rather than a written one, Roman authors wrote about them (not the most unbiased of sources); it would be difficult to imagine later medieval British literature without references to their cultures (such as the druids, who served as priests and advisors, among other functions) and their languages. The tribes in the south—the ones first encountered by the Romans—spoke Common Brittonic, a Celtic language that would develop into modern Welsh, Cornish, and Breton (and the now-extinct Cumbric). The Goidelic, or Gaelic, language developed into Irish Gaelic, Scottish Gaelic, and Manx (spoken on the Isle of Man). The influence of Celtic languages can be found most prominently in place names, such as London, Dover, Avon, and Cornwall.

The Roman conquest of Britain was met with considerable resistance; the most famous example was the revolt led by Queen Boudica of the Iceni, a Celtic tribe, in either 60 or 61 ACE. Boudica and her coalition of several Celtic tribes came close to driving out the Romans, but Roman forces under Suetonius managed to defeat the coalition and reassert control. To the north, the Roman Emperor Hadrian ordered the construction of a wall in 122 ACE to keep out

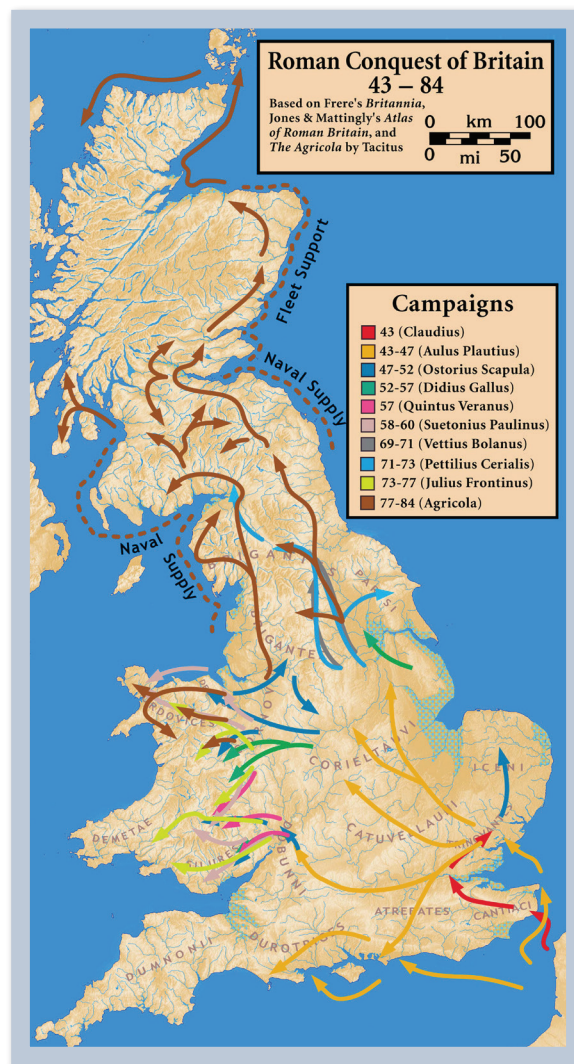


Image 1.1 | Map of Roman conquest of Britain

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Image 1.2 | Map of Roman withdrawal from Britain

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in 476 ACE, the Middle Ages in Britain start with the withdrawal of Roman troops. By 383 ACE, Roman forces had withdrawn from the north and west, with the final departure of troops from the island in 410 ACE. The medieval legend of King Arthur and his knights comes from the events that followed this departure.

1.2.2 Anglo-Saxon Britain

When Roman forces abandoned their British outposts, the Britons were left vulnerable after several hundred years of Roman military protection. The Irish and the Picts began raiding the lands formerly controlled by the Romans, while Saxon pirates stepped up their raids along the British coastline. Although historical records from this time are scarce (most literature at this point was transmitted orally), some later authors claim that a leader named Vortigern (possibly itself a title) made the colossal mistake of inviting Saxon mercenaries into the country to protect Britons from the Picts and Irish. Instead, according to later literary sources, the Saxons began their own invasion of the island. Although modern historians debate whether the invasion was actually more of a migration, literary sources follow the version of events found in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (first composed in the ninth century). However it started, the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes would eventually overrun what is now England, or "Angleland," pushing many of

the Picts, who inhabited what is present-day Scotland. The Picts may have been a combination of indigenous tribes (who predated the Celtic migration to the island hundreds of years earlier) and immigrants from Ireland (the word *Scoti*, from which the name Scotland derives, was used by the Romans to describe the Irish). The Picts were never conquered by the Romans, just as Ireland resisted Roman rule. Much later, in the Declaration of Arbroath (1320), the Scots would use this fact to argue to the Pope that they historically were an independent kingdom, and therefore Edward I of England had no right to their lands.

Although the Middle Ages in Europe are often seen as beginning after the fall of Rome

the Celtic tribes into Wales, Cornwall, Scotland, and Ireland, as well as across the British Channel to Armorica (modern-day Brittany in France).

The Romanized Britons attempted to repel the invaders, and it was during this time—approximately 450 to 550—that the legend of Arthur originates. There is no written evidence from that period that Arthur existed, although some historians have suggested that there may have been a leader (or several leaders) among the Romano-Britons who temporarily held back the Saxon invasion. Whether he was based on one war chief, or was a conglomeration of several historical figures, later authors named Arthur as the leader who defeated the Saxons in several key battles. Ironically, it would not just be later Celtic writers (such as the Welshman Geoffrey of Monmouth) who would write about Arthur, but also the very English/Anglo-Saxons against whose ancestors Arthur was supposed to have fought.

The Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of England (Wessex, Sussex, Essex, Kent, Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumbria, along with other smaller domains) were slowly Christianized in the seventh and eighth centuries. Missionaries often tried to convert the ruler first, who would then allow (or order) the conversion of his people. Bede describes part of this process in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, completed in about 731 ACE. Bede begins with the Roman invasion and continues to this present day. For the previously-pagan Germanic tribes, the process of conversion involved reconciling the warrior code with Christian teachings. Anglo-Saxon literature, therefore, often couches traditional warrior behavior in a Christian context. Stories such as *Beowulf* take a clearly pagan story and retool it into a Christian framework (scholars still debate the extent to which this effort is successful in that story). One of the most successful examples of this reworking is *The Dream of the Rood*, which tells the story of Christ's crucifixion as the actions of a warrior who defeats his enemies through his bravery. More frequently, as in the poem *The Wanderer*, the Christian meaning of the story appears added after the fact. The opposite transformation happens with the story of Judith, taken from *The Book of Judith* (still found in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Bibles, but removed from both Jewish and Protestant versions). The Hebrew Judith who fights the Assyrian Holofernes is described as a type of Anglo-Saxon shield maiden, worthy of her share of the enemy's treasure. Our understanding of this process is limited as well by the scarcity of manuscripts that have survived; both *Beowulf* and *Judith* survive in only one manuscript, while only four manuscript books, or codices, of Anglo-Saxon poetry are extant.

1.2.3 Danelaw Britain

In 793, the Vikings raided the monastery at Lindisfarne, and Danish attacks on England began to increase. Over the next hundred years, Danish forces would occupy more and more Anglo-Saxon territory, at one point leaving only the kingdom of Wessex independent. Sections in the northern and eastern parts of England became known as the Danelaw, or areas where Danish laws were used, rather than Anglo-Saxon ones. Ironically, as Britain went through a temporary phase

where fewer people knew Latin, more books were translated from Latin to Old English (or Anglo-Saxon, which is basically a dialect of Old German). In particular, King Alfred of Wessex (who ruled from 871 to 899) oversaw the translations of numerous Latin texts into Old English, so that past learning would not be lost. At the same time, areas under the Danelaw picked up quite a few loanwords from Norse/Scandinavian languages, including words like “anger,” “cake,” “window,” “glitter,” “mistake,” “eggs,” and “awkward.” Those words would spread to other areas of the island over time.

In 1016, King Canute of Norway and Denmark became king of all England, ruling until 1035. After a struggle with the succession among Canute’s heirs, the Wessex line was briefly restored when Edward the Confessor took the throne in 1042. Edward ruled until 1066, and his death led to a fight for the succession that resulted in the Norman conquest of England by William, Duke of Normandy (more commonly referred to now as William the Conqueror). William defeated his main rival, Harold Godwin, at the Battle of Hastings, on October 14, 1066.

1.2.4 Norman Britain

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records the Norman Conquest as a punishment from God, although it is not complimentary about the instrument of that punishment, William, or his Norman troops. While suppressing revolts, William began the process of removing Anglo-Saxons from power and replacing them with his Norman followers. The *Domesday Book* (a survey of all the lands and wealth of England) records the removal of lands from Anglo-Saxon nobles, whose lands were then awarded to Normans. Many free peasants suddenly found themselves bound to the lord of the manor and required to work for him, signaling the start of the feudal system. At one point, fewer than 250 people owned most of the land in England.

William did not speak English, so Norman French became the most commonly-used language of the British royal court—as well as government offices and the legal system. Just as the Christianization of the Anglo-Saxons had introduced Latin words into the language, Old English incorporated more and more French vocabulary over time. As a result, English speakers can say that they are going to have a “drink” (Anglo-Saxon origin) or a “beverage” (Old French origin), or that they are going to “weep” (Anglo-Saxon) or “cry” (Old French). Additionally, the very word “government” is of French origin, as are the words “office,” “city,” “police,” “tax,” “jury,” “attorney,” and “prison.”

The Norman invasion also led to a resurgence of interest in King Arthur, and it would be during the next few centuries that the most common modern image of Arthur was created. The three main topics of literature in medieval Britain were “the Matter of Rome” (stories of the Trojan War, using Virgil’s *Aeneid* as a reference), “the Matter of France” (mostly stories of Charlemagne and his men), and “the Matter of Britain,” which were mostly stories related to King Arthur. Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *History of the Kings of Britain*, written around 1135-1139, introduced

many Normans to the story of Arthur, including a new character from a different tradition: Merlin. (Well over two hundred years later, Chaucer would mention in *The House of Fame* that some people considered Geoffrey of Monmouth a liar.) Many of the most well-known elements of the Arthurian legend were added over the next forty years or so; the Anglo-Norman writer Wace, in his *Roman de Brut* (1155), added the Round Table, while the French writer Chrétien de Troyes added a French knight, Lancelot, as the lover of Queen Guinevere and the greatest knight of King Arthur's court in his *The Knight of the Cart; or Lancelot* (written roughly between 1175 and 1181).

The quest for the Holy Grail evolved during this time as well. In the Welsh *Peredur*, the grail is a platter with a severed head on it; in Chrétien's *Perceval*, it is a serving dish with contents that light up the room; and in Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival*, the grail is a stone (possibly a meteorite) guarded by the Knights Templar. It is in Robert de Boron's *Joseph d'Arimathe* that the grail becomes the cup used by Jesus at the Last Supper and used by Joseph of Arimathea to catch blood from Jesus during the Crucifixion. By the time that Sir Thomas Malory wrote his huge compilation of Arthurian stories in *Le Morte d'Arthur*, the Grail knight was no longer Percival, but Galahad, the son of Lancelot and Elaine, the daughter of King Pellis (a version of the Fisher King of the Grail stories), although Percival accompanies Galahad on his quest.

Several British monarchs attempted to use the Arthurian stories for their own political advantage. Henry II (who reigned from 1154-1189) claimed to have found the grave of Arthur and Guinevere in Glastonbury, possibly to discourage the popular idea that Arthur might return one day. During the reign of Edward I (1272-1307), a Round Table was constructed (5.5 meters in diameter), which now hangs on the wall in the Great Hall of Winchester Castle. Edward III (1327-1377) created the Order of the Garter (rather than a Round Table, which he considered at one point) to create a new type of community of knights. It was during Edward III's reign that the English language, rather than French, slowly became prominent again. In 1362, English was re-established as the language of the legal system (before the Pleading in English Act of 1362, all legal proceedings were conducted in French, even though most of the English did not know French), although it would not be until the reign of Henry V (1413-1422) that English would be re-established as the official language of government for the first time since the Norman conquest.

By the time that Geoffrey Chaucer began writing, English was slowly becoming the language of literature in Britain once more. Although some of his contemporaries, such as John Gower, wrote in French and Latin as well as English to reach a wider audience, Chaucer wrote his works in Middle English, as did the anonymous author of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, William Langland with his *Piers Plowman*, and other authors. By the time that William Caxton printed a copy of Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* in 1476 (long after Chaucer's death in 1400), Chaucer was considered the master that many English and Scottish authors

sought to emulate. In the Renaissance, Shakespeare took Chaucer's poem *Troilus and Criseyde* and turned it into a play, writing in Early Modern English.

The Middle Ages in Britain end (more or less) in 1485, when Henry VII ends the Wars of the Roses (and the Early Modern Period begins). Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* was published in the same year, and it is the literary reaction to the wars between the houses of Lancaster and York that had just ended. As the Middle Ages drew to a close, Malory records a picture of knighthood that is both nostalgic and, at times, cynical: celebrating the concept while criticizing the practice of it. Just as the start of the Middle Ages gave rise to the legend of King Arthur, *Le Morte d'Arthur* serves as a bookend to the period.

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ANGLO-SAXON LITERATURE

1.4 THE DREAM OF THE ROOD

Author unknown

Approximately seventh to eighth century

The Dream of the Rood dates from at least the early eighth century, when eighteen verses of it were carved on the Ruthwell Cross in runic letters. The Ruthwell Cross, in southern Scotland, stands over eighteen feet tall and includes Gospel scenes, Latin inscriptions, and elaborately-carved vines in addition to the fragment of *The Dream of the Rood*. Like other Anglo-Saxon poems, *The Dream of the Rood* uses alliteration rather than rhyme; it is divided into half-lines (with a pause, or caesura, in the middle) that vary between short rhythmic sections and longer hypermetrical sections (with more syllables). The 156 lines of the complete poem are found in the tenth century Vercelli Book, a manuscript rediscovered in 1822, in the cathedral in Vercelli, in northern Italy. Just as the Ruthwell Cross



Image 1.3 | The Ruthwell Cross

Artist | Lairich Rig

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is meant to appeal to a variety of audiences, the poem presents a Christian subject (the Crucifixion) in a way that would appeal to the traditions of a warrior class only recently converted to Christianity in some cases. Warriors followed a lord (who could be a king or a chieftain), who distributed gold and other rewards to loyal retainers. When the Rood (Cross) speaks of its history, from tree to loyal retainer of Christ (his liege lord/Lord), it describes Christ as a warrior who climbs up onto the cross freely and bravely to defeat sin. An Anglo-Saxon audience could not help but see a comparison to Odin/Woden sacrificing himself on the Tree of Life (Yggdrasil) to gain the secret of the runes, the very language in which the fragment is written. The poem is also a dream vision, a popular genre in medieval English literature (see, for example, Chaucer's *Parlement of Fowles*, found in this anthology). When the dreamer awakes, he longs to rejoin his companions, who have gone on to feast at the Lord's table in heaven: a situation similar to that found in the Anglo-Saxon poem *The Wanderer* (also in the anthology). Near the end, the dreamer refers to Christ saving those who "suffered the burning," an indirect reference to the popular *Harrowing of Hell*, found in the (now) apocryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus* and in numerous medieval works, from mystery plays to Dante's

Divine Comedy. In it, Christ descends to Hell after the Crucifixion, breaks open the gate, scatters the demons, and frees all the righteous souls, leading them to heaven. The reference survives to the present day in the Apostle's Creed, which states that Christ "descended into hell" (or in some recent versions "descended to the dead"). The poem therefore celebrates Christ's victories in battle, eschewing the later medieval focus on Christ's suffering and image as the lamb of God.

1.4.1 The Dream of the Rood

Lo! choicest of dreams I will relate,
 What dream I dreamt in middle of night
 When mortal men reposed in rest.
 Methought I saw a wondrous wood
 Tower aloft with light bewound,
 Brightest of trees; that beacon was all
 Begirt with gold; jewels were standing
 Four at surface of earth, likewise were there five
 Above on the shoulder-brace. All angels of God beheld it,
 Fair through future ages; 'twas no criminal's cross indeed,

But holy spirits beheld it there,
 Men upon earth, all this glorious creation.
 Strange was that victor-tree, and stained with sins was I,
 With foulness defiled. I saw the glorious tree
 With vesture adorned winsomely shine,

Begirt with gold; bright gems had there
 Worthily decked the tree of the Lord.
 Yet through that gold I might perceive
 Old strife of the wretched, that first it gave
 Blood on the stronger [right] side. With sorrows was I oppressed,
 Afraid for that fair sight; I saw the ready beacon
 Change in vesture and hue; at times with moisture covered,
 Soiled with course of blood; at times with treasure adorned.
 Yet lying there a longer while,
 Beheld I sad the Saviour's tree

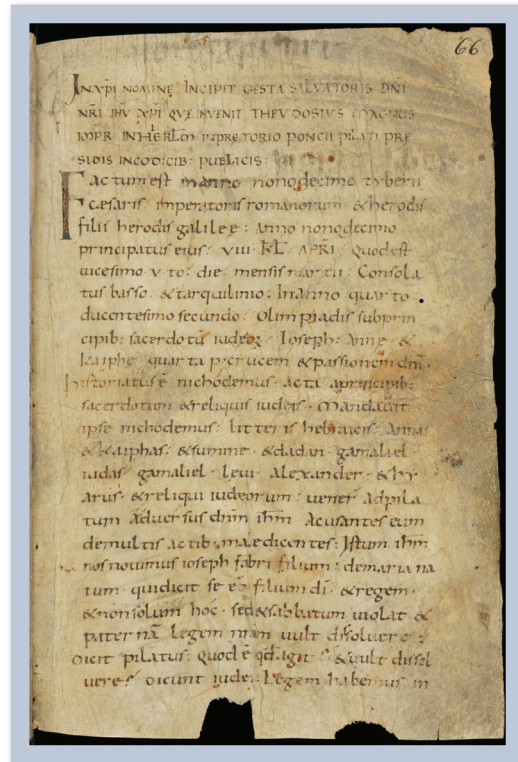


Image 1.4 | The Gospel of Nicodemus

Artist | Nicodemus

Source | Wikimedia Commons

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Until I heard that words it uttered;
The best of woods gan speak these words:
“’Twas long ago (I remember it still)
That I was hewn at end of a grove,
Stripped from off my stem; strong foes laid hold of me there,
Wrought for themselves a show, bade felons raise me up;
Men bore me on their shoulders, till on a mount they set me;
Fiends many fixed me there. Then saw I mankind’s Lord
Hasten with mickle might, for He would sty upon me.
There durst I not ’gainst word of the Lord
Bow down or break, when saw I tremble
The surface of earth; I might then all
My foes have felled, yet fast I stood.
The Hero young begirt Himself, Almighty God was He,
Strong and stern of mind; He stied on the gallows high,
Bold in sight of many, for man He would redeem.
I shook when the Hero clasped me, yet durst not bow to earth,
Fall to surface of earth, but firm I must there stand.
A rood was I upreared; I raised the mighty King,
The Lord of Heaven; I durst not bend me.
They drove their dark nails through me; the wounds are seen upon me,
The open gashes of guile; I durst harm none of them.
They mocked us both together; all moistened with blood was I,
Shed from side of the man, when forth He sent His spirit.
Many have I on that mount endured
Of cruel fates; I saw the Lord of Hosts
Strongly outstretched; darkness had then
Covered with clouds the corse of the Lord,
The brilliant brightness; the shadow continued,
Wan ’neath the welkin. There wept all creation,
Bewailed the King’s death; Christ was on the cross.
Yet hastening thither they came from afar
To the Son of the King: that all I beheld.
Sorely with sorrows was I oppressed; yet I bowed ’neath the hands of men,
Lowly with mickle might. Took they there Almighty God,
Him raised from the heavy torture; the battle-warriors left me
To stand bedrenched with blood; all wounded with darts was I.
There laid they the weary of limb, at head of His corse they stood,
Beheld the Lord of Heaven, and He rested Him there awhile,
Worn from the mickle war. Began they an earth-house to work,
Men in the murderers’ sight, carved it of brightest stone,
Placed therein victories’ Lord. Began sad songs to sing
The wretched at eventide; then would they back return

Mourning from the mighty prince; all lonely rested He there.
Yet weeping we then a longer while
Stood at our station: the [voice] arose
Of battle-warriors; the corse grew cold,
Fair house of life. Then one gan fell
Us all to earth; 'twas a fearful fate!
One buried us in deep pit, yet of me the thanes of the Lord,
His friends, heard tell; [from earth they raised me],
And me begirt with gold and silver.
Now thou mayst hear, my dearest man,
That bale of woes have I endured,
Of sorrows sore. Now the time is come,
That me shall honor both far and wide
Men upon earth, and all this mighty creation
Will pray to this beacon. On me God's Son
Suffered awhile; so glorious now
I tower to Heaven, and I may heal
Each one of those who reverence me;
Of old I became the hardest of pains,
Most loathsome to ledes [nations], the way of life,
Right way, I prepared for mortal men.
Lo! the Lord of Glory honored me then
Above the grove, the guardian of Heaven,
As He His mother, even Mary herself,
Almighty God before all men
Worthily honored above all women.
Now thee I bid, my dearest man,
That thou this sight shalt say to men,
Reveal in words, 'tis the tree of glory,
On which once suffered Almighty God
For the many sins of all mankind,
And also for Adam's misdeeds of old.
Death tasted He there; yet the Lord arose
With His mickle might for help to men.
Then stied He to Heaven; again shall come
Upon this mid-earth to seek mankind
At the day of doom the Lord Himself,
Almighty God, and His angels with Him;
Then He will judge, who hath right of doom,
Each one of men as here before
In this vain life he hath deserved.
No one may there be free from fear
In view of the word that the Judge will speak.

He will ask 'fore the crowd, where is the man
Who for name of the Lord would bitter death
Be willing to taste, as He did on the tree.
But then they will fear, and few will bethink them
What they to Christ may venture to say.
Then need there no one be filled with fear
Who bears in his breast the best of beacons;
But through the rood a kingdom shall seek
From earthly way each single soul
That with the Lord thinketh to dwell.”
Then I prayed to the tree with joyous heart,
With mickle might, when I was alone
With small attendance; the thought of my mind
For the journey was ready; I've lived through many
Hours of longing. Now 'tis hope of my life
That the victory-tree I am able to seek,
Oftener than all men I alone may
Honor it well; my will to that
Is mickle in mind, and my plea for protection
To the rood is directed. I've not many mighty
Of friends on earth; but hence went they forth
From joys of the world, sought glory's King;
Now live they in Heaven with the Father on high,
In glory dwell, and I hope for myself
On every day when the rood of the Lord,
Which here on earth before I viewed,
In this vain life may fetch me away
And bring me then, where bliss is mickle,
Joy in the Heavens, where the folk of the Lord
Is set at the feast, where bliss is eternal;
And may He then set me where I may hereafter
In glory dwell, and well with the saints
Of joy partake. May the Lord be my friend,
Who here on earth suffered before
On the gallows-tree for the sins of man!
He us redeemed, and gave to us life,
A heavenly home. Hope was renewed,
With blessing and bliss, for the sufferers of burning.
The Son was victorious on that fateful journey,
Mighty and happy, when He came with a many,
With a band of spirits to the kingdom of God,
The Ruler Almighty, for joy to the angels
And to all the saints, who in Heaven before

In glory dwelt, when their Ruler came,
Almighty God, where was His home.

1.4.2 Reading and Review Questions

1. In what ways is the Rood a loyal retainer of Christ? How does he not betray his lord/Lord, despite the circumstances?
2. How much does the Dreamer seem to identify with the Rood, and how much does he seem to identify with the “hero?”
3. Which passages of the poem could be used in any Anglo-Saxon heroic poem, and which are specifically religious? Why?
4. How does the image in this poem of Christ on the cross compare to depictions of Odin hanging on Yggdrasil in Norse mythology? Compare how each one is described and what each one accomplishes.
5. Do the last three lines of the poem go off-topic in a small way? Why or why not?

1.5 BEOWULF

Author unknown

Manuscript from around 1000 ACE (from an earlier oral story)

Beowulf survives in a single manuscript that was burned around the edges in a fire in 1741; without it, the story of the hero of the Geats would have been lost to history. It is impossible to know how long the oral story was in circulation before it was written down. The British manuscript is written mostly in a West Saxon dialect of Anglo-Saxon/Old English, although the main actions of the story take place in what would be modern-day Denmark and Sweden (see map). Saxon lands were just south of that area, in modern-day northern Germany, so when the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes invaded Britain, leading to the creation of Angleland, or England, they brought with them stories of their previous homelands. There are some real



Image 1.5 | Beowulf Geography Map

Artist | User "Wiglaf"

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people and historical events mentioned in *Beowulf* alongside the more legendary and literary elements of the story, although scholars have not found any historical reference to Beowulf himself.

The story can be divided into three major sections: the conflict with Grendel (a monster), which draws Beowulf to Hrothgar's kingdom at the beginning of the story; the fight with Grendel's (unnamed) mother; and Beowulf's battle with the dragon years later. As those divisions suggest, heroic behavior drives the action, but the story also asks the audience to stop and consider what heroic behavior really is, sometimes by highlighting the opposite. When Hrothgar lectures Beowulf after Grendel dies (a passage referred to as Hrothgar's sermon), he warns about the dangers of pride and seeking after fame, foreshadowing Beowulf's death. This warning is appropriate for a warrior culture, but it also works as a reference to Christian values. The tensions in the story between the Germanic heroic code and Christian values are worth noting, since the clearly-pagan story was written down after the Saxons had begun to convert. The story records the past glories of the warrior culture within a (barely) Christian framework to justify preserving the story.

The poem contains over three thousand lines, each consisting of alliterative half-lines separated by a caesura (a pause or gap), which is the standard format of Anglo-Saxon poetry (with the exception of the lyric poetry, all of the other works in this section follow the same pattern). Another standard feature of Anglo-Saxon (and Norse) writing is its use of kennings: a type of metaphor that takes a simple word, such as "ship," and describes it figuratively in a compound phrase, such as "wave-rider." The kennings "gold-friend" almost always refers to the leader of a band of warriors (perhaps a king, perhaps a war lord) who was expected to maintain his status and the loyalty of his men by distributing his accumulated wealth to them. The band of warriors, or *comitatus*, were expected to fight and die alongside their leader; the shame of not falling in battle by the side of your gold-friend is demonstrated near the end of *Beowulf* in the speech that Wiglaf gives to the other men. Many of the customs in the story require some explanation for a modern audience. Grendel is considered uncivilized for many reasons in the story, but one of them is that he does not pay *wergild*, or blood money, for the men that he kills. In order to avoid blood feuds between families, *wergild* would be paid to the family by the killer, at which point the feud would be (supposedly) ended. In *Beowulf*, there are nonetheless many moments when revenge is praised as a mark of loyalty and honor, even when the families were related by marriage. High-born women often were sent to marry into a rival or enemy family, in an attempt to bring the families together; these "peace-weavers," however, more often than not found themselves caught in the middle when their families resumed their feuds. The song that the bard sings in honor of Beowulf's triumph is about Hildeburh, the daughter of a Danish king and the wife of a Frisian king. As with all of the songs (or stories-within-the-story), it uses past events to foreshadow future events: in this instance, the fate of Wealhtheow's sons. Far from being unrelated digressions, the songs enrich the story by placing the action in a larger context.

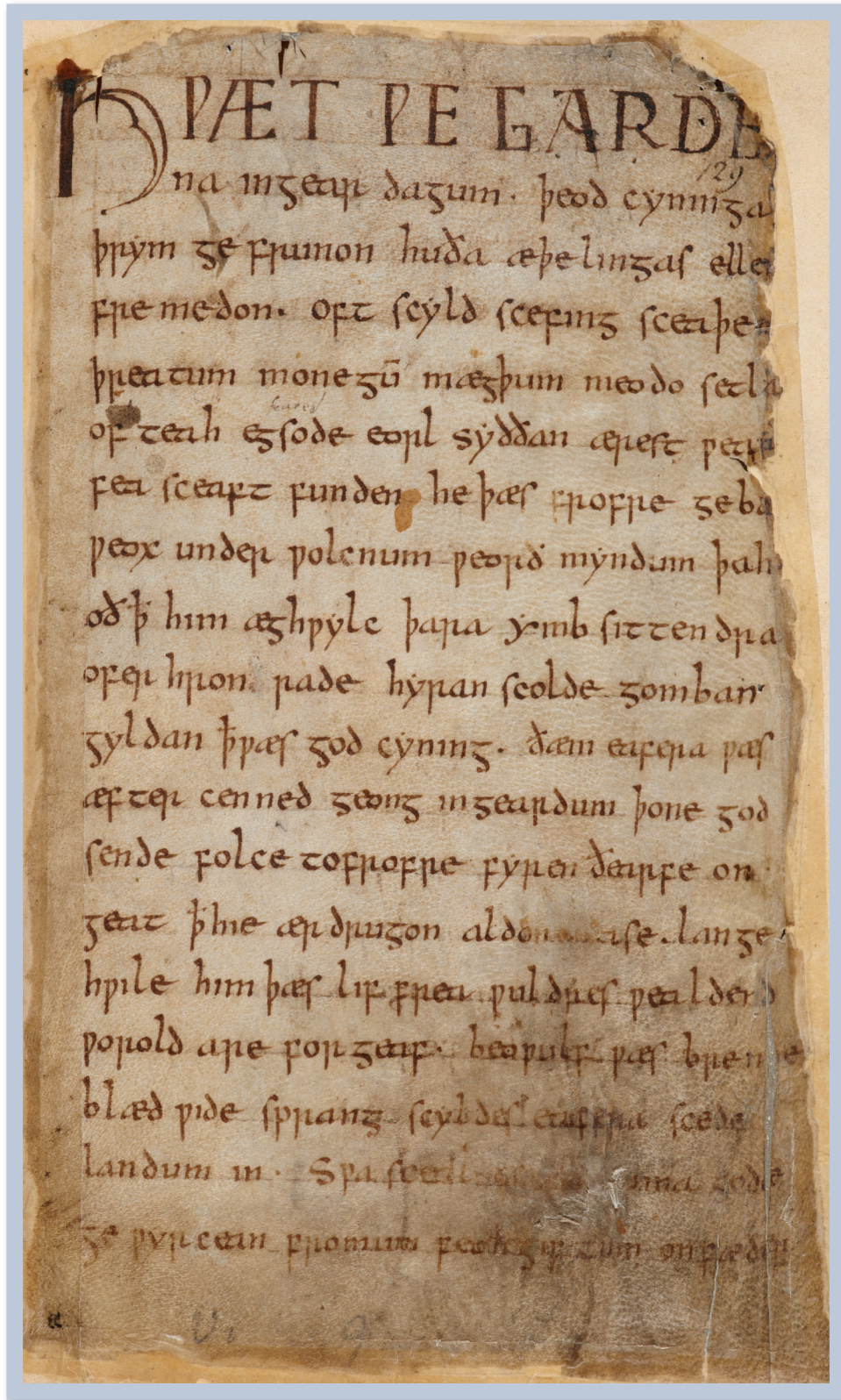


Image 1.6 | First Page of Beowulf

Artist | Unknown

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1.5.1 *Beowulf*

Part I

Lo! the Spear-Danes' glory through splendid achievements
The folk-kings' former fame we have heard of,
How princes displayed then their prowess-in-battle.
Oft Scyld the Scefing from scathers in numbers
From many a people their mead-benches tore.
Since first he found him friendless and wretched,
The earl had had terror: comfort he got for it,
Waxed 'neath the welkin, world-honor gained,
Till all his neighbors o'er sea were compelled to
Bow to his bidding and bring him their tribute:
An excellent atheling! After was borne him
A son and heir, young in his dwelling,
Whom God-Father sent to solace the people.
He had marked the misery malice had caused them,
That reaved of their rulers they wretched had erstwhile
Long been afflicted. The Lord, in requital,
Wielder of Glory, with world-honor blessed him.
Famed was Beowulf, far spread the glory
Of Scyld's great son in the lands of the Danemen.
So the carle that is young, by kindnesses rendered
The friends of his father, with fees in abundance
Must be able to earn that when age approacheth
Eager companions aid him requitingly,
When war assaults him serve him as liegemen:
By praise-worthy actions must honor be got
'Mong all of the races. At the hour that was fated
Scyld then departed to the All-Father's keeping
Warlike to wend him; away then they bare him
To the flood of the current, his fond-loving comrades,
As himself he had bidden, while the friend of the Scyldings
Word-sway wielded, and the well-loved land-prince
Long did rule them. The ring-stemmèd vessel,
Bark of the atheling, lay there at anchor,
Icy in glimmer and eager for sailing;
The beloved leader laid they down there,
Giver of rings, on the breast of the vessel,
The famed by the mainmast. A many of jewels,
Of fretted embossings, from far-lands brought over,
Was placed near at hand then; and heard I not ever
That a folk ever furnished a float more superbly

With weapons of warfare, weeds for the battle,
 Bills and burnies; on his bosom sparkled
 Many a jewel that with him must travel
 On the flush of the flood afar on the current.
 And favors no fewer they furnished him soothly,
 Excellent folk-gems, than others had given him
 Who when first he was born outward did send him
 Lone on the main, the merest of infants:
 And a gold-fashioned standard they stretched under heaven
 High o'er his head, let the holm-currents bear him,
 Seaward consigned him: sad was their spirit,
 Their mood very mournful. Men are not able
 Soothly to tell us, they in halls who reside,
 Heroes under heaven, to what haven he hied.

Part II

In the boroughs then Beowulf, bairn of the Scyldings,
 Belovèd land-prince, for long-lasting season
 Was famed mid the folk (his father departed,
 The prince from his dwelling), till afterward sprang
 Great-minded Healfdene; the Danes in his lifetime
 He graciously governed, grim-mooded, agèd.
 Four bairns of his body born in succession
 Woke in the world, war-troopers' leader
 Heorogar, Hrothgar, and Halga the good;
 Heard I that Elan was Ongentheow's consort,
 The well-beloved bedmate of the War-Scylfing leader.
 Then glory in battle to Hrothgar was given,
 Waxing of war-fame, that willingly kinsmen
 Obeyed his bidding, till the boys grew to manhood,
 A numerous band. It burned in his spirit
 To urge his folk to found a great building,
 A mead-hall grander than men of the era
 Ever had heard of, and in it to share
 With young and old all of the blessings
 The Lord had allowed him, save life and retainers.
 Then the work I find afar was assigned
 To many races in middle-earth's regions,
 To adorn the great folk-hall. In due time it happened
 Early 'mong men, that 'twas finished entirely,
 The greatest of hall-buildings; Heorot he named it
 Who wide-reaching word-sway wielded 'mong earlmen.
 His promise he brake not, rings he lavished,

Treasure at banquet. Towered the hall up
High and horn-crested, huge between antlers:
It battle-waves bided, the blasting fire-demon;
Ere long then from hottest hatred must sword-wrath
Arise for a woman's husband and father.
Then the mighty war-spirit endured for a season,
Bore it bitterly, he who bided in darkness,
That light-hearted laughter loud in the building
Greeted him daily; there was dulcet harp-music,
Clear song of the singer. He said that was able
To tell from of old earthmen's beginnings,
That Father Almighty earth had created,
The winsome wold that the water encircleth,
Set exultingly the sun's and the moon's beams
To lavish their lustre on land-folk and races,
And earth He embellished in all her regions
With limbs and leaves; life He bestowed too
On all the kindreds that live under heaven.
So blessed with abundance, brimming with joyance,
The warriors abided, till a certain one gan to
Dog them with deeds of direfullest malice,
A foe in the hall-building: this horrible stranger
Was Grendel entitled, the march-stepper famous
Who dwelt in the moor-fens, the marsh and the fastness;
The wan-mooded being abode for a season
In the land of the giants, when the Lord and Creator
Had banned him and branded. For that bitter murder,
The killing of Abel, all-ruling Father
The kindred of Cain crushed with His vengeance;
In the feud He rejoiced not, but far away drove him
From kindred and kind, that crime to atone for,
Meter of Justice. Thence ill-favored creatures,
Elves and giants, monsters of ocean,
Came into being, and the giants that longtime
Grappled with God; He gave them requital.

Part III

When the sun was sunken, he set out to visit
The lofty hall-building, how the Ring-Danes had used it
For beds and benches when the banquet was over.
Then he found there reposing many a noble
Asleep after supper; sorrow the heroes,
Misery knew not. The monster of evil

Greedy and cruel tarried but little,
Fell and frantic, and forced from their slumbers
Thirty of thanemen; thence he departed
Leaping and laughing, his lair to return to,
With surfeit of slaughter sallying homeward.
In the dusk of the dawning, as the day was just breaking,
Was Grendel's prowess revealed to the warriors:
Then, his meal-taking finished, a moan was uplifted,
Morning-cry mighty. The man-ruler famous,
The long-worthy atheling, sat very woful,
Suffered great sorrow, sighed for his liegemen,
When they had seen the track of the hateful pursuer,
The spirit accursèd: too crushing that sorrow,
Too loathsome and lasting. Not longer he tarried,
But one night after continued his slaughter
Shameless and shocking, shrinking but little
From malice and murder; they mastered him fully.
He was easy to find then who elsewhere looked for
A pleasanter place of repose in the lodges,
A bed in the bowers. Then was brought to his notice
Told him truly by token apparent
The hall-thane's hatred: he held himself after
Further and faster who the foeman did baffle.
So ruled he and strongly strove against justice
Lone against all men, till empty uptowered
The choicest of houses. Long was the season:
Twelve-winters' time torture suffered
The friend of the Scyldings, every affliction,
Endless agony; hence it after became
Certainly known to the children of men
Sadly in measures, that long against Hrothgar
Grendel struggled:—his grudges he cherished,
Murderous malice, many a winter,
Strife unremitting, and peacefully wished he
Life-woe to lift from no liegeman at all of
The men of the Dane-folk, for money to settle,
No counsellor needed count for a moment
On handsome amends at the hands of the murderer;
The monster of evil fiercely did harass,
The ill-planning death-shade, both elder and younger,
Trapping and tricking them. He trod every night then
The mist-covered moor-fens; men do not know where
Witches and wizards wander and ramble.

So the foe of mankind many of evils
 Grievous injuries, often accomplished,
 Horrible hermit; Heort he frequented,
 Gem-bedecked palace, when night-shades had fallen
 (Since God did oppose him, not the throne could he touch,
 The light-flashing jewel, love of Him knew not).
 'Twas a fearful affliction to the friend of the Scyldings
 Soul-crushing sorrow. Not seldom in private
 Sat the king in his council; conference held they
 What the braves should determine 'gainst terrors unlooked for.
 At the shrines of their idols often they promised
 Gifts and offerings, earnestly prayed they
 The devil from hell would help them to lighten
 Their people's oppression. Such practice they used then,
 Hope of the heathen; hell they remembered
 In innermost spirit, God they knew not,
 The true God they do not know.
 Judge of their actions, All-wielding Ruler,
 No praise could they give the Guardian of Heaven,
 The Wielder of Glory. Woe will be his who
 Through furious hatred his spirit shall drive to
 The clutch of the fire, no comfort shall look for,
 Wax no wiser; well for the man who,
 Living his life-days, his Lord may face
 And find defence in his Father's embrace!

Part IV

So Healfdene's kinsman constantly mused on
 His long-lasting sorrow; the battle-thane clever
 Was not anywise able evils to 'scape from:
 Too crushing the sorrow that came to the people,
 Loathsome and lasting the life-grinding torture,
 Greatest of night-woes. So Higelac's liegeman,
 Good amid Geatmen, of Grendel's achievements
 Heard in his home: of heroes then living
 He was stoutest and strongest, sturdy and noble.
 He bade them prepare him a bark that was trusty;
 He said he the war-king would seek o'er the ocean,
 The folk-leader noble, since he needed retainers.
 For the perilous project prudent companions
 Chided him little, though loving him dearly;
 They egged the brave atheling, augured him glory.
 The excellent knight from the folk of the Geatmen

Had liegemen selected, likest to prove them
Trustworthy warriors; with fourteen companions
The vessel he looked for; a liegeman then showed them,
A sea-crafty man, the bounds of the country.
Fast the days fled; the float was a-water,
The craft by the cliff. Clomb to the prow then
Well-equipped warriors: the wave-currents twisted
The sea on the sand; soldiers then carried
On the breast of the vessel bright-shining jewels,
Handsome war-armor; heroes outshoved then,
Warmen the wood-ship, on its wished-for adventure.
The foamy-necked floater fanned by the breeze,
Likest a bird, glided the waters,
Till twenty and four hours thereafter
The twist-stemmed vessel had traveled such distance
That the sailing-men saw the sloping embankments,
The sea cliffs gleaming, precipitous mountains,
Nesses enormous: they were nearing the limits
At the end of the ocean. Up thence quickly
The men of the Weders clomb to the mainland,
Fastened their vessel (battle weeds rattled,
War burnies clattered), the Wielder they thanked
That the ways o'er the waters had waxen so gentle.
Then well from the cliff edge the guard of the Scyldings
Who the sea-cliffs should see to, saw o'er the gangway
Brave ones bearing beauteous targets,
Armor all ready, anxiously thought he,
Musing and wondering what men were approaching.
High on his horse then Hrothgar's retainer
Turned him to coastward, mightily brandished
His lance in his hands, questioned with boldness.
"Who are ye men here, mail-covered warriors
Clad in your corslets, come thus a-driving
A high riding ship o'er the shoals of the waters,
And hither 'neath helmets have hied o'er the ocean?
I have been strand-guard, standing as warden,
Lest enemies ever anywise ravage
Danish dominions with army of war-ships.
More boldly never have warriors ventured
Hither to come; of kinsmen's approval,
Word-leave of warriors, I ween that ye surely
Nothing have known. Never a greater one
Of earls o'er the earth have I had a sight of

Than is one of your number, a hero in armor;
 No low-ranking fellow adorned with his weapons,
 But launching them little, unless looks are deceiving,
 And striking appearance. Ere ye pass on your journey
 As treacherous spies to the land of the Scyldings
 And farther fare, I fully must know now
 What race ye belong to. Ye far-away dwellers,
 Sea-faring sailors, my simple opinion
 Hear ye and hearken: haste is most fitting
 Plainly to tell me what place ye are come from.”

Part V

The chief of the strangers rendered him answer,
 War-troopers' leader, and word-treasure opened:
 “We are sprung from the lineage of the people of Geatland,
 And Higelac's hearth-friends. To heroes unnumbered
 My father was known, a noble head-warrior
 Ecgtheow titled; many a winter
 He lived with the people, ere he passed on his journey,
 Old from his dwelling; each of the counsellors
 Widely mid world-folk well remembers him.
 We, kindly of spirit, the lord of thy people,
 The son of King Healfdene, have come here to visit,
 Folk-troop's defender: be free in thy counsels!
 To the noble one bear we a weighty commission,
 The helm of the Danemen; we shall hide, I ween,
 Naught of our message. Thou know'st if it happen,
 As we soothly heard say, that some savage despoiler,
 Some hidden pursuer, on nights that are murky
 By deeds very direful 'mid the Danemen exhibits
 Hatred unheard of, horrid destruction
 And the falling of dead. From feelings least selfish
 I am able to render counsel to Hrothgar,
 How he, wise and worthy, may worst the destroyer,
 If the anguish of sorrow should ever be lessened,
 Comfort come to him, and care-waves grow cooler,
 Or ever hereafter he agony suffer
 And troublous distress, while towereth upward
 The handsomest of houses high on the summit.”
 Bestriding his stallion, the strand-watchman answered,
 The doughty retainer: “The difference surely
 'Twixt words and works, the warlike shield-bearer

Who judgeth wisely well shall determine.
 This band, I hear, beareth no malice
 To the prince of the Scyldings. Pass ye then onward
 With weapons and armor. I shall lead you in person;
 To my war-trusty vassals command I shall issue
 To keep from all injury your excellent vessel,
 Your fresh-tarred craft, 'gainst every opposer
 Close by the sea-shore, till the curved-neckèd bark shall
 Waft back again the well-beloved hero
 O'er the way of the water to Weder dominions.
 To warrior so great 'twill be granted sure
 In the storm of strife to stand secure."
 Onward they fared then (the vessel lay quiet,
 The broad-bosomed bark was bound by its cable,
 Firmly at anchor); the boar-signs glistened
 Bright on the visors vivid with gilding,
 Blaze-hardened, brilliant; the boar acted warden.
 The heroes hastened, hurried the liegemen,
 Descended together, till they saw the great palace,
 The well-fashioned wassail-hall wondrous and gleaming:
 'Mid world-folk and kindreds that was widest reputed
 Of halls under heaven which the hero abode in;
 Its lustre enlightened lands without number.
 Then the battle-brave hero showed them the glittering
 Court of the bold ones, that they easily thither
 Might fare on their journey; the aforementioned warrior
 Turning his courser, quoth as he left them:
 "'Tis time I were faring; Father Almighty
 Grant you His grace, and give you to journey
 Safe on your mission! To the sea I will get me
 'Gainst hostile warriors as warden to stand."

Part VI

The highway glistened with many-hued pebble,
 A by-path led the liegemen together.
 Firm and hand-locked the war-burnie glistened,
 The ring-sword radiant rang 'mid the armor
 As the party was approaching the palace together
 In warlike equipments. 'Gainst the wall of the building
 Their wide-fashioned war-shields they weary did set then,
 Battle-shields sturdy; benchward they turned then;
 Their battle-sarks rattled, the gear of the heroes;

The lances stood up then, all in a cluster,
The arms of the seamen, ashen-shafts mounted
With edges of iron: the armor-clad troopers
Were decked with weapons. Then a proud-mooded hero
Asked of the champions questions of lineage:
“From what borders bear ye your battle-shields plated,
Gilded and gleaming, your gray-colored burnies,
Helmets with visors and heap of war-lances?—
To Hrothgar the king I am servant and liegeman.
'Mong folk from far-lands found I have never
Men so many of mien more courageous.
I ween that from valor, nowise as outlaws,
But from greatness of soul ye sought for King Hrothgar.”
Then the strength-famous earlman answer rendered,
The proud-mooded Wederchief replied to his question,
Hardy 'neath helmet: “Higelac’s mates are we;
Beowulf hight I. To the bairn of Healfdene,
The famous folk-leader, I freely will tell
To thy prince my commission, if pleasantly hearing
He’ll grant we may greet him so gracious to all men.”
Wulfgar replied then (he was prince of the Wendels,
His boldness of spirit was known unto many,
His prowess and prudence): “The prince of the Scyldings,
The friend-lord of Danemen, I will ask of thy journey,
The giver of rings, as thou urgest me do it,
The folk-chief famous, and inform thee early
What answer the good one mindeth to render me.”
He turned then hurriedly where Hrothgar was sitting,
Old and hoary, his earlmen attending him;
The strength-famous went till he stood at the shoulder
Of the lord of the Danemen, of courteous thanemen
The custom he minded. Wulfgar addressed then
His friendly liegeland: “Folk of the Geatmen
O’er the way of the waters are wafted hither,
Faring from far-lands: the foremost in rank
The battle-champions Beowulf title.
They make this petition: with thee, O my chieftain,
To be granted a conference; O gracious King Hrothgar,
Friendly answer refuse not to give them!
In war-trappings weeded worthy they seem
Of earls to be honored; sure the atheling is doughty
Who headed the heroes hitherward coming.”

Part VII

Hrothgar answered, helm of the Scyldings:
 “I remember this man as the merest of striplings.
 His father long dead now was Ecgtheow titled,
 Him Hrethel the Geatman granted at home his
 One only daughter; his battle-brave son
 Is come but now, sought a trustworthy friend.
 Seafaring sailors asserted it then,
 Who valuable gift-gems of the Geatmen carried
 As peace-offering thither, that he thirty men’s grapple
 Has in his hand, the hero-in-battle.
 The holy Creator usward sent him,
 To West-Dane warriors, I ween, for to render
 ’Gainst Grendel’s grimness gracious assistance:
 I shall give to the good one gift-gems for courage.
 Hasten to bid them hither to speed them,
 To see assembled this circle of kinsmen;
 Tell them expressly they’re welcome in sooth to
 The men of the Danes.” To the door of the building
 Wulfgar went then, this word-message shouted:
 “My victorious lieglord bade me to tell you,
 The East-Danes’ atheling, that your origin knows he,
 And o’er wave-billows wafted ye welcome are hither,
 Valiant of spirit. Ye straightway may enter
 Clad in corslets, cased in your helmets,
 To see King Hrothgar. Here let your battle-boards,
 Wood-spears and war-shafts, await your conferring.”
 The mighty one rose then, with many a liegeman,
 An excellentthane-group; some there did await them,
 And as bid of the brave one the battle-gear guarded.
 Together they hied them, while the hero did guide them,
 ’Neath Heorot’s roof; the high-minded went then
 Sturdy ’neath helmet till he stood in the building.
 Beowulf spake (his burnie did glisten,
 His armor seamed over by the art of the craftsman):
 “Hail thou, Hrothgar! I am Higelac’s kinsman
 And vassal forsooth; many a wonder
 I dared as a stripling. The doings of Grendel,
 In far-off fatherland I fully did know of:
 Sea-farers tell us, this hall-building standeth,
 Excellent edifice, empty and useless
 To all the earlmen after evenlight’s glimmer
 ’Neath heaven’s bright hues hath hidden its glory.

This my earls then urged me, the most excellent of them,
Carles very clever, to come and assist thee,
Folk-leader Hrothgar; fully they knew of
The strength of my body. Themselves they beheld me
When I came from the contest, when covered with gore
Foes I escaped from, where five I had bound,
The giant-race wasted, in the waters destroying
The nickers by night, bore numberless sorrows,
The Weders avenged (woes had they suffered)
Enemies ravaged; alone now with Grendel
I shall manage the matter, with the monster of evil,
The giant, decide it. Thee I would therefore
Beg of thy bounty, Bright-Danish chieftain,
Lord of the Scyldings, this single petition:
Not to refuse me, defender of warriors,
Friend-lord of folks, so far have I sought thee,
That I may unaided, my earlmen assisting me,
This brave-mooded war-band, purify Heorot.
I have heard on inquiry, the horrible creature
From veriest rashness recks not for weapons;
I this do scorn then, so be Higelac gracious,
My liegelord beloved, lenient of spirit,
To bear a blade or a broad-fashioned target,
A shield to the onset; only with hand-grip
The foe I must grapple, fight for my life then,
Foeman with foeman; he fain must rely on
The doom of the Lord whom death layeth hold of.
I ween he will wish, if he win in the struggle,
To eat in the war-hall earls of the Geat-folk,
Boldly to swallow them, as of yore he did often
The best of the Hrethmen! Thou needest not trouble
A head-watch to give me; he will have me dripping
And dreary with gore, if death overtake me,
Will bear me off bleeding, biting and mouthing me,
The hermit will eat me, heedless of pity,
Marking the moor-fens; no more wilt thou need then
Should I fall, send my armor to my lord, King Higelac.
Find me my food. If I fall in the battle,
Send to Higelac the armor that serveth
To shield my bosom, the best of equipments,
Richest of ring-mails; 'tis the relic of Hrethla,
The work of Wayland. Goes Weird as she must go!"

Part VIII

Hrothgar discoursed, helm of the Scyldings:
“To defend our folk and to furnish assistance,
Thou soughtest us hither, good friend Beowulf.
The fiercest of feuds thy father engaged in,
Heatholaf killed he in hand-to-hand conflict
’Mid Wilfingish warriors; then the Wederish people
For fear of a feud were forced to disown him.
Thence flying he fled to the folk of the South-Danes,
The race of the Scyldings, o’er the roll of the waters;
I had lately begun then to govern the Danemen,
The hoard-seat of heroes held in my youth,
Rich in its jewels: dead was Heregar,
My kinsman and elder had earth-joys forsaken,
Healfdene his bairn. He was better than I am!
That feud thereafter for a fee I compounded;
O’er the weltering waters to the Wilfings I sent
Ornaments old; oaths did he swear me.
It pains me in spirit to any to tell it,
What grief in Heorot Grendel hath caused me,
What horror unlooked-for, by hatred unceasing.
Waned is my war-band, wasted my hall-troop;
Weird hath offcast them to the clutches of Grendel.
God can easily hinder the scather
From deeds so direful. Oft drunken with beer
O’er the ale-vessel promised warriors in armor
They would willingly wait on the wassailing-benches
A grapple with Grendel, with grimpest of edges.
Then this mead-hall at morning with murder was reeking,
The building was bloody at breaking of daylight,
The bench-deals all flooded, dripping and bloodied,
The folk-hall was gory: I had fewer retainers,
Dear-beloved warriors, whom death had laid hold of.
Sit at the feast now, thy intents unto heroes,
Thy victor-fame show, as thy spirit doth urge thee!”
For the men of the Geats then together assembled,
In the beer-hall blithesome a bench was made ready;
There warlike in spirit they went to be seated,
Proud and exultant. A liegeman did service,
Who a beaker embellished bore with decorum,
And gleaming-drink poured. The gleeman sang whilom
Hearty in Heorot; there was heroes’ rejoicing,
A numerous war-band of Weders and Danemen.

Part IX

Unferth spoke up, Ecglaf his son,
Who sat at the feet of the lord of the Scyldings,
Opened the jousting (the journey of Beowulf,
Sea-farer doughty, gave sorrow to Unferth
And greatest chagrin, too, for granted he never
That any man else on earth should attain to,
Gain under heaven, more glory than he):
“Art thou that Beowulf with Breca did struggle,
On the wide sea-currents at swimming contended,
Where to humor your pride the ocean ye tried,
From vainest vaunting adventured your bodies
In care of the waters? And no one was able
Nor lief nor loth one, in the least to dissuade you
Your difficult voyage; then ye ventured a-swimming,
Where your arms outstretching the streams ye did cover,
The mere-ways measured, mixing and stirring them,
Glided the ocean; angry the waves were,
With the weltering of winter. In the water’s possession,
Ye toiled for a seven-night; he at swimming outdid thee,
In strength excelled thee. Then early at morning
On the Heathoremes’ shore the holm-currents tossed him,
Sought he thenceward the home of his fathers,
Beloved of his liegemen, the land of the Brondings,
The peace-castle pleasant, where a people he wielded,
Had borough and jewels. The pledge that he made thee
The son of Beanstan hath soothly accomplished.
Then I ween thou wilt find thee less fortunate issue,
Though ever triumphant in onset of battle,
A grim grappling, if Grendel thou darest
For the space of a night near-by to wait for!”
Beowulf answered, offspring of Ecgtheow:
“My good friend Unferth, sure freely and wildly,
Thou fuddled with beer of Breca hast spoken,
Hast told of his journey! A fact I allege it,
That greater strength in the waters I had then,
Ills in the ocean, than any man else had.
We made agreement as the merest of striplings
Promised each other (both of us then were
Younkers in years) that we yet would adventure
Out on the ocean; it all we accomplished.
While swimming the sea-floods, sword-blade unscabbarded
Boldly we brandished, our bodies expected

To shield from the sharks. He sure was unable
 To swim on the waters further than I could,
 More swift on the waves, nor would I from him go.
 Then we two companions stayed in the ocean
 Five nights together, till the currents did part us,
 The weltering waters, weathers the bleakest,
 And nethermost night, and the north-wind whistled
 Fierce in our faces; fell were the billows.
 The mere fishes' mood was mightily ruffled:
 And there against foemen my firm-knotted corslet,
 Hand-jointed, hardy, help did afford me;
 My battle-sark braided, brilliantly gilded,
 Lay on my bosom. To the bottom then dragged me,
 A hateful fiend-scather, seized me and held me,
 Grim in his grapple: 'twas granted me, nathless,
 To pierce the monster with the point of my weapon,
 My obedient blade; battle offcarried
 The mighty mere-creature by means of my hand-blow.

Part X

“So ill-meaning enemies often did cause me
 Sorrow the sorest. I served them, in quittance,
 With my dear-lovèd sword, as in sooth it was fitting;
 They missed the pleasure of feasting abundantly,
 Ill-doers evil, of eating my body,
 Of surrounding the banquet deep in the ocean;
 But wounded with edges early at morning
 They were stretched a-high on the strand of the ocean,
 Put to sleep with the sword, that sea-going travelers
 No longer thereafter were hindered from sailing
 The foam-dashing currents. Came a light from the east,
 God's beautiful beacon; the billows subsided,
 That well I could see the nesses projecting,
 The blustering crags. Weird often saveth
 The undoomed hero if doughty his valor!
 But me did it fortune to fell with my weapon
 Nine of the nickers. Of night-struggle harder
 'Neath dome of the heaven heard I but rarely,
 Nor of wight more woful in the waves of the ocean;
 Yet I 'scaped with my life the grip of the monsters,
 Weary from travel. Then the waters bare me
 To the land of the Finns, the flood with the current,
 The weltering waves. Not a word hath been told me

Of deeds so daring done by thee, Unferth,
 And of sword-terror none; never hath Breca
 At the play of the battle, nor either of you two,
 Feat so fearless performed with weapons
 Glinting and gleaming
 I utter no boasting;
 Though with cold-blooded cruelty thou killedst thy brothers,
 Thy nearest of kin; thou needs must in hell get
 Direful damnation, though doughty thy wisdom.
 I tell thee in earnest, offspring of Ecglaf,
 Never had Grendel such numberless horrors,
 The direful demon, done to thy liegeland,
 Harrying in Heorot, if thy heart were as sturdy,
 Thy mood as ferocious as thou dost describe them.
 He hath found out fully that the fierce-burning hatred,
 The edge-battle eager, of all of your kindred,
 Of the Victory-Scyldings, need little dismay him:
 Oaths he exacteth, not any he spares
 Of the folk of the Danemen, but fighteth with pleasure,
 Killeth and feasteth, no contest expecteth
 From Spear-Danish people. But the prowess and valor
 Of the earls of the Geatmen early shall venture
 To give him a grapple. He shall go who is able
 Bravely to banquet, when the bright-light of morning
 Which the second day bringeth, the sun in its ether-ropes,
 O'er children of men shines from the southward!"
 Then the gray-haired, war-famed giver of treasure
 Was blithesome and joyous, the Bright-Danish ruler
 Expected assistance; the people's protector
 Heard from Beowulf his bold resolution.
 There was laughter of heroes; loud was the clatter,
 The words were winsome. Wealhtheow advanced then,
 Consort of Hrothgar, of courtesy mindful,
 Gold-decked saluted the men in the building,
 And the freeborn woman the beaker presented
 To the lord of the kingdom, first of the East-Danes,
 Bade him be blithesome when beer was a-flowing,
 Lief to his liegemen; he lustily tasted
 Of banquet and beaker, battle-famed ruler.
 The Helmingish lady then graciously circled
 'Mid all the liegemen lesser and greater:
 Treasure-cups tendered, till time was afforded
 That the decorous-mooded, diademed folk-queen

Might bear to Beowulf the bumper o'errunning;
 She greeted the Geat-prince, God she did thank,
 Most wise in her words, that her wish was accomplished
 That in any of earlmen she ever should look for
 Solace in sorrow. He accepted the beaker,
 Battle-bold warrior, at Wealhtheow's giving,
 Then equipped for combat quoth he in measures,
 Beowulf spake, offspring of Ecgtheow:
 "I purposed in spirit when I mounted the ocean,
 When I boarded my boat with a band of my liegemen,
 I would work to the fullest the will of your people
 Or in foe's-clutches fastened fall in the battle.
 Deeds I shall do of daring and prowess,
 Or the last of my life-days live in this mead-hall."
 These words to the lady were welcome and pleasing,
 The boast of the Geatman; with gold trappings broidered
 Went the freeborn folk-queen her fond-lord to sit by.
 Then again as of yore was heard in the building
 Courtly discussion, conquerors' shouting,
 Heroes were happy, till Healfdene's son would
 Go to his slumber to seek for refreshing;
 For the horrid hell-monster in the hall-building knew he
 A fight was determined, since the light of the sun they
 No longer could see, and lowering darkness
 O'er all had descended, and dark under heaven
 Shadowy shapes came shying around them.
 The liegemen all rose then. One saluted the other,
 Hrothgar Beowulf, in rhythmical measures,
 Wishing him well, and, the wassail-hall giving
 To his care and keeping, quoth he departing:
 "Not to any one else have I ever entrusted,
 But thee and thee only, the hall of the Danemen,
 Since high I could heave my hand and my buckler.
 Take thou in charge now the noblest of houses;
 Be mindful of honor, exhibiting prowess,
 Watch 'gainst the foeman! Thou shalt want no enjoyments,
 Survive thou safely adventure so glorious!"

Part XI

Then Hrothgar departed, his earl-throng attending him,
 Folk-lord of Scyldings, forth from the building;
 The war-chieftain wished then Wealhtheow to look for,
 The queen for a bedmate. To keep away Grendel

The Glory of Kings had given a hall-watch,
As men heard recounted: for the king of the Danemen
He did special service, gave the giant a watcher:
And the prince of the Geatmen implicitly trusted
His warlike strength and the Wielder's protection.
His armor of iron off him he did then,
His helmet from his head, to his henchman committed
His chased-handled chain-sword, choicest of weapons,
And bade him bide with his battle-equipments.
The good one then uttered words of defiance,
Beowulf Geatman, ere his bed he upmounted:
"I hold me no meaner in matters of prowess,
In warlike achievements, than Grendel does himself;
Hence I seek not with sword-edge to sooth him to slumber,
Of life to bereave him, though well I am able.
No battle-skill has he, that blows he should strike me,
To shatter my shield, though sure he is mighty
In strife and destruction; but struggling by night we
Shall do without edges, dare he to look for
Weaponless warfare, and wise-mooded Father
The glory apportion, God ever-holy,
On which hand soever to him seemeth proper."
Then the brave-mooded hero bent to his slumber,
The pillow received the cheek of the noble;
And many a martial mere-thane attending
Sank to his slumber. Seemed it unlikely
That ever thereafter any should hope to
Be happy at home, hero-friends visit
Or the lordly troop-castle where he lived from his childhood;
They had heard how slaughter had snatched from the wine-hall
Had recently ravished, of the race of the Scyldings
Too many by far. But the Lord to them granted
The weaving of war-speed, to Wederish heroes
Aid and comfort, that every opponent
By one man's war-might they worsted and vanquished,
By the might of himself; the truth is established
That God Almighty hath governed for ages
Kindreds and nations. A night very lurid
The trav'ler-at-twilight came tramping and striding.
The warriors were sleeping who should watch the horned-building,
One only excepted. 'Mid earthmen 'twas 'stablished,
Th' implacable foeman was powerless to hurl them
To the land of shadows, if the Lord were unwilling;

But serving as warder, in terror to foemen,
He angrily bided the issue of battle.

Part XII

'Neath the cloudy cliffs came from the moor then
Grendel going, God's anger bare he.
The monster intended some one of earthmen
In the hall-building grand to entrap and make way with:
He went under welkin where well he knew of
The wine-joyous building, brilliant with plating,
Gold-hall of earthmen. Not the earliest occasion
He the home and manor of Hrothgar had sought:
Ne'er found he in life-days later nor earlier
Hardier hero, hall-thanes more sturdy!
Then came to the building the warrior marching,
Bereft of his joyance. The door quickly opened
On fire-hinges fastened, when his fingers had touched it;
The fell one had flung then—his fury so bitter—
Open the entrance. Early thereafter
The foeman trod the shining hall-pavement,
Strode he angrily; from the eyes of him glimmered
A lustre unlovely likest to fire.
He beheld in the hall the heroes in numbers,
A circle of kinsmen sleeping together,
A throng of thanemen: then his thoughts were exultant,
He minded to sunder from each of the thanemen
The life from his body, horrible demon,
Ere morning came, since fate had allowed him
The prospect of plenty. Providence willed not
To permit him any more of men under heaven
To eat in the night-time. Higelac's kinsman
Great sorrow endured how the dire-mooded creature
In unlooked-for assaults were likely to bear him.
No thought had the monster of deferring the matter,
But on earliest occasion he quickly laid hold of
A soldier asleep, suddenly tore him,
Bit his bone-prison, the blood drank in currents,
Swallowed in mouthfuls: he soon had the dead man's
Feet and hands, too, eaten entirely.
Nearer he strode then, the stout-hearted warrior
Snatched as he slumbered, seizing with hand-grip,
Forward the foeman foined with his hand;
Caught he quickly the cunning deviser,

On his elbow he rested. This early discovered
The master of malice, that in middle-earth's regions,
'Neath the whole of the heavens, no hand-grapple greater
In any man else had he ever encountered:
Fearful in spirit, faint-mooded waxed he,
Not off could betake him; death he was pondering,
Would fly to his covert, seek the devils' assembly:
His calling no more was the same he had followed
Long in his lifetime. The liege-kinsman worthy
Of Higelac minded his speech of the evening,
Stood he up straight and stoutly did seize him.
His fingers crackled; the giant was outward,
The earl stepped farther. The famous one minded
To flee away farther, if he found an occasion,
And off and away, avoiding delay,
To fly to the fen-moors; he fully was ware of
The strength of his grapple in the grip of the foeman.
'Twas an ill-taken journey that the injury-bringing,
Harrying harmer to Heorot wandered:
The palace re-echoed; to all of the Danemen,
Dwellers in castles, to each of the bold ones,
Earlmen, was terror. Angry they both were,
Archwarders raging. Rattled the building;
'Twas a marvellous wonder that the wine-hall withstood then
The bold-in-battle, bent not to earthward,
Excellent earth-hall; but within and without it
Was fastened so firmly in fetters of iron,
By the art of the armorer. Off from the sill there
Bent mead-benches many, as men have informed me,
Adorned with gold-work, where the grim ones did struggle.
The Scylding wise men weened ne'er before
That by might and main-strength a man under heaven
Might break it in pieces, bone-decked, resplendent,
Crush it by cunning, unless clutch of the fire
In smoke should consume it. The sound mounted upward
Novel enough; on the North Danes fastened
A terror of anguish, on all of the men there
Who heard from the wall the weeping and plaining,
The song of defeat from the foeman of heaven,
Heard him hymns of horror howl, and his sorrow
Hell-bound bewailing. He held him too firmly
Who was strongest of main-strength of men of that era.

Part XIII

For no cause whatever would the earlmen's defender
Leave in life-joys the loathsome newcomer,
He deemed his existence utterly useless
To men under heaven. Many a noble
Of Beowulf brandished his battle-sword old,
Would guard the life of his lord and protector,
The far-famous chieftain, if able to do so;
While waging the warfare, this wist they but little,
Brave battle-thanes, while his body intending
To slit into slivers, and seeking his spirit:
That the relentless foeman nor finest of weapons
Of all on the earth, nor any of war-bills
Was willing to injure; but weapons of victory
Swords and suchlike he had sworn to dispense with.
His death at that time must prove to be wretched,
And the far-away spirit widely should journey
Into enemies' power. This plainly he saw then
Who with mirth of mood malice no little
Had wrought in the past on the race of the earthmen
(To God he was hostile), that his body would fail him,
But Higelac's hardy henchman and kinsman
Held him by the hand; hateful to other
Was each one if living. A body-wound suffered
The direful demon, damage incurable
Was seen on his shoulder, his sinews were shivered,
His body did burst. To Beowulf was given
Glory in battle; Grendel from thenceward
Must flee and hide him in the fen-cliffs and marshes,
Sick unto death, his dwelling must look for
Unwinsome and woful; he wist the more fully
The monster flees away to hide in the moors.
The end of his earthly existence was nearing,
His life-days' limits. At last for the Danemen,
When the slaughter was over, their wish was accomplished.
The comer-from-far-land had cleansed then of evil,
Wise and valiant, the war-hall of Hrothgar,
Saved it from violence. He joyed in the night-work,
In repute for prowess; the prince of the Geatmen
For the East-Danish people his boast had accomplished,
Bettered their burdensome bale-sorrows fully,
The craft-begot evil they erstwhile had suffered
And were forced to endure from crushing oppression,

Their manifold misery. 'Twas a manifest token,
 When the hero-in-battle the hand suspended,
 The arm and the shoulder (there was all of the claw
 Of Grendel together) 'neath great-stretching hall-roof.

Part XIV

In the mist of the morning many a warrior
 Stood round the gift-hall, as the story is told me:
 Folk-princes fared then from far and from near
 Through long-stretching journeys to look at the wonder,
 The footprints of the foeman. Few of the warriors
 Who gazed on the foot-tracks of the inglorious creature
 His parting from life pained very deeply,
 How, weary in spirit, off from those regions
 In combats conquered he carried his traces,
 Fated and flying, to the flood of the nickers.
 There in bloody billows bubbled the currents,
 The angry eddy was everywhere mingled
 And seething with gore, welling with sword-blood;
 He death-doomed had hid him, when reaved of his joyance
 He laid down his life in the lair he had fled to,
 His heathenish spirit, where hell did receive him.
 Thence the friends from of old backward turned them,
 And many a younker from merry adventure,
 Striding their stallions, stout from the seaward,
 Heroes on horses. There were heard very often
 Beowulf's praises; many often asserted
 That neither south nor north, in the circuit of waters,
 O'er outstretching earth-plain, none other was better
 'Mid bearers of war-shields, more worthy to govern,
 'Neath the arch of the ether. Not any, however,
 'Gainst the friend-lord muttered, mocking-words uttered
 Of Hrothgar the gracious (a good king he).
 Oft the famed ones permitted their fallow-skinned horses
 To run in rivalry, racing and chasing,
 Where the fieldways appeared to them fair and inviting,
 Known for their excellence; oft a thane of the folk-lord,
 A man of celebrity, mindful of rhythms,
 Who ancient traditions treasured in memory,
 New word-groups found properly bound:
 The bard after 'gan then Beowulf's venture
 Wisely to tell of, and words that were clever
 To utter skilfully, earnestly speaking,

Everything told he that he heard as to Sigmund's
Mighty achievements, many things hidden,
The strife of the Wælsing, the wide-going ventures
The children of men knew of but little,
The feud and the fury, but Fitela with him,
When suchlike matters he minded to speak of,
Uncle to nephew, as in every contention
Each to other was ever devoted:
A numerous host of the race of the scathers
They had slain with the sword-edge. To Sigmund accrued then
No little of glory, when his life-days were over,
Since he sturdy in struggle had destroyed the great dragon,
The hoard-treasure's keeper; 'neath the hoar-grayish stone he,
The son of the atheling, unaided adventured
The perilous project; not present was Fitela,
Yet the fortune befell him of forcing his weapon
Through the marvellous dragon, that it stood in the wall,
Well-honored weapon; the worm was slaughtered.
The great one had gained then by his glorious achievement
To reap from the ring-hoard richest enjoyment,
As best it did please him: his vessel he loaded,
Shining ornaments on the ship's bosom carried,
Kinsman of Wæls: the drake in heat melted.
He was farthest famed of fugitive pilgrims,
Mid wide-scattered world-folk, for works of great prowess,
War-troopers' shelter: hence waxed he in honor.⁴
Afterward Heremod's hero-strength failed him,
His vigor and valor. 'Mid venomous haters
To the hands of foemen he was foully delivered,
Offdriven early. Agony-billows
Oppressed him too long, to his people he became then,
To all the athelings, an ever-great burden;
And the daring one's journey in days of yore
Many wise men were wont to deplore,
Such as hoped he would bring them help in their sorrow,
That the son of their ruler should rise into power,
Holding the headship held by his fathers,
Should govern the people, the gold-hoard and borough,
The kingdom of heroes, the realm of the Scyldings.
He to all men became then far more beloved,
Higelac's kinsman, to kindreds and races,
To his friends much dearer; him malice assaulted.—
Oft running and racing on roadsters they measured

The dun-colored highways. Then the light of the morning
 Was hurried and hastened. Went henchmen in numbers
 To the beautiful building, bold ones in spirit,
 To look at the wonder; the liegelord himself then
 From his wife-bower wending, warden of treasures,
 Glorious trod with troopers unnumbered,
 Famed for his virtues, and with him the queen-wife
 Measured the mead-ways, with maidens attending.

Part XV

Hrothgar discoursed (to the hall-building went he,
 He stood by the pillar, saw the steep-rising hall-roof
 Gleaming with gold-gems, and Grendel his hand there):
 “For the sight we behold now, thanks to the Wielder
 Early be offered! Much evil I bided,
 Snaring from Grendel: God can e’er ’complish
 Wonder on wonder, Wielder of Glory!
 But lately I reckoned ne’er under heaven
 Comfort to gain me for any of sorrows,
 While the handsomest of houses horrid with bloodstain
 Gory uptowered; grief had offfrightened
 Each of the wise ones who weened not that ever
 The folk-troop’s defences ’gainst foes they should strengthen,
 ’Gainst sprites and monsters. Through the might of the Wielder
 A doughty retainer hath a deed now accomplished
 Which erstwhile we all with our excellent wisdom
 Failed to perform. May affirm very truly
 What woman soever in all of the nations
 Gave birth to the child, if yet she surviveth,
 That the long-ruling Lord was lavish to herward
 In the birth of the bairn. Now, Beowulf dear,
 Most excellent hero, I’ll love thee in spirit
 As bairn of my body; bear well henceforward
 The relationship new. No lack shall befall thee
 Of earth-joys any I ever can give thee.
 Full often for lesser service I’ve given
 Hero less hardy hoard-treasure precious,
 To a weaker in war-strife. By works of distinction
 Thou hast gained for thyself now that thy glory shall flourish
 Forever and ever. The All-Ruler quite thee
 With good from His hand as He hitherto did thee!”
 Beowulf answered, Ecgtheow’s offspring:
 “That labor of glory most gladly achieved we,

The combat accomplished, unquailing we ventured
 The enemy's grapple; I would grant it much rather
 Thou wert able to look at the creature in person,
 Faint unto falling, the foe in his trappings!
 On murder-bed quickly I minded to bind him,
 With firm-holding fetters, that forced by my grapple
 Low he should lie in life-and-death struggle
 'Less his body escape; I was wholly unable,
 Since God did not will it, to keep him from going,
 Not held him that firmly, hated opposer;
 Too swift was the foeman. Yet safety regarding
 He suffered his hand behind him to linger,
 His arm and shoulder, to act as watcher;
 No shadow of solace the woe-begone creature
 Found him there nathless: the hated destroyer
 Liveth no longer, lashed for his evils,
 But sorrow hath seized him, in snare-meshes hath him
 Close in its clutches, keepeth him writhing
 In baleful bonds: there banished for evil
 The man shall wait for the mighty tribunal,
 How the God of glory shall give him his earnings."
 Then the soldier kept silent, son of old Ecglaf,
 From boasting and bragging of battle-achievements,
 Since the princes beheld there the hand that depended
 'Neath the lofty hall-timbers by the might of the nobleman,
 Each one before him, the enemy's fingers;
 Each finger-nail strong steel most resembled,
 The heathen one's hand-spur, the hero-in-battle's
 Claw most uncanny; quoth they agreeing,
 That not any excellent edges of brave ones
 Was willing to touch him, the terrible creature's
 Battle-hand bloody to bear away from him.

Part XVI

Then straight was ordered that Heorot inside
 With hands be embellished: a host of them gathered,
 Of men and women, who the wassailing-building
 The guest-hall begeared. Gold-flashing sparkled
 Webs on the walls then, of wonders a many
 To each of the heroes that look on such objects.
 The beautiful building was broken to pieces
 Which all within with irons was fastened,
 Its hinges torn off: only the roof was

Whole and uninjured when the horrible creature
Outlawed for evil off had betaken him,
Hopeless of living. 'Tis hard to avoid it
(Whoever will do it!); but he doubtless must come to
The place awaiting, as Wyrð hath appointed,
Soul-bearers, earth-dwellers, earls under heaven,
Where bound on its bed his body shall slumber
When feasting is finished. Full was the time then
That the son of Healfdene went to the building;
The excellent atheling would eat of the banquet.
Ne'er heard I that people with hero-band larger
Bare them better tow'rds their bracelet-bestower.
The laden-with-glory stooped to the bench then
(Their kinsmen-companions in plenty were joyful,
Many a cupful quaffing complaisantly),
Doughty of spirit in the high-tow'ring palace,
Hrothgar and Hrothulf. Heorot then inside
Was filled with friendly ones; falsehood and treachery
The Folk-Scyldings now nowise did practise.
Then the offspring of Healfdene offered to Beowulf
A golden standard, as reward for the victory,
A banner embossed, burnie and helmet;
Many men saw then a song-famous weapon
Borne 'fore the hero. Beowulf drank of
The cup in the building; that treasure-bestowing
He needed not blush for in battle-men's presence.
Ne'er heard I that many men on the ale-bench
In friendlier fashion to their fellows presented
Four bright jewels with gold-work embellished.
'Round the roof of the helmet a head-guarder outside
Braided with wires, with bosses was furnished,
That swords-for-the-battle fight-hardened might fail
Boldly to harm him, when the hero proceeded
Forth against foemen. The defender of earls then
Commanded that eight steeds with bridles
Gold-plated, gleaming, be guided to hallward,
Inside the building; on one of them stood then
An art-broidered saddle embellished with jewels;
'Twas the sovereign's seat, when the son of King Healfdene
Was pleased to take part in the play of the edges;
The famous one's valor ne'er failed at the front when
Slain ones were bowing. And to Beowulf granted
The prince of the Ingwins, power over both,

O'er war-steeds and weapons; bade him well to enjoy them.
 In so manly a manner the mighty-famed chieftain,
 Hoard-ward of heroes, with horses and jewels
 War-storms requited, that none e'er condemneth
 Who willet to tell truth with full justice.

Part XVII

And the atheling of earlmen to each of the heroes
 Who the ways of the waters went with Beowulf,
 A costly gift-token gave on the mead-bench,
 Offered an heirloom, and ordered that that man
 The warrior killed by Grendel is to be paid for in gold.
 With gold should be paid for, whom Grendel had erstwhile
 Wickedly slaughtered, as he more of them had done
 Had far-seeing God and the mood of the hero
 The fate not averted: the Father then governed
 All of the earth-dwellers, as He ever is doing;
 Hence insight for all men is everywhere fittest,
 Forethought of spirit! much he shall suffer
 Of lief and of loathsome who long in this present
 Use the world in this woful existence.
 There was music and merriment mingling together
 Touching Healfdene's leader; the joy-wood was fingered,
 Measures recited, when the singer of Hrothgar
 On mead-bench should mention the merry hall-joyance
 Of the kinsmen of Finn, when onset surprised them:
 "The Half-Danish hero, Hnæf of the Scyldings,
 On the field of the Frisians was fated to perish.
 Sure Hildeburg needed not mention approving
 The faith of the Jutemen: though blameless entirely,
 When shields were shivered she was shorn of her darlings,
 Of bairns and brothers: they bent to their fate
 With war-spear wounded; woe was that woman.
 Not causeless lamented the daughter of Hoce
 The decree of the Wielder when morning-light came and
 She was able 'neath heaven to behold the destruction
 Of brothers and bairns, where the brightest of earth-joys
 She had hitherto had: all the henchmen of Finn
 War had oftaken, save a handful remaining,
 That he nowise was able to offer resistance
 To the onset of Hengest in the parley of battle,
 Nor the wretched remnant to rescue in war from
 The earl of the atheling; but they offered conditions,

Compact between the Frisians and the Danes.
 Another great building to fully make ready,
 A hall and a high-seat, that half they might rule with
 The sons of the Jutemen, and that Folcwalda's son would
 Day after day the Danemen honor
 When gifts were giving, and grant of his ring-store
 To Hengest's earl-troop ever so freely,
 Of his gold-plated jewels, as he encouraged the Frisians
 On the bench of the beer-hall. On both sides they swore then
 A fast-binding compact; Finn unto Hengest
 With no thought of revoking vowed then most solemnly
 The woe-begone remnant well to take charge of,
 His Witan advising; the agreement should no one
 By words or works weaken and shatter,
 By artifice ever injure its value,
 Though reaved of their ruler their ring-giver's slayer
 They followed as vassals, Fate so requiring:
 Then if one of the Frisians the quarrel should speak of
 In tones that were taunting, terrible edges
 Should cut in requital. Accomplished the oath was,
 And treasure of gold from the hoard was uplifted.
 The best of the Scylding braves was then fully
 Prepared for the pile; at the pyre was seen clearly
 The blood-gory burnie, the boar with his gilding,
 The iron-hard swine, athelings many
 Fatally wounded; no few had been slaughtered.
 Hildeburg bade then, at the burning of Hnæf,
 The bairn of her bosom to bear to the fire,
 That his body be burned and borne to the pyre.
 The woe-stricken woman wept on his shoulder,
 In measures lamented; upmounted the hero.
 The greatest of dead-fires curled to the welkin,
 On the hill's-front crackled; heads were a-melting,
 Wound-doors bursting, while the blood was a-coursing
 From body-bite fierce. The fire devoured them,
 Greediest of spirits, whom war had offcarried
 From both of the peoples; their bravest were fallen.

Part XVIII

"Then the warriors departed to go to their dwellings,
 Reaved of their friends, Friesland to visit,
 Their homes and high-city. Hengest continued
 Biding with Finn the blood-tainted winter,

Wholly unsundered; of fatherland thought he
Though unable to drive the ring-stemmèd vessel
O'er the ways of the waters; the wave-deeps were tossing,
Fought with the wind; winter in ice-bonds
Closed up the currents, till there came to the dwelling
A year in its course, as yet it revolveth,
If season propitious one alway regardeth,
World-cheering weathers. Then winter was gone,
Earth's bosom was lovely; the exile would get him,
The guest from the palace; on grewsomest vengeance
He brooded more eager than on oversea journeys,
Whe'r onset-of-anger he were able to 'complish,
The bairns of the Jutemen therein to remember.
Nowise refused he the duties of liegeman
When Hun of the Frisians the battle-sword Láfing,
Fairest of falchions, friendly did give him:
Its edges were famous in folk-talk of Jutland.
And savage sword-fury seized in its clutches
Bold-mooded Finn where he bode in his palace,
When the grewsome grapple Guthlaf and Oslaf
Had mournfully mentioned, the mere-journey over,
For sorrows half-blamed him; the flickering spirit
Could not bide in his bosom. Then the building was covered
With corpses of foemen, and Finn too was slaughtered,
The king with his comrades, and the queen made a prisoner.
The troops of the Scyldings bore to their vessels
All that the land-king had in his palace,
Such trinkets and treasures they took as, on searching,
At Finn's they could find. They ferried to Daneland
The excellent woman on oversea journey,
Led her to their land-folk." The lay was concluded,
The gleeman's recital. Shouts again rose then,
Bench-glee resounded, bearers then offered
Wine from wonder-vats. Wealhtheo advanced then
Going 'neath gold-crown, where the good ones were seated
Uncle and nephew; their peace was yet mutual,
True each to the other. And Unferth the spokesman
Sat at the feet of the lord of the Scyldings:
Each trusted his spirit that his mood was courageous,
Though at fight he had failed in faith to his kinsmen.
Said the queen of the Scyldings: "My lord and protector,
Treasure-bestower, take thou this beaker;
Joyance attend thee, gold-friend of heroes,

And greet thou the Geatmen with gracious responses!
 So ought one to do. Be kind to the Geatmen,
 In gifts not niggardly; anear and afar now
 Peace thou enjoyest. Report hath informed me
 Thou'lt have for a bairn the battle-brave hero.
 Now is Heorot cleansèd, ring-palace gleaming;
 Give while thou mayest many rewards,
 And bequeath to thy kinsmen kingdom and people,
 On wending thy way to the Wielder's splendor.
 I know good Hrothulf, that the noble young troopers
 He'll care for and honor, lord of the Scyldings,
 If earth-joys thou endest earlier than he doth;
 I reckon that recompense he'll render with kindness
 Our offspring and issue, if that all he remember,
 What favors of yore, when he yet was an infant,
 We awarded to him for his worship and pleasure.”
 Then she turned by the bench where her sons were carousing,
 Hrethric and Hrothmund, and the heroes' offspring,
 The war-youth together; there the good one was sitting
 'Twixt the brothers twain, Beowulf Geatman.

Part XIX

A beaker was borne him, and bidding to quaff it
 Graciously given, and gold that was twisted
 Pleasantly proffered, a pair of arm-jewels,
 Rings and corslet, of collars the greatest
 I've heard of 'neath heaven. Of heroes not any
 More splendid from jewels have I heard 'neath the welkin,
 Since Hama off bore the Brosingmen's necklace,
 The bracteates and jewels, from the bright-shining city,
 Eormenric's cunning craftiness fled from,
 Chose gain everlasting. Geatish Higelac,
 Grandson of Swerting, last had this jewel
 When tramping 'neath banner the treasure he guarded,
 The field-spoil defended; Fate offcarried him
 When for deeds of daring he endured tribulation,
 Hate from the Frisians; the ornaments bare he
 O'er the cup of the currents, costly gem-treasures,
 Mighty folk-leader, he fell 'neath his target;
 The corpse of the king then came into charge of
 The race of the Frankmen, the mail-shirt and collar:
 Warmen less noble plundered the fallen,
 When the fight was finished; the folk of the Geatmen

The field of the dead held in possession.
 The choicest of mead-halls with cheering resounded.
 Wealhtheow discoursed, the war-troop addressed she:
 “This collar enjoy thou, Beowulf worthy,
 Young man, in safety, and use thou this armor,
 Gems of the people, and prosper thou fully,
 Show thyself sturdy and be to these liegemen
 Mild with instruction! I’ll mind thy requital.
 Thou hast brought it to pass that far and near
 Forever and ever earthmen shall honor thee,
 Even so widely as ocean surroundeth
 The blustering bluffs. Be, while thou livest,
 A wealth-blessèd atheling. I wish thee most truly
 Jewels and treasure. Be kind to my son, thou
 Living in joyance! Here each of the nobles
 Is true unto other, gentle in spirit,
 Loyal to leader. The liegemen are peaceful,
 The war-troops ready: well-drunken heroes,
 Do as I bid ye.” Then she went to the settle.
 There was choicest of banquets, wine drank the heroes:
 Weird they knew not, destiny cruel,
 As to many an earlman early it happened,
 When evening had come and Hrothgar had parted
 Off to his manor, the mighty to slumber.
 Warriors unnumbered warded the building
 As erst they did often: the ale-settle bared they,
 ’Twas covered all over with beds and pillows.
 Doomed unto death, down to his slumber
 Bowed then a beer-thane. Their battle-shields placed they,
 Bright-shining targets, up by their heads then;
 O’er the atheling on ale-bench ’twas easy to see there
 Battle-high helmet, burnie of ring-mail,
 And mighty war-spear. ’Twas the wont of that people
 To constantly keep them equipped for the battle,
 At home or marching—in either condition—
 At seasons just such as necessity ordered
 As best for their ruler; that people was worthy.

Part XX

They sank then to slumber. With sorrow one paid for
 His evening repose, as often betid them
 While Grendel was holding the gold-bedecked palace,
 Ill-deeds performing, till his end overtook him,

Death for his sins. 'Twas seen very clearly,
Known unto earth-folk, that still an avenger
Outlived the loathed one, long since the sorrow
Caused by the struggle; the mother of Grendel,
Devil-shaped woman, her woe ever minded,
Who was held to inhabit the horrible waters,
The cold-flowing currents, after Cain had become a
Slayer-with-edges to his one only brother,
The son of his sire; he set out then banished,
Marked as a murderer, man-joys avoiding,
Lived in the desert. Thence demons unnumbered
Fate-sent awoke; one of them Grendel,
Sword-cursèd, hateful, who at Heorot met with
A man that was watching, waiting the struggle,
Where a horrid one held him with hand-grapple sturdy;
Nathless he minded the might of his body,
The glorious gift God had allowed him,
And folk-ruling Father's favor relied on,
His help and His comfort: so he conquered the foeman,
The hell-spirit humbled: he unhappy departed then,
Reaved of his joyance, journeying to death-haunts,
Foeman of man. His mother moreover
Eager and gloomy was anxious to go on
Her mournful mission, mindful of vengeance
For the death of her son. She came then to Heorot
Where the Armor-Dane earlmen all through the building
Were lying in slumber. Soon there became then
Return to the nobles, when the mother of Grendel
Entered the folk-hall; the fear was less grievous
By even so much as the vigor of maidens,
War-strength of women, by warrior is reckoned,
When well-carved weapon, worked with the hammer,
Blade very bloody, brave with its edges,
Strikes down the boar-sign that stands on the helmet.
Then the hard-edgèd weapon was heaved in the building,
The brand o'er the benches, broad-lindens many
Hand-fast were lifted; for helmet he recked not,
For armor-net broad, whom terror laid hold of.
She went then hastily, outward would get her
Her life for to save, when some one did spy her;
Soon she had grappled one of the athelings
Fast and firmly, when fenward she hied her;
That one to Hrothgar was liefest of heroes

In rank of retainer where waters encircle,
 A mighty shield-warrior, whom she murdered at slumber,
 A broadly-famed battle-knight. Beowulf was absent,
 But another apartment was erstwhile devoted
 To the glory-decked Geatman when gold was distributed.
 There was hubbub in Heorot. The hand that was famous
 She grasped in its gore; grief was renewed then
 In homes and houses: 'twas no happy arrangement
 In both of the quarters to barter and purchase
 With lives of their friends. Then the well-aged ruler,
 The gray-headed war-thane, was woful in spirit,
 When his long-trusted liegeman lifeless he knew of,
 His dearest one gone. Quick from a room was
 Beowulf brought, brave and triumphant.
 As day was dawning in the dusk of the morning,
 Went then that earlman, champion noble,
 Came with comrades, where the clever one bided
 Whether God all gracious would grant him a respite
 After the woe he had suffered. The war-worthy hero
 With a troop of retainers trod then the pavement
 (The hall-building groaned), till he greeted the wise one,
 The earl of the Ingwins; asked if the night had
 Fully refreshed him, as fain he would have it.

Part XXI

Hrothgar rejoined, helm of the Scyldings:
 "Ask not of joyance! Grief is renewed to
 The folk of the Danemen. Dead is Æschere,
 Yrmenlaf's brother, older than he,
 My true-hearted counsellor, trusty adviser,
 Shoulder-companion, when fighting in battle
 Our heads we protected, when troopers were clashing,
 And heroes were dashing; such an earl should be ever,
 An erst-worthy atheling, as Æschere proved him.
 The flickering death-spirit became in Heorot
 His hand-to-hand murderer; I can not tell whither
 The cruel one turned in the carcass exulting,
 By cramming discovered. The quarrel she wreaked then,
 That last night igone Grendel thou killedst
 In grewsomest manner, with grim-holding clutches,
 Since too long he had lessened my liege-troop and wasted
 My folk-men so foully. He fell in the battle
 With forfeit of life, and another has followed,

A mighty crime-worker, her kinsman avenging,
And henceforth hath 'stablished her hatred unyielding,
As it well may appear to many a liegeman,
Who mourneth in spirit the treasure-bestower,
Her heavy heart-sorrow; the hand is now lifeless
Which availed you in every wish that you cherished.
Land-people heard I, liegemen, this saying,
Dwellers in halls, they had seen very often
A pair of such mighty march-striding creatures,
Far-dwelling spirits, holding the moorlands:
One of them wore, as well they might notice,
The image of woman, the other one wretched
In guise of a man wandered in exile,
Except he was huger than any of earthmen;
Earth-dwelling people entitled him Grendel
In days of yore: they know not their father,
Whe'r ill-going spirits any were borne him
Ever before. They guard the wolf-coverts,
Lands inaccessible, wind-beaten nesses,
Fearfullest fen-deeps, where a flood from the mountains
'Neath mists of the nesses netherward rattles,
The stream under earth: not far is it henceward
Measured by mile-lengths that the mere-water standeth,
Which forests hang over, with frost-whiting covered,
A firm-rooted forest, the floods overshadow.
There ever at night one an ill-meaning portent
A fire-flood may see; 'mong children of men
None liveth so wise that wot of the bottom;
Though harassed by hounds the heath-stepper seek for,
Fly to the forest, firm-antlered he-deer,
Spurred from afar, his spirit he yieldeth,
His life on the shore, ere in he will venture
To cover his head. Uncanny the place is:
Thence upward ascendeth the surging of waters,
Wan to the welkin, when the wind is stirring
The weathers unpleasing, till the air groweth gloomy,
And the heavens lower. Now is help to be gotten
From thee and thee only! The abode thou know'st not,
The dangerous place where thou'rt able to meet with
The sin-laden hero: seek if thou darest!
For the feud I will fully fee thee with money,
With old-time treasure, as erstwhile I did thee,
With well-twisted jewels, if away thou shalt get thee."

Part XXII

Beowulf answered, Ecgtheow's son:
 "Grieve not, O wise one! for each it is better,
 His friend to avenge than with vehemence wail him;
 Each of us must the end-day abide of
 His earthly existence; who is able accomplish
 Glory ere death! To battle-thane noble
 Lifeless lying, 'tis at last most fitting.
 Arise, O king, quick let us hasten
 To look at the footprint of the kinsman of Grendel!
 I promise thee this now: to his place he'll escape not,
 To embrace of the earth, nor to mountainous forest,
 Nor to depths of the ocean, wherever he wanders.
 Practice thou now patient endurance
 Of each of thy sorrows, as I hope for thee soothly!"
 Then up sprang the old one, the All-Wielder thanked he,
 Ruler Almighty, that the man had outspoken.
 Then for Hrothgar a war-horse was decked with a bridle,
 Curly-maned courser. The clever folk-leader
 Stately proceeded: stepped then an earl-troop
 Of linden-wood bearers. Her footprints were seen then
 Widely in wood-paths, her way o'er the bottoms,
 Where she faraway fared o'er fen-country murky,
 Bore away breathless the best of retainers
 Who pondered with Hrothgar the welfare of country.
 The son of the athelings then went o'er the stony,
 Declivitous cliffs, the close-covered passes,
 Narrow passages, paths unfrequented,
 Nesses abrupt, nicker-haunts many;
 One of a few of wise-mooded heroes,
 He onward advanced to view the surroundings,
 Till he found unawares woods of the mountain
 O'er hoar-stones hanging, holt-wood unjoyful;
 The water stood under, welling and gory.
 'Twas irksome in spirit to all of the Danemen,
 Friends of the Scyldings, to many a liegeman
 Sad to be suffered, a sorrow unlittle
 To each of the earlmen, when to Æschere's head they
 Came on the cliff. The current was seething
 With blood and with gore (the troopers gazed on it).
 The horn anon sang the battle-song ready.
 The troop were all seated; they saw 'long the water then
 Many a serpent, mere-dragons wondrous

Trying the waters, nickers a-lying
On the cliffs of the nesses, which at noonday full often
Go on the sea-deeps their sorrowful journey,
Wild-beasts and wormkind; away then they hastened
ot-mooded, hateful, they heard the great clamor,
The war-trumpet winding. One did the Geat-prince
Sunder from earth-joys, with arrow from bowstring,
From his sea-struggle tore him, that the trusty war-missile
Pierced to his vitals; he proved in the currents
Less doughty at swimming whom death had offcarried.
Soon in the waters the wonderful swimmer
Was straitened most sorely with sword-pointed boar-spears,
Pressed in the battle and pulled to the cliff-edge;
The liegemen then looked on the loath-fashioned stranger.
Beowulf donned then his battle-equipments,
Cared little for life; inlaid and most ample,
The hand-woven corslet which could cover his body,
Must the wave-deeps explore, that war might be powerless
To harm the great hero, and the hating one's grasp might
Not peril his safety; his head was protected
By the light-flashing helmet that should mix with the bottoms,
Trying the eddies, treasure-emblazoned,
Encircled with jewels, as in seasons long past
The weapon-smith worked it, wondrously made it,
With swine-bodies fashioned it, that thenceforward no longer
Brand might bite it, and battle-sword hurt it.
And that was not least of helpers in prowess
That Hrothgar's spokesman had lent him when straitened;
And the hilted hand-sword was Hrunting entitled,
Old and most excellent 'mong all of the treasures;
Its blade was of iron, blotted with poison,
Hardened with gore; it failed not in battle
Any hero under heaven in hand who it brandished,
Who ventured to take the terrible journeys,
The battle-field sought; not the earliest occasion
That deeds of daring 'twas destined to 'complish.
Ecglaf's kinsman minded not soothly,
Exulting in strength, what erst he had spoken
Drunken with wine, when the weapon he lent to
A sword-hero bolder; himself did not venture
'Neath the strife of the currents his life to endanger,
To fame-deeds perform; there he forfeited glory,

Repute for his strength. Not so with the other
When he clad in his corslet had equipped him for battle.

Part XXIII

Beowulf spake, Ecgtheow's son:
"Recall now, oh, famous kinsman of Healfdene,
Prince very prudent, now to part I am ready,
Gold-friend of earlmen, what erst we agreed on,
Should I lay down my life in lending thee assistance,
When my earth-joys were over, thou wouldst evermore serve me
In stead of a father; my faithful thanemen,
My trusty retainers, protect thou and care for,
Fall I in battle: and, Hrothgar beloved,
Send unto Higelac the high-valued jewels
Thou to me hast allotted. The lord of the Geatmen
May perceive from the gold, the Hrethling may see it
When he looks on the jewels, that a gem-giver found I
Good over-measure, enjoyed him while able.
And the ancient heirloom Unferth permit thou,
The famed one to have, the heavy-sword splendid
The hard-edged weapon; with Hrunting to aid me,
I shall gain me glory, or grim-death shall take me."
The atheling of Geatmen uttered these words and
Heroic did hasten, not any rejoinder
Was willing to wait for; the wave-current swallowed
The doughty-in-battle. Then a day's-length elapsed ere
He was able to see the sea at its bottom.
Early she found then who fifty of winters
The course of the currents kept in her fury,
Grisly and greedy, that the grim one's dominion
Some one of men from above was exploring.
Forth did she grab them, grappled the warrior
With horrible clutches; yet no sooner she injured
His body unscathed: the burnie out-guarded,
That she proved but powerless to pierce through the armor,
The limb-mail locked, with loath-grabbing fingers.
The sea-wolf bare then, when bottomward came she,
The ring-prince homeward, that he after was powerless
(He had daring to do it) to deal with his weapons,
But many a mere-beast tormented him swimming,
Flood-beasts no few with fierce-biting tusks did
Break through his burnie, the brave one pursued they.
The earl then discovered he was down in some cavern

Where no water whatever anywise harmed him,
And the clutch of the current could come not anear him,
Since the roofed-hall prevented; brightness a-gleaming
Fire-light he saw, flashing resplendent.
The good one saw then the sea-bottom's monster,
The mighty mere-woman; he made a great onset
With weapon-of-battle, his hand not desisted
From striking, that war-blade struck on her head then
A battle-song greedy. The stranger perceived then
The sword would not bite, her life would not injure,
But the falchion failed the folk-prince when straitened:
Erst had it often onsets encountered,
Oft cloven the helmet, the fated one's armor:
'Twas the first time that ever the excellent jewel
Had failed of its fame. Firm-mooded after,
Not heedless of valor, but mindful of glory,
Was Higelac's kinsman; the hero-chief angry
Cast then his carved-sword covered with jewels
That it lay on the earth, hard and steel-pointed;
He hoped in his strength, his hand-grapple sturdy.
So any must act whenever he thinketh
To gain him in battle glory unending,
And is reckless of living. The lord of the War-Geats
(He shrank not from battle) seized by the shoulder
The mother of Grendel; then mighty in struggle
Swung he his enemy, since his anger was kindled,
That she fell to the floor. With furious grapple
She gave him requital early thereafter,
And stretched out to grab him; the strongest of warriors
Faint-mooded stumbled, till he fell in his traces,
Foot-going champion. Then she sat on the hall-guest
And wielded her war-knife wide-bladed, flashing,
For her son would take vengeance, her one only bairn.
His breast-armor woven bode on his shoulder;
It guarded his life, the entrance defended
'Gainst sword-point and edges. Ecgtheow's son there
Had fatally journeyed, champion of Geatmen,
In the arms of the ocean, had the armor not given,
Close-woven corslet, comfort and succor,
And had God most holy not awarded the victory,
All-knowing Lord; easily did heaven's
Ruler most righteous arrange it with justice;
Uprose he erect ready for battle.

Part XXIV

Then he saw mid the war-gems a weapon of victory,
An ancient giant-sword, of edges a-doughty,
Glory of warriors: of weapons 'twas choicest,
Only 'twas larger than any man else was
Able to bear to the battle-encounter,
The good and splendid work of the giants.
He grasped then the sword-hilt, knight of the Scyldings,
Bold and battle-grim, brandished his ring-sword,
Hopeless of living, hotly he smote her,
That the fiend-woman's neck firmly it grappled,
Broke through her bone-joints, the bill fully pierced her
Fate-cursèd body, she fell to the ground then:
The hand-sword was bloody, the hero exulted.
The brand was brilliant, brightly it glimmered,
Just as from heaven gemlike shineth
The torch of the firmament. He glanced 'long the building,
And turned by the wall then, Higelac's vassal
Raging and wrathful raised his battle-sword
Strong by the handle. The edge was not useless
To the hero-in-battle, but he speedily wished to
Give Grendel requital for the many assaults he
Had worked on the West-Danes not once, but often,
When he slew in slumber the subjects of Hrothgar,
Swallowed down fifteen sleeping retainers
Of the folk of the Danemen, and fully as many
Carried away, a horrible prey.
He gave him requital, grim-raging champion,
When he saw on his rest-place weary of conflict
Grendel lying, of life-joys bereavèd,
As the battle at Heorot erstwhile had scathed him;
His body far bounded, a blow when he suffered,
Death having seized him, sword-smiting heavy,
And he cut off his head then. Early this noticed
The clever carles who as comrades of Hrothgar
Gazed on the sea-deeps, that the surging wave-currents
Were mightily mingled, the mere-flood was gory:
Of the good one the gray-haired together held converse,
The hoary of head, that they hoped not to see again
The atheling ever, that exulting in victory
He'd return there to visit the distinguished folk-ruler:
Then many concluded the mere-wolf had killed him.
The ninth hour came then. From the ness-edge departed

The bold-mooded Scyldings; the gold-friend of heroes
Homeward betook him. The strangers sat down then
Soul-sick, sorrowful, the sea-waves regarding:
They wished and yet weened not their well-loved friend-lord
To see any more. The sword-blade began then,
The blood having touched it, contracting and shriveling
With battle-icicles; 'twas a wonderful marvel
That it melted entirely, likest to ice when
The Father unbindeth the bond of the frost and
Unwindeth the wave-bands, He who wieldeth dominion
Of times and of tides: a truth-firm Creator.
Nor took he of jewels more in the dwelling,
Lord of the Weders, though they lay all around him,
Than the head and the handle handsome with jewels;
The brand early melted, burnt was the weapon:
So hot was the blood, the strange-spirit poisonous
That in it did perish. He early swam off then
Who had bided in combat the carnage of haters,
Went up through the ocean; the eddies were cleansèd,
The spacious expanses, when the spirit from farland
His life put aside and this short-lived existence.
The seamen's defender came swimming to land then
Doughty of spirit, rejoiced in his sea-gift,
The bulky burden which he bore in his keeping.
The excellent vassals advanced then to meet him,
To God they were grateful, were glad in their chieftain,
That to see him safe and sound was granted them.
From the high-minded hero, then, helmet and burnie
Were speedily loosened: the ocean was putrid,
The water 'neath welkin weltered with gore.
Forth did they fare, then, their footsteps retracing,
Merry and mirthful, measured the earth-way,
The highway familiar: men very daring
Bare then the head from the sea-cliff, burdening
Each of the earlmen, excellent-valiant.
Four of them had to carry with labor
The head of Grendel to the high towering gold-hall
Upstuck on the spear, till fourteen most-valiant
And battle-brave Geatmen came there going
Straight to the palace: the prince of the people
Measured the mead-ways, their mood-brave companion.
The atheling of earlmen entered the building,
Deed-valiant man, adorned with distinction,

Doughty shield-warrior, to address King Hrothgar:
 Then hung by the hair, the head of Grendel
 Was borne to the building, where beer-thanes were drinking,
 Loth before earlmen and eke 'fore the lady:
 The warriors beheld then a wonderful sight.

Part XXV

Beowulf spake, offspring of Ecgtheow:
 “Lo! we blithely have brought thee, bairn of Healfdene,
 Prince of the Scyldings, these presents from ocean
 Which thine eye looketh on, for an emblem of glory.
 I came off alive from this, narrowly 'scaping:
 In war 'neath the water the work with great pains I
 Performed, and the fight had been finished quite nearly,
 Had God not defended me. I failed in the battle
 Aught to accomplish, aided by Hrunting,
 Though that weapon was worthy, but the Wielder of earth-folk
 Gave me willingly to see on the wall a
 Heavy old hand-sword hanging in splendor
 (He guided most often the lorn and the friendless),
 That I swung as a weapon. The wards of the house then
 I killed in the conflict (when occasion was given me).
 Then the battle-sword burned, the brand that was lifted,
 As the blood-current sprang, hottest of war-sweats;
 Seizing the hilt, from my foes I offbore it;
 I avenged as I ought to their acts of malignity,
 The murder of Danemen. I then make thee this promise,
 Thou'lt be able in Heorot careless to slumber
 With thy throng of heroes and the thanes of thy people
 Every and each, of greater and lesser,
 And thou needest not fear for them from the selfsame direction
 As thou formerly fearedst, oh, folk-lord of Scyldings,
 End-day for earlmen.” To the age-hoary man then,
 The gray-haired chieftain, the gold-fashioned sword-hilt,
 Old-work of giants, was thereupon given;
 Since the fall of the fiends, it fell to the keeping
 Of the wielder of Danemen, the wonder-smith's labor,
 And the bad-mooded being abandoned this world then,
 Opponent of God, victim of murder,
 And also his mother; it went to the keeping
 Of the best of the world-kings, where waters encircle,
 Who the scot divided in Scylding dominion.
 Hrothgar discoursed, the hilt he regarded,

The ancient heirloom where an old-time contention's
Beginning was graven: the gurgling currents,
The flood slew thereafter the race of the giants,
They had proved themselves daring: that people was loth to
The Lord everlasting, through lash of the billows
The Father gave them final requital.
So in letters of rune on the clasp of the handle
Gleaming and golden, 'twas graven exactly,
Set forth and said, whom that sword had been made for,
Finest of irons, who first it was wrought for,
Wreathed at its handle and gleaming with serpents.
The wise one then said (silent they all were)
Son of old Healfdene: "He may say unrefuted
Who performs 'mid the folk-men fairness and truth
(The hoary old ruler remembers the past),
That better by birth is this bairn of the nobles!
Thy fame is extended through far-away countries,
Good friend Beowulf, o'er all of the races,
Thou holdest all firmly, hero-like strength with
Prudence of spirit. I'll prove myself grateful
As before we agreed on; thou granted for long shalt
Become a great comfort to kinsmen and comrades,
A help unto heroes. Heremod became not
Such to the Scyldings, successors of Ecgwela;
He grew not to please them, but grievous destruction,
And dire death-woes to Danemen attracted;
He slew in anger his table-companions,
Trustworthy counsellors, till he turned off lonely
From world-joys away, wide-famous ruler:
Though high-ruling heaven in hero-strength raised him,
In might exalted him, o'er men of all nations
Made him supreme, yet a murderous spirit
Grew in his bosom: he gave then no ring-gems
To the Danes after custom; endured he unjoyful
Standing the straits from strife that was raging,
Longsome folk-sorrow. Learn then from this,
Lay hold of virtue! Though laden with winters,
I have sung thee these measures. 'Tis a marvel to tell it,
How all-ruling God from greatness of spirit
Giveth wisdom to children of men,
Manor and earlship: all things He ruleth.
He often permitteth the mood-thought of man of
The illustrious lineage to lean to possessions,

Allows him earthly delights at his manor,
 A high-burg of heroes to hold in his keeping,
 Maketh portions of earth-folk hear him,
 And a wide-reaching kingdom so that, wisdom failing him,
 He himself is unable to reckon its boundaries;
 He liveth in luxury, little debars him,
 Nor sickness nor age, no treachery-sorrow
 Becloudeth his spirit, conflict nowhere,
 No sword-hate, appeareth, but all of the world doth
 Wend as he wisheth; the worse he knoweth not,
 Till arrant arrogance inward pervading,
 Waxeth and springeth, when the warder is sleeping,
 The guard of the soul: with sorrows encompassed,
 Too sound is his slumber, the slayer is near him,
 Who with bow and arrow aimeth in malice.

Part XXVI

“Then bruised in his bosom he with bitter-toothed missile
 Is hurt 'neath his helmet: from harmful pollution
 He is powerless to shield him by the wonderful mandates
 Of the loath-cursèd spirit; what too long he hath holden
 Him seemeth too small, savage he hoardeth,
 Nor boastfully giveth gold-plated rings,
 The fate of the future flouts and forgetteth
 Since God had erst given him greatness no little,
 Wielder of Glory. His end-day anear,
 It afterward happens that the bodily-dwelling
 Fleetingly fadeth, falls into ruins;
 Another lays hold who doleth the ornaments,
 The nobleman's jewels, nothing lamenting,
 Heedeth no terror. Oh, Beowulf dear,
 Best of the heroes, from bale-strife defend thee,
 And choose thee the better, counsels eternal;
 Beware of arrogance, world-famous champion!
 But a little-while lasts thy life-vigor's fulness;
 'Twill after hap early, that illness or sword-edge
 Shall part thee from strength, or the grasp of the fire,
 Or the wave of the current, or clutch of the edges,
 Or flight of the war-spear, or age with its horrors,
 Or thine eyes' bright flashing shall fade into darkness:
 'Twill happen full early, excellent hero,
 That death shall subdue thee. So the Danes a half-century
 I held under heaven, helped them in struggles

'Gainst many a race in middle-earth's regions,
With ash-wood and edges, that enemies none
On earth molested me. Lo! offsetting change, now,
Came to my manor, grief after joyance,
When Grendel became my constant visitor,
Inveterate hater: I from that malice
Continually travailed with trouble no little.
Thanks be to God that I gained in my lifetime,
To the Lord everlasting, to look on the gory
Head with mine eyes, after long-lasting sorrow!
Go to the bench now, battle-adornèd
Joy in the feasting: of jewels in common
We'll meet with many when morning appeareth."
The Geatman was gladsome, ganged he immediately
To go to the bench, as the clever one bade him.
Then again as before were the famous-for-prowess,
Hall-inhabiters, handsomely banqueted,
Feasted anew. The night-veil fell then
Dark o'er the warriors. The courtiers rose then;
The gray-haired was anxious to go to his slumbers,
The hoary old Scylding. Hankered the Geatman,
The champion doughty, greatly, to rest him:
An earlman early outward did lead him,
Fagged from his faring, from far-country springing,
Who for etiquette's sake all of a liegeman's
Needs regarded, such as seamen at that time
Were bounden to feel. The big-hearted rested;
The building uptowered, spacious and gilded,
The guest within slumbered, till the sable-clad raven
Blithely foreboded the beacon of heaven.
Then the bright-shining sun o'er the bottoms came going;
The warriors hastened, the heads of the peoples
Were ready to go again to their peoples,
The high-mooded farer would faraway thenceward
Look for his vessel. The valiant one bade then,
Offspring of Ecglaf, off to bear Hrunting,
To take his weapon, his well-beloved iron;
He him thanked for the gift, saying good he accounted
The war-friend and mighty, nor chid he with words then
The blade of the brand: 'twas a brave-mooded hero.
When the warriors were ready, arrayed in their trappings,
The atheling dear to the Danemen advanced then

On to the dais, where the other was sitting,
Grim-mooded hero, greeted King Hrothgar.

Part XXVII

Beowulf spake, Ecgtheow's offspring:
"We men of the water wish to declare now
Fared from far-lands, we're firmly determined
To seek King Higelac. Here have we fitly
Been welcomed and feasted, as heart would desire it;
Good was the greeting. If greater affection
I am anyway able ever on earth to
Gain at thy hands, ruler of heroes,
Than yet I have done, I shall quickly be ready
For combat and conflict. O'er the course of the waters
Learn I that neighbors alarm thee with terror,
As haters did whilom, I hither will bring thee
For help unto heroes henchmen by thousands.
I know as to Higelac, the lord of the Geatmen,
Though young in years, he yet will permit me,
By words and by works, ward of the people,
Fully to furnish thee forces and bear thee
My lance to relieve thee, if liegemen shall fail thee,
And help of my hand-strength; if Hrethric be treating,
Bairn of the king, at the court of the Geatmen,
He thereat may find him friends in abundance:
Faraway countries he were better to seek for
Who trusts in himself." Hrothgar discoursed then,
Making rejoinder: "These words thou hast uttered
All-knowing God hath given thy spirit!
Ne'er heard I an earlman thus early in life
More clever in speaking: thou'rt cautious of spirit,
Mighty of muscle, in mouth-answers prudent.
I count on the hope that, happen it ever
That missile shall rob thee of Hrethel's descendant,
Edge-horrid battle, and illness or weapon
Deprive thee of prince, of people's protector,
And life thou yet holdest, the Sea-Geats will never
Find a more fitting folk-lord to choose them,
Gem-ward of heroes, than thou mightest prove thee,
If the kingdom of kinsmen thou carest to govern.
Thy mood-spirit likes me the longer the better,
Beowulf dear: thou hast brought it to pass that
To both these peoples peace shall be common,

To Geat-folk and Danemen, the strife be suspended,
 The secret assailings they suffered in yore-days;
 And also that jewels be shared while I govern
 The wide-stretching kingdom, and that many shall visit
 Others o'er the ocean with excellent gift-gems:
 The ring-adorned bark shall bring o'er the currents
 Presents and love-gifts. This people I know
 Tow'rd foeman and friend firmly established,
 After ancient etiquette everywise blameless."
 Then the warden of earlmen gave him still farther,
 Kinsman of Healfdene, a dozen of jewels,
 Bade him safely seek with the presents
 His well-beloved people, early returning.
 Then the noble-born king kissed the distinguished,
 Dear-lovèd liegeman, the Dane-prince saluted him,
 And claspèd his neck; tears from him fell,
 From the gray-headed man: he two things expected,
 Agèd and reverend, but rather the second,
 That bold in council they'd meet thereafter.
 The man was so dear that he failed to suppress the
 Emotions that moved him, but in mood-fetters fastened
 The long-famous hero longeth in secret
 Deep in his spirit for the dear-beloved man
 Though not a blood-kinsman. Beowulf thenceward,
 Gold-splendid warrior, walked o'er the meadows
 Exulting in treasure: the sea-going vessel
 Riding at anchor awaited its owner.
 As they pressed on their way then, the present of Hrothgar
 Was frequently referred to: a folk-king indeed that
 Everyway blameless, till age did debar him
 The joys of his might, which hath many oft injured.

Part XXVIII

Then the band of very valiant retainers
 Came to the current; they were clad all in armor,
 In link-woven burnies. The land-warder noticed
 The return of the earlmen, as he erstwhile had seen them;
 Nowise with insult he greeted the strangers
 From the naze of the cliff, but rode on to meet them;
 Said the bright-armed visitors vesselward traveled
 Welcome to Weders. The wide-bosomed craft then
 Lay on the sand, laden with armor,
 With horses and jewels, the ring-stemmèd sailer:

The mast uptowered o'er the treasure of Hrothgar.
To the boat-ward a gold-bound brand he presented,
That he was afterwards honored on the ale-bench more highly
As the heirloom's owner. Set he out on his vessel,
To drive on the deep, Dane-country left he.
Along by the mast then a sea-garment fluttered,
A rope-fastened sail. The sea-boat resounded,
The wind o'er the waters the wave-floater nowise
Kept from its journey; the sea-goer traveled,
The foamy-necked floated forth o'er the currents,
The well-fashioned vessel o'er the ways of the ocean,
Till they came within sight of the cliffs of the Geatmen,
The well-known headlands. The wave-goer hastened
Driven by breezes, stood on the shore.
Prompt at the ocean, the port-ward was ready,
Who long in the past outlooked in the distance,
At water's-edge waiting well-lovèd heroes;
He bound to the bank then the broad-bosomed vessel
Fast in its fetters, lest the force of the waters
Should be able to injure the ocean-wood winsome.
Bade he up then take the treasure of princes,
Plate-gold and fretwork; not far was it thence
To go off in search of the giver of jewels:
Hrethel's son Higelac at home there remaineth,
Himself with his comrades close to the sea-coast.
The building was splendid, the king heroic,
Great in his hall, Hygd very young was,
Fine-mooded, clever, though few were the winters
That the daughter of Hæreth had dwelt in the borough;
But she nowise was cringing nor niggard of presents,
Of ornaments rare, to the race of the Geatmen.
Thrytho nursed anger, excellent folk-queen,
Hot-burning hatred: no hero whatever
'Mong household companions, her husband excepted
Dared to adventure to look at the woman
With eyes in the daytime; but he knew that death-chains
Hand-wreathed were wrought him: early thereafter,
When the hand-strife was over, edges were ready,
That fierce-raging sword-point had to force a decision,
Murder-bale show. Such no womanly custom
For a lady to practise, though lovely her person,
That a weaver-of-peace, on pretence of anger
A belovèd liegeman of life should deprive.

Soothly this hindered Heming's kinsman;
 Other ale-drinking earlmen asserted
 That fearful folk-sorrows fewer she wrought them,
 Treacherous doings, since first she was given
 Adorned with gold to the war-hero youthful,
 For her origin honored, when Offa's great palace
 O'er the fallow flood by her father's instructions
 She sought on her journey, where she afterwards fully,
 Famed for her virtue, her fate on the king's-seat
 Enjoyed in her lifetime, love did she hold with
 The ruler of heroes, the best, it is told me,
 Of all of the earthmen that oceans encompass,
 Of earl-kindreds endless; hence Offa was famous
 Far and widely, by gifts and by battles,
 Spear-valiant hero; the home of his fathers
 He governed with wisdom, whence Eomær did issue
 For help unto heroes, Heming's kinsman,
 Grandson of Garmund, great in encounters.

Part XXIX

Then the brave one departed, his band along with him,
 Seeking the sea-shore, the sea-marches treading,
 The wide-stretching shores. The world-candle glimmered,
 The sun from the southward; they proceeded then onward,
 Early arriving where they heard that the troop-lord,
 Ongentheow's slayer, excellent, youthful
 Folk-prince and warrior was distributing jewels,
 Close in his castle. The coming of Beowulf
 Was announced in a message quickly to Higelac,
 That the folk-troop's defender forth to the palace
 The linden-companion alive was advancing,
 Secure from the combat courtward a-going.
 The building was early inward made ready
 For the foot-going guests as the good one had ordered.
 He sat by the man then who had lived through the struggle,
 Kinsman by kinsman, when the king of the people
 Had in lordly language saluted the dear one,
 In words that were formal. The daughter of Hæreth
 Coursed through the building, carrying mead-cups:
 She loved the retainers, tendered the beakers
 To the high-minded Geatmen. Higelac 'gan then
 Pleasantly plying his companion with questions
 In the high-towering palace. A curious interest

Tormented his spirit, what meaning to see in
The Sea-Geats' adventures: "Beowulf worthy,
How throve your journeying, when thou thoughtest suddenly
Far o'er the salt-streams to seek an encounter,
A battle at Heorot? Hast bettered for Hrothgar,
The famous folk-leader, his far-published sorrows
Any at all? In agony-billows
I mused upon torture, distrusted the journey
Of the beloved liegeman; I long time did pray thee
By no means to seek out the murderous spirit,
To suffer the South-Danes themselves to decide on
Grappling with Grendel. To God I am thankful
To be suffered to see thee safe from thy journey."
Beowulf answered, bairn of old Ecgtheow:
"Tis hidden by no means, Higelac chieftain,
From many of men, the meeting so famous,
What mournful moments of me and of Grendel
Were passed in the place where he pressing affliction
On the Victory-Scyldings scathefully brought,
Anguish forever; that all I avengèd,
So that any under heaven of the kinsmen of Grendel
Needeth not boast of that cry-in-the-morning,
Who longest liveth of the loth-going kindred,
Encompassed by moorland. I came in my journey
To the royal ring-hall, Hrothgar to greet there:
Soon did the famous scion of Healfdene,
When he understood fully the spirit that led me,
Assign me a seat with the son of his bosom.
The troop was in joyance; mead-glee greater
'Neath arch of the ether not ever beheld I
'Mid hall-building holders. The highly-famed queen,
Peace-tie of peoples, oft passed through the building,
Cheered the young troopers; she oft tendered a hero
A beautiful ring-band, ere she went to her sitting.
Oft the daughter of Hrothgar in view of the courtiers
To the earls at the end the ale-vessel carried,
Whom Freaware I heard then hall-sitters title,
When nail-adorned jewels she gave to the heroes:
Gold-bedecked, youthful, to the glad son of Froda
Her faith has been plighted; the friend of the Scyldings,
The guard of the kingdom, hath given his sanction,
And counts it a vantage, for a part of the quarrels,
A portion of hatred, to pay with the woman.

Somewhere not rarely, when the ruler has fallen,
 The life-taking lance relaxeth its fury
 For a brief breathing-spell, though the bride be charming!

Part XXX

“It well may discomfit the prince of the Heathobards
 And each of the thanemen of earls that attend him,
 When he goes to the building escorting the woman,
 That a noble-born Daneman the knights should be feasting:
 There gleam on his person the leavings of elders
 Hard and ring-bright, Heathobards’ treasure,
 While they wielded their arms, till they misled to the battle
 Their own dear lives and beloved companions.
 He saith at the banquet who the collar beholdeth,
 An ancient ash-warrior who earlmen’s destruction
 Clearly recalleth (cruel his spirit),
 Sadly beginneth sounding the youthful
 Thane-champion’s spirit through the thoughts of his bosom,
 War-grief to waken, and this word-answer speaketh:
 ‘Art thou able, my friend, to know when thou seest it
 The brand which thy father bare to the conflict
 In his latest adventure, ’neath visor of helmet,
 The dearly-loved iron, where Danemen did slay him,
 And brave-mooded Scyldings, on the fall of the heroes,
 (When vengeance was sleeping) the slaughter-place wielded?
 E’en now some man of the murderer’s progeny
 Exulting in ornaments enters the building,
 Boasts of his blood-shedding, offbeareth the jewel
 Which thou shouldst wholly hold in possession!’
 So he urgeth and mindeth on every occasion
 With woe-bringing words, till waxeth the season
 When the woman’s thane for the works of his father,
 The bill having bitten, blood-gory sleepeth,
 Fated to perish; the other one thenceward
 ’Scapeth alive, the land knoweth thoroughly.
 Then the oaths of the earlmen on each side are broken,
 When rancors unresting are raging in Ingeld
 And his wife-love waxeth less warm after sorrow.
 So the Heathobards’ favor not faithful I reckon,
 Their part in the treaty not true to the Danemen,
 Their friendship not fast. I further shall tell thee
 More about Grendel, that thou fully mayst hear,
 Ornament-giver, what afterward came from

The hand-rush of heroes. When heaven's bright jewel
O'er earthfields had glided, the stranger came raging,
The horrible night-fiend, us for to visit,
Where wholly unharmed the hall we were guarding.
To Hondscio happened a hopeless contention,
Death to the doomed one, dead he fell foremost,
Girded war-champion; to him Grendel became then,
To the vassal distinguished, a tooth-weaponed murderer,
The well-beloved henchman's body all swallowed.
Not the earlier off empty of hand did
The bloody-toothed murderer, mindful of evils,
Wish to escape from the gold-giver's palace,
But sturdy of strength he strove to outdo me,
Hand-ready grappled. A glove was suspended
Spacious and wondrous, in art-fetters fastened,
Which was fashioned entirely by touch of the craftman
From the dragon's skin by the devil's devices:
He down in its depths would do me unsadly
One among many, deed-doer raging,
Though sinless he saw me; not so could it happen
When I in my anger upright did stand.
'Tis too long to recount how requital I furnished
For every evil to the earlmen's destroyer;
'Twas there, my prince, that I proudly distinguished
Thy land with my labors. He left and retreated,
He lived his life a little while longer:
Yet his right-hand guarded his footstep in Heorot,
And sad-mooded thence to the sea-bottom fell he,
Mournful in mind. For the might-rush of battle
The friend of the Scyldings, with gold that was plated,
With ornaments many, much requited me,
When daylight had dawned, and down to the banquet
We had sat us together. There was chanting and joyance:
The age-stricken Scylding asked many questions
And of old-times related; oft light-ringing harp-strings,
Joy-telling wood, were touched by the brave one;
Now he uttered measures, mourning and truthful,
Then the large-hearted land-king a legend of wonder
Truthfully told us. Now troubled with years
The age-hoary warrior afterward began to
Mourn for the might that marked him in youth-days;
His breast within boiled, when burdened with winters
Much he remembered. From morning till night then

We joyed us therein as etiquette suffered,
 Till the second night season came unto earth-folk.
 Then early thereafter, the mother of Grendel
 Was ready for vengeance, wretched she journeyed;
 Her son had death ravished, the wrath of the Geatmen.
 The horrible woman avengèd her offspring,
 And with mighty mainstrength murdered a hero.
 There the spirit of Æschere, agèd adviser,
 Was ready to vanish; nor when morn had lightened
 Were they anywise suffered to consume him with fire,
 Folk of the Danemen, the death-weakened hero,
 Nor the belovèd liegeman to lay on the pyre;
 She the corpse had offcarried in the clutch of the foeman
 'Neath mountain-brook's flood. To Hrothgar 'twas saddest
 Of pains that ever had preyed on the chieftain;
 By the life of thee the land-prince then me
 Besought very sadly, in sea-currents' eddies
 To display my prowess, to peril my safety,
 Might-deeds accomplish; much did he promise.
 I found then the famous flood-current's cruel,
 Horrible depth-warder. A while unto us two
 Hand was in common; the currents were seething
 With gore that was clotted, and Grendel's fierce mother's
 Head I offhacked in the hall at the bottom
 With huge-reaching sword-edge, hardly I wrested
 My life from her clutches; not doomed was I then,
 But the warden of earlmen afterward gave me
 Jewels in quantity, kinsman of Healfdene.

Part XXXI

"So the belovèd land-prince lived in decorum;
 I had missed no rewards, no meeds of my prowess,
 But he gave me jewels, regarding my wishes,
 Healfdene his bairn; I'll bring them to thee, then,
 Atheling of earlmen, offer them gladly.
 And still unto thee is all my affection:
 But few of my folk-kin find I surviving
 But thee, dear Higelac!" Bade he in then to carry
 The boar-image, banner, battle-high helmet,
 Iron-gray armor, the excellent weapon,
 In song-measures said: "This suit-for-the-battle
 Hrothgar presented me, bade me expressly,
 Wise-mooded atheling, thereafter to tell thee

The whole of its history, said King Heregar owned it,
Dane-prince for long: yet he wished not to give then
The mail to his son, though dearly he loved him,
Hereward the hardy. Hold all in joyance!”
I heard that there followed hard on the jewels
Two braces of stallions of striking resemblance,
Dappled and yellow; he granted him usance
Of horses and treasures. So a kinsman should bear him,
No web of treachery weave for another,
Nor by cunning craftiness cause the destruction
Of trusty companion. Most precious to Higelac,
The bold one in battle, was the bairn of his sister,
And each unto other mindful of favors.
I am told that to Hygd he proffered the necklace,
Wonder-gem rare that Wealththeow gave him,
The troop-leader’s daughter, a trio of horses
Slender and saddle-bright; soon did the jewel
Embellish her bosom, when the beer-feast was over.
So Ecgtheow’s bairn brave did prove him,
War-famous man, by deeds that were valiant,
He lived in honor, beloved companions
Slew not carousing; his mood was not cruel,
But by hand-strength hugest of heroes then living
The brave one retained the bountiful gift that
The Lord had allowed him. Long was he wretched,
So that sons of the Geatmen accounted him worthless,
And the lord of the liegemen loth was to do him
Mickle of honor, when mead-cups were passing;
They fully believed him idle and sluggish,
An indolent atheling: to the honor-blest man there
Came requital for the cuts he had suffered.
The folk-troop’s defender bade fetch to the building
The heirloom of Hrethel, embellished with gold,
So the brave one enjoined it; there was jewel no richer
In the form of a weapon ’mong Geats of that era;
In Beowulf’s keeping he placed it and gave him
Seven of thousands, manor and lordship.
Common to both was land ’mong the people,
Estate and inherited rights and possessions,
To the second one specially spacious dominions,
To the one who was better. It afterward happened
In days that followed, befell the battle-thanes,
After Higelac’s death, and when Heardred was murdered

With weapons of warfare 'neath well-covered targets,
 When valiant battlemen in victor-band sought him,
 War-Scylfing heroes harassed the nephew
 Of Hereric in battle. To Beowulf's keeping
 Turned there in time extensive dominions:
 He fittingly ruled them a fifty of winters
 (He a man-ruler wise was, manor-ward old) till
 A certain one 'gan, on gloom-darkening nights, a
 Dragon, to govern, who guarded a treasure,
 A high-rising stone-cliff, on heath that was grayish:
 A path 'neath it lay, unknown unto mortals.
 Some one of earthmen entered the mountain,
 The heathenish hoard laid hold of with ardor;
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Part XXXII

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 He sought of himself who sorely did harm him,
 But, for need very pressing, the servant of one of
 The sons of the heroes hate-blows evaded,
 Seeking for shelter and the sin-driven warrior
 Took refuge within there. He early looked in it,
 * * * * *
 * * * * *
 * * * * * when the onset surprised him,
 He a gem-vessel saw there: many of suchlike
 Ancient ornaments in the earth-cave were lying,
 As in days of yore some one of men of
 Illustrious lineage, as a legacy monstrous,
 There had secreted them, careful and thoughtful,
 Dear-valued jewels. Death had offsnatched them,
 In the days of the past, and the one man moreover
 Of the flower of the folk who fared there the longest,
 Was fain to defer it, friend-mourning warder,
 A little longer to be left in enjoyment
 Of long-lasting treasure. A barrow all-ready
 Stood on the plain the stream-currents nigh to,
 New by the ness-edge, unnethe of approaching:
 The keeper of rings carried within a

Ponderous deal of the treasure of nobles,
Of gold that was beaten, briefly he spake then:
“Hold thou, O Earth, now heroes no more may,
The earnings of earlmen. Lo! erst in thy bosom
Worthy men won them; war-death hath ravished,
Perilous life-bale, all my warriors,
Liegemen beloved, who this life have forsaken,
Who hall-pleasures saw. No sword-bearer have I,
And no one to burnish the gold-plated vessel,
The high-valued beaker: my heroes are vanished.
The hardy helmet behung with gilding
Shall be reaved of its riches: the ring-cleansers slumber
Who were charged to have ready visors-for-battle,
And the burnie that bided in battle-encounter
O'er breaking of war-shields the bite of the edges
Moulds with the hero. The ring-twisted armor,
Its lord being lifeless, no longer may journey
Hanging by heroes; harp-joy is vanished,
The rapture of glee-wood, no excellent falcon
Swoops through the building, no swift-footed charger
Grindeth the gravel. A grievous destruction
No few of the world-folk widely hath scattered!”
So, woful of spirit one after all
Lamented mournfully, moaning in sadness
By day and by night, till death with its billows
Dashed on his spirit. Then the ancient dusk-scather
Found the great treasure standing all open,
He who flaming and fiery flies to the barrows,
Naked war-dragon, nightly escapeth
Encompassed with fire; men under heaven
Widely beheld him. 'Tis said that he looks for
The hoard in the earth, where old he is guarding
The heathenish treasure; he'll be nowise the better.
So three-hundred winters the waster of peoples
Held upon earth that excellent hoard-hall,
Till the forementioned earlman angered him bitterly:
The beat-plated beaker he bare to his chieftain
And fullest remission for all his remissness
Begged of his lieg lord. Then the hoard⁵ was discovered,
The treasure was taken, his petition was granted
The lorn-mooded liegeman. His lord regarded
The old-work of earth-folk—'twas the earliest occasion.
When the dragon awoke, the strife was renewed there;

He snuffed 'long the stone then, stout-hearted found he
 The footprint of foeman; too far had he gone
 With cunning craftiness close to the head of
 The fire-spewing dragon. So undoomed he may 'scape from
 Anguish and exile with ease who possesseth
 The favor of Heaven. The hoard-warden eagerly
 Searched o'er the ground then, would meet with the person
 That caused him sorrow while in slumber reclining:
 Gleaming and wild he oft went round the cavern,
 All of it outward; not any of earthmen
 Was seen in that desert. Yet he joyed in the battle,
 Rejoiced in the conflict: oft he turned to the barrow,
 Sought for the gem-cup; this he soon perceived then
 That some man or other had discovered the gold,
 The famous folk-treasure. Not fain did the hoard-ward
 Wait until evening; then the ward of the barrow
 Was angry in spirit, the loathèd one wished to
 Pay for the dear-valued drink-cup with fire.
 Then the day was done as the dragon would have it,
 He no longer would wait on the wall, but departed
 Fire-impelled, flaming. Fearful the start was
 To earls in the land, as it early thereafter
 To their giver-of-gold was grievously ended.

Part XXXIII

The stranger began then to vomit forth fire,
 To burn the great manor; the blaze then glimmered
 For anguish to earlmen, not anything living
 Was the hateful air-goer willing to leave there.
 The war of the worm widely was noticed,
 The feud of the foeman afar and anear,
 How the enemy injured the earls of the Geatmen,
 Harried with hatred: back he hied to the treasure,
 To the well-hidden cavern ere the coming of daylight.
 He had circled with fire the folk of those regions,
 With brand and burning; in the barrow he trusted,
 In the wall and his war-might: the weening deceived him.
 Then straight was the horror to Beowulf published,
 Early forsooth, that his own native homestead,
 The best of buildings, was burning and melting,
 Gift-seat of Geatmen. 'Twas a grief to the spirit
 Of the good-mooded hero, the greatest of sorrows:
 The wise one weened then that wielding his kingdom

'Gainst the ancient commandments, he had bitterly angered
The Lord everlasting: with lorn meditations
His bosom welled inward, as was nowise his custom.
The fire-spewing dragon fully had wasted
The fastness of warriors, the water-land outward,
The manor with fire. The folk-ruling hero,
Prince of the Weders, was planning to wreak him.
The warmen's defender bade them to make him,
Earlmen's atheling, an excellent war-shield
Wholly of iron: fully he knew then
That wood from the forest was helpless to aid him,
Shield against fire. The long-worthy ruler
Must live the last of his limited earth-days,
Of life in the world and the worm along with him,
Though he long had been holding hoard-wealth in plenty.
Then the ring-prince disdained to seek with a war-band,
With army extensive, the air-going ranger;
He felt no fear of the foeman's assaults and
He counted for little the might of the dragon,
His power and prowess: for previously dared he
A heap of hostility, hazarded dangers,
War-thane, when Hrothgar's palace he cleansed,
Conquering combatant, clutched in the battle
The kinsmen of Grendel, of kindred detested.
'Twas of hand-fights not least where Higelac was slaughtered,
When the king of the Geatmen with clashings of battle,
Friend-lord of folks in Frisian dominions,
Offspring of Hrethrel perished through sword-drink,
With battle-swords beaten; thence Beowulf came then
On self-help relying, swam through the waters;
He bare on his arm, lone-going, thirty
Outfits of armor, when the ocean he mounted.
The Hetwars by no means had need to be boastful
Of their fighting afoot, who forward to meet him
Carried their war-shields: not many returned from
The brave-mooded battle-knight back to their homesteads.
Ecgtheow's bairn o'er the bight-courses swam then,
Lone-goer lorn to his land-folk returning,
Where Hygd to him tendered treasure and kingdom,
Rings and dominion: her son she not trusted,
To be able to keep the kingdom devised him
'Gainst alien races, on the death of King Higelac.

Yet the sad ones succeeded not in persuading the atheling
 In any way ever, to act as a suzerain
 To Heardred, or promise to govern the kingdom;
 Yet with friendly counsel in the folk he sustained him,
 Gracious, with honor, till he grew to be older,
 Wielded the Weders. Wide-fleeing outlaws,
 Ohthere's sons, sought him o'er the waters:
 They had stirred a revolt 'gainst the helm of the Scylfings,
 The best of the sea-kings, who in Swedish dominions
 Distributed treasure, distinguished folk-leader.
 'Twas the end of his earth-days; injury fatal
 By swing of the sword he received as a greeting,
 Offspring of Higelac; Ongentheow's bairn
 Later departed to visit his homestead,
 When Heardred was dead; let Beowulf rule them,
 Govern the Geatmen: good was that folk-king.

Part XXXIV

He planned requital for the folk-leader's ruin
 In days thereafter, to Eadgils the wretched
 Becoming an enemy. Ohthere's son then
 Went with a war-troop o'er the wide-stretching currents
 With warriors and weapons: with woe-journeys cold he
 After avenged him, the king's life he took.
 So he came off uninjured from all of his battles,
 Perilous fights, offspring of Ecgtheow,
 From his deeds of daring, till that day most momentous
 When he fate-driven fared to fight with the dragon.
 With eleven companions the prince of the Geatmen
 Went lowering with fury to look at the fire-drake:
 Inquiring he'd found how the feud had arisen,
 Hate to his heroes; the highly-famed gem-vessel
 Was brought to his keeping through the hand of th' informer.
 That in the throng was thirteenth of heroes,
 That caused the beginning of conflict so bitter,
 Captive and wretched, must sad-mooded thenceward
 Point out the place: he passed then unwillingly
 To the spot where he knew of the notable cavern,
 The cave under earth, not far from the ocean,
 The anger of eddies, which inward was full of
 Jewels and wires: a warden uncanny,
 Warrior weaponed, wardered the treasure,

Old under earth; no easy possession
For any of earth-folk access to get to.
Then the battle-brave atheling sat on the naze-edge,
While the gold-friend of Geatmen gracious saluted
His fireside-companions: woe was his spirit,
Death-boding, wav'ring; Weird very near him,
Who must seize the old hero, his soul-treasure look for,
Dragging aloof his life from his body:
Not flesh-hidden long was the folk-leader's spirit.
Beowulf spake, Ecgtheow's son:
"I survived in my youth-days many a conflict,
Hours of onset: that all I remember.
I was seven-winters old when the jewel-prince took me,
High-lord of heroes, at the hands of my father,
Hrethel the hero-king had me in keeping,
Gave me treasure and feasting, our kinship remembered;
Not ever was I any less dear to him
Knight in the boroughs, than the bairns of his household,
Herebald and Hæthcyn and Higelac mine.
To the eldest unjustly by acts of a kinsman
Was murder-bed strewn, since him Hæthcyn from horn-bow
His sheltering chieftain shot with an arrow,
Erred in his aim and injured his kinsman,
One brother the other, with blood-sprinkled spear:
'Twas a feeless fight, finished in malice,
Sad to his spirit; the folk-prince however
Had to part from existence with vengeance untaken.
So to hoar-headed hero 'tis heavily crushing
To live to see his son as he rideth
Young on the gallows: then measures he chanteth,
A song of sorrow, when his son is hanging
For the raven's delight, and aged and hoary
He is unable to offer any assistance.
Every morning his offspring's departure
Is constant recalled: he cares not to wait for
The birth of an heir in his borough-enclosures,
Since that one through death-pain the deeds hath experienced.
He heart-grieved beholds in the house of his son the
Wine-building wasted, the wind-lodging places
Reaved of their roaring; the riders are sleeping,
The knights in the grave; there's no sound of the harp-wood,
Joy in the yards, as of yore were familiar.

Part XXXV

“He seeks then his chamber, singeth a woe-song
 One for the other; all too extensive
 Seemed homesteads and plains. So the helm of the Weders
 Mindful of Herebald heart-sorrow carried,
 Stirred with emotion, nowise was able
 To wreak his ruin on the ruthless destroyer:
 He was unable to follow the warrior with hatred,
 With deeds that were direful, though dear he not held him.
 Then pressed by the pang this pain occasioned him,
 He gave up glee, God-light elected;
 He left to his sons, as the man that is rich does,
 His land and fortress, when from life he departed.
 Then was crime and hostility ’twixt Swedes and Geatmen,
 O’er wide-stretching water warring was mutual,
 Burdensome hatred, when Hrethel had perished,
 And Ongentheow’s offspring were active and valiant,
 Wished not to hold to peace oversea, but
 Round Hreosna-beorh often accomplished
 Cruellest massacre. This my kinsman avengèd,
 The feud and fury, as ’tis found on inquiry,
 Though one of them paid it with forfeit of life-joys,
 With price that was hard: the struggle became then
 Fatal to Hæthcyn, lord of the Geatmen.
 Then I heard that at morning one brother the other
 With edges of irons egged on to murder,
 Where Ongentheow maketh onset on Eofor:
 The helmet crashed, the hoary-haired Scylfing
 Sword-smitten fell, his hand then remembered
 Feud-hate sufficient, refused not the death-blow.
 The gems that he gave me, with jewel-bright sword I
 ’Quited in contest, as occasion was offered:
 Land he allowed me, life-joy at homestead,
 Manor to live on. Little he needed
 From Gepids or Danes or in Sweden to look for
 Trooper less true, with treasure to buy him;
 ’Mong foot-soldiers ever in front I would hie me,
 Alone in the vanguard, and evermore gladly
 Warfare shall wage, while this weapon endureth
 That late and early often did serve me
 When I proved before heroes the slayer of Dæghrefn,
 Knight of the Hugmen: he by no means was suffered
 To the king of the Frisians to carry the jewels,

The breast-decoration; but the banner-possessor
 Bowed in the battle, brave-mooded atheling.
 No weapon was slayer, but war-grapple broke then
 The surge of his spirit, his body destroying.
 Now shall weapon's edge make war for the treasure,
 And hand and firm-sword." Beowulf spake then,
 Boast-words uttered—the latest occasion:
 "I braved in my youth-days battles unnumbered;
 Still am I willing the struggle to look for,
 Fame-deeds perform, folk-warden prudent,
 If the hateful despoiler forth from his cavern
 Seeketh me out!" Each of the heroes,
 Helm-bearers sturdy, he thereupon greeted
 Belovèd co-liegemen—his last salutation:
 "No brand would I bear, no blade for the dragon,
 Wist I a way my word-boast to 'complish
 Else with the monster, as with Grendel I did it;
 But fire in the battle hot I expect there,
 Furious flame-burning: so I fixed on my body
 Target and war-mail. The ward of the barrow
 I'll not flee from a foot-length, the foeman uncanny.
 At the wall 'twill befall us as Fate decreeth,
 Each one's Creator. I am eager in spirit,
 With the wingèd war-hero to away with all boasting.
 Bide on the barrow with burnies protected,
 Earls in armor, which of us two may better
 Bear his disaster, when the battle is over.
 'Tis no matter of yours, and man cannot do it,
 But me and me only, to measure his strength with
 The monster of malice, might-deeds to 'complish.
 I with prowess shall gain the gold, or the battle,
 Direful death-woe will drag off your ruler!"
 The mighty champion rose by his shield then,
 Brave under helmet, in battle-mail went he
 'Neath steep-rising stone-cliffs, the strength he relied on
 Of one man alone: no work for a coward.
 Then he saw by the wall who a great many battles
 Had lived through, most worthy, when foot-troops collided,
 Stone-arches standing, stout-hearted champion,
 Saw a brook from the barrow bubbling out thenceward:
 The flood of the fountain was fuming with war-flame:
 Not nigh to the hoard, for season the briefest
 Could he brave, without burning, the abyss that was yawning,

The drake was so fiery. The prince of the Weders
Caused then that words came from his bosom,
So fierce was his fury; the firm-hearted shouted:
His battle-clear voice came in resounding
'Neath the gray-colored stone. Stirred was his hatred,
The hoard-ward distinguished the speech of a man;
Time was no longer to look out for friendship.
The breath of the monster issued forth first,
Vapory war-sweat, out of the stone-cave:
The earth re-echoed. The earl 'neath the barrow
Lifted his shield, lord of the Geatmen,
Tow'rd the terrible stranger: the ring-twisted creature's
Heart was then ready to seek for a struggle.
The excellent battle-king first brandished his weapon,
The ancient heirloom, of edges unblunted,
To the death-planners twain was terror from other.
The lord of the troopers intrepidly stood then
'Gainst his high-rising shield, when the dragon coiled him
Quickly together: in corslet he bided.
He went then in blazes, bended and striding,
Hasting him forward. His life and body
The targe well protected, for time-period shorter
Than wish demanded for the well-renowned leader,
Where he then for the first day was forced to be victor,
Famous in battle, as Fate had not willed it.
The lord of the Geatmen uplifted his hand then,
Smiting the fire-drake with sword that was precious,
That bright on the bone the blade-edge did weaken,
Bit more feebly than his folk-leader needed,
Burdened with bale-griefs. Then the barrow-protector,
When the sword-blow had fallen, was fierce in his spirit,
Flinging his fires, flamings of battle
Gleamed then afar: the gold-friend of Weders
Boasted no conquests, his battle-sword failed him
Naked in conflict, as by no means it ought to,
Long-trusty weapon. 'Twas no slight undertaking
That Egtheow's famous offspring would leave
The drake-cavern's bottom; he must live in some region
Other than this, by the will of the dragon,
As each one of earthmen existence must forfeit.
'Twas early thereafter the excellent warriors
Met with each other. Anew and afresh
The hoard-ward took heart (gasps heaved then his bosom):

Sorrow he suffered encircled with fire
 Who the people erst governed. His companions by no means
 Were banded about him, bairns of the princes,
 With valorous spirit, but they sped to the forest,
 Seeking for safety. The soul-deeps of one were
 Ruffled by care: kin-love can never
 Aught in him waver who well doth consider.

Part XXXVI

The son of Weohstan was Wiglaf entitled,
 Shield-warrior precious, prince of the Scylfings,
 Ælfhere's kinsman: he saw his dear liegelord
 Enduring the heat 'neath helmet and visor.
 Then he minded the holding that erst he had given him,
 The Wægmunding warriors' wealth-blessèd homestead,
 Each of the folk-rights his father had wielded;
 He was hot for the battle, his hand seized the target,
 The yellow-bark shield, he unsheathed his old weapon,
 Which was known among earthmen as the relic of Eanmund,
 Ohthere's offspring, whom, exiled and friendless,
 Weohstan did slay with sword-edge in battle,
 And carried his kinsman the clear-shining helmet,
 The ring-made burnie, the old giant-weapon
 That Onela gave him, his boon-fellow's armor,
 Ready war-trappings: he the feud did not mention,
 Though he'd fatally smitten the son of his brother.
 Many a half-year held he the treasures,
 The bill and the burnie, till his bairn became able,
 Like his father before him, fame-deeds to 'complish;
 Then he gave him 'mong Geatmen a goodly array of
 Weeds for his warfare; he went from life then
 Old on his journey. 'Twas the earliest time then
 That the youthful champion might charge in the battle
 Aiding his liegelord; his spirit was dauntless.
 Nor did kinsman's bequest quail at the battle:
 This the dragon discovered on their coming together.
 Wiglaf uttered many a right-saying,
 Said to his fellows, sad was his spirit:
 "I remember the time when, tasting the mead-cup,
 We promised in the hall the lord of us all
 Who gave us these ring-treasures, that this battle-equipment,
 Swords and helmets, we'd certainly quite him,
 Should need of such aid ever befall him:

In the war-band he chose us for this journey spontaneously,
Stirred us to glory and gave me these jewels,
Since he held and esteemed us trust-worthy spearmen,
Hardy helm-bearers, though this hero-achievement
Our lord intended alone to accomplish,
Ward of his people, for most of achievements,
Doings audacious, he did among earth-folk.
The day is now come when the ruler of earthmen
Needeth the vigor of valiant heroes:
Let us wend us towards him, the war-prince to succor,
While the heat yet rageth, horrible fire-fight.
God wot in me, 'tis mickle the liefer
The blaze should embrace my body and eat it
With my treasure-bestower. Meseemeth not proper
To bear our battle-shields back to our country,
'Less first we are able to fell and destroy the
Long-hating foeman, to defend the life of
The prince of the Weders. Well do I know 't isn't
Earned by his exploits, he only of Geatmen
Sorrow should suffer, sink in the battle:
Brand and helmet to us both shall be common,
Shield-cover, burnie." Through the bale-smoke he stalked then,
Went under helmet to the help of his chieftain,
Briefly discoursing: "Beowulf dear,
Perform thou all fully, as thou formerly saidst,
In thy youthful years, that while yet thou livedst
Thou wouldst let thine honor not ever be lessened.
Thy life thou shalt save, mighty in actions,
Atheling undaunted, with all of thy vigor;
I'll give thee assistance." The dragon came raging,
Wild-mooded stranger, when these words had been uttered
('Twas the second occasion), seeking his enemies,
Men that were hated, with hot-gleaming fire-waves;
With blaze-billows burned the board to its edges:
The fight-armor failed then to furnish assistance
To the youthful spear-hero: but the young-aged stripling
Quickly advanced 'neath his kinsman's war-target,
Since his own had been ground in the grip of the fire.
Then the warrior-king was careful of glory,
He soundly smote with sword-for-the-battle,
That it stood in the head by hatred driven;
Nægling was shivered, the old and iron-made
Brand of Beowulf in battle deceived him.

'Twas denied him that edges of irons were able
 To help in the battle; the hand was too mighty
 Which every weapon, as I heard on inquiry,
 Outstruck in its stroke, when to struggle he carried
 The wonderful war-sword: it waxed him no better.
 Then the people-despoiler—third of his onsets—
 Fierce-raging fire-drake, of feud-hate was mindful,
 Charged on the strong one, when chance was afforded,
 Heated and war-grim, seized on his neck
 With teeth that were bitter; he bloody did wax with
 Soul-gore seething; sword-blood in waves boiled.

Part XXXVII

Then I heard that at need of the king of the people
 The upstanding earlman exhibited prowess,
 Vigor and courage, as suited his nature;
 He his head did not guard, but the high-minded liegeman's
 Hand was consumed, when he succored his kinsman,
 So he struck the strife-bringing strange-comer lower,
 Earl-thane in armor, that in went the weapon
 Gleaming and plated, that 'gan then the fire
 Later to lessen. The liegelord himself then
 Retained his consciousness, brandished his war-knife,
 Battle-sharp, bitter, that he bare on his armor:
 The Weder-lord cut the worm in the middle.
 They had felled the enemy (life drove out then
 Puissant prowess), the pair had destroyed him,
 Land-chiefs related: so a liegeman should prove him,
 A thaneman when needed. To the prince 'twas the last of
 His era of conquest by his own great achievements,
 The latest of world-deeds. The wound then began
 Which the earth-dwelling dragon erstwhile had wrought him
 To burn and to swell. He soon then discovered
 That bitterest bale-woe in his bosom was raging,
 Poison within. The atheling advanced then,
 That along by the wall, he prudent of spirit
 Might sit on a settle; he saw the giant-work,
 How arches of stone strengthened with pillars
 The earth-hall eternal inward supported.
 Then the long-worthy liegeman laved with his hand the
 Far-famous chieftain, gory from sword-edge,
 Refreshing the face of his friend-lord and ruler,
 Sated with battle, unbinding his helmet.

Beowulf answered, of his injury spake he,
 His wound that was fatal (he was fully aware
 He had lived his allotted life-days enjoying
 The pleasures of earth; then past was entirely
 His measure of days, death very near):
 “My son I would give now my battle-equipments,
 Had any of heirs been after me granted,
 Along of my body. This people I governed
 Fifty of winters: no king ’mong my neighbors
 Dared to encounter me with comrades-in-battle,
 Try me with terror. The time to me ordered
 I bided at home, mine own kept fitly,
 Sought me no snares, swore me not many
 Oaths in injustice. Joy over all this
 I’m able to have, though ill with my death-wounds;
 Hence the Ruler of Earthmen need not charge me
 With the killing of kinsmen, when cometh my life out
 Forth from my body. Fare thou with haste now
 To behold the hoard ’neath the hoar-grayish stone,
 Well-lovèd Wiglaf, now the worm is a-lying,
 Sore-wounded sleepeth, disseized of his treasure.
 Go thou in haste that treasures of old I,
 Gold-wealth may gaze on, together see lying
 The ether-bright jewels, be easier able,
 Having the heap of hoard-gems, to yield my
 Life and the land-folk whom long I have governed.”

Part XXXVIII

Then heard I that Wihstan’s son very quickly,
 These words being uttered, heeded his liegelord
 Wounded and war-sick, went in his armor,
 His well-woven ring-mail, ’neath the roof of the barrow.
 Then the trusty retainer treasure-gems many
 Victorious saw, when the seat he came near to,
 Gold-treasure sparkling spread on the bottom,
 Wonder on the wall, and the worm-creature’s cavern,
 The ancient dawn-flier’s, vessels a-standing,
 Cups of the ancients of cleansers bereavèd,
 Robbed of their ornaments: there were helmets in numbers,
 Old and rust-eaten, arm-bracelets many,
 Artfully woven. Wealth can easily,
 Gold on the sea-bottom, turn into vanity
 Each one of earthmen, arm him who pleaseth!

And he saw there lying an all-golden banner
High o'er the hoard, of hand-wonders greatest,
Linkèd with lacets: a light from it sparkled,
That the floor of the cavern he was able to look on,
To examine the jewels. Sight of the dragon
Not any was offered, but edge offcarried him.
Then I heard that the hero the hoard-treasure plundered,
The giant-work ancient reaved in the cavern,
Bare on his bosom the beakers and platters,
As himself would fain have it, and took off the standard,
The brightest of beacons; the bill had erst injured
(Its edge was of iron), the old-ruler's weapon,
Him who long had watched as ward of the jewels,
Who fire-terror carried hot for the treasure,
Rolling in battle, in middlemost darkness,
Till murdered he perished. The messenger hastened,
Not loth to return, hurried by jewels:
Curiosity urged him if, excellent-mooded,
Alive he should find the lord of the Weders
Mortally wounded, at the place where he left him.
'Mid the jewels he found then the famous old chieftain,
His liegeland beloved, at his life's-end gory:
He thereupon 'gan to lave him with water,
Till the point of his sword piercèd his breast-hoard.
Beowulf spake (the gold-gems he noticed),
The old one in sorrow: "For the jewels I look on
Thanks do I utter for all to the Ruler,
Wielder of Worship, with words of devotion,
The Lord everlasting, that He let me such treasures
Gain for my people ere death overtook me.
Since I've bartered the aged life to me granted
For treasure of jewels, attend ye henceforward
The wants of the war-thanes; I can wait here no longer.
The battle-famed bid ye to build them a grave-hill,
Bright when I'm burned, at the brim-current's limit;
As a memory-mark to the men I have governed,
Aloft it shall tower on Whale's-Ness uprising,
That earls of the ocean hereafter may call it
Beowulf's barrow, those who barks ever-dashing
From a distance shall drive o'er the darkness of waters."
The bold-mooded troop-lord took from his neck then
The ring that was golden, gave to his liegeman,
The youthful war-hero, his gold-flashing helmet,

His collar and war-mail, bade him well to enjoy them:
 “Thou art latest left of the line of our kindred,
 Of Wægmunding people: Weird hath offcarried
 All of my kinsmen to the Creator’s glory,
 Earls in their vigor: I shall after them fare.”
 ’Twas the aged liegeland’s last-spoken word in
 His musings of spirit, ere he mounted the fire,
 The battle-waves burning: from his bosom departed
 His soul to seek the sainted ones’ glory.

Part XXXIX

It had woefully chanced then the youthful retainer
 To behold on earth the most ardent-belovèd
 At his life-days’ limit, lying there helpless.
 The slayer too lay there, of life all bereavèd,
 Horrible earth-drake, harassed with sorrow:
 The round-twisted monster was permitted no longer
 To govern the ring-hoards, but edges of war-swords
 Mightily seized him, battle-sharp, sturdy
 Leavings of hammers, that still from his wounds
 The flier-from-farland fell to the earth
 Hard by his hoard-house, hopped he at midnight
 Not e’er through the air, nor exulting in jewels
 Suffered them to see him: but he sank then to earthward
 Through the hero-chief’s handwork. I heard sure it throve then
 But few in the land of liegemen of valor,
 Though of every achievement bold he had proved him,
 To run ’gainst the breath of the venomous scather,
 Or the hall of the treasure to trouble with hand-blows,
 If he watching had found the ward of the hoard-hall
 On the barrow abiding. Beowulf’s part of
 The treasure of jewels was paid for with death;
 Each of the twain had attained to the end of
 Life so unlasting. Not long was the time till
 The tardy-at-battle returned from the thicket,
 The timid truce-breakers ten all together,
 Who durst not before play with the lances
 In the prince of the people’s pressing emergency;
 But blushing with shame, with shields they betook them,
 With arms and armor where the old one was lying:
 They gazed upon Wiglaf. He was sitting exhausted,
 Foot-going fighter, not far from the shoulders
 Of the lord of the people, would rouse him with water;

No whit did it help him; though he hoped for it keenly,
 He was able on earth not at all in the leader
 Life to retain, and nowise to alter
 The will of the Wielder; the World-Ruler's power
 Would govern the actions of each one of heroes,
 As yet He is doing. From the young one forthwith then
 Could grim-worded greeting be got for him quickly
 Whose courage had failed him. Wiglaf discoursed then,
 Weohstan his son, sad-mooded hero,
 Looked on the hated: "He who soothness will utter
 Can say that the liegelord who gave you the jewels,
 The ornament-armor wherein ye are standing,
 When on ale-bench often he offered to hall-men
 Helmet and burnie, the prince to his liegemen,
 As best upon earth he was able to find him,—
 That he wildly wasted his war-gear undoubtedly
 When battle o'ertook him. The troop-king no need had
 To glory in comrades; yet God permitted him,
 Victory-Wielder, with weapon unaided
 Himself to avenge, when vigor was needed.
 I life-protection but little was able
 To give him in battle, and I 'gan, notwithstanding,
 Helping my kinsman (my strength overtaxing):
 He waxed the weaker when with weapon I smote on
 My mortal opponent, the fire less strongly
 Flamed from his bosom. Too few of protectors
 Came round the king at the critical moment.
 Now must ornament-taking and weapon-bestowing,
 Home-joyance all, cease for your kindred,
 Food for the people; each of your warriors
 Must needs be bereavèd of rights that he holdeth
 In landed possessions, when faraway nobles
 Shall learn of your leaving your lord so basely,
 The dastardly deed. Death is more pleasant
 To every earlman than infamous life is!"

Part XL

Then he charged that the battle be announced at the hedge
 Up o'er the cliff-edge, where the earl-troopers bided
 The whole of the morning, mood-wretched sat them,
 Bearers of battle-shields, both things expecting,
 The end of his lifetime and the coming again of
 The liegelord beloved. Little reserved he

Of news that was known, who the ness-cliff did travel,
But he truly discoursed to all that could hear him:
“Now the free-giving friend-lord of the folk of the Weders,
The folk-prince of Geatmen, is fast in his death-bed,
By the deeds of the dragon in death-bed abideth;
Along with him lieth his life-taking foeman
Slain with knife-wounds: he was wholly unable
To injure at all the ill-planning monster
With bite of his sword-edge. Wiglaf is sitting,
Offspring of Wihstan, up over Beowulf,
Earl o’er another whose end-day hath reached him,
Head-watch holdeth o’er heroes unliving,
For friend and for foeman. The folk now expecteth
A season of strife when the death of the folk-king
To Frankmen and Frisians in far-lands is published.
The war-hatred waxed warm ’gainst the Hugmen,
When Higelac came with an army of vessels
Faring to Friesland, where the Frankmen in battle
Humbled him and bravely with overnight ’complished
That the mail-clad warrior must sink in the battle,
Fell ’mid his folk-troop: no fret-gems presented
The atheling to earlmen; aye was denied us
Merewing’s mercy. The men of the Swedelands
For truce or for truth trust I but little;
But widely ’twas known that near Ravenswood Ongentheow
Sundered Hæthcyn the Hrethling from life-joys,
When for pride overweening the War-Scylfings first did
Seek the Geatmen with savage intentions.
Early did Ohthere’s age-laden father,
Old and terrible, give blow in requital,
Killing the sea-king, the queen-mother rescued,
The old one his consort deprived of her gold,
Onela’s mother and Ohthere’s also,
And then followed the feud-nursing foemen till hardly,
Reaved of their ruler, they Ravenswood entered.
Then with vast-numbered forces he assaulted the remnant,
Weary with wounds, woe often promised
The livelong night to the sad-hearted war-troop:
Said he at morning would kill them with edges of weapons,
Some on the gallows for glee to the fowls.
Aid came after to the anxious-in-spirit
At dawn of the day, after Higelac’s bugle

And trumpet-sound heard they, when the good one proceeded
 And faring followed the flower of the troopers.

Part XLI

“The blood-stained trace of Swedes and Geatmen,
 The death-rush of warmen, widely was noticed,
 How the folks with each other feud did awaken.
 The worthy one went then with well-beloved comrades,
 Old and dejected to go to the fastness,
 Ongentheo earl upward then turned him;
 Of Higelac’s battle he’d heard on inquiry,
 The exultant one’s prowess, despaired of resistance,
 With earls of the ocean to be able to struggle,
 ’Gainst sea-going sailors to save the hoard-treasure,
 His wife and his children; he fled after thenceward
 Old ’neath the earth-wall. Then was offered pursuance
 To the braves of the Swedemen, the banner to Higelac.
 They fared then forth o’er the field-of-protection,
 When the Hrethling heroes hedgeward had thronged them.
 Then with edges of irons was Ongentheow driven,
 The gray-haired to tarry, that the troop-ruler had to
 Suffer the power solely of Eofor:
 Wulf then wildly with weapon assaulted him,
 Wonred his son, that for swinge of the edges
 The blood from his body burst out in currents,
 Forth ’neath his hair. He feared not however,
 Gray-headed Scylfing, but speedily quited
 The wasting wound-stroke with worse exchange,
 When the king of the thane-troop thither did turn him:
 The wise-mooded son of Wonred was powerless
 To give a return-blow to the age-hoary man,
 But his head-shielding helmet first hewed he to pieces,
 That flecked with gore perforce he did totter,
 Fell to the earth; not fey was he yet then,
 But up did he spring though an edge-wound had reached him.
 Then Higelac’s vassal, valiant and dauntless,
 When his brother lay dead, made his broad-bladed weapon,
 Giant-sword ancient, defence of the giants,
 Bound o’er the shield-wall; the folk-prince succumbed then,
 Shepherd of people, was pierced to the vitals.
 There were many attendants who bound up his kinsman,
 Carried him quickly when occasion was granted
 That the place of the slain they were suffered to manage.

This pending, one hero plundered the other,
His armor of iron from Ongentheow ravished,
His hard-sword hilted and helmet together;
The old one's equipments he carried to Higelac.
He the jewels received, and rewards 'mid the troopers
Graciously promised, and so did accomplish:
The king of the Weders requited the war-rush,
Hrethel's descendant, when home he repaired him,
To Eofor and Wulf with wide-lavished treasures,
To each of them granted a hundred of thousands
In land and rings wrought out of wire:
None upon mid-earth needed to twit him
With the gifts he gave them, when glory they conquered;
And to Eofor then gave he his one only daughter,
The honor of home, as an earnest of favor.
That's the feud and hatred—as ween I 'twill happen—
The anger of earthmen, that earls of the Swedemen
Will visit on us, when they hear that our leader
Lifeless is lying, he who longtime protected
His hoard and kingdom 'gainst hating assailers,
Who on the fall of the heroes defended of yore
The deed-mighty Scyldings, did for the troopers
What best did avail them, and further moreover
Hero-deeds 'complished. Now is haste most fitting,
That the lord of liegemen we look upon yonder,
And that one carry on journey to death-pyre
Who ring-presents gave us. Not aught of it all
Shall melt with the brave one—there's a mass of bright jewels,
Gold beyond measure, grewsomely purchased
And ending it all ornament-rings too
Bought with his life; these fire shall devour,
Flame shall cover, no earlman shall wear
A jewel-memento, nor beautiful virgin
Have on her neck rings to adorn her,
But wretched in spirit bereavèd of gold-gems
She shall oft with others be exiled and banished,
Since the leader of liegemen hath laughter forsaken,
Mirth and merriment. Hence many a war-spear
Cold from the morning shall be clutched in the fingers,
Heaved in the hand, no harp-music's sound shall
Waken the warriors, but the wan-coated raven
Fain over fey ones freely shall gabble,
Shall say to the eagle how he sped in the eating,

When, the wolf his companion, he plundered the slain.”
 So the high-minded hero was rehearsing these stories
 Loathsome to hear; he lied as to few of
 Weirds and of words. All the war-troop arose then,
 'Neath the Eagle's Cape sadly betook them,
 Weeping and woful, the wonder to look at.
 They saw on the sand then soulless a-lying,
 His slaughter-bed holding, him who rings had given them
 In days that were done; then the death-bringing moment
 Was come to the good one, that the king very warlike,
 Wielder of Weders, with wonder-death perished.
 First they beheld there a creature more wondrous,
 The worm on the field, in front of them lying,
 The foeman before them: the fire-spewing dragon,
 Ghostly and grisly guest in his terrors,
 Was scorched in the fire; as he lay there he measured
 Fifty of feet; came forth in the night-time
 To rejoice in the air, thereafter departing
 To visit his den; he in death was then fastened,
 He would joy in no other earth-hollowed caverns.
 There stood round about him beakers and vessels,
 Dishes were lying and dear-valued weapons,
 With iron-rust eaten, as in earth's mighty bosom
 A thousand of winters there they had rested:
 That mighty bequest then with magic was guarded,
 Gold of the ancients, that earlman not any
 The ring-hall could touch, save Ruling-God only,
 Sooth-king of Vict'ries gave whom He wished to
 (He is earth-folk's protector) to open the treasure,
 E'en to such among mortals as seemed to Him proper.

Part XLII

Then 'twas seen that the journey prospered him little
 Who wrongly within had the ornaments hidden
 Down 'neath the wall. The warden erst slaughtered
 Some few of the folk-troop: the feud then thereafter
 Was hotly avengèd. 'Tis a wonder where,
 When the strength-famous trooper has attained to the end of
 Life-days allotted, then no longer the man may
 Remain with his kinsmen where mead-cups are flowing.
 So to Beowulf happened when the ward of the barrow,
 Assaults, he sought for: himself had no knowledge
 How his leaving this life was likely to happen.

So to doomsday, famous folk-leaders down did
Call it with curses—who 'complished it there—
That that man should be ever of ill-deeds convicted,
Confined in foul-places, fastened in hell-bonds,
Punished with plagues, who this place should e'er ravage.
He cared not for gold: rather the Wielder's
Favor preferred he first to get sight of.
Wiglaf discoursed then, Wihstan his son:
"Oft many an earlman on one man's account must
Sorrow endure, as to us it hath happened.
The liegelord beloved we could little prevail on,
Kingdom's keeper, counsel to follow,
Not to go to the guardian of the gold-hoard, but let him
Lie where he long was, live in his dwelling
Till the end of the world. Met we a destiny
Hard to endure: the hoard has been looked at,
Been gained very grimly; too grievous the fate that
The prince of the people pricked to come thither.
I was therein and all of it looked at,
The building's equipments, since access was given me,
Not kindly at all entrance permitted
Within under earth-wall. Hastily seized I
And held in my hands a huge-weighing burden
Of hoard-treasures costly, hither out bare them
To my liegelord beloved: life was yet in him,
And consciousness also; the old one discoursed then
Much and mournfully, commanded to greet you,
Bade that remembering the deeds of your friend-lord
Ye build on the fire-hill of corpses a lofty
Burial-barrow, broad and far-famous,
As 'mid world-dwelling warriors he was widely most honored
While he reveled in riches. Let us rouse us and hasten
Again to see and seek for the treasure,
The wonder 'neath wall. The way I will show you,
That close ye may look at ring-gems sufficient
And gold in abundance. Let the bier with promptness
Fully be fashioned, when forth we shall come,
And lift we our lord, then, where long he shall tarry,
Well-beloved warrior, 'neath the Wielder's protection."
Then the son of Wihstan bade orders be given,
Mood-valiant man, to many of heroes,
Holders of homesteads, that they hither from far,
Leaders of liegemen, should look for the good one

With wood for his pyre: "The flame shall now swallow
 (The wan fire shall wax) the warriors' leader
 Who the rain of the iron often abided,
 When, sturdily hurled, the storm of the arrows
 Leapt o'er linden-wall, the lance rendered service,
 Furnished with feathers followed the arrow."
 Now the wise-mooded son of Wihstan did summon
 The best of the braves from the band of the ruler
 Seven together; 'neath the enemy's roof he
 Went with the seven; one of the heroes
 Who fared at the front, a fire-blazing torch-light
 Bare in his hand. No lot then decided
 Who that hoard should havoc, when hero-earls saw it
 Lying in the cavern uncared-for entirely,
 Rusting to ruin: they rued then but little
 That they hastily hence hauled out the treasure,
 The dear-valued jewels; the dragon eke pushed they,
 The worm o'er the wall, let the wave-currents take him,
 The waters enwind the ward of the treasures.
 There wounden gold on a wain was uploaded,
 A mass unmeasured, the men-leader off then,
 The hero hoary, to Whale's-Ness was carried.

Part XLIII

The folk of the Geatmen got him then ready
 A pile on the earth strong for the burning,
 Behung with helmets, hero-knights' targets,
 And bright-shining burnies, as he begged they should have them;
 Then wailing war-heroes their world-famous chieftain,
 Their liegelord beloved, laid in the middle.
 Soldiers began then to make on the barrow
 The largest of dead-fires: dark o'er the vapor
 The smoke-cloud ascended, the sad-roaring fire,
 Mingled with weeping (the wind-roar subsided)
 Till the building of bone it had broken to pieces,
 Hot in the heart. Heavy in spirit
 They mood-sad lamented the men-leader's ruin;
 And mournful measures the much-grieving widow

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The men of the Weders made accordingly
 A hill on the height, high and extensive,
 Of sea-going sailors to be seen from a distance,
 And the brave one's beacon built where the fire was,
 In ten-days' space, with a wall surrounded it,
 As wisest of world-folk could most worthily plan it.
 They placed in the barrow rings and jewels,
 All such ornaments as erst in the treasure
 War-mooded men had won in possession:
 The earnings of earlmen to earth they entrusted,
 The gold to the dust, where yet it remaineth
 As useless to mortals as in foregoing eras.
 'Round the dead-mound rode then the doughty-in-battle,
 Bairns of all twelve of the chiefs of the people,
 More would they mourn, lament for their ruler,
 Speak in measure, mention him with pleasure,
 Weighed his worth, and his warlike achievements
 Mightily commended, as 'tis meet one praise his
 Liegelord in words and love him in spirit,
 When forth from his body he fares to destruction.
 So lamented mourning the men of the Geats,
 Fond-loving vassals, the fall of their lord,
 Said he was kindest of kings under heaven,
 Gentlest of men, most winning of manner,
 Friendliest to folk-troops and fondest of honor.

1.5.2 Reading and Review Questions

1. Are Grendel and his mother symbolic? Do they represent something to the characters? Does the dragon at the end symbolize something else?
2. What do each of the stories-within-the-story add to the overall theme of *Beowulf*? How do they foreshadow later events?
3. What is explicitly Christian in *Beowulf*, and what isn't? How much does Christianity influence the story?
4. How does *Beowulf* represent ideas about family/kinship? What should the audience emulate, and are there warnings about kin?
5. Is Beowulf a good hero and/or a good king? To what extent in each case? Give evidence.

1.6 JUDITH

Author unknown

At least late tenth century, possibly earlier

Old English / Anglo-Saxon

Like *Beowulf*, the only copy of the poem *Judith* is found in one manuscript—the same manuscript as *Beowulf*. Unlike *Beowulf*, this poem is not the only extant version of the story. The Book of Judith was removed from the Protestant Bible during the Reformation, but remains in the Roman Catholic Bible and Eastern Orthodox Bible. It is no coincidence that *Judith* and *Beowulf* are next to each other in the manuscript; as described in the poem, Judith is a female version of Beowulf, albeit a decidedly more Christian one. There may be “shield-bearing warriors” (11) all around her, but it is Judith who wields the sword against Holofernes as a warrior for God. Holofernes may be an Assyrian general, but both he and the Hebrew maiden Judith are described in ways that the Danish Beowulf or the Anglo-Saxon audience for the poem would recognize: Holofernes is a “gold-friend of men” (22), and Judith is awarded her fair share of the spoils of battle just like any other warrior. The poem is written in alliterative verse, with two half-lines separated by a caesura (pause). Like *Beowulf*, the poem has kennings (such as the “gold-friend” mentioned above—the lord who gives his retainers gold); like *The Dream of the Rood*, some of the half-lines are short (following the standard rhythm), and some of the half-lines are hypermetrical (adding extra syllables). At 348 lines, the Anglo-Saxon poem is only a fragment of the complete story found in the Biblical version, which takes a far less heroic tone than the poem (the Biblical story makes Holofernes far less dangerous and Judith far less brave). In the poem, Judith’s war-like attributes are balanced with repeated descriptions of her as a holy woman. Judith’s beauty may be described in a vaguely pagan way as “elf-brilliant” (14), but the poem’s Christian emphasis on her holiness as a handmaiden of the Lord takes this Old Testament figure and paints her as the warrior-version of a New Testament saint.

1.6.1 Selections from *Judith*

Part I

[The glorious Creator’s] gifts doubted she [not]
 Upón this wide earth; then found she there ready
 Help from the mighty Prince, when she most need did have
 Of grace from the highest Judge, that her ’gainst the greatest terror
 The Lord of Creation should shield. That Father in heaven to her
 The Glorious-in-mind did grant, for thát firm faith she had
 Ín the Almighty ever. Then heard I that Holofernes
 Wine-summons eagerly wrought, and with all wonders a glorious
 Banquet had hé prepared; to thát bade the prince of men

All his noblest thanes. Thát with mickle haste
 Did the warriors-with-shields perform; came to the mighty chief
 The people's leaders going. Ón the fourth day was that
 After that Judith, cunning in mind,
 The elf-sheen virgin, him first had sought.

Part II

They then at the feast proceeded to sit,
 The proud to the wine-drinking, all his comrades-in-ill,
 Bold mailed-warriors. There were lofty beakers
 Oft borne along the benches, alsó were cups and flagons
 Full to the hall-sitters borne. The fated partook of them,
 Brave warriors-with-shields, though the mighty weened not of it,
 Awful lord of earls. Thén was Holofernes,
 Gold-friend of men, full of wine-joy:
 He laughed and clamored, shouted and dinned,
 That children of men from afar might hear
 How the strong-minded both stormed and yelled,
 Moody and mead-drunken, often admonished
 The sitters-on-benches to bear themselves well.
 Thus did the hateful one during all day
 His liege-men [loyal] keep plying with wine,
 Stout-hearted giver of treasure, until they lay in a swoon,
 He drenched all his nobles [with drink], as if they were slain in death,
 Deprived of each one of goods. Thus bade the prince of men
 The sitters-in-hall to serve, until to children of men
 The darkening night drew nigh. He bade then, filled with hate,
 The blessed maiden with haste to fetch
 To his bed of rest, laden with jewels,
 Adorned with rings. They quickly performed,
 The attendant thanes, what their lord them bade,
 Mailed-warriors' prince; like a flash they stepped
 Into the guest-room, where they Judith
 Wise-minded found, and quickly then
 The warriors-with-shields began to lead
 The glorious maid to the lofty tent
 Where the mighty himself always rested
 By night within, to the Saviour hateful,
 Holofernes. There was an all-golden
 Beautiful fly-net around the folk-warrior's
 Bed suspended, só that the hateful
 Was able to look through, the chief of warriors,
 Upon each one that therein came

Of the sons of heroes, and on him no one
 Of the race of men, unless the proud some one
 Of the strong-in-war bade to him nearer
 Of warriors for counsel to come. They then to him at rest brought
 Quickly the cunning woman; went then the stout-in-heart
 The men their lord to tell that the holy woman was
 Brought to his chamber-tent. The famous then in mind
 Was glad, the ruler of cities; he thought the beautiful maiden
 With spot and stain to defile: that Judge of glory would not
 Allow, the Keeper of honor, but him from that deed restrained
 The Lord, the Ruler of hosts. Went then the devilish one,
 The wanton [warrior-prince], with [mickle] band of men,
 The baleful his bed to seek, where hé his life should lose
 Quickly within one night; he had then his end attained
 On earth ungentle [end], such as before he wrought for,
 The mighty prince of men, while ín this world he was,
 While he dwelt under roof of the clouds. Then fell so drunk with wine
 The mighty [chief] on his bed, as if he knew no rede
 Within his place of wit; the warriors stepped
 Óút from the chamber with mickle haste,
 The wine-filled men, whó the oath-breaker,
 Hateful folk-hater, had led to his bed
 For the very last time. Then was the Saviour's
 Glorious maiden earnestly mindful
 How she the terrible most easily might
 Of life deprive before the lustful,
 The wanton, awoke. The wreathed-locked took then,
 The Creator's handmaid, a sharp-edged sword
 Hardened by war-strokes, and drew from its sheath
 With hér right hand; then Keeper of heaven
 By name she gan name, Saviour of all
 Dwellers-in-th' world, and this word she spake:
 "Thee, God of Creation, and Spirit of Comfort,
 Son of the Almighty, will I [now] pray
 For thine own mercy to me in my need,
 Trinity's Glory. To me greatly now then
 My heart is inflamed, and my mind is sad,
 Sorely with sorrows oppressed; grant, Lord of Heaven, to me
 Victory and faith without fear, that I with this sword may be able
 To hew down this dealer of murder; grant [too] my safety to me,
 Strong-hearted Leader of men; ne'er in this world had I
 Of thy mercy more urgent need: avenge now, mighty Lord,
 Glorious Giver of honor, that I am so angry in mind,

So heated within my breast." Hér then the highest Judge
 Quickly with courage inspired, as doth he [ever] each one
 Of dwellers here [upon earth], who him for help to them seek
 With rede and righteous belief. Then roomy in mind she became,
 The holy one's hope was renewed; then took she the heathen man
 Fast by his own [long] hair, with hands him towards her she drew
 With marks of contempt, and the baleful one
 With cunning laid down, the loathsome man,
 As she the accursèd most easily might
 Wield at her will. Struck then the curly-locked
 The hostile foe with shining sword,
 The hateful-minded, that half-way she cut
 The [evil one's] neck, that he lay in a swoon,
 Drunken and wounded. Not yet was he dead,
 Thoroughly lifeless; struck she then earnestly,
 The maiden brave-minded, a second time
 The heathen hound, that his head rolled off
 Forth on the floor: the foul corpse lay
 Lifeless behind, went the spirit elsewhere
 Beneath the deep earth, and there was disgraced,
 In torment bound ever thereafter,
 Surrounded with serpents, with tortures encompassed,
 Strongly enchained in the fire of hell
 After his death. He need never hope,
 Enveloped with darkness, that thence he may go
 Out of that worm-hall, but there shall he dwell
 Ever for ever without end henceforth
 In that dark home, of hope-joys deprived.

Part III

Then had she gained glorious honor,
 Judith in war, as God to her granted,
 The Ruler of Heaven, who gave to her victory.
 The cunning maid then quickly brought
 The army-leader's head so bloody
 In that [very] vessel in which her attendant,
 The fair-faced woman, food for them both,
 In virtues renowned, thither had brought,
 And it then so gory to her gave in hand,
 To the thoughtful-in-mind to bear to their home,
 Judith to her maid. Went they forth thence,
 The women both in courage bold,
 Until they had come, proud in their minds,

The women triumphant, out from the army,
So that they plainly were able to see
Of that beautiful city the walls [fair] shine,
Béthulía. Then jewel-decked théy
Upon the foot-path hastened to go,
Until glad-minded they had arrived
At the gate of the wall. The warriors sat,
The watching men were keeping ward
Within that fortress, as before to the folk,
Sad in their minds, Judith had bidden,
The cunning maiden, when she went on her journey,
The stout-hearted woman. Then again was she come,
Dear to her people, and then quickly ordered
The wise-minded woman some one of the men
To come to meet her from out the wide city,
And hér in haste to admit within
Through the gate of the wall, and this word she spake
To the victor-folk: "To you can I say
A thought-worthy thing, that no longer ye need
Mourn in your minds: your Creator is kind,
Glory of kings: that ís become known
Wide through the world, that to you is success
Glorious at hand, and honor is granted
For [all] those sorrows which long ye suffered."
Glad then were they, the dwellers-in-borough,
After they heard how the holy one spake
O'er the high wall. The host was in joy.
To the fortress-gate the people hastened,
Men, women together, in troops and heaps,
In crowds and throngs, hurried and ran
To meet the Lord's maid by thousands and thousands,
Both old and young: to each one became
Of men in the mead-city his mind rejoiced,
After they knew that Judith was come
Again to her home, and then in haste
With reverence théy allowed her to enter.
Then bade the clever, with gold adorned,
Her servant-maid, thoughtful-in-mind,
The army-leader's head to uncover,
And it as a proof bloody to show
To the city-folk how she speeded in war.
Then spake the noble one to all the folk:
"Here ye may clearly, victory-blessed warriors,

Chiefs of the people, upón the most hateful
Heathen hero's head fix your gaze,
On Holofernes deprived of life,
Who chiefest of men wrought murders for us,
Sorest sorrows, and that yet more
Would he increase: but God him granted not
A longer life, that hé with woes
Might still afflict us. Of life I deprived him
By help of God. Now I every man
Of these city-dwellers will [earnestly] pray,
Of shield-bearing warriors, that ye yourselves quickly
Hasten to fight; when the God of creation,
The glorious King, shall send from the east
Bright beams of light, bear forth your shields,
Boards before breasts and coats-of-mail,
Bright helmets [too] among the foes,
To fell the folk-leaders with shining swords,
The fated chiefs. Your foes are now
Condemned to death, and ye glory shall gain,
Honor in battle, as to you hath betokened
The mighty Lord through mine own hand.”
Then the band of the brave was quickly prepared,
Of the bold for battle; stepped out the valiant
Men and comrades, bore their banners,
Went forth to fight straight on their way
The heroes 'neath helmets from the holy city
At the dawn itself; shields made a din,
Loudly resounded. Thereat laughed the lank
Wolf in the wood, and the raven wan,
Fowl greedy for slaughter: both of them knew
That for them the warriors thought to provide
Their fill on the fated; and flew on their track
The dewy-winged eagle eager for prey,
The dusky-coated sang his war-song,
The crooked-beaked. Stepped forth the warriors,
The heroes for battle with boards protected,
With hollow shields, who awhile before
The foreign-folk's reproach endured,
The heathens' scorn; fiercely was thát
At the ash-spear's play to them all repaid,
[All] the Assyrians, after the Hebrews
Under their banners had [boldly] advanced
To the army-camps. They bravely then

Forthright let fly showers of arrows,
 Of battle-adders, out from the horn-bows,
 Of strongly-made shafts; stormed they aloud,
 The cruel warriors, sent forth their spears
 Among the brave; the heroes were angry,
 The dwellers-in-land, with the loathed race;
 The stern-minded stepped, the stout-in-heart,
 Rudely awakened their ancient foes
 Weary from mead; with hands drew forth
 The men from the sheaths the brightly-marked swords
 Most choice in their edges, eagerly struck
 Of the [host of] Assyrians the battle-warriors,
 The hostile-minded; not one they spared
 Of the army-folk, nor low nor high
 Of living men, whom they might subdue.

Part XII

Thus then the thanes in the morning-hours
 Pressed on the strangers unceasingly,
 Until they perceived, those who were hostile,
 The army-folk's chiefest leaders,
 That upon them sword-strokes mighty bestowed
 The Hebrew men. They that in words
 To their most noted chiefs of the people
 Went to announce, waked helmeted warriors
 And to them with fear the dread news told,
 To the weary-from-mead the morning-terror,
 The hateful sword-play. Then learnt I that quickly
 The slaughter-fated men aroused from sleep
 And to the baleful's sleeping-bower
 The saddened men pressed on in crowds,
 To Holofernes: they only were thinking
 To their own lord to make known the fight,
 Ere terror on him should take its seat,
 The might of the Hebrews. They all imagined
 That the prince of men and the handsome maid
 In the beautiful tent were [still] together,
 Judith the noble and the lustful one,
 Dreadful and fierce; though no earl there was
 Who the warrior durst [then] awake,
 Or durst discover how the helmeted warrior
 With the holy maid had passed his time,
 The Creator's handmaid. The force approached,
 The folk of the Hebrews, courageously fought

With hard battle-arms, fiercely repaid
Their former fights with shining swords,
The old-time grudge; was of the Assyrians
By that day's work the glory diminished,
The pride brought low. The warriors stood
'Round their prince's tent strongly excited,
Gloomy in mind. They then all together
Began to groan, to cry aloud
And gnash with their teeth,—afar from God,—
Showing their anger; 'twas the end of their glory,
Of joy and valor. The earls were thinking
To awaken their lord; they did not succeed.
Then at last and too late was one so bold
Of the battle-warriors that to the bower-tent
He daringly ventured, since need him compelled:
Found he then on the bed lying deadly-pale
His [own] gold-giver of breath bereft,
Of life deprived. Then quickly he fell
Astounded to earth, gan tear his hair,
Excited in mind, and his garments too,
And this word he spake to the warriors [brave],
Who saddened there were standing without:
“Here is displayed our own destruction,
The future betokened, that it is to the time
Now amongst men almost arrived,
When we our lives shall lose together,
In battle perish: here lies with sword hewn
Our lord beheaded.” They then sad-in-mind
Threw down their weapons and sorrowful went
To hasten in flight. They fought on their tracks,
The mighty folk, till the greatest part
Of the army lay, in battle struck down,
On the victor-plain, hewn down with swords,
To wolves for pleasure, and to slaughter-greedy
Fowls for a joy. Those who lived fled
The shields of their foes. Went on their tracks
The Hebrews' host, honored with victory,
With glory ennobled; them took the Lord God
Fairly to help, the Lord Almighty.
They bravely then with shining swords,
Stout-hearted heroes, a war-path wrought
Through heaps of their foes, hewed down their shields,
Cut through their phalanx: the warriors were
Enraged in battle, the Hebrew men;
The thanes at that time were much delighted

At the combat with spears. Here fell in the dust
The highest part of the chiefest number
Óf the Assyrians' princely nobility,
Of the hateful race; very few came
Alive to their homes. The nobly-bold turned,
Warriors retiring, among the slaughtered,
The smoking corpses; it was time to take
For the dwellers-in-land from the loathsome ones,
Their ancient foes deprived of life,
The gory booty, the shining trappings,
Shields and broad swords, brown-colored helmets,
Precious treasures. Gloriously had they
On that folk-place their foes overcome,
The defenders of home their ancient foes
With swords put-to-sleep: behind them rested
Those who in life were most hateful to them
Of living races. Then all the people,
Of tribes most renowned, for one month's space,
The proud twisted-locked, bore and carried
To that bright city, Bethulia [named],
Helmets and hip-swords, hoary byrnies,
War-trappings of men adorned with gold,
More precious treasures than any man
Of the cunning-in-mind may be able to tell,
All that the warriors with might had won,
The bold under banners on the battle-place
By means of Judith's [most] clever lore,
The moody maid's. As meed for her
From that expedition, they brought for herself,
The spear-strong earls, of Holofernes
The sword and gory helm, likewise the byrnie broad,
Adorned with reddish gold, all that the warrior-chief,
The brave, of treasure had, or individual wealth,
Of rings and jewels bright; that to the lady fair,
The wise-in-mind, gave théy. For all that Judith said
Glory to the Lord of hosts, who honor to her gave,
Fame in realm of earth, and meed in heaven too,
Reward in the glory of heaven, because true faith she had
Ín the Almighty ever; now at last she doubted not
Of the meed which long she yearned for. For that to the dear Lord be
Glory for ever and ever, who made both wind and air,
The heavens and roomy lands, likewise the rushing streams,
And joys of firmament too by means of his mercy mild.

1.6.2 Reading and Review Questions

1. Why is Judith able to defeat Holofernes so easily? In what ways does she fit the definition of an epic hero, and in what ways doesn't she?
2. What do you think that the golden net around Holofernes' bed might symbolize, and why?
3. Research how Anglo-Saxons viewed elves. Why might they have used the description "elf-brilliant" for her?
4. What are some examples of understatement in the story, and why are they there?
5. How does the depiction of religion in *Judith* compare to the depictions of religion in *Beowulf* and *The Dream of the Rood*? What might be the reasons for any differences?

1.7 THE WANDERER

Author unknown

At least late tenth century, possibly much earlier

The Wanderer is found only in the manuscript known as the Exeter Book, which was copied in the late tenth century. The 115-line poem follows the usual Anglo-Saxon pattern of short alliterative half-lines separated by a caesura (pause). The wanderer (or "earth-stepper") has buried his lord (his "gold-friend") and finds himself alone in the world. Members of a lord's *comitatus*, or war band, were expected to die alongside their leader in battle; the wanderer is looking for a new lord as he suffers through the uncertainty, loneliness, and physical hardships of exile. The poem begins and ends with references to Christianity, with a kenning near the end of the poem with God as "Shaper of Men;" the only certainty that the speaker has is that there is a "safe home" waiting for him in heaven. The rest of the

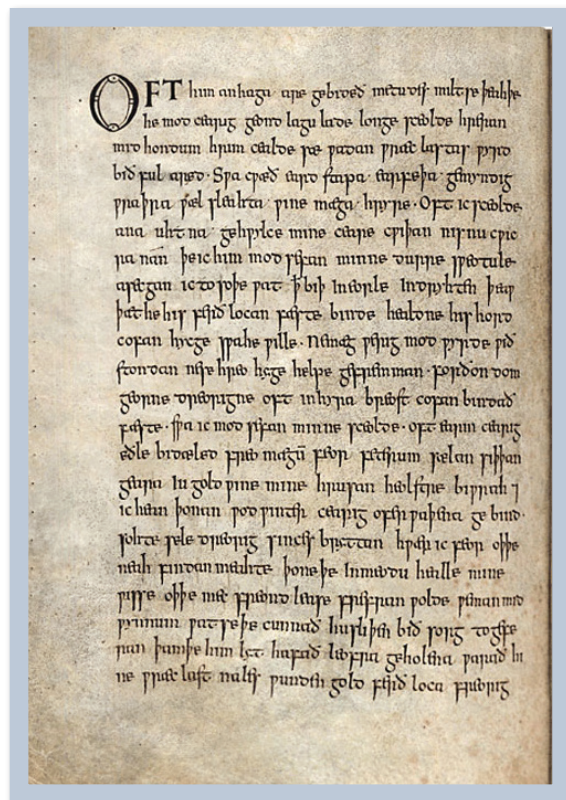


Image 1.7 | First Page of The Wanderer

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poem focuses on what he has lost. Like *The Ruin* and *The Seafarer*, also found in the Exeter Book, *The Wanderer* is what is known as an “*ubi sunt*” poem (Latin for “where has”). In J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Two Towers*, Aragorn recites a poem about Eorl the Young that begins “Where now the horse and the rider? Where is the horn that was blowing?” (142; the movie transfers the speech to King Theoden), which was drawn directly from *The Wanderer*’s “Where has the horse gone? Where is the man?” Because of its theme, *The Wanderer* is usually classified as a type of elegy, or lament for what has been lost.

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The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers. Directed by Peter Jackson. New Line Cinema and Wingnut Films. 2002.

1.7.2 *The Wanderer*

Often the solitary man prays for favour, for the mercy of the Lord, though, sad at heart, he must needs stir with his bands for a weary while the icy sea across the watery ways, must journey the paths of exile; settled in truth is fate! So spoke the wanderer, mindful of hardships, of cruel slaughters, of the fall of kinsmen:

’Often I must bewail my sorrows in my loneliness at the dawn of each day; there is none of living men now to whom I dare speak my heart openly. I know for a truth that it is a noble custom for a man to bind fast the thoughts of his heart, to treasure his broodings, let him think as he will. Nor can the weary in mood resist fate, nor does the fierce thought avail anything. Wherefore those eager for glory often bind fast in their secret hearts a sad thought. So I, sundered from my native land, far from noble kinsmen, often sad at heart, had to fetter my mind, when in years gone by the darkness of the earth covered my gold-friend, and I went thence in wretchedness with wintry care upon me over the frozen waves, gloomily sought the hall of a treasure-giver wherever I could find him far or near, who might know me in the mead hall or comfort me, left without friends, treat me with kindness. He knows who puts it to the test how cruel a comrade is sorrow for him who has few dear protectors; his is the path of exile, in no wise the twisted gold; a chill body, in no wise the riches of the earth; he thinks of retainers in hall and the receiving of treasure, of how in his youth his gold-friend was kind to him at the feast. The joy has all perished. Wherefore he knows this who must long forgo the counsels of his dear lord and friend, when sorrow and sleep together often bind the poor solitary man; it seems to him in his mind that he clasps and kisses his lord and lays hands and head on his knee, as when erstwhile in past days he was near the gift-throne; then the friendless man wakes again, sees before him the dark waves, the sea-birds bathing, spreading their feathers; frost and snow falling mingled with hail. Then heavier are the wounds in his heart, sore for his beloved; sorrow is renewed. Then the memory of kinsmen crosses his mind; he greets them with songs; he gazes on

them eagerly. The companions of warriors swim away again; the souls of sailors bring there not many known songs. Care is renewed in him who must needs send very often his weary mind over the frozen waves. And thus I cannot think why in this world my mind becomes not overcast when I consider all the life of earls, how of a sudden they have given up hall, courageous retainers. So this world each day passes and falls; for a man cannot become wise till he has his share of years in the world. A wise man must be patient, not over-passionate, nor over-hasty of speech, nor over-weak or rash in war, nor over-fearful, nor over-glad, nor over-covetous, never over-eager to boast ere he has full knowledge.) A man must bide his time, when he boasts in his speech, until he knows well in his pride whither the thoughts of the mind will turn. A wise man must see how dreary it will be when all the riches of this world stand waste, as in different places throughout this world walls stand, blown upon by winds, hung with frost, the dwellings in ruins. The wine halls crumble; the rulers lie low, bereft of joy; the mighty warriors have all fallen in their pride by the wall; war carried off some, bore them on far paths; one the raven bore away over the high sea; one the grey wolf gave over to death; one an earl with sad face hid in the earth-cave. Thus did the Creator of men lay waste this earth till the old work of giants stood empty, free from the revel of castle-dwellers. Then he who has thought wisely of the foundation of things and who deeply ponders this dark life, wise in his heart, often turns his thoughts to the many slaughters of the past, and speaks these words:

“Whither has gone the horse? Whither has gone the man? Whither has gone the giver of treasure? Whither has gone the place of feasting? Where are the joys of hall? Alas, the bright cup! Alas, the warrior in his corslet! Alas, the glory of the prince! How that time has passed away, has grown dark under the shadow of night, as if it had never been! Now in the place of the dear warriors stands a wall, wondrous high, covered with serpent shapes; the might of the ash-wood spears has carried off the earls, the weapon greedy for slaughter—a glorious fate; and storms beat upon these rocky slopes; the falling storm binds the earth, the terror of winter. Then comes darkness, the night shadow casts gloom, sends from the north fierce hailstorms to the terror of men. Everything is full of hardship in the kingdom of earth; the decree of fate changes the world under the heavens. Here possessions are transient, here friends are transient, here man is transient, here woman is transient; all this firm-set earth becomes empty.”

So spoke the wise man in his heart, and sat apart in thought. Good is he who holds his faith; nor shall a man ever show forth too quickly the sorrow of his breast, except he, the earl, first know how to work its cure bravely. Well is it for him who seeks mercy, comfort from the Father in heaven, where for us all security stands.

1.7.3 Reading and Review Questions

1. What are all of the kennings in the poem, and what do they mean?
2. Where is the wanderer? Is there any symbolic meaning in the setting of the poem?

3. Do the last lines, with their focus on Christianity, fit with the rest of the poem? Why or why not?
4. What makes a man wise, according to the poem? How is it an Anglo-Saxon perspective on wisdom, or is it?
5. How much does shame play a role in the wanderer's perspectives? Should he feel shame, in either an Anglo-Saxon or a Christian context?

1.8 THE WIFE'S LAMENT

Author unknown

At least late tenth century, possibly earlier

The Wife's Lament survives only in the Exeter Book, just as *The Wanderer* does. It is one of two Old English elegies that are told from the perspective of a woman; instead of a retainer lamenting the loss of his lord, the women lament their separation from a husband or lover (her "lord" regardless of his status). Like *The Wanderer*, the 53-line poem is alliterative, with short half-lines divided by a caesura, or pause. The woman in *The Wife's Lament*, however, does not talk about reuniting with her lord in heaven, as the narrator does in *The Wanderer*. The wife is focused on the anguish of the moment, since she does not know if her lord is dead. Both the wife and the wanderer are in exile, but the wanderer's exile is from the death of his lord, while the wife's exile is from her family when she joins her husband's family. As the wife sits in her "earth-hall" (a kenning for "cave"), lamenting her lot in life, the reader is forced to piece together the few (mostly ambiguous) details she recounts into a coherent story. Scholars argue about how to interpret her circumstances. Has she been separated from her husband by the cruelty of his family, or by his own cruelty (since he apparently has murderous thoughts)? Some scholars suggest that more than one man is involved; some suggest that she is cursing her husband; still others suggest that the "earth-hall" is actually a grave, and she is a ghost.

1.8.1 *The Wife's Lament*

I make this song of my deep sadness, of my own lot. I can say that since I grew up I have not endured miseries new or old more than now. Ever I suffer the torment of my exile. First my lord went hence from his people over the tossing waves. I had sorrow at dawn as to where in the land my lord might be. Then I set out, a friendless exile, to seek helpers in my woeful hard straits. The man's kinsmen began to plot in secret thought to part us, so that we should live most wretchedly, most widely sundered in the world, and a yearning came upon me. My lord bade me take up my dwelling here; few dear loyal friends had I in this place; and so my mind is sad, since I found the man most mated to me unhappy, sad in heart, cloaking his mind, plotting mischief with blithe manner. Full often we two

pledged one another that naught but death should divide us; that is changed now. Our friendship now is as if it had not been. I must needs endure the hate of my dear one far and near. They bade me dwell in the forest grove under the oak-tree in the earth-cave. Old is this earth-hall; I am filled with yearning. Dim are the valleys, high the hills, harsh strongholds o'ergrown with briers, dwellings empty of joy. Full often the departure of my lord has seized cruelly upon me. There are loving friends alive on the earth; they have their bed; while alone at dawn I pass through this earth-cave to beneath the oak-tree, where I sit a long summer's day. There I can mourn my miseries, many hardships, for I can never calm my care of mind, nor all that longing which has come upon me in this life. Ever may that youth be sad of mood, grievous the thought of his heart; may he likewise be forced to wear a blithe air and also care in his breast, the affliction of constant sorrows. May all his joy in the world depend on himself only; may he be banished very far in a distant land where my friend sits under a rocky slope chilled by the storm, my friend weary in mind, girt round with water in a sad dwelling. My friend suffers great grief; too often he remembers a happier home. Ill is it for him who must suffer longing for his loved one.

1.8.2 Reading and Review Questions

1. Compare the situation of the speakers in *The Wanderer* and *The Wife's Lament*. How are they similar and different?
2. Based on the information in the poem itself, why was the wife forced to live in a cave? What are the possible reasons?
3. Why does the poem contain so much deliberate ambiguity? What purpose might the multiple possible readings have, if any?
4. Why must the wife appear to be cheerful, even if her heart is breaking?
5. Based on the poem itself, what evidence suggests that the "earth-hall" might be a grave? What evidence appears to contradict that theory?

1.9 THE VENERABLE BEDE

(c. 673-735 ACE)

Cædmon's Hymn is found in the work of an English monk named Bede (later called the Venerable Bede). Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, written in Latin, covers British history from the Roman invasion to 731 ACE, the year the history was completed. In particular, Bede focuses on the conversion of pagan tribes to Christianity: first the Celtic tribes, and then the Anglo-Saxons. Bede credits both Irish and Italian missionaries with doing all of the work to bring about conversions, condemning native Britons for their lack of effort. The process of conversion was still underway when Bede was writing. Early rulers would often convert, and then order their subjects to convert as well, so Bede is careful to record

the history of conquests: whoever controls a group potentially controls the religion. Bede's work also features numerous miracle stories, which serve to remind readers both of the power of religion and a reason to convert. The most famous example is the story of the illiterate Caedmon, who is blessed one night with the ability to compose poetry. *Cædmon's Hymn*, composed in Anglo-Saxon and translated by Bede into Latin, is considered one of the earliest example of Anglo-Saxon poetry.

1.9.1 The Story of Cædmon and *Cædmon's Hymn*

Found in the *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*
Completed 731 ACE

Preface

To the most glorious king Ceolwulf. Bede, the servant of Christ and Priest.

I formerly, at your request, most readily sent to you the Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation, which I had lately published, for you to read and judge; and I now send it again to be transcribed, and more fully studied at your leisure. And I rejoice greatly at the sincerity and zeal, with which you not only diligently give ear to hear the words of Holy Scripture, but also industriously take care to become acquainted with the actions and sayings of former men of renown, especially of our own nation. For if history relates good things of good men, the attentive hearer is excited to imitate that which is good; or if it recounts evil things of wicked persons, none the less the conscientious and devout hearer or reader, shunning that which is hurtful and wrong, is the more earnestly fired to perform those things which he knows to be good, and worthy of the service of God. And as you have carefully marked this, you are desirous that the said history should be more fully made known to yourself, and to those over whom the Divine Authority

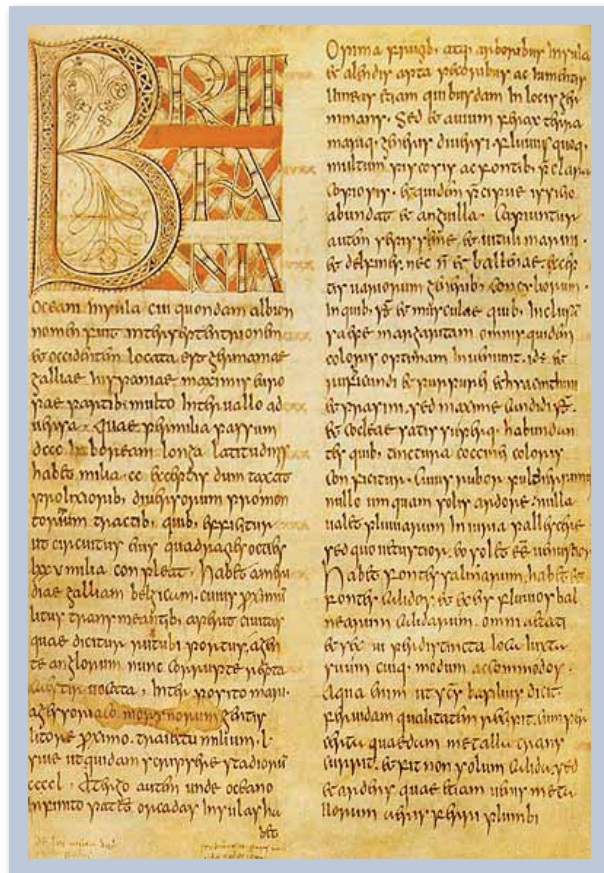


Image 1.8 | Manuscript Image from Cædmon's Hymn

Artist | The Venerable Bede

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has appointed you governor, from your great regard to the common good. But to the end that I may remove all occasion of doubting what I have written, both from yourself and other readers or hearers of this history, I will take care briefly to show you from what authors I chiefly learned the same.

My principal authority and aid in this work was the most learned and reverend Abbot Albinus; who, educated in the Church of Canterbury by those venerable and learned men, Archbishop Theodore of blessed memory, and the Abbot Hadrian, transmitted to me by Nothelm, the pious priest of the Church of London, either in writing, or by word of mouth of the same Nothelm, all that he thought worthy of memory that had been done in the province of Kent, or the adjacent parts, by the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory, as he had learned the same either from written records, or the traditions of his predecessors. The same Nothelm, afterwards went to Rome, and having, with leave of the present Pope Gregory, searched into the archives of the Holy Roman Church, found there some epistles of the blessed Pope Gregory, and other popes; and, returning home, by the advice of the aforesaid most reverend father Albinus, brought them to me, to be inserted in my history. Thus, from the beginning of this volume to the time when the English nation received the faith of Christ, we have acquired matter from the writings of former men, gathered from various sources; but from that time till the present,



Image 1.9 | Memorial to Cædmon

Artist | Rich Tea

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what was transacted in the Church of Canterbury by the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory or their successors, and under what kings the same happened, has been conveyed to us, as we have said, by Nothelm through the industry of the aforesaid Abbot Albinus. They also partly informed me by what bishops and under what kings the provinces of the East and West Saxons, as also of the East Angles, and of the Northumbrians, received the grace of the Gospel. In short, I was chiefly encouraged to undertake this work by the exhortations of the same Albinus. In like manner, Daniel, the most reverend Bishop of the West Saxons, who is still living, communicated to me in writing some things relating to the Ecclesiastical History of that province, and the adjoining one

of the South Saxons, as also of the Isle of Wight. But how, by the ministry of those holy priests of Christ, Cedd and Ceadda, the province of the Mercians was brought to the faith of Christ, which they knew not before, and how that of the East Saxons recovered the faith after having rejected it, and how those fathers lived and died, we learned from the brethren of the monastery, which was built by them, and is called Laestingaeu. Further, what ecclesiastical matters took place in the province of the East Angles, was partly made known to us from the writings and tradition of former men, and partly by the account of the most reverend Abbot Esi. What was done with regard to the faith of Christ, and what was the episcopal succession in the province of Lindsey, we had either from the letters of the most reverend prelate Cynibert, or by word of mouth from other persons of good credit. But what was done in the Church in the different parts of the province of Northumbria from the time when they received the faith of Christ till this present, I received not on the authority of any one man, but by the faithful testimony of innumerable witnesses, who might know or remember the same; besides what I had of my own knowledge. Wherein it is to be observed, that what I have written concerning our most holy father, Bishop Cuthbert, either in this volume, or in my account of his life and actions, I partly took from what I found written of him by the brethren of the Church of Lindisfarne, accepting without reserve the statements I found there; but at the same time took care to add such things as I could myself have knowledge of by the faithful testimony of trustworthy informants. And I humbly entreat the reader, that if he shall find in these our writings anything not delivered according to the truth, he will not lay the blame of it on me, for, as the true rule of history requires, withholding nothing, I have laboured to commit to writing such things as I could gather from common report, for the instruction of posterity.

Moreover, I beseech all men who shall hear or read this history of our nation, that for my infirmities both of mind and body, they will offer up frequent intercessions to the throne of Grace. And I further pray, that in recompense for the labour wherewith I have recorded in the several provinces and more important places those events which I considered worthy of note and of interest to their inhabitants, I may for my reward have the benefit of their pious prayers.

Book I

Chapter I. Of the Situation of Britain and Ireland, and of their ancient inhabitants

Britain, an island in the Atlantic, formerly called Albion, lies to the north-west, facing, though at a considerable distance, the coasts of Germany, France, and Spain, which form the greatest part of Europe. It extends 800 miles in length towards the north, and is 200 miles in breadth, except where several promontories extend further in breadth, by which its compass is made to be 4,875 miles. To the south lies Belgic Gaul. To its nearest shore there is an easy passage from the city of Rutubi Portus, by the English now corrupted into Reptacaestir. The distance from here across the sea to Gessoriacum, the nearest shore in the territory of the

Morini, is fifty miles, or as some writers say, 450 furlongs. On the other side of the island, where it opens upon the boundless ocean, it has the islands called Orcades. Britain is rich in grain and trees, and is well adapted for feeding cattle and beasts of burden. It also produces vines in some places, and has plenty of land and water fowl of divers sorts; it is remarkable also for rivers abounding in fish, and plentiful springs. It has the greatest plenty of salmon and eels; seals are also frequently taken, and dolphins, as also whales; besides many sorts of shell-fish, such as mussels, in which are often found excellent pearls of all colours, red, purple, violet and green, but chiefly white. There is also a great abundance of snails, of which the scarlet dye is made, a most beautiful red, which never fades with the heat of the sun or exposure to rain, but the older it is, the more beautiful it becomes. It has both salt and hot springs, and from them flow rivers which furnish hot baths, proper for all ages and both sexes, in separate places, according to their requirements. For water, as St. Basil says, receives the quality of heat, when it runs along certain metals, and becomes not only hot but scalding. Britain is rich also in veins of metals, as copper, iron, lead, and silver; it produces a great deal of excellent jet, which is black and sparkling, and burns when put to the fire, and when set on fire, drives away serpents; being warmed with rubbing, it attracts whatever is applied to it, like amber. The island was formerly distinguished by twenty-eight famous cities, besides innumerable forts, which were all strongly secured with walls, towers, gates, and bars. And, because it lies almost under the North Pole, the nights are light in summer, so that at midnight the beholders are often in doubt whether the evening twilight still continues, or that of the morning has come; since the sun at night returns to the east in the northern regions without passing far beneath the earth. For this reason the days are of a great length in summer, and on the other hand, the nights in winter are eighteen hours long, for the sun then withdraws into southern parts. In like manner the nights are very short in summer, and the days in winter, that is, only six equinoctial hours. Whereas, in Armenia, Macedonia, Italy, and other countries of the same latitude, the longest day or night extends but to fifteen hours, and the shortest to nine.

There are in the island at present, following the number of the books in which the Divine Law was written, five languages of different nations employed in the study and confession of the one self-same knowledge, which is of highest truth and true sublimity, to wit, English, British, Scottish, Pictish, and Latin, the last having become common to all by the study of the Scriptures. But at first this island had no other inhabitants but the Britons, from whom it derived its name, and who, coming over into Britain, as is reported, from Armorica, possessed themselves of the southern parts thereof. Starting from the south, they had occupied the greater part of the island, when it happened, that the nation of the Picts, putting to sea from Scythia, as is reported, in a few ships of war, and being driven by the winds beyond the bounds of Britain, came to Ireland and landed on its northern shores. There, finding the nation of the Scots, they begged to be allowed to settle among them, but could not succeed in obtaining their request. Ireland is the largest island

next to Britain, and lies to the west of it; but as it is shorter than Britain to the north, so, on the other hand, it runs out far beyond it to the south, over against the northern part of Spain, though a wide sea lies between them. The Picts then, as has been said, arriving in this island by sea, desired to have a place granted them in which they might settle. The Scots answered that the island could not contain them both; but "We can give you good counsel," said they, "whereby you may know what to do; we know there is another island, not far from ours, to the eastward, which we often see at a distance, when the days are clear. If you will go thither, you can obtain settlements; or, if any should oppose you, we will help you." The Picts, accordingly, sailing over into Britain, began to inhabit the northern parts thereof, for the Britons had possessed themselves of the southern. Now the Picts had no wives, and asked them of the Scots; who would not consent to grant them upon any other terms, than that when any question should arise, they should choose a king from the female royal race rather than from the male: which custom, as is well known, has been observed among the Picts to this day. In process of time, Britain, besides the Britons and the Picts, received a third nation, the Scots, who, migrating from Ireland under their leader, Reuda, either by fair means, or by force of arms, secured to themselves those settlements among the Picts which they still possess. From the name of their commander, they are to this day called Dalreudini; for, in their language, Dal signifies a part.

Ireland is broader than Britain and has a much healthier and milder climate; for the snow scarcely ever lies there above three days: no man makes hay in the summer for winter's provision, or builds stables for his beasts of burden. No reptiles are found there, and no snake can live there; for, though snakes are often carried thither out of Britain, as soon as the ship comes near the shore, and the scent of the air reaches them, they die. On the contrary, almost all things in the island are efficacious against poison. In truth, we have known that when men have been bitten by serpents, the scrapings of leaves of books that were brought out of Ireland, being put into water, and given them to drink, have immediately absorbed the spreading poison, and assuaged the swelling.

The island abounds in milk and honey, nor is there any lack of vines, fish, or fowl; and it is noted for the hunting of stags and roe-deer. It is properly the country of the Scots, who, migrating from thence, as has been said, formed the third nation in Britain in addition to the Britons and the Picts.

There is a very large gulf of the sea, which formerly divided the nation of the Britons from the Picts; it runs from the west far into the land, where, to this day, stands a strong city of the Britons, called Alcluith. The Scots, arriving on the north side of this bay, settled themselves there.

Chapter II. How Cain Julius Caesar was the first Roman that came into Britain

Now Britain had never been visited by the Romans, and was entirely unknown to them before the time of Caius Julius Caesar, who, in the year 693 after the

foundation of Rome, but the sixtieth year before the Incarnation of our Lord, was consul with Lucius Bibulus. While he was making war upon the Germans and the Gauls, who were divided only by the river Rhine, he came into the province of the Morini, whence is the nearest and shortest passage into Britain. Here, having provided about eighty ships of burden and fast-sailing vessels, he sailed over into Britain; where, being first roughly handled in a battle, and then caught in a storm, he lost a considerable part of his fleet, no small number of foot-soldiers, and almost all his cavalry. Returning into Gaul, he put his legions into winter-quarters, and gave orders for building six hundred sail of both sorts. With these he again crossed over early in spring into Britain, but, whilst he was marching with the army against the enemy, the ships, riding at anchor, were caught in a storm and either dashed one against another, or driven upon the sands and wrecked. Forty of them were lost, the rest, with much difficulty, repaired. Caesar's cavalry was, at the first encounter, defeated by the Britons, and there Labienus, the tribune, was slain. In the second engagement, with great hazard to his men, he defeated the Britons and put them to flight. Thence he proceeded to the river Thames, where a great multitude of the enemy had posted themselves on the farther side of the river, under the command of Cassobellaunus, and fenced the bank of the river and almost all the ford under water with sharp stakes: the remains of these are to be seen to this day, apparently about the thickness of a man's thigh, cased with lead, and fixed immovably in the bottom of the river. This being perceived and avoided by the Romans, the barbarians, not able to stand the charge of the legions, hid themselves in the woods, whence they grievously harassed the Romans with repeated sallies. In the meantime, the strong state of the Trinovantes, with their commander Androgius, surrendered to Caesar, giving him forty hostages. Many other cities, following their example, made a treaty with the Romans. Guided by them, Caesar at length, after severe fighting, took the town of Cassobellaunus, situated between two marshes, fortified by sheltering woods, and plentifully furnished with all necessaries. After this, Caesar returned from Britain into Gaul, but he had no sooner put his legions into winter quarters, than he was suddenly beset and distracted with wars and sudden risings on every side.

Chapter III. How Claudius, the second of the Romans who came into Britain, brought the islands Orcades into subjection to the Roman empire; and Vespasian, sent by him, reduced the Isle of Wight under the dominion of the Romans.

In the year of Rome 798, Claudius, fourth emperor from Augustus, being desirous to approve himself a prince beneficial to the republic, and eagerly bent upon war and conquest on every side, undertook an expedition into Britain, which as it appeared, was roused to rebellion by the refusal of the Romans to give up certain deserters. No one before or after Julius Caesar had dared to land upon the island. Claudius crossed over to it, and within a very few days, without any fighting or bloodshed, the greater part of the island was surrendered into his hands. He also

added to the Roman empire the Orcades, which lie in the ocean beyond Britain, and, returning to Rome in the sixth month after his departure, he gave his son the title of Britannicus. This war he concluded in the fourth year of his reign, which is the forty-sixth from the Incarnation of our Lord. In which year there came to pass a most grievous famine in Syria, which is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles to have been foretold by the prophet Agabus.

Vespasian, who was emperor after Nero, being sent into Britain by the same Claudius, brought also under the Roman dominion the Isle of Wight, which is close to Britain on the south, and is about thirty miles in length from east to west, and twelve from north to south; being six miles distant from the southern coast of Britain at the east end, and three at the west. Nero, succeeding Claudius in the empire, undertook no wars at all; and, therefore, among countless other disasters brought by him upon the Roman state, he almost lost Britain; for in his time two most notable towns were there taken and destroyed.

Chap. IV. How Lucius, king of Britain, writing to Pope Eleutherus, desired to be made a Christian.

In the year of our Lord 156, Marcus Antoninus Verus, the fourteenth from Augustus, was made emperor, together with his brother, Aurelius Commodus. In their time, whilst the holy Eleutherus presided over the Roman Church, Lucius, king of Britain, sent a letter to him, entreating that by a mandate from him he might be made a Christian. He soon obtained his pious request, and the Britons preserved the faith, which they had received, uncorrupted and entire, in peace and tranquillity until the time of the Emperor Diocletian.

Chap. V. How the Emperor Severus divided from the rest by a rampart that part of Britain which had been recovered.

In the year of our Lord 189, Severus, an African, born at Leptis, in the province of Tripolis, became emperor. He was the seventeenth from Augustus, and reigned seventeen years. Being naturally of a harsh disposition, and engaged in many wars, he governed the state vigorously, but with much trouble. Having been victorious in all the grievous civil wars which happened in his time, he was drawn into Britain by the revolt of almost all the confederated tribes; and, after many great and severe battles, he thought fit to divide that part of the island, which he had recovered, from the other unconquered nations, not with a wall, as some imagine, but with a rampart. For a wall is made of stones, but a rampart, with which camps are fortified to repel the assaults of enemies, is made of sods, cut out of the earth, and raised high above the ground, like a wall, having in front of it the trench whence the sods were taken, with strong stakes of wood fixed above it. Thus Severus drew a great trench and strong rampart, fortified with several towers, from sea to sea. And there, at York, he fell sick afterwards and died, leaving two sons, Bassianus and Geta; of whom Geta died, adjudged an enemy of the State; but Bassianus, having taken the surname of Antonius, obtained the empire.

Chap. VI. Of the reign of Diocletian, and how he persecuted the Christians.

In the year of our Lord 286, Diocletian, the thirty-third from Augustus, and chosen emperor by the army, reigned twenty years, and created Maximian, surnamed Herculus, his colleague in the empire. In their time, one Carausius, of very mean birth, but a man of great ability and energy, being appointed to guard the sea-coasts, then infested by the Franks and Saxons, acted more to the prejudice than to the advantage of the commonwealth, by not restoring to its owners any of the booty taken from the robbers, but keeping all to himself; thus giving rise to the suspicion that by intentional neglect he suffered the enemy to infest the frontiers. When, therefore, an order was sent by Maximian that he should be put to death, he took upon him the imperial purple, and possessed himself of Britain, and having most valiantly conquered and held it for the space of seven years, he was at length put to death by the treachery of his associate Allectus. The usurper, having thus got the island from Carausius, held it three years, and was then vanquished by Asclepiodotus, the captain of the Praetorian guards, who thus at the end of ten years restored Britain to the Roman empire.

Meanwhile, Diocletian in the east, and Maximian Herculus in the west, commanded the churches to be destroyed, and the Christians to be persecuted and slain. This persecution was the tenth since the reign of Nero, and was more lasting and cruel than almost any before it; for it was carried on incessantly for the space of ten years, with burning of churches, proscription of innocent persons, and the slaughter of martyrs. Finally, Britain also attained to the great glory of bearing faithful witness to God.

Chap. VII. The Passion of St. Alban and his companions, who at that time shed their blood for our Lord.

At that time suffered St. Alban, of whom the priest Fortunatus, in the Praise of Virgins, where he makes mention of the blessed martyrs that came to the Lord from all parts of the world, says:

And fruitful Britain noble Alban rears.

This Alban, being yet a pagan, at the time when at the bidding of unbelieving rulers all manner of cruelty was practised against the Christians, gave entertainment in his house to a certain clerk, flying from his persecutors. This man he observed to be engaged in continual prayer and watching day and night; when on a sudden the Divine grace shining on him, he began to imitate the example of faith and piety which was set before him, and being gradually instructed by his wholesome admonitions, he cast off the darkness of idolatry, and became a Christian in all sincerity of heart. The aforesaid clerk having been some days entertained by him, it came to the ears of the impious prince, that a confessor of Christ, to whom a martyr's place had not yet been assigned, was concealed at Alban's house. Whereupon he sent some soldiers to make a strict search after him. When they came to the martyr's hut, St. Alban presently came forth to the soldiers, instead of his guest and master, in the habit or long coat which he wore, and was bound and led before the judge.

It happened that the judge, at the time when Alban was carried before him, was standing at the altar, and offering sacrifice to devils. When he saw Alban, being much enraged that he should thus, of his own accord, dare to put himself into the hands of the soldiers, and incur such danger on behalf of the guest whom he had harboured, he commanded him to be dragged to the images of the devils, before which he stood, saying, "Because you have chosen to conceal a rebellious and sacrilegious man, rather than to deliver him up to the soldiers, that his contempt of the gods might meet with the penalty due to such blasphemy, you shall undergo all the punishment that was due to him, if you seek to abandon the worship of our religion." But St. Alban, who had voluntarily declared himself a Christian to the persecutors of the faith, was not at all daunted by the prince's threats, but putting on the armour of spiritual warfare, publicly declared that he would not obey his command. Then said the judge, "Of what family or race are you?"—"What does it concern you," answered Alban, "of what stock I am? If you desire to hear the truth of my religion, be it known to you, that I am now a Christian, and free to fulfil Christian duties."—"I ask your name," said the judge; "tell me it immediately."—"I am called Alban by my parents," replied he; "and I worship ever and adore the true and living God, Who created all things." Then the judge, filled with anger, said, "If you would enjoy the happiness of eternal life, do not delay to offer sacrifice to the great gods." Alban rejoined, "These sacrifices, which by you are offered to devils, neither can avail the worshippers, nor fulfil the desires and petitions of the suppliants. Rather, whosoever shall offer sacrifice to these images, shall receive the everlasting pains of hell for his reward."

The judge, hearing these words, and being much incensed, ordered this holy confessor of God to be scourged by the executioners, believing that he might by stripes shake that constancy of heart, on which he could not prevail by words. He, being most cruelly tortured, bore the same patiently, or rather joyfully, for our Lord's sake. When the judge perceived that he was not to be overcome by tortures, or withdrawn from the exercise of the Christian religion, he ordered him to be put to death. Being led to execution, he came to a river, which, with a most rapid course, ran between the wall of the town and the arena where he was to be executed. He there saw a great multitude of persons of both sexes, and of divers ages and conditions, who were doubtless assembled by Divine inspiration, to attend the blessed confessor and martyr, and had so filled the bridge over the river, that he could scarce pass over that evening. In truth, almost all had gone out, so that the judge remained in the city without attendance. St. Alban, therefore, urged by an ardent and devout wish to attain the sooner to martyrdom, drew near to the stream, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, whereupon the channel was immediately dried up, and he perceived that the water had given place and made way for him to pass. Among the rest, the executioner, who should have put him to death, observed this, and moved doubtless by Divine inspiration hastened to meet him at the appointed place of execution, and casting away the sword which he had carried ready drawn, fell at his feet, praying earnestly that he might rather

be accounted worthy to suffer with the martyr, whom he was ordered to execute, or, if possible, instead of him.

Whilst he was thus changed from a persecutor into a companion in the faith and truth, and the other executioners rightly hesitated to take up the sword which was lying on the ground, the holy confessor, accompanied by the multitude, ascended a hill, about half a mile from the arena, beautiful, as was fitting, and of most pleasing appearance, adorned, or rather clothed, everywhere with flowers of many colours, nowhere steep or precipitous or of sheer descent, but with a long, smooth natural slope, like a plain, on its sides, a place altogether worthy from of old, by reason of its native beauty, to be consecrated by the blood of a blessed martyr. On the top of this hill, St. Alban prayed that God would give him water, and immediately a living spring, confined in its channel, sprang up at his feet, so that all men acknowledged that even the stream had yielded its service to the martyr. For it was impossible that the martyr, who had left no water remaining in the river, should desire it on the top of the hill, unless he thought it fitting. The river then having done service and fulfilled the pious duty, returned to its natural course, leaving a testimony of its obedience. Here, therefore, the head of the undaunted martyr was struck off, and here he received the crown of life, which God has promised to them that love him. But he who laid impious hands on the holy man's neck was not permitted to rejoice over his dead body; for his eyes dropped upon the ground at the same moment as the blessed martyr's head fell.

At the same time was also beheaded the soldier, who before, through the Divine admonition, refused to strike the holy confessor. Of whom it is apparent, that though he was not purified by the waters of baptism, yet he was cleansed by the washing of his own blood, and rendered worthy to enter the kingdom of heaven. Then the judge, astonished at the unwonted sight of so many heavenly miracles, ordered the persecution to cease immediately, and began to honour the death of the saints, by which he once thought that they might have been turned from their zeal for the Christian faith. The blessed Alban suffered death on the twenty-second day of June, near the city of Verulam, which is now by the English nation called Verlamacaestir, or Vaeclingacaestir, where afterwards, when peaceable Christian times were restored, a church of wonderful workmanship, and altogether worthy to commemorate his martyrdom, was erected. In which place the cure of sick persons and the frequent working of wonders cease not to this day.

At that time suffered Aaron and Julius, citizens of the City of Legions, and many more of both sexes in divers places; who, after that they had endured sundry torments, and their limbs had been mangled after an unheard-of manner, when their warfare was accomplished, yielded their souls up to the joys of the heavenly city.

Chap. VIII. How, when the persecution ceased, the Church in Britain enjoyed peace till the time of the Arian heresy.

When the storm of persecution ceased, the faithful Christians, who, during the time of danger, had hidden themselves in woods and deserts and secret caves, came

forth and rebuilt the churches which had been levelled to the ground; founded, erected, and finished the cathedrals raised in honour of the holy martyrs, and, as if displaying their conquering standards in all places, celebrated festivals and performed their sacred rites with pure hearts and lips. This peace continued in the Christian churches of Britain until the time of the Arian madness, which, having corrupted the whole world, infected this island also, so far removed from the rest of the world, with the poison of its error; and when once a way was opened across the sea for that plague, straightway all the taint of every heresy fell upon the island, ever desirous to hear some new thing, and never holding firm to any sure belief.

At this time Constantius, who, whilst Diocletian was alive, governed Gaul and Spain, a man of great clemency and urbanity, died in Britain. This man left his son Constantine, born of Helena, his concubine, emperor of the Gauls. Eutropius writes that Constantine, being created emperor in Britain, succeeded his father in the sovereignty. In his time the Arian heresy broke out, and although it was exposed and condemned in the Council of Nicaea, nevertheless, the deadly poison of its evil spread, as has been said, to the Churches in the islands, as well as to those of the rest of the world.

Chap. IX. How during the reign of Gratian, Maximus, being created Emperor in Britain, returned into Gaul with a mighty army.

In the year of our Lord 377, Gratian, the fortieth from Augustus, held the empire for six years after the death of Valens; though he had long before reigned with his uncle Valens, and his brother Valentinian. Finding the condition of the commonwealth much impaired, and almost gone to ruin, and impelled by the necessity of restoring it, he invested the Spaniard, Theodosius, with the purple at Sirmium, and made him emperor of Thrace and the Eastern provinces. At that time, Maximus, a man of energy and probity, and worthy of the title of Augustus, if he had not broken his oath of allegiance, was made emperor by the army somewhat against his will, passed over into Gaul, and there by treachery slew the Emperor Gratian, who in consternation at his sudden invasion, was attempting to escape into Italy. His brother, the Emperor Valentinian, expelled from Italy, fled into the East, where he was entertained by Theodosius with fatherly affection, and soon restored to the empire, for Maximus the tyrant, being shut up in Aquileia, was there taken by them and put to death.

Chap. X. How, in the reign of Arcadius, Pelagius, a Briton, insolently impugned the Grace of God.

In the year of our Lord 394, Arcadius, the son of Theodosius, the forty-third from Augustus, succeeding to the empire, with his brother Honorius, held it thirteen years. In his time, Pelagius, a Briton, spread far and near the infection of his perfidious doctrine, denying the assistance of the Divine grace, being seconded therein by his associate Julianus of Campania, who was impelled by an uncontrolled desire to recover his bishopric, of which he had been deprived. St. Augustine, and

the other orthodox fathers, quoted many thousand catholic authorities against them, but failed to amend their folly; nay, more, their madness being rebuked was rather increased by contradiction than suffered by them to be purified through adherence to the truth; which Prosper, the rhetorician, has beautifully expressed thus in heroic verse:—

They tell that one, erewhile consumed with gnawing spite, snake-like attacked Augustine in his writings. Who urged the wretched viper to raise from the ground his head, howsoever hidden in dens of darkness? Either the sea-girt Britons reared him with the fruit of their soil, or fed on Campanian pastures his heart swells with pride.

Chap. XI. How during the reign of Honorius, Gratian and Constantine were created tyrants in Britain; and soon after the former was slain in Britain, and the latter in Gaul.

In the year of our Lord 407, Honorius, the younger son of Theodosius, and the forty-fourth from Augustus, being emperor, two years before the invasion of Rome by Alaric, king of the Goths, when the nations of the Alani, Suevi, Vandals, and many others with them, having defeated the Franks and passed the Rhine, ravaged all Gaul, Gratianus, a citizen of the country, was set up as tyrant in Britain and killed. In his place, Constantine, one of the meanest soldiers, only for the hope afforded by his name, and without any worth to recommend him, was chosen emperor. As soon as he had taken upon him the command, he crossed over into Gaul, where being often imposed upon by the barbarians with untrustworthy treaties, he did more harm than good to the Commonwealth. Whereupon Count Constantius, by the command of Honorius, marching into Gaul with an army, besieged him in the city of Arles, took him prisoner, and put him to death. His son Constans, a monk, whom he had created Caesar, was also put to death by his own follower Count Gerontius, at Vienne.

Rome was taken by the Goths, in the year from its foundation, 1164. Then the Romans ceased to rule in Britain, almost 470 years after Caius Julius Caesar came to the island. They dwelt within the rampart, which, as we have mentioned, Severus made across the island, on the south side of it, as the cities, watch-towers, bridges, and paved roads there made testify to this day; but they had a right of dominion over the farther parts of Britain, as also over the islands that are beyond Britain.

Chap. XII. How the Britons, being ravaged by the Scots and Picts, sought succour from the Romans, who coming a second time, built a wall across the island; but when this was broken down at once by the aforesaid enemies, they were reduced to greater distress than before.

From that time, the British part of Britain, destitute of armed soldiers, of all military stores, and of the whole flower of its active youth, who had been led away by the rashness of the tyrants never to return, was wholly exposed to rapine, the people being altogether ignorant of the use of weapons. Whereupon they suffered

many years from the sudden invasions of two very savage nations from beyond the sea, the Scots from the west, and the Picts from the north. We call these nations from beyond the sea, not on account of their being seated out of Britain, but because they were separated from that part of it which was possessed by the Britons, two broad and long inlets of the sea lying between them, one of which runs into the interior of Britain, from the Eastern Sea, and the other from the Western, though they do not reach so far as to touch one another. The eastern has in the midst of it the city Giudi. On the Western Sea, that is, on its right shore, stands the city of Alcluith, which in their language signifies the Rock Cluith, for it is close by the river of that name.

On account of the attacks of these nations, the Britons sent messengers to Rome with letters piteously praying for succour, and promising perpetual subjection, provided that the impending enemy should be driven away. An armed legion was immediately sent them, which, arriving in the island, and engaging the enemy, slew a great multitude of them, drove the rest out of the territories of their allies, and having in the meanwhile delivered them from their worst distress, advised them to build a wall between the two seas across the island, that it might secure them by keeping off the enemy. So they returned home with great triumph. But the islanders building the wall which they had been told to raise, not of stone, since they had no workmen capable of such a work, but of sods, made it of no use. Nevertheless, they carried it for many miles between the two bays or inlets of the sea of which we have spoken; to the end that where the protection of the water was wanting, they might use the rampart to defend their borders from the irruptions of the enemies. Of the work there erected, that is, of a rampart of great breadth and height, there are evident remains to be seen at this day. It begins at about two miles' distance from the monastery of Aebbercurnig, west of it, at a place called in the Pictish language Peanfahel, but in the English tongue, Penneltun, and running westward, ends near the city of Alcluith.

But the former enemies, when they perceived that the Roman soldiers were gone, immediately coming by sea, broke into the borders, trampled and overran all places, and like men mowing ripe corn, bore down all before them. Hereupon messengers were again sent to Rome miserably imploring aid, lest their wretched country should be utterly blotted out, and the name of a Roman province, so long renowned among them, overthrown by the cruelties of foreign races, might become utterly contemptible. A legion was accordingly sent again, and, arriving unexpectedly in autumn, made great slaughter of the enemy, obliging all those that could escape, to flee beyond the sea; whereas before, they were wont yearly to carry off their booty without any opposition. Then the Romans declared to the Britons, that they could not for the future undertake such troublesome expeditions for their sake, and advised them rather to take up arms and make an effort to engage their enemies, who could not prove too powerful for them, unless they themselves were enervated by cowardice. Moreover, thinking that it might be some help to the allies, whom they were forced to abandon, they constructed a strong stone wall

from sea to sea, in a straight line between the towns that had been there built for fear of the enemy, where Severus also had formerly built a rampart. This famous wall, which is still to be seen, was raised at public and private expense, the Britons also lending their assistance. It is eight feet in breadth, and twelve in height, in a straight line from east to west, as is still evident to beholders. This being presently finished, they gave the dispirited people good advice, and showed them how to furnish themselves with arms. Besides, they built towers to command a view of the sea, at intervals, on the southern coast, where their ships lay, because there also the invasions of the barbarians were apprehended, and so took leave of their allies, never to return again.

After their departure to their own country, the Scots and Picts, understanding that they had refused to return, at once came back, and growing more confident than they had been before, occupied all the northern and farthest part of the island, driving out the natives, as far as the wall. Hereupon a timorous guard was placed upon the fortification, where, dazed with fear, they became ever more dispirited day by day. On the other side, the enemy constantly attacked them with barbed weapons, by which the cowardly defenders were dragged in piteous fashion from the wall, and dashed against the ground. At last, the Britons, forsaking their cities and wall, took to flight and were scattered. The enemy pursued, and forthwith followed a massacre more grievous than ever before; for the wretched natives were torn in pieces by their enemies, as lambs are torn by wild beasts. Thus, being expelled from their dwellings and lands, they saved themselves from the immediate danger of starvation by robbing and plundering one another, adding to the calamities inflicted by the enemy their own domestic broils, till the whole country was left destitute of food except such as could be procured in the chase.

Chap. XIII. How in the reign of Theodosius the younger, in whose time Palladius was sent to the Scots that believed in Christ, the Britons begging assistance of Ætius, the consul, could not obtain it. [446 ACE]

In the year of our Lord 423, Theodosius, the younger, the forty-fifth from Augustus, succeeded Honorius and governed the Roman empire twenty-six years. In the eighth year of his reign, Palladius was sent by Celestinus, the Roman pontiff, to the Scots that believed in Christ, to be their first bishop. In the twenty-third year of his reign, Aetius, a man of note and a patrician, discharged his third consulship with Symmachus for his colleague. To him the wretched remnant of the Britons sent a letter, which began thus:—"To Aetius, thrice Consul, the groans of the Britons." And in the sequel of the letter they thus unfolded their woes:—"The barbarians drive us to the sea; the sea drives us back to the barbarians: between them we are exposed to two sorts of death; we are either slaughtered or drowned." Yet, for all this, they could not obtain any help from him, as he was then engaged in most serious wars with Bledla and Attila, kings of the Huns. And though the year before this Bledla had been murdered by the treachery of his own brother

Attila, yet Attila himself remained so intolerable an enemy to the Republic, that he ravaged almost all Europe, attacking and destroying cities and castles. At the same time there was a famine at Constantinople, and soon after a plague followed; moreover, a great part of the wall of that city, with fifty-seven towers, fell to the ground. Many cities also went to ruin, and the famine and pestilential state of the air destroyed thousands of men and cattle.

Chap. XIV. How the Britons, compelled by the great famine, drove the barbarians out of their territories; and soon after there ensued, along with abundance of corn, decay of morals, pestilence, and the downfall of the nation.

In the meantime, the aforesaid famine distressing the Britons more and more, and leaving to posterity a lasting memory of its mischievous effects, obliged many of them to submit themselves to the depredators; though others still held out, putting their trust in God, when human help failed. These continually made raids from the mountains, caves, and woods, and, at length, began to inflict severe losses on their enemies, who had been for so many years plundering the country. The bold Irish robbers thereupon returned home, intending to come again before long. The Picts then settled down in the farthest part of the island and afterwards remained there, but they did not fail to plunder and harass the Britons from time to time.

Now, when the ravages of the enemy at length abated, the island began to abound with such plenty of grain as had never been known in any age before; along with plenty, evil living increased, and this was immediately attended by the taint of all manner of crime; in particular, cruelty, hatred of truth, and love of falsehood; insomuch, that if any one among them happened to be milder than the rest, and more inclined to truth, all the rest abhorred and persecuted him unrestrainedly, as if he had been the enemy of Britain. Nor were the laity only guilty of these things, but even our Lord's own flock, with its shepherds, casting off the easy yoke of Christ, gave themselves up to drunkenness, enmity, quarrels, strife, envy, and other such sins. In the meantime, on a sudden, a grievous plague fell upon that corrupt generation, which soon destroyed such numbers of them, that the living scarcely availed to bury the dead: yet, those that survived, could not be recalled from the spiritual death, which they had incurred through their sins, either by the death of their friends, or the fear of death. Whereupon, not long after, a more severe vengeance for their fearful crimes fell upon the sinful nation. They held a council to determine what was to be done, and where they should seek help to prevent or repel the cruel and frequent incursions of the northern nations; and in concert with their King Vortigern, it was unanimously decided to call the Saxons to their aid from beyond the sea, which, as the event plainly showed, was brought about by the Lord's will, that evil might fall upon them for their wicked deeds.

Chap. XV. How the Angles, being invited into Britain, at first drove off the enemy; but not long after, making a league with them, turned their weapons against their allies.

In the year of our Lord 449, Marcian, the forty-sixth from Augustus, being made emperor with Valentinian, ruled the empire seven years. Then the nation of the Angles, or Saxons, being invited by the aforesaid king, arrived in Britain with three ships of war and had a place in which to settle assigned to them by the same king, in the eastern part of the island, on the pretext of fighting in defence of their country, whilst their real intentions were to conquer it. Accordingly they engaged with the enemy, who were come from the north to give battle, and the Saxons obtained the victory. When the news of their success and of the fertility of the country, and the cowardice of the Britons, reached their own home, a more considerable fleet was quickly sent over, bringing a greater number of men, and these, being added to the former army, made up an invincible force. The newcomers received of the Britons a place to inhabit among them, upon condition that they should wage war against their enemies for the peace and security of the country, whilst the Britons agreed to furnish them with pay. Those who came over were of the three most powerful nations of Germany—Saxons, Angles, and Jutes. From the Jutes are descended the people of Kent, and of the Isle of Wight, including those in the province of the West-Saxons who are to this day called Jutes, seated opposite to the Isle of Wight. From the Saxons, that is, the country which is now called Old Saxony, came the East-Saxons, the South-Saxons, and the West-Saxons. From the Angles, that is, the country which is called Angulus, and which is said, from that time, to have remained desert to this day, between the provinces of the Jutes and the Saxons, are descended the East-Angles, the Midland-Angles, the Mercians, all the race of the Northumbrians, that is, of those nations that dwell on the north side of the river Humber, and the other nations of the Angles. The first commanders are said to have been the two brothers Hengist and Horsa. Of these Horsa was afterwards slain in battle by the Britons, and a monument, bearing his name, is still in existence in the eastern parts of Kent. They were the sons of Victgilsus, whose father was Vitta, son of Vecta, son of Woden; from whose stock the royal race of many provinces trace their descent. In a short time, swarms of the aforesaid nations came over into the island, and the foreigners began to increase so much, that they became a source of terror to the natives themselves who had invited them. Then, having on a sudden entered into league with the Picts, whom they had by this time repelled by force of arms, they began to turn their weapons against their allies. At first, they obliged them to furnish a greater quantity of provisions; and, seeking an occasion of quarrel, protested, that unless more plentiful supplies were brought them, they would break the league, and ravage all the island; nor were they backward in putting their threats into execution. In short, the fire kindled by the hands of the pagans, proved God's just vengeance for the crimes of the people; not unlike that which, being of old lighted by the Chaldeans, consumed the walls and all the buildings of Jerusalem. For here, too, through the agency of the pitiless

conqueror, yet by the disposal of the just Judge, it ravaged all the neighbouring cities and country, spread the conflagration from the eastern to the western sea, without any opposition, and overran the whole face of the doomed island. Public as well as private buildings were overturned; the priests were everywhere slain before the altars; no respect was shown for office, the prelates with the people were destroyed with fire and sword; nor were there any left to bury those who had been thus cruelly slaughtered. Some of the miserable remnant, being taken in the mountains, were butchered in heaps. Others, spent with hunger, came forth and submitted themselves to the enemy, to undergo for the sake of food perpetual servitude, if they were not killed upon the spot. Some, with sorrowful hearts, fled beyond the seas. Others, remaining in their own country, led a miserable life of terror and anxiety of mind among the mountains, woods and crags.

Chap. XVI. How the Britons obtained their first victory over the Angles, under the command of Ambrosius, a Roman.

When the army of the enemy, having destroyed and dispersed the natives, had returned home to their own settlements, the Britons began by degrees to take heart, and gather strength, sallying out of the lurking places where they had concealed themselves, and with one accord imploring the Divine help, that they might not utterly be destroyed. They had at that time for their leader, Ambrosius Aurelianus, a man of worth, who alone, by chance, of the Roman nation had survived the storm, in which his parents, who were of the royal race, had perished. Under him the Britons revived, and offering battle to the victors, by the help of God, gained the victory. From that day, sometimes the natives, and sometimes their enemies, prevailed, till the year of the siege of Badon-hill, when they made no small slaughter of those enemies, about forty-four years after their arrival in England. But of this hereafter.

Chap. XVII. How Germanus the Bishop, sailing into Britain with Lupus, first quelled the tempest of the sea, and afterwards that of the Pelagians, by Divine power. [429 ACE]

Some few years before their arrival, the Pelagian heresy, brought over by Agricola, the son of Severianus, a Pelagian bishop, had corrupted with its foul taint the faith of the Britons. But whereas they absolutely refused to embrace that perverse doctrine, and blaspheme the grace of Christ, yet were not able of themselves to confute the subtilty of the unholy belief by force of argument, they bethought them of wholesome counsels and determined to crave aid of the Gallican prelates in that spiritual warfare. Hereupon, these, having assembled a great synod, consulted together to determine what persons should be sent thither to sustain the faith, and by unanimous consent, choice was made of the apostolic prelates, Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, and Lupus of Troyes, to go into Britain to confirm the people's faith in the grace of God. With ready zeal they complied with the request and commands of the Holy Church, and put to sea. The ship sped

safely with favouring winds till they were halfway between the coast of Gaul and Britain. There on a sudden they were obstructed by the malevolence of demons, who were jealous that men of such eminence and piety should be sent to bring back the people to salvation. They raised storms, and darkened the sky with clouds. The sails could not support the fury of the winds, the sailors' skill was forced to give way, the ship was sustained by prayer, not by strength, and as it happened, their spiritual leader and bishop, being spent with weariness, had fallen asleep. Then, as if because resistance flagged, the tempest gathered strength, and the ship, overwhelmed by the waves, was ready to sink. Then the blessed Lupus and all the rest, greatly troubled, awakened their elder, that he might oppose the raging elements. He, showing himself the more resolute in proportion to the greatness of the danger, called upon Christ, and having, in the name of the Holy Trinity, taken and sprinkled a little water, quelled the raging waves, admonished his companion, encouraged all, and all with one consent uplifted their voices in prayer. Divine help was granted, the enemies were put to flight, a cloudless calm ensued, the winds veering about set themselves again to forward their voyage, the sea was soon traversed, and they reached the quiet of the wished-for shore. A multitude flocking thither from all parts, received the bishops, whose coming had been foretold by the predictions even of their adversaries. For the evil spirits declared their fear, and when the bishops expelled them from the bodies of the possessed, they made known the nature of the tempest, and the dangers they had occasioned, and confessed that they had been overcome by the merits and authority of these men.

In the meantime the bishops speedily filled the island of Britain with the fame of their preaching and miracles; and the Word of God was by them daily preached, not only in the churches, but even in the streets and fields, so that the faithful and Catholic were everywhere confirmed, and those who had been perverted accepted the way of amendment. Like the Apostles, they acquired honour and authority through a good conscience, learning through the study of letters, and the power of working miracles through their merits. Thus the whole country readily came over to their way of thinking; the authors of the erroneous belief kept themselves in hiding, and, like evil spirits, grieved for the loss of the people that were rescued from them. At length, after long deliberation, they had the boldness to enter the lists. They came forward in all the splendour of their wealth, with gorgeous apparel, and supported by a numerous following; choosing rather to hazard the contest, than to undergo among the people whom they had led astray, the reproach of having been silenced, lest they should seem by saying nothing to condemn themselves. An immense multitude had been attracted thither with their wives and children. The people were present as spectators and judges; the two parties stood there in very different case; on the one side was Divine faith, on the other human presumption; on the one side piety, on the other pride; on the one side Pelagius, the founder of their faith, on the other Christ. The blessed bishops permitted their adversaries to speak first, and their empty speech long took up the time and filled the ears with meaningless words. Then the venerable prelates poured forth the torrent of

their eloquence and showered upon them the words of Apostles and Evangelists, mingling the Scriptures with their own discourse and supporting their strongest assertions by the testimony of the written Word. Vainglory was vanquished and unbelief refuted; and the heretics, at every argument put before them, not being able to reply, confessed their errors. The people, giving judgement, could scarce refrain from violence, and signified their verdict by their acclamations.

Chap. XVIII. How the some holy man gave sight to the blind daughter of a tribune, and then coming to St. Alban, there received of his relics, and left other relics of the blessed Apostles and other martyrs. [429 ACE]

After this, a certain man, who held the office of tribune, came forward with his wife, and brought his blind daughter, a child of ten years of age, to be healed of the bishops. They ordered her to be brought to their adversaries, who, being rebuked by their own conscience, joined their entreaties to those of the child's parents, and besought the bishops that she might be healed. They, therefore, perceiving their adversaries to yield, poured forth a short prayer, and then Germanus, full of the Holy Ghost, invoking the Trinity, at once drew from his side a casket which hung about his neck, containing relics of the saints, and, taking it in his hands, applied it in the sight of all to the girl's eyes, which were immediately delivered from darkness and filled with the light of truth. The parents rejoiced, and the people were filled with awe at the miracle; and after that day, the heretical beliefs were so fully obliterated from the minds of all, that they thirsted for and sought after the doctrine of the bishops.

This damnable heresy being thus suppressed, and the authors thereof confuted, and all the people settled in the purity of the faith, the bishops went to the tomb of the martyr, the blessed Alban, to give thanks to God through him. There Germanus, having with him relics of all the Apostles, and of divers martyrs, after offering up his prayers, commanded the tomb to be opened, that he might lay therein the precious gifts; judging it fitting, that the limbs of saints brought together from divers countries, as their equal merits had procured them admission into heaven, should find shelter in one tomb. These being honourably bestowed, and laid together, he took up a handful of dust from the place where the blessed martyr's blood had been shed, to carry away with him. In this dust the blood had been preserved, showing that the slaughter of the martyrs was red, though the persecutor was pale in death. In consequence of these things, an innumerable multitude of people was that day converted to the Lord.

Chap. XIX. How the same holy man, being detained there by sickness, by his prayers quenched a fire that had broken out among the houses, and was himself cured of his infirmity by a vision. [429 ACE]

As they were returning thence, the treacherous enemy, having, as it chanced, prepared a snare, caused Germanus to bruise his foot by a fall, not knowing that, as it was with the blessed Job, his merits would be but increased by bodily affliction.

Whilst he was thus detained some time in the same place by his infirmity, a fire broke out in a cottage neighbouring to that in which he was; and having burned down the other houses which were thatched with reed, fanned by the wind, was carried on to the dwelling in which he lay. The people all flocked to the prelate, entreating that they might lift him in their arms, and save him from the impending danger. But he rebuked them, and in the assurance of his faith, would not suffer himself to be removed. The whole multitude, in terror and despair, ran to oppose the conflagration; but, for the greater manifestation of the Divine power, whatsoever the crowd endeavoured to save, was destroyed; and what the sick and helpless man defended, the flame avoided and passed by, though the house that sheltered the holy man lay open to it, and while the fire raged on every side, the place in which he lay appeared untouched, amid the general conflagration. The multitude rejoiced at the miracle, and was gladly vanquished by the power of God. A great crowd of people watched day and night before the humble cottage; some to have their souls healed, and some their bodies. All that Christ wrought in the person of his servant, all the wonders the sick man performed cannot be told. Moreover, he would suffer no medicines to be applied to his infirmity; but one night he saw one clad in garments as white as snow, standing by him, who reaching out his hand, seemed to raise him up, and ordered him to stand firm upon his feet; from which time his pain ceased, and he was so perfectly restored, that when the day came, with good courage he set forth upon his journey.

Chap. XX. How the same Bishops brought help from Heaven to the Britons in a battle, and then returned home. [430 ACE]

In the meantime, the Saxons and Picts, with their united forces, made war upon the Britons, who in these straits were compelled to take up arms. In their terror thinking themselves unequal to their enemies, they implored the assistance of the holy bishops; who, hastening to them as they had promised, inspired so much confidence into these fearful people, that one would have thought they had been joined by a mighty army. Thus, by these apostolic leaders, Christ Himself commanded in their camp. The holy days of Lent were also at hand, and were rendered more sacred by the presence of the bishops, insomuch that the people being instructed by daily sermons, came together eagerly to receive the grace of baptism. For a great multitude of the army desired admission to the saving waters, and a wattled church was constructed for the Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord, and so fitted up for the army in the field as if it were in a city. Still wet with the baptismal water the troops set forth; the faith of the people was fired; and where arms had been deemed of no avail, they looked to the help of God. News reached the enemy of the manner and method of their purification, who, assured of success, as if they had to deal with an unarmed host, hastened forward with renewed eagerness. But their approach was made known by scouts. When, after the celebration of Easter, the greater part of the army, fresh from the font, began to take up arms and prepare for war, Germanus offered to be their leader. He

picked out the most active, explored the country round about, and observed, in the way by which the enemy was expected, a valley encompassed by hills of moderate height. In that place he drew up his untried troops, himself acting as their general. And now a formidable host of foes drew near, visible, as they approached, to his men lying in ambush. Then, on a sudden, Germanus, bearing the standard, exhorted his men, and bade them all in a loud voice repeat his words. As the enemy advanced in all security, thinking to take them by surprise, the bishops three times cried, "Hallelujah." A universal shout of the same word followed, and the echoes from the surrounding hills gave back the cry on all sides, the enemy was panic-stricken, fearing, not only the neighbouring rocks, but even the very frame of heaven above them; and such was their terror, that their feet were not swift enough to save them. They fled in disorder, casting away their arms, and well satisfied if, even with unprotected bodies, they could escape the danger; many of them, flying headlong in their fear, were engulfed by the river which they had crossed. The Britons, without a blow, inactive spectators of the victory they had gained, beheld their vengeance complete. The scattered spoils were gathered up, and the devout soldiers rejoiced in the success which Heaven had granted them. The prelates thus triumphed over the enemy without bloodshed, and gained a victory by faith, without the aid of human force. Thus, having settled the affairs of the island, and restored tranquillity by the defeat of the invisible foes, as well as of enemies in the flesh, they prepared to return home. Their own merits, and the intercession of the blessed martyr Alban, obtained for them a calm passage, and the happy vessel restored them in peace to the desires of their people.

Chap. XXI. How, when the Pelagian heresy began to spring up afresh, Germanus, returning to Britain with Severus, first restored bodily strength to a lame youth, then spiritual health to the people of God, having condemned or converted the Heretics. [447 ACE]

Not long after, news was brought from the same island, that certain persons were again attempting to teach and spread abroad the Pelagian heresy, and again the holy Germanus was entreated by all the priests, that he would defend the cause of God, which he had before maintained. He speedily complied with their request; and taking with him Severus, a man of singular sanctity, who was disciple to the blessed father, Lupus, bishop of Troyes, and at that time, having been ordained bishop of the Treveri, was preaching the Word of God to the tribes of Upper Germany, put to sea, and with favouring winds and calm waters sailed to Britain.

In the meantime, the evil spirits, speeding through the whole island, were constrained against their will to foretell that Germanus was coming, insomuch, that one Elafius, a chief of that region, without tidings from any visible messenger, hastened to meet the holy men, carrying with him his son, who in the very flower of his youth laboured under a grievous infirmity; for the sinews of the knee were wasted and shrunk, so that the withered limb was denied the power to walk. All the country followed this Elafius. The bishops arrived, and were met by the ignorant

multitude, whom they blessed, and preached the Word of God to them. They found the people constant in the faith as they had left them; and learning that but few had gone astray, they sought out the authors of the evil and condemned them. Then suddenly Elafius cast himself at the feet of the bishops, presenting his son, whose distress was visible and needed no words to express it. All were grieved, but especially the bishops, who, filled with pity, invoked the mercy of God; and straightway the blessed Germanus, causing the youth to sit down, touched the bent and feeble knee and passed his healing hand over all the diseased part. At once health was restored by the power of his touch, the withered limb regained its vigour, the sinews resumed their task, and the youth was, in the presence of all the people, delivered whole to his father. The multitude was amazed at the miracle, and the Catholic faith was firmly established in the hearts of all; after which, they were, in a sermon, exhorted to amend their error. By the judgement of all, the exponents of the heresy, who had been banished from the island, were brought before the bishops, to be conveyed into the continent, that the country might be rid of them, and they corrected of their errors. So it came to pass that the faith in those parts continued long after pure and untainted. Thus when they had settled all things, the blessed prelates returned home as prosperously as they had come.

But Germanus, after this, went to Ravenna to intercede for the tranquillity of the Armoricans, where, after being very honourably received by Valentinian and his mother, Placidia, he departed hence to Christ; his body was conveyed to his own city with a splendid retinue, and mighty works attended his passage to the grave. Not long after, Valentinian was murdered by the followers of Aetius, the patrician, whom he had put to death, in the sixth year of the reign of Marcian, and with him ended the empire of the West.

Chap. XXII. How the Britons, being for a time at rest from foreign invasions, wore themselves out by civil wars, and at the same time gave themselves up to more heinous crimes.

In the meantime, in Britain, there was some respite from foreign, but not from civil war. The cities destroyed by the enemy and abandoned remained in ruins; and the natives, who had escaped the enemy, now fought against each other. Nevertheless, the kings, priests, private men, and the nobility, still remembering the late calamities and slaughters, in some measure kept within bounds; but when these died, and another generation succeeded, which knew nothing of those times, and was only acquainted with the existing peaceable state of things, all the bonds of truth and justice were so entirely broken, that there was not only no trace of them remaining, but only very few persons seemed to retain any memory of them at all. To other crimes beyond description, which their own historian, Gildas, mournfully relates, they added this—that they never preached the faith to the Saxons, or English, who dwelt amongst them. Nevertheless, the goodness of God did not forsake his people, whom he foreknew, but sent to the aforesaid nation much more worthy heralds of the truth, to bring it to the faith.

Chap. XXIII. How the holy Pope Gregory sent Augustine, with other monks, to preach to the English nation, and encouraged them by a letter of exhortation, not to desist from their labour. [596 ACE]

In the year of our Lord 582, Maurice, the fifty-fourth from Augustus, ascended the throne, and reigned twenty-one years. In the tenth year of his reign, Gregory, a man eminent in learning and the conduct of affairs, was promoted to the Apostolic see of Rome, and presided over it thirteen years, six months and ten days. He, being moved by Divine inspiration, in the fourteenth year of the same emperor, and about the one hundred and fiftieth after the coming of the English into Britain, sent the servant of God, Augustine, and with him divers other monks, who feared the Lord, to preach the Word of God to the English nation. They having, in obedience to the pope's commands, undertaken that work, when they had gone but a little way on their journey, were seized with craven terror, and began to think of returning home, rather than proceed to a barbarous, fierce, and unbelieving nation, to whose very language they were strangers; and by common consent they decided that this was the safer course. At once Augustine, who had been appointed to be consecrated bishop, if they should be received by the English, was sent back, that he might, by humble entreaty, obtain of the blessed Gregory, that they should not be compelled to undertake so dangerous, toilsome, and uncertain a journey. The pope, in reply, sent them a letter of exhortation, persuading them to set forth to the work of the Divine Word, and rely on the help of God. The purport of which letter was as follows:

“Gregory, the servant of the servants of God, to the servants of our Lord. Forasmuch as it had been better not to begin a good work, than to think of desisting from one which has been begun, it behoves you, my beloved sons, to fulfil with all diligence the good work, which, by the help of the Lord, you have undertaken. Let not, therefore, the toil of the journey, nor the tongues of evil-speaking men, discourage you; but with all earnestness and zeal perform, by God's guidance, that which you have set about; being assured, that great labour is followed by the greater glory of an eternal reward. When Augustine, your Superior, returns, whom we also constitute your abbot, humbly obey him in all things; knowing, that whatsoever you shall do by his direction, will, in all respects, be profitable to your souls. Almighty God protect you with His grace, and grant that I may, in the heavenly country, see the fruits of your labour, inasmuch as, though I cannot labour with you, I shall partake in the joy of the reward, because I am willing to labour. God keep you in safety, my most beloved sons. Given the 23rd of July, in the fourteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the thirteenth year after the consulship of our lord aforesaid, and the fourteenth indiction.”

Chap. XXIV. How he wrote to the bishop of Arles to entertain them. [596 ACE]

The same venerable pope also sent at the same time a letter to Aetherius, archbishop of Arles, exhorting him to give favourable entertainment to Augustine on his way to Britain; which letter was in these words:

“To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow bishop Aetherius, Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. Although religious men stand in need of no recommendation with priests who have the charity which is pleasing to God; yet because an opportunity of writing has occurred, we have thought fit to send this letter to you, Brother, to inform you, that with the help of God we have directed thither, for the good of souls, the bearer of these presents, Augustine, the servant of God, of whose zeal we are assured, with other servants of God, whom it is requisite that your Holiness readily assist with priestly zeal, affording him all the comfort in your power. And to the end that you may be the more ready in your help, we have enjoined him to inform you particularly of the occasion of his coming; knowing, that when you are acquainted with it, you will, as the matter requires, for the sake of God, dutifully dispose yourself to give him comfort. We also in all things recommend to your charity, Candidus, the priest, our common son, whom we have transferred to the administration of a small patrimony in our Church. God keep you in safety, most reverend brother. Given the 23rd day of July, in the fourteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the thirteenth year after the consulship of our lord aforesaid, and the fourteenth indiction.”

Chap. XXV. How Augustine, coming into Britain, first preached in the Isle of Thanet to the King of Kent, and having obtained licence from him, went into Kent, in order to preach therein. [597 ACE]

Augustine, thus strengthened by the encouragement of the blessed Father Gregory, returned to the work of the Word of God, with the servants of Christ who were with him, and arrived in Britain. The powerful Ethelbert was at that time king of Kent; he had extended his dominions as far as the boundary formed by the great river Humber, by which the Southern Saxons are divided from the Northern. On the east of Kent is the large Isle of Thanet, containing, according to the English way of reckoning, 600 families, divided from the mainland by the river Wantsum, which is about three furlongs in breadth, and which can be crossed only in two places; for at both ends it runs into the sea. On this island landed the servant of the Lord, Augustine, and his companions, being, as is reported, nearly forty men. They had obtained, by order of the blessed Pope Gregory, interpreters of the nation of the Franks, and sending to Ethelbert, signified that they were come from Rome, and brought a joyful message, which most undoubtedly assured to those that hearkened to it everlasting joys in heaven, and a kingdom that would never end, with the living and true God. The king hearing this, gave orders that they should stay in the island where they had landed, and be furnished with necessaries, till he should consider what to do with them. For he had before heard of the Christian religion, having a Christian wife of the royal family of the Franks, called Bertha; whom he had received from her parents, upon condition that she should be permitted to preserve inviolate the rites of her religion with the Bishop Liudhard, who was sent with her to support her in the faith. Some days after, the king came into the island, and sitting in the open air, ordered Augustine and his

companions to come and hold a conference with him. For he had taken precaution that they should not come to him in any house, lest, by so coming, according to an ancient superstition, if they practised any magical arts, they might impose upon him, and so get the better of him. But they came endued with Divine, not with magic power, bearing a silver cross for their banner, and the image of our Lord and Saviour painted on a board; and chanting litanies, they offered up their prayers to the Lord for the eternal salvation both of themselves and of those to whom and for whom they had come. When they had sat down, in obedience to the king's commands, and preached to him and his attendants there present the Word of life, the king answered thus: "Your words and promises are fair, but because they are new to us, and of uncertain import, I cannot consent to them so far as to forsake that which I have so long observed with the whole English nation. But because you are come from far as strangers into my kingdom, and, as I conceive, are desirous to impart to us those things which you believe to be true, and most beneficial, we desire not to harm you, but will give you favourable entertainment, and take care to supply you with all things necessary to your sustenance; nor do we forbid you to preach and gain as many as you can to your religion." Accordingly he gave them an abode in the city of Canterbury, which was the metropolis of all his dominions, and, as he had promised, besides supplying them with sustenance, did not refuse them liberty to preach. It is told that, as they drew near to the city, after their manner, with the holy cross, and the image of our sovereign Lord and King, Jesus Christ, they sang in concert this litany: "We beseech thee, O Lord, for Thy great mercy, that Thy wrath and anger be turned away from this city, and from Thy holy house, for we have sinned. Hallelujah."

Chap. XXVI. How St. Augustine in Kent followed the doctrine and manner of life of the primitive Church, and settled his episcopal see in the royal city. [597 ACE]

As soon as they entered the dwelling-place assigned to them, they began to imitate the Apostolic manner of life in the primitive Church; applying themselves to constant prayer, watchings, and fastings; preaching the Word of life to as many as they could; despising all worldly things, as in nowise concerning them; receiving only their necessary food from those they taught; living themselves in all respects conformably to what they taught, and being always ready to suffer any adversity, and even to die for that truth which they preached. In brief, some believed and were baptized, admiring the simplicity of their blameless life, and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine. There was on the east side of the city, a church dedicated of old to the honour of St. Martin, built whilst the Romans were still in the island, wherein the queen, who, as has been said before, was a Christian, was wont to pray. In this they also first began to come together, to chant the Psalms, to pray, to celebrate Mass, to preach, and to baptize, till when the king had been converted to the faith, they obtained greater liberty to preach everywhere and build or repair churches.

When he, among the rest, believed and was baptized, attracted by the pure life of these holy men and their gracious promises, the truth of which they established by many miracles, greater numbers began daily to flock together to hear the Word, and, forsaking their heathen rites, to have fellowship, through faith, in the unity of Christ's Holy Church. It is told that the king, while he rejoiced at their conversion and their faith, yet compelled none to embrace Christianity, but only showed more affection to the believers, as to his fellow citizens in the kingdom of Heaven. For he had learned from those who had instructed him and guided him to salvation, that the service of Christ ought to be voluntary, not by compulsion. Nor was it long before he gave his teachers a settled residence suited to their degree in his metropolis of Canterbury, with such possessions of divers sorts as were necessary for them.

Chap. XXVII. How St. Augustine, being made a bishop, sent to acquaint Pope Gregory with what had been done in Britain, and asked and received replies, of which he stood in need. [597-601 ACE]

In the meantime, Augustine, the man of God, went to Arles, and, according to the orders received from the holy Father Gregory, was ordained archbishop of the English nation, by Aetherius, archbishop of that city. Then returning into Britain, he sent Laurentius the priest and Peter the monk to Rome, to acquaint Pope Gregory, that the English nation had received the faith of Christ, and that he was himself made their bishop. At the same time, he desired his solution of some doubts which seemed urgent to him. He soon received fitting answers to his questions, which we have also thought meet to insert in this our history:

The First Question of the blessed Augustine, Bishop of the Church of Canterbury.—Concerning bishops, what should be their manner of conversation towards their clergy? or into how many portions the offerings of the faithful at the altar are to be divided? and how the bishop is to act in the Church?

Gregory, Pope of the City of Rome, answers.—Holy Scripture, in which we doubt not you are well versed, testifies to this, and in particular the Epistles of the Blessed Paul to Timothy, wherein he endeavours to show him what should be his manner of conversation in the house of God; but it is the custom of the Apostolic see to prescribe these rules to bishops when they are ordained: that all emoluments which accrue, are to be divided into four portions;—one for the bishop and his household, for hospitality and entertainment of guests; another for the clergy; a third for the poor; and the fourth for the repair of churches. But in that you, my brother, having been instructed in monastic rules, must not live apart from your clergy in the Church of the English, which has been lately, by the will of God, converted to the faith, you must establish the manner of conversation of our fathers in the primitive Church, among whom, none said that aught of the things which they possessed was his own, but they had all things common.

But if there are any clerks not received into holy orders, who cannot live continent, they are to take wives, and receive their stipends outside of the community; because

we know that it is written concerning the same fathers of whom we have spoken that a distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. Care is also to be taken of their stipends, and provision to be made, and they are to be kept under ecclesiastical rule, that they may live orderly, and attend to singing of psalms, and, by the help of God, preserve their hearts and tongues and bodies from all that is unlawful. But as for those that live in common, there is no need to say anything of assigning portions, or dispensing hospitality and showing mercy; inasmuch as all that they have over is to be spent in pious and religious works, according to the teaching of Him who is the Lord and Master of all, "Give alms of such things as ye have over, and behold all things are clean unto you."

Augustine's Second Question.—Whereas the faith is one and the same, are there different customs in different Churches? and is one custom of Masses observed in the holy Roman Church, and another in the Church of Gaul?

Pope Gregory answers.—You know, my brother, the custom of the Roman Church in which you remember that you were bred up. But my will is, that if you have found anything, either in the Roman, or the Gallican, or any other Church, which may be more acceptable to Almighty God, you should carefully make choice of the same, and sedulously teach the Church of the English, which as yet is new in the faith, whatsoever you can gather from the several Churches. For things are not to be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things. Choose, therefore, from every Church those things that are pious, religious, and right, and when you have, as it were, made them up into one bundle, let the minds of the English be accustomed thereto.

Augustine's Third Question.—I beseech you, what punishment must be inflicted on one who steals anything from a church?

Gregory answers.—You may judge, my brother, by the condition of the thief, in what manner he is to be corrected. For there are some, who, having substance, commit theft; and there are others, who transgress in this matter through want. Wherefore it is requisite, that some be punished with fines, others with stripes; some with more severity, and some more mildly. And when the severity is greater, it is to proceed from charity, not from anger; because this is done for the sake of him who is corrected, that he may not be delivered up to the fires of Hell. For it behoves us to maintain discipline among the faithful, as good parents do with their children according to the flesh, whom they punish with stripes for their faults, and yet they design to make those whom they chastise their heirs, and preserve their possessions for those whom they seem to visit in wrath. This charity is, therefore, to be kept in mind, and it dictates the measure of the punishment, so that the mind may do nothing beyond the rule prescribed by reason. You will add to this, how men are to restore those things which they have stolen from the church. But let not the Church take more than it has lost of its worldly possessions, or seek gain from vanities.

Augustine's Fourth Question.—Whether two full brothers may marry two sisters, who are of a family far removed from them?

Gregory answers.—Most assuredly this may lawfully be done; for nothing is found in Holy Writ on this matter that seems to contradict it.

Augustine's Fifth Question.—To what degree may the faithful marry with their kindred? and is it lawful to marry a stepmother or a brother's wife?

Gregory answers.—A certain secular law in the Roman commonwealth allows, that the son and daughter of a brother and sister, or of two full brothers, or two sisters, may be joined in matrimony; but we have found, by experience, that the offspring of such wedlock cannot grow up; and the Divine law forbids a man to “uncover the nakedness of his kindred.” Hence of necessity it must be the third or fourth generation of the faithful, that can be lawfully joined in matrimony; for the second, which we have mentioned, must altogether abstain from one another. To marry with one's stepmother is a heinous crime, because it is written in the Law, “Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father:” now the son, indeed, cannot uncover his father's nakedness; but in regard that it is written, “They twain shall be one flesh,” he that presumes to uncover the nakedness of his stepmother, who was one flesh with his father, certainly uncovers the nakedness of his father. It is also prohibited to marry with a sister-in-law, because by the former union she is become the brother's flesh. For which thing also John the Baptist was beheaded, and obtained the crown of holy martyrdom. For, though he was not ordered to deny Christ, and it was not for confessing Christ that he was killed, yet inasmuch as the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, said, “I am the Truth,” because John was killed for the truth, he also shed his blood for Christ.

But forasmuch as there are many of the English, who, whilst they were still heathens, are said to have been joined in this unholy union, when they attain to the faith they are to be admonished to abstain, and be made to know that this is a grievous sin. Let them fear the dread judgement of God, lest, for the gratification of their carnal desires, they incur the torments of eternal punishment. Yet they are not on this account to be deprived of the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, lest they should seem to be punished for those things which they did through ignorance before they had received Baptism. For in these times the Holy Church chastises some things with zeal, and tolerates some in mercy, and is blind to some in her wisdom, and so, by forbearance and blindness often suppresses the evil that stands in her way. But all that come to the faith are to be admonished not to presume to do such things. And if any shall be guilty of them, they are to be excluded from the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. For as the offence is, in some measure, to be tolerated in those who did it through ignorance, so it is to be rigorously punished in those who do not fear to sin knowingly.

Augustine's Sixth Question.—Whether a bishop may be consecrated without other bishops being present, if there be so great a distance between them, that they cannot easily come together?

Gregory answers.—In the Church of England, of which you are as yet the only bishop, you cannot otherwise ordain a bishop than in the absence of other bishops. For when do bishops come over from Gaul, that they may be present as

witnesses to you in ordaining a bishop? But we would have you, my brother, to ordain bishops in such a manner, that the said bishops may not be far asunder, to the end that there be no lack, but that at the ordination of a bishop other pastors also, whose presence is of great benefit, should easily come together. Thus, when, by the help of God, bishops shall have been ordained in places near to one another, no ordination of a bishop is to take place without assembling three or four bishops. For, even in spiritual affairs, we may take example by the temporal, that they may be wisely and discreetly conducted. For surely, when marriages are celebrated in the world, some married persons are assembled, that those who went before in the way of matrimony, may also partake in the joy of the new union. Why, then, at this spiritual ordinance, wherein, by means of the sacred ministry, man is joined to God, should not such persons be assembled, as may either rejoice in the advancement of the new bishop, or jointly pour forth their prayers to Almighty God for his preservation?

Augustine's Seventh Question.—How are we to deal with the bishops of Gaul and Britain?

Gregory answers.—We give you no authority over the bishops of Gaul, because the bishop of Arles received the pall in the old times of my predecessors, and we must by no means deprive him of the authority he has received. If it shall therefore happen, my brother, that you go over into the province of Gaul, you are to concert with the said bishop of Arles, how, if there be any faults among the bishops, they may be amended. And if he shall be lukewarm in keeping up discipline, he is to be fired by your zeal; to whom we have also written, that aided by the presence of your Holiness in Gaul, he should exert himself to the utmost, and put away from the behaviour of the bishops all that is opposed to the command of our Creator. But you shall not have power to go beyond your own authority and judge the bishops of Gaul, but by persuading, and winning them, and showing good works for them to imitate, you shall recall the perverted to the pursuit of holiness; for it is written in the Law, “When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest bruise the ears with thine hand and eat; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbours’ standing corn.” For thou mayest not apply the sickle of judgement in that harvest which thou seest to have been committed to another; but by the influence of good works thou shalt clear the Lord’s wheat of the chaff of its vices, and convert it by exhortation and persuasion in the body of the Church, as it were, by eating. But whatsoever is to be done by authority, must be transacted with the aforesaid bishop of Arles, lest that should be omitted, which the ancient institution of the fathers has appointed. But as for all the bishops of Britain, we commit them to your care, that the unlearned may be taught, the weak strengthened by persuasion, and the perverse corrected by authority.

Augustine's Eighth Question.—Whether a woman with child ought to be baptized? Or when she has brought forth, after what time she may come into the church? As also, after how many days the infant born may be baptized, lest he be prevented by death? Or how long after her husband may have carnal knowledge

of her? Or whether it is lawful for her to come into the church when she has her courses, or to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion? Or whether a man, under certain circumstances, may come into the church before he has washed with water? Or approach to receive the Mystery of the Holy Communion? All which things are requisite to be known by the ignorant nation of the English.

Gregory answers.—I do not doubt but that these questions have been put to you, my brother, and I think I have already answered you therein. But I believe you would wish the opinion which you yourself might give and hold to be confirmed by my reply also. Why should not a woman with child be baptized, since the fruitfulness of the flesh is no offence in the eyes of Almighty God? For when our first parents sinned in Paradise, they forfeited the immortality which they had received, by the just judgement of God. Because, therefore, Almighty God would not for their fault wholly destroy the human race, he both deprived man of immortality for his sin, and, at the same time, of his great goodness and loving-kindness, reserved to him the power of propagating his race after him. On what ground, then, can that which is preserved to human nature by the free gift of Almighty God, be excluded from the privilege of Holy Baptism? For it is very foolish to imagine that the gift can be opposed to grace in that Mystery in which all sin is blotted out. When a woman is delivered, after how many days she may come into the church, you have learnt from the teaching of the Old Testament, to wit, that she is to abstain for a male child thirty-three days, and sixty-six for a female. Now you must know that this is to be received in a mystery; for if she enters the church the very hour that she is delivered, to return thanks, she is not guilty of any sin; because the pleasure of the flesh is a fault, and not the pain; but the pleasure is in the copulation of the flesh, whereas there is pain in bringing forth the child. Wherefore it is said to the first mother of all, “In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children.” If, therefore, we forbid a woman that has brought forth, to enter the church, we make a crime of her very punishment. To baptize either a woman who has brought forth, if there be danger of death, even the very hour that she brings forth, or that which she has brought forth the very hour it is born, is in no way prohibited, because, as the grace of the Holy Mystery is to be with much discretion provided for those who are in full life and capable of understanding, so is it to be without any delay administered to the dying; lest, while a further time is sought to confer the Mystery of redemption, if a small delay intervene, the person that is to be redeemed be dead and gone.

Her husband is not to approach her, till the infant born be weaned. An evil custom is sprung up in the lives of married people, in that women disdain to suckle the children whom they bring forth, and give them to other women to suckle; which seems to have been invented on no other account but incontinency; because, as they will not be continent, they will not suckle the children whom they bear. Those women, therefore, who, from evil custom, give their children to others to bring up, must not approach their husbands till the time of purification is past. For even when there has been no child-birth, women are forbidden to do so, whilst they have their courses, insomuch that the Law condemns to death any

man that shall approach unto a woman during her uncleanness. Yet the woman, nevertheless, must not be forbidden to come into the church whilst she has her courses; because the superfluity of nature cannot be imputed to her as a crime; and it is not just that she should be refused admittance into the church, for that which she suffers against her will. For we know, that the woman who had the issue of blood, humbly approaching behind our Lord's back, touched the hem of his garment, and her infirmity immediately departed from her. If, therefore, she that had an issue of blood might commendably touch the garment of our Lord, why may not she, who has her courses, lawfully enter into the church of God? But you may say, Her infirmity compelled her, whereas these we speak of are bound by custom. Consider, then, most dear brother, that all we suffer in this mortal flesh, through the infirmity of our nature, is ordained by the just judgement of God after the fall; for to hunger, to thirst, to be hot, to be cold, to be weary, is from the infirmity of our nature; and what else is it to seek food against hunger, drink against thirst, air against heat, clothes against cold, rest against weariness, than to procure a remedy against distempers? Thus to a woman her courses are a distemper. If, therefore, it was a commendable boldness in her, who in her disease touched our Lord's garment, why may not that which is allowed to one infirm person, be granted to all women, who, through the fault of their nature, are rendered infirm?

She must not, therefore, be forbidden to receive the Mystery of the Holy Communion during those days. But if any one out of profound respect does not presume to do it, she is to be commended; yet if she receives it, she is not to be judged. For it is the part of noble minds in some manner to acknowledge their faults, even when there is no fault; because very often that is done without a fault, which, nevertheless, proceeded from a fault. Thus, when we are hungry, it is no sin to eat; yet our being hungry proceeds from the sin of the first man. The courses are no sin in women, because they happen naturally; yet, because our nature itself is so depraved, that it appears to be defiled even without the concurrence of the will, a defect arises from sin, and thereby human nature may itself know what it is become by judgement. And let man, who wilfully committed the offence, bear the guilt of that offence against his will. And, therefore, let women consider with themselves, and if they do not presume, during their courses, to approach the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord, they are to be commended for their praiseworthy consideration; but when they are carried away with love of the same Mystery to receive it according to the custom of the religious life, they are not to be restrained, as we said before. For as in the Old Testament the outward works are observed, so in the New Testament, that which is outwardly done, is not so diligently regarded as that which is inwardly thought, that the punishment may be with discernment. For whereas the Law forbids the eating of many things as unclean, yet our Lord says in the Gospel, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man." And afterwards he added, expounding the same, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts." Where it is abundantly shown, that that is declared by Almighty God

to be polluted in deed, which springs from the root of a polluted thought. Whence also Paul the Apostle says, "Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure." And presently, declaring the cause of that defilement, he adds, "For even their mind and conscience is defiled." If, therefore, meat is not unclean to him whose mind is not unclean, why shall that which a woman suffers according to nature, with a clean mind, be imputed to her as uncleanness?

A man who has approached his own wife is not to enter the church unless washed with water, nor is he to enter immediately although washed. The Law prescribed to the ancient people, that a man in such cases should be washed with water, and not enter into the church before the setting of the sun. Which, nevertheless, may be understood spiritually, because a man acts so when the mind is led by the imagination to unlawful concupiscence; for unless the fire of concupiscence be first driven from his mind, he is not to think himself worthy of the congregation of the brethren, while he sees himself burdened by the iniquity of a perverted will. For though divers nations have divers opinions concerning this affair, and seem to observe different rules, it was always the custom of the Romans, from ancient times, for such an one to seek to be cleansed by washing, and for some time reverently to forbear entering the church. Nor do we, in so saying, assign matrimony to be a fault; but forasmuch as lawful intercourse cannot be had without the pleasure of the flesh, it is proper to forbear entering the holy place, because the pleasure itself cannot be without a fault. For he was not born of adultery or fornication, but of lawful marriage, who said, "Behold I was conceived in iniquity, and in sin my mother brought me forth." For he who knew himself to have been conceived in iniquity, lamented that he [pg 060] was born from sin, because he bears the defect, as a tree bears in its bough the sap it drew from the root. In which words, however, he does not call the union of the married couple iniquity, but the will itself. For there are many things which are lawful and permitted, and yet we are somewhat defiled in doing them. As very often by being angry we correct faults, and at the same time disturb our own peace of mind; and though that which we do is right, yet it is not to be approved that our mind should be disturbed. For he who said, "My eye was disturbed with anger," had been angry at the vices of sinners. Now, seeing that only a calm mind can rest in the light of contemplation, he grieved that his eye was disturbed with anger; because, whilst he was correcting evil actions below, he was obliged to be confused and disturbed with regard to the contemplation of the highest things. Anger against vice is, therefore, commendable, and yet painful to a man, because he thinks that by his mind being agitated, he has incurred some guilt. Lawful commerce, therefore, must be for the sake of children, not of pleasure; and must be to procure offspring, not to satisfy vices. But if any man is led not by the desire of pleasure, but only for the sake of getting children, such a man is certainly to be left to his own judgement, either as to entering the church, or as to receiving the Mystery of the Body and Blood of our Lord, which he, who being placed in the fire cannot burn, is not to be forbidden by us to receive. But when, not the love of

getting children, but of pleasure prevails, the pair have cause to lament their deed. For this the holy preaching concedes to them, and yet fills the mind with dread of the very concession. For when Paul the Apostle said, "Let him that cannot contain have his own wife;" he presently took care to subjoin, "But this I say by way of permission, not of commandment." For that is not granted by way of permission which is lawful, because it is just; and, therefore, that which he said he permitted, he showed to be an offence.

It is seriously to be considered, that when God was about to speak to the people on Mount Sinai, He first commanded them to abstain from women. And if purity of body was there so carefully required, where God spoke to the people by the means of a creature as His representative, that those who were to hear the words of God should abstain; how much more ought women, who receive the Body of Almighty God, to preserve themselves in purity of flesh, lest they be burdened with the very greatness of that inestimable Mystery? For this reason also, it was said to David, concerning his men, by the priest, that if they were clean in this particular, they should receive the shewbread, which they would not have received at all, had not David first declared them to be clean. Then the man, who, afterwards, has been washed with water, is also capable of receiving the Mystery of the Holy Communion, when it is lawful for him, according to what has been before declared, to enter the church.

Augustine's Ninth Question.—Whether after an illusion, such as is wont to happen in a dream, any man may receive the Body of our Lord, or if he be a priest, celebrate the Divine Mysteries?

Gregory answers.—The Testament of the Old Law, as has been said already in the article above, calls such a man polluted, and allows him not to enter into the church till the evening, after being washed with water. Which, nevertheless, a spiritual people, taking in another sense, will understand in the same manner as above; because he is imposed upon as it were in a dream, who, being tempted with uncleanness, is defiled by real representations in thought, and he is to be washed with water, that he may cleanse away the sins of thought with tears; and unless the fire of temptation depart before, may know himself to be in a manner guilty until the evening. But a distinction is very necessary in that illusion, and one must carefully consider what causes it to arise in the mind of the person sleeping; for sometimes it proceeds from excess of eating or drinking; sometimes from the superfluity or infirmity of nature, and sometimes from the thoughts. And when it happens either through superfluity or infirmity of nature, such an illusion is not to be feared at all, because it is to be lamented, that the mind of the person, who knew nothing of it, suffers the same, rather than that he occasioned it. But when the appetite of gluttony commits excess in food, and thereupon the receptacles of the humours are oppressed, the mind thence contracts some guilt; yet not so much as to hinder the receiving of the Holy Mystery, or celebrating Mass, when a holy day requires it, or necessity obliges the Mystery to be shown forth, because there is no other priest in the place; for if there be others who can perform the

ministry, the illusion proceeding from over-eating ought not to exclude a man from receiving the sacred Mystery; but I am of opinion he ought humbly to abstain from offering the sacrifice of the Mystery, but not from receiving it, unless the mind of the person sleeping has been disturbed with some foul imagination. For there are some, who for the most part so suffer the illusion, that their mind, even during the sleep of the body, is not defiled with filthy thoughts. In which case, one thing is evident, that the mind is guilty, not being acquitted even in its own judgement; for though it does not remember to have seen anything whilst the body was sleeping, yet it calls to mind that, when the body was awake, it fell into gluttony. But if the illusion of the sleeper proceeds from evil thoughts when he was awake, then its guilt is manifest to the mind; for the man perceives from what root that defilement sprang, because what he had consciously thought of, that he afterwards unconsciously endured. But it is to be considered, whether that thought was no more than a suggestion, or proceeded to delight, or, what is worse, consented to sin. For all sin is committed in three ways, viz., by suggestion, by delight, and by consent. Suggestion comes from the Devil, delight from the flesh, and consent from the spirit. For the serpent suggested the first offence, and Eve, as flesh, took delight in it, but Adam, as the spirit, consented. And when the mind sits in judgement on itself, it must clearly distinguish between suggestion and delight, and between delight and consent. For when the evil spirit suggests a sin to the mind, if there ensue no delight in the sin, the sin is in no way committed; but when the flesh begins to take delight in it, then sin begins to arise. But if it deliberately consents, then the sin is known to be full-grown. The seed, therefore, of sin is in the suggestion, the nourishment of it in delight, its maturity in the consent. And it often happens that what the evil spirit sows in the thought, in that the flesh begins to find delight, and yet the soul does not consent to that delight. And whereas the flesh cannot be delighted without the mind, yet the mind struggling against the pleasures of the flesh, is after a manner unwillingly bound by the carnal delight, so that through reason it opposes it, and does not consent, yet being bound by delight, it grievously laments being so bound. Wherefore that great soldier of our Lord's host, groaned and said, "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members." Now if he was a captive, he did not fight; but he did fight; wherefore he was a captive and at the same time therefore fought against the law of the mind, which the law that is in the members opposed; but if he fought, he was no captive. Thus, then, man is, as I may say, a captive and yet free. Free on account of justice, which he loves, a captive by the delight which he unwillingly bears within him.

Chap. XXVIII. How Pope Gregory wrote to the bishop of Arles to help Augustine in the work of God. [601 ACE]

Thus far the answers of the holy Pope Gregory, to the questions of the most reverend prelate, Augustine. Now the letter, which he says he had written to the

bishop of Arles, was directed to Vergilius, successor to Aetherius, and was in the following words:

“To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow bishop, Vergilius; Gregory, servant of the servants of God. With how much kindness brethren, coming of their own accord, are to be entertained, is shown by this, that they are for the most part invited for the sake of brotherly love. Therefore, if our common brother, Bishop Augustine, shall happen to come to you, let your love, as is becoming, receive him with so great kindness and affection, that it may refresh him by the benefit of its consolation and show to others how brotherly charity is to be cultivated. And, since it often happens that those who are at a distance first learn from others the things that need correction, if he bring before you, my brother, any sins of bishops or others, do you, in conjunction with him, carefully inquire into the same, and show yourself so strict and earnest with regard to those things which offend God and provoke His wrath, that for the amendment of others, the punishment may fall upon the guilty, and the innocent may not suffer under false report. God keep you in safety, most reverend brother. Given the 22nd day of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord, and the fourth indiction.”

Chap. XXIX. How the same Pope sent to Augustine the Pall and a letter, along with several ministers of the Word. [601 ACE]

Moreover, the same Pope Gregory, hearing from Bishop Augustine, that the harvest which he had was great and the labourers but few, sent to him, together with his aforesaid envoys, certain fellow labourers and ministers of the Word, of whom the chief and foremost were Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Rufinianus, and by them all things in general that were necessary for the worship and service of the Church, to wit, sacred vessels and altar-cloths, also church-furniture, and vestments for the bishops and clerks, as likewise relics of the holy Apostles and martyrs; besides many manuscripts. He also sent a letter, wherein he signified that he had despatched the pall to him, and at the same time directed how he should constitute bishops in Britain. The letter was in these words:

“To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow bishop, Augustine; Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. Though it be certain, that the unspeakable rewards of the eternal kingdom are reserved for those who labour for Almighty God, yet it is requisite that we bestow on them the benefit of honours, to the end that they may by this recompense be encouraged the more vigorously to apply themselves to the care of their spiritual work. And, seeing that the new Church of the English is, through the bounty of the Lord, and your labours, brought to the grace of God, we grant you the use of the pall in the same, only for the celebration of the solemn service of the Mass; that so you may ordain twelve bishops in different places, who shall be subject to your jurisdiction. But the bishop of London shall, for the future, be always consecrated by his own synod, and receive the pall, which is the token of his office, from this holy and Apostolic see, which I, by the grace

of God, now serve. But we would have you send to the city of York such a bishop as you shall think fit to ordain; yet so, that if that city, with the places adjoining, shall receive the Word of God, that bishop shall also ordain twelve bishops, and enjoy the honour of a metropolitan; for we design, if we live, by the help of God, to bestow on him also the pall; and yet we would have him to be subject to your authority, my brother; but after your decease, he shall so preside over the bishops he shall have ordained, as to be in no way subject to the jurisdiction of the bishop of London. But for the future let there be this distinction as regards honour between the bishops of the cities of London and York, that he who has been first ordained have the precedence. But let them take counsel and act in concert and with one mind dispose whatsoever is to be done for zeal of Christ; let them judge rightly, and carry out their judgement without dissension.

“But to you, my brother, shall, by the authority of our God and Lord Jesus Christ, be subject not only those bishops whom you shall ordain, and those that shall be ordained by the bishop of York, but also all the prelates in Britain; to the end that from the words and manner of life of your Holiness they may learn the rule of a right belief and a good life, and fulfilling their office in faith and righteousness, they may, when it shall please the Lord, attain to the kingdom of Heaven. God preserve you in safety, most reverend brother.

“Given the 22nd of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord, and the fourth indiction.”

Chap. XXX. A copy of the letter which Pope Gregory sent to the Abbot Mellitus, then going into Britain. [601 ACE]

The aforesaid envoys having departed, the blessed Father Gregory sent after them a letter worthy to be recorded, wherein he plainly shows how carefully he watched over the salvation of our country. The letter was as follows:

“To his most beloved son, the Abbot Mellitus; Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. We have been much concerned, since the departure of our people that are with you, because we have received no account of the success of your journey. Howbeit, when Almighty God has led you to the most reverend Bishop Augustine, our brother, tell him what I have long been considering in my own mind concerning the matter of the English people; to wit, that the temples of the idols in that nation ought not to be destroyed; but let the idols that are in them be destroyed; let water be consecrated and sprinkled in the said temples, let altars be erected, and relics placed there. For if those temples are well built, it is requisite that they be converted from the worship of devils to the service of the true God; that the nation, seeing that their temples are not destroyed, may remove error from their hearts, and knowing and adoring the true God, may the more freely resort to the places to which they have been accustomed. And because they are used to slaughter many oxen in sacrifice to devils, some solemnity must be given them in exchange for this, as that on the day of the dedication, or the

nativities of the holy martyrs, whose relics are there deposited, they should build themselves huts of the boughs of trees about those churches which have been turned to that use from being temples, and celebrate the solemnity with religious feasting, and no more offer animals to the Devil, but kill cattle and glorify God in their feast, and return thanks to the Giver of all things for their abundance; to the end that, whilst some outward gratifications are retained, they may the more easily consent to the inward joys. For there is no doubt that it is impossible to cut off every thing at once from their rude natures; because he who endeavours to ascend to the highest place rises by degrees or steps, and not by leaps. Thus the Lord made Himself known to the people of Israel in Egypt; and yet He allowed them the use, in His own worship, of the sacrifices which they were wont to offer to the Devil, commanding them in His sacrifice to kill animals, to the end that, with changed hearts, they might lay aside one part of the sacrifice, whilst they retained another; and although the animals were the same as those which they were wont to offer, they should offer them to the true God, and not to idols; and thus they would no longer be the same sacrifices. This then, dearly beloved, it behoves you to communicate to our aforesaid brother, that he, being placed where he is at present, may consider how he is to order all things. God preserve you in safety, most beloved son.

“Given the 17th of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord, and the fourth indiction.”

Chap. XXXI. How Pope Gregory, by letter, exhorted Augustine not to glory in his miracles. [601 ACE]

At which time he also sent Augustine a letter concerning the miracles that he had heard had been wrought by him; wherein he admonishes him not to incur the danger of being puffed up by the number of them. The letter was in these words:

“I know, dearly beloved brother, that Almighty God, by means of you, shows forth great miracles to the nation which it was His will to choose. Wherefore you must needs rejoice with fear, and fear with joy concerning that heavenly gift; for you will rejoice because the souls of the English are by outward miracles drawn to inward grace; but you will fear, lest, amidst the wonders that are wrought, the weak mind may be puffed up with self-esteem, and that whereby it is outwardly raised to honour cause it inwardly to fall through vain-glory. For we must call to mind, that when the disciples returned with joy from preaching, and said to their Heavenly Master, ‘Lord, even the devils are subject to us through Thy Name;’ forthwith they received the reply, ‘In this rejoice not; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.’ For their minds were set on private and temporal joys, when they rejoiced in miracles; but they are recalled from the private to the common joy, and from the temporal to the eternal, when it is said to them, ‘Rejoice in this, because your names are written in heaven.’ For all the elect do not work miracles, and yet the names of all are written in heaven. For those who are disciples of the

truth ought not to rejoice, save for that good thing which all men enjoy as well as they, and in which their joy shall be without end.

“It remains, therefore, most dear brother, that amidst those outward actions, which you perform through the power of the Lord, you should always carefully judge yourself in your heart, and carefully understand both what you are yourself, and how much grace is bestowed upon that same nation, for the conversion of which you have received even the gift of working miracles. And if you remember that you have at any time sinned against our Creator, either by word or deed, always call it to mind, to the end that the remembrance of your guilt may crush the vanity which rises in your heart. And whatsoever gift of working miracles you either shall receive, or have received, consider the same, not as conferred on you, but on those for whose salvation it has been given you.”

Chap. XXXII. How Pope Gregory sent letters and gifts to King Ethelbert. [601 ACE]

The same blessed Pope Gregory, at the same time, sent a letter to King Ethelbert, with many gifts of divers sorts; being desirous to glorify the king with temporal honours, at the same time that he rejoiced that through his own labour and zeal he had attained to the knowledge of heavenly glory. The copy of the said letter is as follows:

“To the most glorious lord, and his most excellent son, Ethelbert, king of the English, Bishop Gregory. Almighty God advances good men to the government of nations, that He may by their means bestow the gifts of His loving-kindness on those over whom they are placed. This we know to have come to pass in the English nation, over whom your Highness was placed, to the end, that by means of the blessings which are granted to you, heavenly benefits might also be conferred on your subjects. Therefore, my illustrious son, do you carefully guard the grace which you have received from the Divine goodness, and be eager to spread the Christian faith among the people under your rule; in all uprightness increase your zeal for their conversion; suppress the worship of idols; overthrow the structures of the temples; establish the manners of your subjects by much cleanness of life, exhorting, terrifying, winning, correcting, and showing forth an example of good works, that you may obtain your reward in Heaven from Him, Whose Name and the knowledge of Whom you have spread abroad upon earth. For He, Whose honour you seek and maintain among the nations, will also render your Majesty’s name more glorious even to posterity.

“For even so the most pious emperor, Constantine, of old, recovering the Roman commonwealth from the false worship of idols, brought it with himself into subjection to Almighty God, our Lord Jesus Christ, and turned to Him with his whole mind, together with the nations under his rule. Whence it followed, that his praises transcended the fame of former princes; and he excelled his predecessors in renown as much as in good works. Now, therefore, let your Highness hasten to impart to the kings and peoples that are subject to you, the knowledge of one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that you may surpass the ancient kings of your

nation in praise and merit, and while you cause the sins of others among your own subjects to be blotted out, become the more free from anxiety with regard to your own sins before the dread judgement of Almighty God.

“Willingly hear, devoutly perform, and studiously retain in your memory, whatsoever counsel shall be given you by our most reverend brother, Bishop Augustine, who is trained up in the monastic rule, full of the knowledge of Holy Scripture, and, by the help of God, endued with good works; for if you give ear to him when he speaks on behalf of Almighty God, the sooner will Almighty God hear his prayers for you. But if (which God forbid!) you slight his words, how shall Almighty God hear him on your behalf, when you neglect to hear him on behalf of God? Unite yourself, therefore, to him with all your mind, in the fervour of faith, and further his endeavours, by that virtue which God has given you, that He may make you partaker of His kingdom, Whose faith you cause to be received and maintained in your own.

“Besides, we would have your Highness know that, as we find in Holy Scripture from the words of the Almighty Lord, the end of this present world, and the kingdom of the saints, which will never come to an end, is at hand. But as the end of the world draws near, many things are about to come upon us which were not before, to wit, changes in the air, and terrors from heaven, and tempests out of the order of the seasons, wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes in divers places; which things will not, nevertheless, all happen in our days, but will all follow after our days. If, therefore, you perceive that any of these things come to pass in your country, let not your mind be in any way disturbed; for these signs of the end of the world are sent before, for this reason, that we may take heed to our souls, and be watchful for the hour of death, and may be found prepared with good works to meet our Judge. Thus much, my illustrious son, I have said in few words, with intent that when the Christian faith is spread abroad in your kingdom, our discourse to you may also be more copious, and we may desire to say the more, as joy for the full conversion of your nation is increased in our mind.

“I have sent you some small gifts, which will not appear small to you, when received by you with the blessing of the blessed Apostle, Peter. May Almighty God, therefore, perfect in you His grace which He has begun, and prolong your life here through a course of many years, and in the fulness of time receive you into the congregation of the heavenly country. May the grace of God preserve you in safety, my most excellent lord and son.

“Given the 22nd day of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, in the eighteenth year after his consulship, and the fourth indiction.”

Chap. XXXIII. How Augustine repaired the church of our Saviour, and built the monastery of the blessed Peter the Apostle; and concerning Peter the first abbot of the same.

Augustine having had his episcopal see granted him in the royal city, as has been said, recovered therein, with the support of the king, a church, which he was

informed had been built of old by the faithful among the Romans, and consecrated it in the name of the Holy Saviour, our Divine Lord Jesus Christ, and there established a residence for himself and all his successors. He also built a monastery not far from the city to the eastward, in which, by his advice, Ethelbert erected from the foundation the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, and enriched it with divers gifts; wherein the bodies of the same Augustine, and of all the bishops of Canterbury, and of the kings of Kent, might be buried. Nevertheless, it was not Augustine himself who consecrated that church, but Laurentius, his successor.

The first abbot of that monastery was the priest Peter, who, being sent on a mission into Gaul, was drowned in a bay of the sea, which is called Amflea, and committed to a humble tomb by the inhabitants of the place; but since it was the will of Almighty God to reveal his merits, a light from Heaven was seen over his grave every night; till the neighbouring people who saw it, perceiving that he had been a holy man that was buried there, and inquiring who and whence he was, carried away the body, and interred it in the church, in the city of Boulogne, with the honour due to so great a person.

Chap. XXXIV. How Ethelfrid, king of the Northumbrians, having vanquished the nations of the Scots, expelled them from the territories of the English. [603 ACE]

At this time, the brave and ambitious king, Ethelfrid, governed the kingdom of the Northumbrians, and ravaged the Britons more than all the chiefs of the English, insomuch that he might be compared to Saul of old, king of the Israelites, save only in this, that he was ignorant of Divine religion. For he conquered more territories from the Britons than any other chieftain or king, either subduing the inhabitants and making them tributary, or driving them out and planting the English in their places. To him might justly be applied the saying of the patriarch blessing his son in the person of Saul, "Benjamin shall ravine as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil." Hereupon, Aedan, king of the Scots that dwell in Britain, being alarmed by his success, came against him with a great and mighty army, but was defeated and fled with a few followers; for almost all his army was cut to pieces at a famous place, called Degsastan, that is, Degsa Stone. In which battle also Theobald, brother to Ethelfrid, was killed, with almost all the forces he commanded. This war Ethelfrid brought to an end in the year of our Lord 603, the eleventh of his own reign, which lasted twenty-four years, and the first year of the reign of Phocas, who then was at the head of the Roman empire. From that time, no king of the Scots durst come into Britain to make war on the English to this day.

Book II

Chap. I. Of the death of the blessed Pope Gregory. [604 ACE]

At this time, that is, in the year of our Lord 605, the blessed Pope Gregory, after having most gloriously governed the Roman Apostolic see thirteen years, six

months, and ten days, died, and was translated to an eternal abode in the kingdom of Heaven. Of whom, seeing that by his zeal he converted our nation, the English, from the power of Satan to the faith of Christ, it behoves us to discourse more at large in our Ecclesiastical History, for we may rightly, nay, we must, call him our apostle; because, as soon as he began to wield the pontifical power over all the world, and was placed over the Churches long before converted to the true faith, he made our nation, till then enslaved to idols, the Church of Christ, so that concerning him we may use those words of the Apostle; “if he be not an apostle to others, yet doubtless he is to us; for the seal of his apostleship are we in the Lord.”

He was by nation a Roman, son of Gordianus, tracing his descent from ancestors that were not only noble, but religious. Moreover Felix, once bishop of the same Apostolic see, a man of great honour in Christ and in the Church, was his forefather. Nor did he show his nobility in religion by less strength of devotion than his parents and kindred. But that nobility of this world which was seen in him, by the help of the Divine Grace, he used only to gain the glory of eternal dignity; for soon quitting his secular habit, he entered a monastery, wherein he began to live with so much grace of perfection that (as he was wont afterwards with tears to testify) his mind was above all transitory things; that he rose superior to all that is subject to change; that he used to think of nothing but what was heavenly; that, whilst detained by the body, he broke through the bonds of the flesh by contemplation; and that he even loved death, which is a penalty to almost all men, as the entrance into life, and the reward of his labours. This he used to say of himself, not to boast of his progress in virtue, but rather to bewail the falling off which he imagined he had sustained through his pastoral charge. Indeed, once in a private conversation with his deacon, Peter, after having enumerated the former virtues of his soul, he added sorrowfully, “But now, on account of the pastoral charge, it is entangled with the affairs of laymen, and, after so fair an appearance of inward peace, is defiled with the dust of earthly action. And having wasted itself on outward things, by turning aside to the affairs of many men, even when it desires the inward things, it returns to them undoubtedly impaired. I therefore consider what I endure, I consider what I have lost, and when I behold what I have thrown away, that which I bear appears the more grievous.”

So spake the holy man constrained by his great humility. But it behoves us to believe that he lost nothing of his monastic perfection by reason of his pastoral charge, but rather that he gained greater profit through the labour of converting many, than by the former calm of his private life, and chiefly because, whilst holding the pontifical office, he set about organizing his house like a monastery. And when first drawn from the monastery, ordained to the ministry of the altar, and sent to Constantinople as representative of the Apostolic see, though he now took part in the secular affairs of the palace, yet he did not abandon the fixed course of his heavenly life; for some of the brethren of his monastery, who had followed him to the royal city in their brotherly love, he employed for the better observance of monastic rule, to the end that at all times, by their example, as he writes himself,

he might be held fast to the calm shore of prayer, as it were, with the cable of an anchor, whilst he should be tossed up and down by the ceaseless waves of worldly affairs; and daily in the intercourse of studious reading with them, strengthen his mind shaken with temporal concerns. By their company he was not only guarded against the assaults of the world, but more and more roused to the exercises of a heavenly life.

For they persuaded him to interpret by a mystical exposition the book of the blessed Job, which is involved in great obscurity; nor could he refuse to undertake that work, which brotherly affection imposed on him for the future benefit of many; but in a wonderful manner, in five and thirty books of exposition, he taught how that same book is to be understood literally; how to be referred to the mysteries of Christ and the Church; and in what sense it is to be adapted to every one of the faithful. This work he began as papal representative in the royal city, but finished it at Rome after being made pope. Whilst he was still in the royal city, by the help of the grace of Catholic truth, he crushed in its first rise a new heresy which sprang up there, concerning the state of our resurrection. For Eutychius, bishop of that city, taught, that our body, in the glory of resurrection, would be impalpable, and more subtile than wind and air. The blessed Gregory hearing this, proved by force of truth, and by the instance of the Resurrection of our Lord, that this doctrine was every way opposed to the orthodox faith. For the Catholic faith holds that our body, raised by the glory of immortality, is indeed rendered subtile by the effect of spiritual power, but is palpable by the reality of nature; according to the example of our Lord's Body, concerning which, when risen from the dead, He Himself says to His disciples, "Handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have." In maintaining this faith, the venerable Father Gregory so earnestly strove against the rising heresy, and with the help of the most pious emperor, Tiberius Constantine, so fully suppressed it, that none has been since found to revive it.

He likewise composed another notable book, the "Liber Pastoralis," wherein he clearly showed what sort of persons ought to be preferred to rule the Church; how such rulers ought to live; with how much discrimination they ought to instruct the different classes of their hearers, and how seriously to reflect every day on their own frailty. He also wrote forty homilies on the Gospel, which he divided equally into two volumes; and composed four books of Dialogues, in which, at the request of his deacon, Peter, he recounted the virtues of the more renowned saints of Italy, whom he had either known or heard of, as a pattern of life for posterity; to the end that, as he taught in his books of Expositions what virtues men ought to strive after, so by describing the miracles of saints, he might make known the glory of those virtues. Further, in twenty-two homilies, he showed how much light is latent in the first and last parts of the prophet Ezekiel, which seemed the most obscure. Besides which, he wrote the "Book of Answers," to the questions of the holy Augustine, the first bishop of the English nation, as we have shown above, inserting the same book entire in this history; and the useful little "Synodical Book," which he composed with the bishops of Italy on necessary matters of the Church; as well as private

letters to certain persons. And it is the more wonderful that he could write so many lengthy works, seeing that almost all the time of his youth, to use his own words, he was frequently tormented with internal pain, constantly enfeebled by the weakness of his digestion, and oppressed by a low but persistent fever. But in all these troubles, forasmuch as he carefully reflected that, as the Scripture testifies, "He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," the more severely he suffered under those present evils, the more he assured himself of his eternal hope.

Thus much may be said of his immortal genius, which could not be crushed by such severe bodily pains. Other popes applied themselves to building churches or adorning them with gold and silver, but Gregory was wholly intent upon gaining souls. Whatsoever money he had, he took care to distribute diligently and give to the poor, that his righteousness might endure for ever, and his horn be exalted with honour; so that the words of the blessed Job might be truly said of him, "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my judgement was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor; and the cause which I knew not, I searched out. And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth." And a little after: "If I have withheld," says he, "the poor from their desire; or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof: (for from my youth compassion grew up with me, and from my mother's womb it came forth with me.)"

To his works of piety and righteousness this also may be added, that he saved our nation, by the preachers he sent hither, from the teeth of the old enemy, and made it partaker of eternal liberty. Rejoicing in the faith and salvation of our race, and worthily commending it with praise, he says, in his exposition of the blessed Job, "Behold, the tongue of Britain, which only knew how to utter barbarous cries, has long since begun to raise the Hebrew Hallelujah to the praise of God! Behold, the once swelling ocean now serves prostrate at the feet of the saints; and its wild upheavals, which earthly princes could not subdue with the sword, are now, through the fear of God, bound by the lips of priests with words alone; and the heathen that stood not in awe of troops of warriors, now believes and fears the tongues of the humble! For he has received a message from on high and mighty works are revealed; the strength of the knowledge of God is given him, and restrained by the fear of the Lord, he dreads to do evil, and with all his heart desires to attain to everlasting grace." In which words the blessed Gregory shows us this also, that St. Augustine and his companions brought the English to receive the truth, not only by the preaching of words, but also by showing forth heavenly signs.

The blessed Pope Gregory, among other things, caused Masses to be celebrated in the churches of the holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, over their bodies. And in the celebration of Masses, he added three petitions of the utmost perfection: "And

dispose our days in thy peace, and bid us to be preserved from eternal damnation, and to be numbered in the flock of thine elect.”

He governed the Church in the days of the Emperors Mauritius and Phocas, and passing out of this life in the second year of the same Phocas, he departed to the true life which is in Heaven. His body was buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter before the sacristy, on the 12th day of March, to rise one day in the same body in glory with the rest of the holy pastors of the Church. On his tomb was written this epitaph:

Receive, O Earth, his body taken from thine own; thou canst restore it, when God calls to life. His spirit rises to the stars; the claims of death shall not avail against him, for death itself is but the way to new life. In this tomb are laid the limbs of a great pontiff, who yet lives for ever in all places in countless deeds of mercy. Hunger and cold he overcame with food and raiment, and shielded souls from the enemy by his holy teaching. And whatsoever he taught in word, that he fulfilled in deed, that he might be a pattern, even as he spake words of mystic meaning. By his guiding love he brought the Angles to Christ, gaining armies for the Faith from a new people. This was thy toil, thy task, thy care, thy aim as shepherd, to offer to thy Lord abundant increase of the flock. So, Consul of God, rejoice in this thy triumph, for now thou hast the reward of thy works for evermore.

Nor must we pass by in silence the story of the blessed Gregory, handed down to us by the tradition of our ancestors, which explains his earnest care for the salvation of our nation. It is said that one day, when some merchants had lately arrived at Rome, many things were exposed for sale in the market place, and much people resorted thither to buy: Gregory himself went with the rest, and saw among other wares some boys put up for sale, of fair complexion, with pleasing countenances, and very beautiful hair. When he beheld them, he asked, it is said, from what region or country they were brought? and was told, from the island of Britain, and that the inhabitants were like that in appearance. He again inquired whether those islanders were Christians, or still involved in the errors of paganism, and was informed that they were pagans. Then fetching a deep sigh from the bottom of his heart, “Alas! what pity,” said he, “that the author of darkness should own men of such fair countenances; and that with such grace of outward form, their minds should be void of inward grace.” He therefore again asked, what was the name of that nation? and was answered, that they were called Angles. “Right,” said he, “for they have an angelic face, and it is meet that such should be co-heirs with the Angels in heaven. What is the name of the province from which they are brought?” It was replied, that the natives of that province were called Deiri. “Truly are they *De ira*,” said he, “saved from wrath, and called to the mercy of Christ. How is the king of that province called?” They told him his name was Aelli; and he, playing upon the name, said, “Allelujah, the praise of God the Creator must be sung in those parts.”

Then he went to the bishop of the Roman Apostolic see (for he was not himself then made pope), and entreated him to send some ministers of the Word into

Britain to the nation of the English, that it might be converted to Christ by them; declaring himself ready to carry out that work with the help of God, if the Apostolic Pope should think fit to have it done. But not being then able to perform this task, because, though the Pope was willing to grant his request, yet the citizens of Rome could not be brought to consent that he should depart so far from the city, as soon as he was himself made Pope, he carried out the long-desired work, sending, indeed, other preachers, but himself by his exhortations and prayers helping the preaching to bear fruit. This account, which we have received from a past generation, we have thought fit to insert in our Ecclesiastical History.

Chap. II. How Augustine admonished the bishops of the Britons on behalf of Catholic peace, and to that end wrought a heavenly miracle in their presence; and of the vengeance that pursued them for their contempt. [Circ. 603 ACE]

In the meantime, Augustine, with the help of King Ethelbert, drew together to a conference the bishops and doctors of the nearest province of the Britons, at a place which is to this day called, in the English language, Augustine's Ác, that is, Augustine's Oak, on the borders of the Hwiccas and West Saxons; and began by brotherly admonitions to persuade them to preserve Catholic peace with him, and undertake the common labour of preaching the Gospel to the heathen for the Lord's sake. For they did not keep Easter Sunday at the proper time, but from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon; which computation is contained in a cycle of eighty-four years. Besides, they did many other things which were opposed to the unity of the church. When, after a long disputation, they did not comply with the entreaties, exhortations, or rebukes of Augustine and his companions, but preferred their own traditions before all the Churches which are united in Christ throughout the world, the holy father, Augustine, put an end to this troublesome and tedious contention, saying, "Let us entreat God, who maketh men to be of one mind in His Father's house, to vouchsafe, by signs from Heaven, to declare to us which tradition is to be followed; and by what path we are to strive to enter His kingdom. Let some sick man be brought, and let the faith and practice of him, by whose prayers he shall be healed, be looked upon as hallowed in God's sight and such as should be adopted by all." His adversaries unwillingly consenting, a blind man of the English race was brought, who having been presented to the British bishops, found no benefit or healing from their ministry; at length, Augustine, compelled by strict necessity, bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying that He would restore his lost sight to the blind man, and by the bodily enlightenment of one kindle the grace of spiritual light in the hearts of many of the faithful. Immediately the blind man received sight, and Augustine was proclaimed by all to be a true herald of the light from Heaven. The Britons then confessed that they perceived that it was the true way of righteousness which Augustine taught; but that they could not depart from their ancient customs without the consent and sanction of their people. They therefore desired that a

second time a synod might be appointed, at which more of their number should be present.

This being decreed, there came, it is said, seven bishops of the Britons, and many men of great learning, particularly from their most celebrated monastery, which is called, in the English tongue, Bancornaburg, and over which the Abbot Dinoot is said to have presided at that time. They that were to go to the aforesaid council, betook themselves first to a certain holy and discreet man, who was wont to lead the life of a hermit among them, to consult with him, whether they ought, at the preaching of Augustine, to forsake their traditions. He answered, "If he is a man of God, follow him."—"How shall we know that?" said they. He replied, "Our Lord saith, Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; if therefore, Augustine is meek and lowly of heart, it is to be believed that he bears the yoke of Christ himself, and offers it to you to bear. But, if he is harsh and proud, it is plain that he is not of God, nor are we to regard his words." They said again, "And how shall we discern even this?"—"Do you contrive," said the anchorite, "that he first arrive with his company at the place where the synod is to be held; and if at your approach he rises up to you, hear him submissively, being assured that he is the servant of Christ; but if he despises you, and does not rise up to you, whereas you are more in number, let him also be despised by you."

They did as he directed; and it happened, that as they approached, Augustine was sitting on a chair. When they perceived it, they were angry, and charging him with pride, set themselves to contradict all he said. He said to them, "Many things ye do which are contrary to our custom, or rather the custom of the universal Church, and yet, if you will comply with me in these three matters, to wit, to keep Easter at the due time; to fulfil the ministry of Baptism, by which we are born again to God, according to the custom of the holy Roman Apostolic Church; and to join with us in preaching the Word of God to the English nation, we will gladly suffer all the other things you do, though contrary to our customs." They answered that they would do none of those things, nor receive him as their archbishop; for they said among themselves, "if he would not rise up to us now, how much more will he despise us, as of no account, if we begin to be under his subjection?" Then the man of God, Augustine, is said to have threatened them, that if they would not accept peace with their brethren, they should have war from their enemies; and, if they would not preach the way of life to the English nation, they should suffer at their hands the vengeance of death. All which, through the dispensation of the Divine judgement, fell out exactly as he had predicted.

For afterwards the warlike king of the English, Ethelfrid, of whom we have spoken, having raised a mighty army, made a very great slaughter of that heretical nation, at the city of Legions, which by the English is called Legacaestir, but by the Britons more rightly Carlegion. Being about to give battle, he observed their priests, who were come together to offer up their prayers to God for the combatants, standing apart in a place of greater safety; he inquired who they were, and what they came together to do in that place. Most of them were of the monastery

of Bangor, in which, it is said, there was so great a number of monks, that the monastery being divided into seven parts, with a superior set over each, none of those parts contained less than three hundred men, who all lived by the labour of their hands. Many of these, having observed a fast of three days, had come together along with others to pray at the aforesaid battle, having one Brocmail for their protector, to defend them, whilst they were intent upon their prayers, against the swords of the barbarians. King Ethelfrid being informed of the occasion of their coming, said, "If then they cry to their God against us, in truth, though they do not bear arms, yet they fight against us, because they assail us with their curses." He, therefore, commanded them to be attacked first, and then destroyed the rest of the impious army, not without great loss of his own forces. About twelve hundred of those that came to pray are said to have been killed, and only fifty to have escaped by flight. Brocmail, turning his back with his men, at the first approach of the enemy, left those whom he ought to have defended unarmed and exposed to the swords of the assailants. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of the holy Bishop Augustine, though he himself had been long before taken up into the heavenly kingdom, that the heretics should feel the vengeance of temporal death also, because they had despised the offer of eternal salvation.

Chap. III. How St. Augustine made Mellitus and Justus bishops; and of his death. [604 ACE]

In the year of our Lord 604, Augustine, Archbishop of Britain, ordained two bishops, to wit, Mellitus and Justus; Mellitus to preach to the province of the East-Saxons, who are divided from Kent by the river Thames, and border on the Eastern sea. Their metropolis is the city of London, which is situated on the bank of the aforesaid river, and is the mart of many nations resorting to it by sea and land. At that time, Sabert, nephew to Ethelbert through his sister Rricula, reigned over the nation, though he was under subjection to Ethelbert, who, as has been said above, had command over all the nations of the English as far as the river Humber. But when this province also received the word of truth, by the preaching of Mellitus, King Ethelbert built the church of St. Paul the Apostle, in the city of London, where he and his successors should have their episcopal see. As for Justus, Augustine ordained him bishop in Kent, at the city of Dorubrevis, which the English call Hrofaescaestrae, from one that was formerly the chief man of it, called Hrof. It is about twenty-four miles distant from the city of Canterbury to the westward, and in it King Ethelbert dedicated a church to the blessed Apostle Andrew, and bestowed many gifts on the bishops of both those churches, as well as on the Bishop of Canterbury, adding lands and possessions for the use of those who were associated with the bishops.

After this, the beloved of God, our father Augustine, died, and his body was laid outside, close by the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, above spoken of, because it was not yet finished, nor consecrated, but as soon as it was consecrated, the body was brought in, and fittingly buried in the north chapel thereof;

wherein also were interred the bodies of all the succeeding archbishops, except two only, Theodore and Bertwald, whose bodies are in the church itself, because the aforesaid chapel could contain no more. Almost in the midst of this chapel is an altar dedicated in honour of the blessed Pope Gregory, at which every Saturday memorial Masses are celebrated for the archbishops by a priest of that place. On the tomb of Augustine is inscribed this epitaph:

“Here rests the Lord Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, who, being of old sent hither by the blessed Gregory, Bishop of the city of Rome, and supported by God in the working of miracles, led King Ethelbert and his nation from the worship of idols to the faith of Christ, and having ended the days of his office in peace, died the 26th day of May, in the reign of the same king.”

Chap. IV. How Laurentius and his bishops admonished the Scots to observe the unity of the Holy Church, particularly in keeping of Easter; and how Mellitus went to Rome.

Laurentius succeeded Augustine in the bishopric, having been ordained thereto by the latter, in his lifetime, lest, upon his death, the Church, as yet in so unsettled a state, might begin to falter, if it should be destitute of a pastor, though but for one hour. Wherein he also followed the example of the first pastor of the Church, that is, of the most blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles, who, having founded the Church of Christ at Rome, is said to have consecrated Clement to help him in preaching the Gospel, and at the same time to be his successor. Laurentius, being advanced to the rank of archbishop, laboured indefatigably, both by frequent words of holy exhortation and constant example of good works to strengthen the foundations of the Church, which had been so nobly laid, and to carry it on to the fitting height of perfection. In short, he not only took charge of the new Church formed among the English, but endeavoured also to bestow his pastoral care upon the tribes of the ancient inhabitants of Britain, as also of the Scots, who inhabit the island of Ireland, which is next to Britain. For when he understood that the life and profession of the Scots in their aforesaid country, as well as of the Britons in Britain, was not truly in accordance with the practice of the Church in many matters, especially that they did not celebrate the festival of Easter at the due time, but thought that the day of the Resurrection of our Lord ought, as has been said above, to be observed between the 14th and 20th of the moon; he wrote, jointly with his fellow bishops, a hortatory epistle, entreating and conjuring them to keep the unity of peace and Catholic observance with the Church of Christ spread throughout the world. The beginning of which epistle is as follows:

“To our most dear brethren, the Lords Bishops and Abbots throughout all the country of the Scots, Laurentius, Mellitus, and Justus, Bishops, servants of the servants of God. When the Apostolic see, according to the universal custom which it has followed elsewhere, sent us to these western parts to preach to pagan nations, and it was our lot to come into this island, which is called Britain, before we knew them, we held both the Britons and Scots in great esteem for sanctity,

believing that they walked according to the custom of the universal Church; but becoming acquainted with the Britons, we thought that the Scots had been better. Now we have learnt from Bishop Dagan, who came into this aforesaid island, and the Abbot Columban, in Gaul, that the Scots in no way differ from the Britons in their walk; for when Bishop Dagan came to us, not only did he refuse to eat at the same table, but even to eat in the same house where we were entertained.”

Also Laurentius with his fellow bishops wrote a letter to the bishops of the Britons, suitable to his degree, by which he endeavoured to confirm them in Catholic unity; but what he gained by so doing the present times still show.

About this time, Mellitus, bishop of London, went to Rome, to confer with the Apostolic Pope Boniface about the necessary affairs of the English Church. And the same most reverend pope, assembling a synod of the bishops of Italy, to prescribe rules for the life and peace of the monks, Mellitus also sat among them, in the eighth year of the reign of the Emperor Phocas, the thirteenth indiction, on the 27th of February, to the end that he also might sign and confirm by his authority whatsoever should be regularly decreed, and on his return into Britain might carry the decrees to the Churches of the English, to be committed to them and observed; together with letters which the same pope sent to the beloved of God, Archbishop Laurentius, and to all the clergy; as likewise to King Ethelbert and the English nation. This pope was Boniface, the fourth after the blessed Gregory, bishop of the city of Rome. He obtained for the Church of Christ from the Emperor Phocas the gift of the temple at Rome called by the ancients Pantheon, as representing all the gods; wherein he, having purified it from all defilement, dedicated a church to the holy Mother of God, and to all Christ's martyrs, to the end that, the company of devils being expelled, the blessed company of the saints might have therein a perpetual memorial.

Chap. V. How, after the death of the kings Ethelbert and Sabert, their successors restored idolatry; for which reason, both Mellitus and Justus departed out of Britain. [616 ACE]

In the year of our Lord 616, which is the twenty-first year after Augustine and his company were sent to preach to the English nation, Ethelbert, king of Kent, having most gloriously governed his temporal kingdom fifty-six years, entered into the eternal joys of the kingdom of Heaven. He was the third of the English kings who ruled over all the southern provinces that are divided from the northern by the river Humber and the borders contiguous to it; but the first of all that ascended to the heavenly kingdom. The first who had the like sovereignty was Aelli, king of the South-Saxons; the second, Caelin, king of the West-Saxons, who, in their own language, is called Ceaulin; the third, as has been said, was Ethelbert, king of Kent; the fourth was Redwald, king of the East-Angles, who, even in the life-time of Ethelbert, had been acquiring the leadership for his own race. The fifth was Edwin, king of the Northumbrian nation, that is, of those who live in the district to the north of the river Humber; his power was greater; he had the overlordship over all

the nations who inhabit Britain, both English and British, except only the people of Kent; and he reduced also under the dominion of the English, the Mevanian Islands of the Britons, lying between Ireland and Britain; the sixth was Oswald, the most Christian king of the Northumbrians, whose kingdom was within the same bounds; the seventh, his brother Oswy, ruled over a kingdom of like extent for a time, and for the most part subdued and made tributary the nations of the Picts and Scots, who occupy the northern parts of Britain: but of that hereafter.

King Ethelbert died on the 24th day of the month of February, twenty-one years after he had received the faith, and was buried in St. Martin's chapel within the church of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, where also lies his queen, Bertha. Among other benefits which he conferred upon his nation in his care for them, he established, with the help of his council of wise men, judicial decisions, after the Roman model; which are written in the language of the English, and are still kept and observed by them. Among which, he set down first what satisfaction should be given by any one who should steal anything belonging to the Church, the bishop, or the other clergy, for he was resolved to give protection to those whom he had received along with their doctrine.

This Ethelbert was the son of Irminric, whose father was Octa, whose father was Oeric, surnamed Oisc, from whom the kings of Kent are wont to be called Oiscings. His father was Hengist, who, being invited by Vortigern, first came into Britain, with his son Oisc, as has been said above.

But after the death of Ethelbert, the accession of his son Eadbald proved very harmful to the still tender growth of the new Church; for he not only refused to accept the faith of Christ, but was also defiled with such fornication, as the Apostle testifies, as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. By both which crimes he gave occasion to those to return to their former uncleanness, who, under his father, had, either for favour or fear of the king, submitted to the laws of the faith and of a pure life. Nor did the unbelieving king escape without the scourge of Divine severity in chastisement and correction; for he was troubled with frequent fits of madness, and possessed by an unclean spirit. The storm of this disturbance was increased by the death of Sabert, king of the East Saxons, who departing to the heavenly kingdom, left three sons, still pagans, to inherit his temporal crown. They immediately began openly to give themselves up to idolatry, which, during their father's lifetime, they had seemed somewhat to abandon, and they granted free licence to their subjects to serve idols. And when they saw the bishop, whilst celebrating Mass in the church, give the Eucharist to the people, filled, as they were, with folly and ignorance, they said to him, as is commonly reported, "Why do you not give us also that white bread, which you used to give to our father Saba (for so they were wont to call him), and which you still continue to give to the people in the church?" To whom he answered, "If you will be washed in that font of salvation, in which your father was washed, you may also partake of the holy Bread of which he partook; but if you despise the laver of life, you can in no wise receive the Bread of life." They replied, "We will not enter

into that font, because we know that we do not stand in need of it, and yet we will be refreshed by that bread." And being often earnestly admonished by him, that this could by no means be done, nor would any one be admitted to partake of the sacred Oblation without the holy cleansing, at last, they said, filled with rage, "If you will not comply with us in so small a matter as that which we require, you shall not stay in our province." And they drove him out and bade him and his company depart from their kingdom. Being driven thence, he came into Kent, to take counsel with his fellow bishops, Laurentius and Justus, and learn what was to be done in that case; and with one consent they determined that it was better for them all to return to their own country, where they might serve God in freedom of mind, than to continue to no purpose among barbarians, who had revolted from the faith. Mellitus and Justus accordingly went away first, and withdrew into the parts of Gaul, intending there to await the event. But the kings, who had driven from them the herald of the truth, did not continue long unpunished in their worship of devils. For marching out to battle against the nation of the Gewissi, they were all slain with their army. Nevertheless, the people, having been once turned to wickedness, though the authors of it were destroyed, would not be corrected, nor return to the unity of faith and charity which is in Christ.

Chap. VI. How Laurentius, being reprov'd by the Apostle Peter, converted King Eadbald to Christ; and how the king soon recalled Mellitus and Justus to preach the Word. [617-618 ACE]

Laurentius, being about to follow Mellitus and Justus, and to quit Britain, ordered his bed to be laid that night in the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, which has been often mentioned before; wherein having laid himself to rest, after he had with tears poured forth many prayers to God for the state of the Church, he fell asleep; in the dead of night, the blessed chief of the Apostles appeared to him, and scourging him grievously a long time, asked of him with apostolic severity, why he was forsaking the flock which he had committed to him? or to what shepherd he was leaving, by his flight, Christ's sheep that were in the midst of wolves? "Hast thou," he said, "forgotten my example, who, for the sake of those little ones, whom Christ commended to me in token of His affection, underwent at the hands of infidels and enemies of Christ, bonds, stripes, imprisonment, afflictions, and lastly, death itself, even the death of the cross, that I might at last be crowned with Him?" Laurentius, the servant of Christ, roused by the scourging of the blessed Peter and his words of exhortation, went to the king as soon as morning broke, and laying aside his garment, showed the scars of the stripes which he had received. The king, astonished, asked who had presumed to inflict such stripes on so great a man. And when he heard that for the sake of his salvation the bishop had suffered these cruel blows at the hands of the Apostle of Christ, he was greatly afraid; and abjuring the worship of idols, and renouncing his unlawful marriage, he received the faith of Christ, and being baptized, promoted and supported the interests of the Church to the utmost of his power.

He also sent over into Gaul, and recalled Mellitus and Justus, and bade them return to govern their churches in freedom. They came back one year after their departure, and Justus returned to the city of Rochester, where he had before presided; but the people of London would not receive Bishop Mellitus, choosing rather to be under their idolatrous high priests; for King Eadbald had not so much authority in the kingdom as his father, and was not able to restore the bishop to his church against the will and consent of the pagans. But he and his nation, after his conversion to the Lord, sought to obey the commandments of God. Lastly, he built the church of the holy Mother of God, in the monastery of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, which was afterwards consecrated by Archbishop Mellitus.

**Chap. VII. How Bishop Mellitus by prayer quenched a fire in his city.
[619 ACE]**

In this king's reign, the blessed Archbishop Laurentius was taken up to the heavenly kingdom: he was buried in the church and monastery of the holy Apostle Peter, close by his predecessor Augustine, on the 2nd day of the month of February. Mellitus, who was bishop of London, succeeded to the see of Canterbury, being the third archbishop from Augustine; Justus, who was still living, governed the church of Rochester. These ruled the Church of the English with much care and industry, and received letters of exhortation from Boniface, bishop of the Roman Apostolic see, who presided over the Church after Deusdedit, in the year of our Lord 619. Mellitus laboured under the bodily infirmity of gout, but his mind was sound and active, cheerfully passing over all earthly things, and always aspiring to love, seek, and attain to those which are celestial. He was noble by birth, but still nobler by the elevation of his mind.

In short, that I may give one instance of his power, from which the rest may be inferred, it happened once that the city of Canterbury, being set on fire through carelessness, was in danger of being consumed by the spreading conflagration; water was thrown on the fire in vain; a considerable part of the city was already destroyed, and the fierce flames were advancing towards the bishop's abode, when he, trusting in God, where human help failed, ordered himself to be carried towards the raging masses of fire which were spreading on every side. The church of the four crowned Martyrs was in the place where the fire raged most fiercely. The bishop, being carried thither by his servants, weak as he was, set about averting by prayer the danger which the strong hands of active men had not been able to overcome with all their exertions. Immediately the wind, which blowing from the south had spread the conflagration throughout the city, veered to the north, and thus prevented the destruction of those places that had been exposed to its full violence, then it ceased entirely and there was a calm, while the flames likewise sank and were extinguished. And because the man of God burned with the fire of divine love, and was wont to drive away the storms of the powers of the air, by his frequent prayers and at his bidding, from doing harm to himself, or his people, it was meet that he should be allowed to prevail over the winds and flames of this world, and to obtain that they should not injure him or his.

This archbishop also, having ruled the church five years, departed to heaven in the reign of King Eadbald, and was buried with his fathers in the monastery and church, which we have so often mentioned, of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, in the year of our Lord 624, on the 24th day of April.

Chap. VIII. How Pope Boniface sent the Pall and a letter to Justus, successor to Mellitus. [624 ACE]

Justus, bishop of the church of Rochester, immediately succeeded Mellitus in the archbishopric. He consecrated Romanus bishop of that see in his own stead, having obtained authority to ordain bishops from Pope Boniface, whom we mentioned above as successor to Deusdedit: of which licence this is the form:

“Boniface, to his most beloved brother Justus. We have learnt not only from the contents of your letter addressed to us, but from the fulfilment granted to your work, how faithfully and vigilantly you have laboured, my brother, for the Gospel of Christ; for Almighty God has not forsaken either the mystery of His Name, or the fruit of your labours, having Himself faithfully promised to the preachers of the Gospel, ‘Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world;’ which promise His mercy has particularly manifested in this ministry imposed upon you, opening the hearts of the nations to receive the wondrous mystery of your preaching. For He has blessed with a rich reward your Eminence’s acceptable course, by the support of His loving kindness; granting a plentiful increase to your labours in the faithful management of the talents committed to you, and bestowing it on that which you might confirm to many generations. This is conferred on you by that recompense whereby, constantly persevering in the ministry imposed upon you, you have awaited with praiseworthy patience the redemption of that nation, and that they might profit by your merits, salvation has been bestowed on them. For our Lord Himself says, ‘He that endureth to the end shall be saved.’ You are, therefore, saved by the hope of patience, and the virtue of endurance, to the end that the hearts of unbelievers, being cleansed from their natural disease of superstition, might obtain the mercy of their Saviour: for having received letters from our son Adulwald, we perceive with how much knowledge of the Sacred Word you, my brother, have brought his mind to the belief in true conversion and the certainty of the faith. Therefore, firmly confiding in the long-suffering of the Divine clemency, we believe that, through the ministry of your preaching, there will ensue most full salvation not only of the nations subject to him, but also of their neighbours; to the end, that as it is written, the recompense of a perfect work may be conferred on you by the Lord, the Rewarder of all the just; and that the universal confession of all nations, having received the mystery of the Christian faith, may declare, that in truth ‘Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.’

“We have also, my brother, moved by the warmth of our goodwill, sent you by the bearer of these presents, the pall, giving you authority to use it only in the celebration of the Sacred Mysteries; granting to you likewise to ordain bishops

when there shall be occasion, through the Lord's mercy; that so the Gospel of Christ, by the preaching of many, may be spread abroad in all the nations that are not yet converted. You must, therefore, endeavour, my brother, to preserve with unblemished sincerity of mind that which you have received through the kindness of the Apostolic see, bearing in mind what it is that is represented by the honourable vestment which you have obtained to be borne on your shoulders. And imploring the Divine mercy, study to show yourself such that you may present before the tribunal of the Supreme Judge that is to come, the rewards of the favour granted to you, not with guiltiness, but with the benefit of souls.

“God preserve you in safety, most dear brother!”

Chap. IX. Of the reign of King Edwin, and how Paulinus, coming to preach the Gospel, first converted his daughter and others to the mysteries of the faith of Christ. [625-626 ACE]

At this time the nation of the Northumbrians, that is, the English tribe dwelling on the north side of the river Humber, with their king, Edwin, received the Word of faith through the preaching of Paulinus, of whom we have before spoken. This king, as an earnest of his reception of the faith, and his share in the heavenly kingdom, received an increase also of his temporal realm, for he reduced under his dominion all the parts of Britain that were provinces either of the English, or of the Britons, a thing which no English king had ever done before; and he even subjected to the English the Mevanian islands, as has been said above. The more important of these, which is to the southward, is the larger in extent, and more fruitful, containing nine hundred and sixty families, according to the English computation; the other contains above three hundred.

The occasion of this nation's reception of the faith was the alliance by marriage of their aforesaid king with the kings of Kent, for he had taken to wife Ethelberg, otherwise called Tata, daughter to King Ethelbert. When he first sent ambassadors to ask her in marriage of her brother Eadbald, who then reigned in Kent, he received the answer, “That it was not lawful to give a Christian maiden in marriage to a pagan husband, lest the faith and the mysteries of the heavenly King should be profaned by her union with a king that was altogether a stranger to the worship of the true God.” This answer being brought to Edwin by his messengers, he promised that he would in no manner act in opposition to the Christian faith, which the maiden professed; but would give leave to her, and all that went with her, men and women, bishops and clergy, to follow their faith and worship after the custom of the Christians. Nor did he refuse to accept that religion himself, if, being examined by wise men, it should be found more holy and more worthy of God.

So the maiden was promised, and sent to Edwin, and in accordance with the agreement, Paulinus, a man beloved of God, was ordained bishop, to go with her, and by daily exhortations, and celebrating the heavenly Mysteries, to confirm her and her company, lest they should be corrupted by intercourse with the pagans.

Paulinus was ordained bishop by the Archbishop Justus, on the 21st day of July, in the year of our Lord 625, and so came to King Edwin with the aforesaid maiden as an attendant on their union in the flesh. But his mind was wholly bent upon calling the nation to which he was sent to the knowledge of truth; according to the words of the Apostle, "To espouse her to the one true Husband, that he might present her as a chaste virgin to Christ." Being come into that province, he laboured much, not only to retain those that went with him, by the help of God, that they should not abandon the faith, but, if haply he might, to convert some of the pagans to the grace of the faith by his preaching. But, as the Apostle says, though he laboured long in the Word, "The god of this world blinded the minds of them that believed not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them."

The next year there came into the province one called Eumer, sent by the king of the West-Saxons, whose name was Cuichelm, to lie in wait for King Edwin, in hopes at once to deprive him of his kingdom and his life. He had a two-edged dagger, dipped in poison, to the end that, if the wound inflicted by the weapon did not avail to kill the king, it might be aided by the deadly venom. He came to the king on the first day of the Easter festival, at the river Derwent, where there was then a royal township, and being admitted as if to deliver a message from his master, whilst unfolding in cunning words his pretended embassy, he started up on a sudden, and unsheathing the dagger under his garment, assaulted the king. When Lilla, the king's most devoted servant, saw this, having no buckler at hand to protect the king from death, he at once interposed his own body to receive the blow; but the enemy struck home with such force, that he wounded the king through the body of the slaughtered thegn. Being then attacked on all sides with swords, in the confusion he also slew impiously with his dagger another of the thegns, whose name was Forthhere.

On that same holy Easter night, the queen had brought forth to the king a daughter, called Eanfled. The king, in the presence of Bishop Paulinus, gave thanks to his gods for the birth of his daughter; and the bishop, on his part, began to give thanks to Christ, and to tell the king, that by his prayers to Him he had obtained that the queen should bring forth the child in safety, and without grievous pain. The king, delighted with his words, promised, that if God would grant him life and victory over the king by whom the murderer who had wounded him had been sent, he would renounce his idols, and serve Christ; and as a pledge that he would perform his promise, he delivered up that same daughter to Bishop Paulinus, to be consecrated to Christ. She was the first to be baptized of the nation of the Northumbrians, and she received Baptism on the holy day of Pentecost, along with eleven others of her house. At that time, the king, being recovered of the wound which he had received, raised an army and marched against the nation of the West-Saxons; and engaging in war, either slew or received in surrender all those of whom he learned that they had conspired to murder him. So he returned victorious into his own country, but he would not immediately and unadvisedly embrace the mysteries of the Christian faith, though he no longer worshipped idols, ever since

he made the promise that he would serve Christ; but first took heed earnestly to be instructed at leisure by the venerable Paulinus, in the knowledge of faith, and to confer with such as he knew to be the wisest of his chief men, inquiring what they thought was fittest to be done in that case. And being a man of great natural sagacity, he often sat alone by himself a long time in silence, deliberating in the depths of his heart how he should proceed, and to which religion he should adhere.

Chap. X. How Pope Boniface, by letter, exhorted the same king to embrace the faith. [Circ. 625 ACE]

At this time he received a letter from Pope Boniface exhorting him to embrace the faith, which was as follows:

COPY OF THE LETTER OF THE MOST BLESSED AND APOSTOLIC POPE OF THE CHURCH OF THE CITY OF ROME, BONIFACE, ADDRESSED TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS EDWIN, KING OF THE ENGLISH.

“To the illustrious Edwin, king of the English, Bishop Boniface, the servant of the servants of God. Although the power of the Supreme Deity cannot be expressed by [pg 106]the function of human speech, seeing that, by its own greatness, it so consists in invisible and unsearchable eternity, that no keenness of wit can comprehend or express how great it is; yet inasmuch as His Humanity, having opened the doors of the heart to receive Himself, mercifully, by secret inspiration, puts into the minds of men such things as It reveals concerning Itself, we have thought fit to extend our episcopal care so far as to make known to you the fulness of the Christian faith; to the end that, bringing to your knowledge the Gospel of Christ, which our Saviour commanded should be preached to all nations, we might offer to you the cup of the means of salvation.

“Thus the goodness of the Supreme Majesty, which, by the word alone of His command, made and created all things, the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, disposing the order by which they should subsist, hath, ordaining all things, with the counsel of His co-eternal Word, and the unity of the Holy Spirit, made man after His own image and likeness, forming him out of the mire of the earth; and granted him such high privilege of distinction, as to place him above all else; so that, preserving the bounds of the law of his being, his substance should be established to eternity. This God,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the undivided Trinity,—from the east unto the west, through faith by confession to the saving of their souls, men worship and adore as the Creator of all things, and their own Maker; to Whom also the heights of empire and the powers of the world are subject, because the pre-eminence of all kingdoms is granted by His disposition. It hath pleased Him, therefore, in the mercy of His loving kindness, and for the greater benefit of all His creatures, by the fire of His Holy Spirit wonderfully to kindle the cold hearts even of the nations seated at the extremities of the earth in the knowledge of Himself.

“For we suppose, since the two countries are near together, that your Highness has fully understood what the clemency of our Redeemer has effected in the

enlightenment of our illustrious son, King Eadbald, and the nations under his rule; we therefore trust, with assured confidence that, through the long-suffering of Heaven, His wonderful gift will be also conferred on you; since, indeed, we have learnt that your illustrious consort, who is discerned to be one flesh with you, has been blessed with the reward of eternity, through the regeneration of Holy Baptism. We have, therefore, taken care by this letter, with all the goodwill of heartfelt love, to exhort your Highness, that, abhorring idols and their worship, and despising the foolishness of temples, and the deceitful flatteries of auguries, you believe in God the Father Almighty, and His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, to the end that, believing and being released from the bonds of captivity to the Devil, you may, through the co-operating power of the Holy and undivided Trinity, be partaker of the eternal life.

“How great guilt they lie under, who adhere in their worship to the pernicious superstition of idolatry, appears by the examples of the perishing of those whom they worship. Wherefore it is said of them by the Psalmist, ‘All the gods of the nations are devils, but the Lord made the heavens.’ And again, ‘Eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not. Therefore they are made like unto those that place the hope of their confidence in them.’ For how can they have power to help any man, that are made out of corruptible matter, by the hands of your inferiors and subjects, and on which, by employing human art, you have bestowed a lifeless similitude of members? which, moreover, unless they be moved by you, will not be able to walk; but, like a stone fixed in one place, being so formed, and having no understanding, sunk in insensibility, have no power of doing harm or good. We cannot, therefore, by any manner of discernment conceive how you come to be so deceived as to follow and worship those gods, to whom you yourselves have given the likeness of a body.

“It behoves you, therefore, by taking upon you the sign of the Holy Cross, by which the human race has been redeemed, to root out of your hearts all the accursed deceitfulness of the snares of the Devil, who is ever the jealous foe of the works of the Divine Goodness, and to put forth your hands and with all your might set to work to break in pieces and destroy those which you have hitherto fashioned of wood or stone to be your gods. For the very destruction and decay of these, which never had the breath of life in them, nor could in any wise receive feeling from their makers, may plainly teach you how worthless that was which you hitherto worshipped. For you yourselves, who have received the breath of life from the Lord, are certainly better than these which are wrought with hands, seeing that Almighty God has appointed you to be descended, after many ages and through many generations, from the first man whom he formed. Draw near, then, to the knowledge of Him Who created you, Who breathed the breath of life into you, Who sent His only-begotten Son for your redemption, to save you from original sin, that being delivered from the power of the Devil’s perversity and wickedness, He might bestow on you a heavenly reward.

“Hearken to the words of the preachers, and the Gospel of God, which they declare to you, to the end that, believing, as has been said before more than once, in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His Son, and the Holy Ghost, and the indivisible Trinity, having put to flight the thoughts of devils, and driven from you the temptations of the venomous and deceitful enemy, and being born again of water and the Holy Ghost, you may, through the aid of His bounty, dwell in the brightness of eternal glory with Him in Whom you shall have believed.

“We have, moreover, sent you the blessing of your protector, the blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles, to wit, a shirt of proof with one gold ornament, and one cloak of Ancyra, which we pray your Highness to accept with all the goodwill with which it is sent by us.”

Chap. XI. How Pope Boniface advised the king’s consort to use her best endeavours for his salvation. [Circ.625 ACE]

The same pope also wrote to King Edwin’s consort, Ethelberg, to this effect:
THE COPY OF THE LETTER OF THE MOST BLESSED AND APOSTOLIC BONIFACE, POPE OF THE CITY OF ROME, TO ETHELBERG, KING EDWIN’S QUEEN.

“To the illustrious lady his daughter, Queen Ethelberg, Boniface, bishop, servant of the servants of God. The goodness of our Redeemer has in His abundant Providence offered the means of salvation to the human race, which He rescued, by the shedding of His precious Blood, from the bonds of captivity to the Devil; to the end that, when He had made known His name in divers ways to the nations, they might acknowledge their Creator by embracing the mystery of the Christian faith. And this the mystical purification of your regeneration plainly shows to have been bestowed upon the mind of your Highness by God’s gift. Our heart, therefore, has greatly rejoiced in the benefit bestowed by the bounty of the Lord, for that He has vouchsafed, in your confession, to kindle a spark of the orthodox religion, by which He might the more easily inflame with the love of Himself the understanding, not only of your illustrious consort, but also of all the nation that is subject to you.

“For we have been informed by those, who came to acquaint us with the laudable conversion of our illustrious son, King Eadbald, that your Highness, also, having received the wonderful mystery of the Christian faith, continually excels in the performance of works pious and acceptable to God; that you likewise carefully refrain from the worship of idols, and the deceits of temples and auguries, and with unimpaired devotion, give yourself so wholly to the love of your Redeemer, as never to cease from lending your aid in spreading the Christian faith. But when our fatherly love earnestly inquired concerning your illustrious consort, we were given to understand, that he still served abominable idols, and delayed to yield obedience in giving ear to the voice of the preachers. This occasioned us no small grief, that he that is one flesh with you still remained a stranger to the knowledge of the supreme and undivided Trinity. Whereupon we, in our fatherly care, have not delayed to admonish and exhort your Christian Highness, to the end that, filled

with the support of the Divine inspiration, you should not defer to strive, both in season and out of season, that with the co-operating power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, your husband also may be added to the number of Christians; that so you may uphold the rights of marriage in the bond of a holy and unblemished union. For it is written, 'They twain shall be one flesh.' How then can it be said, that there is unity in the bond between you, if he continues a stranger to the brightness of your faith, separated from it by the darkness of detestable error?

"Wherefore, applying yourself continually to prayer, do not cease to beg of the long-suffering of the Divine Mercy the benefits of his illumination; to the end, that those whom the union of carnal affection has manifestly made in a manner to be one body, may, after this life continue in perpetual fellowship, by the unity of faith. Persist, therefore, illustrious daughter, and to the utmost of your power endeavour to soften the hardness of his heart by carefully making known to him the Divine precepts; pouring into his mind a knowledge of the greatness of that mystery which you have received by faith, and of the marvellous reward which, by the new birth, you have been made worthy to obtain. Inflammate the coldness of his heart by the message of the Holy Ghost, that he may put from him the deadness of an evil worship, and the warmth of the Divine faith may kindle his understanding through your frequent exhortations; and so the testimony of Holy Scripture may shine forth clearly, fulfilled by you, 'The unbelieving husband shall be saved by the believing wife.' For to this end you have obtained the mercy of the Lord's goodness, that you might restore with increase to your Redeemer the fruit of faith and of the benefits entrusted to your hands. That you may be able to fulfil this task, supported by the help of His loving kindness we do not cease to implore with frequent prayers.

"Having premised thus much, in pursuance of the duty of our fatherly affection, we exhort you, that when the opportunity of a bearer shall offer, you will with all speed comfort us with the glad tidings of the wonderful work which the heavenly Power shall vouchsafe to perform by your means in the conversion of your consort, and of the nation subject to you; to the end, that our solicitude, which earnestly awaits the fulfilment of its desire in the soul's salvation of you and yours, may, by hearing from you, be set at rest; and that we, discerning more fully the light of the Divine propitiation shed abroad in you, may with a joyful confession abundantly return due thanks to God, the Giver of all good things, and to the blessed Peter, the chief of the Apostles.

"We have, moreover, sent you the blessing of your protector, the blessed Peter, the chief of the Apostles, to wit, a silver looking-glass, and a gilded ivory comb, which we pray your Highness to accept with all the goodwill with which it is sent by us."

Chap. XII. How Edwin was persuaded to believe by a vision which he had once seen when he was in exile. [Circ. 616 ACE]

Thus wrote the aforesaid Pope Boniface for the salvation of King Edwin and his nation. But a heavenly vision, which the Divine Goodness was pleased once to

reveal to this king, when he was in banishment at the court of Redwald, king of the Angles, was of no little use in urging him to receive and understand the doctrines of salvation. For when Paulinus perceived that it was a difficult task to incline the king's proud mind to the humility of the way of salvation and the reception of the mystery of the life-giving Cross, and at the same time was employing the word of exhortation with men, and prayer to the Divine Goodness, for the salvation of Edwin and his subjects; at length, as we may suppose, it was shown him in spirit what the nature of the vision was that had been formerly revealed from Heaven to the king. Then he lost no time, but immediately admonished the king to perform the vow which he had made, when he received the vision, promising to fulfil it, if he should be delivered from the troubles of that time, and advanced to the throne.

The vision was this. When Ethelfrid, his predecessor, was persecuting him, he wandered for many years as an exile, hiding in divers places and kingdoms, and at last came to Redwald, beseeching him to give him protection against the snares of his powerful persecutor. Redwald willingly received him, and promised to perform what was asked of him. But when Ethelfrid understood that he had appeared in that province, and that he and his companions were hospitably entertained by Redwald, he sent messengers to bribe that king with a great sum of money to murder him, but without effect. He sent a second and a third time, offering a greater bribe each time, and, moreover, threatening to make war on him if his offer should be despised. Redwald, whether terrified by his threats, or won over by his gifts, complied with this request, and promised either to kill Edwin, or to deliver him up to the envoys. A faithful friend of his, hearing of this, went into his chamber, where he was going to bed, for it was the first hour of the night; and calling him out, told him what the king had promised to do with him, adding, "If, therefore, you are willing, I will this very hour conduct you out of this province, and lead you to a place where neither Redwald nor Ethelfrid shall ever find you." He answered, "I thank you for your good will, yet I cannot do what you propose, and be guilty of being the first to break the compact I have made with so great a king, when he has done me no harm, nor shown any enmity to me; but, on the contrary, if I must die, let it rather be by his hand than by that of any meaner man. For whither shall I now fly, when I have for so many long years been a vagabond through all the provinces of Britain, to escape the snares of my enemies?" His friend went away; Edwin remained alone without, and sitting with a heavy heart before the palace, began to be overwhelmed with many thoughts, not knowing what to do, or which way to turn.

When he had remained a long time in silent anguish of mind, consumed with inward fire, on a sudden in the stillness of the dead of night he saw approaching a person, whose face and habit were strange to him, at sight of whom, seeing that he was unknown and unlooked for, he was not a little startled. The stranger coming close up, saluted him, and asked why he sat there in solitude on a stone troubled and wakeful at that time, when all others were taking their rest, and were fast asleep. Edwin, in his turn, asked, what it was to him, whether he spent the night within doors or abroad. The stranger, in reply, said, "Do not think that I am ignorant of the

cause of your grief, your watching, and sitting alone without. For I know of a surety who you are, and why you grieve, and the evils which you fear will soon fall upon you. But tell me, what reward you would give the man who should deliver you out of these troubles, and persuade Redwald neither to do you any harm himself, nor to deliver you up to be murdered by your enemies.” Edwin replied, that he would give such an one all that he could in return for so great a benefit. The other further added, “What if he should also assure you, that your enemies should be destroyed, and you should be a king surpassing in power, not only all your own ancestors, but even all that have reigned before you in the English nation?” Edwin, encouraged by these questions, did not hesitate to promise that he would make a fitting return to him who should confer such benefits upon him. Then the other spoke a third time and said, “But if he who should truly foretell that all these great blessings are about to befall you, could also give you better and more profitable counsel for your life and salvation than any of your fathers or kindred ever heard, do you consent to submit to him, and to follow his wholesome guidance?” Edwin at once promised that he would in all things follow the teaching of that man who should deliver him from so many great calamities, and raise him to a throne.

Having received this answer, the man who talked to him laid his right hand on his head saying, “When this sign shall be given you, remember this present discourse that has passed between us, and do not delay the performance of what you now promise.” Having uttered these words, he is said to have immediately vanished. So the king perceived that it was not a man, but a spirit, that had appeared to him.

Whilst the royal youth still sat there alone, glad of the comfort he had received, but still troubled and earnestly pondering who he was, and whence he came, that had so talked to him, his aforesaid friend came to him, and greeting him with a glad countenance, “Rise,” said he, “go in; calm and put away your anxious cares, and compose yourself in body and mind to sleep; for the king’s resolution is altered, and he designs to do you no harm, but rather to keep his pledged faith; for when he had privately made known to the queen his intention of doing what I told you before, she dissuaded him from it, reminding him that it was altogether unworthy of so great a king to sell his good friend in such distress for gold, and to sacrifice his honour, which is more valuable than all other adornments, for the love of money.” In short, the king did as has been said, and not only refused to deliver up the banished man to his enemy’s messengers, but helped him to recover his kingdom. For as soon as the messengers had returned home, he raised a mighty army to subdue Ethelfrid; who, meeting him with much inferior forces, (for Redwald had not given him time to gather and unite all his power,) was slain on the borders of the kingdom of Mercia, on the east side of the river that is called Idle. In this battle, Redwald’s son, called Raegenheri, was killed. Thus Edwin, in accordance with the prophecy he had received, not only escaped the danger from his enemy, but, by his death, succeeded the king on the throne.

King Edwin, therefore, delaying to receive the Word of God at the preaching of Paulinus, and being wont for some time, as has been said, to sit many hours

alone, and seriously to ponder with himself what he was to do, and what religion he was to follow, the man of God came to him one day, laid his right hand on his head, and asked, whether he knew that sign? The king, trembling, was ready to fall down at his feet, but he raised him up, and speaking to him with the voice of a friend, said, "Behold, by the gift of God you have escaped the hands of the enemies whom you feared. Behold, you have obtained of His bounty the kingdom which you desired. Take heed not to delay to perform your third promise; accept the faith, and keep the precepts of Him Who, delivering you from temporal adversity, has raised you to the honour of a temporal kingdom; and if, from this time forward, you shall be obedient to His will, which through me He signifies to you, He will also deliver you from the everlasting torments of the wicked, and make you partaker with Him of His eternal kingdom in heaven."

Chap. XIII. Of the Council he held with his chief men concerning their reception of the faith of Christ, and how the high priest profaned his own altars. [627 ACE]

The king, hearing these words, answered, that he was both willing and bound to receive the faith which Paulinus taught; but that he would confer about it with his chief friends and counsellors, to the end that if they also were of his opinion, they might all together be consecrated to Christ in the font of life. Paulinus consenting, the king did as he said; for, holding a council with the wise men, he asked of every one in particular what he thought of this doctrine hitherto unknown to them, and the new worship of God that was preached? The chief of his own priests, Coifi, immediately answered him, "O king, consider what this is which is now preached to us; for I verily declare to you what I have learnt beyond doubt, that the religion which we have hitherto professed has no virtue in it and no profit. For none of your people has applied himself more diligently to the worship of our gods than I; and yet there are many who receive greater favours from you, and are more preferred than I, and are more prosperous in all that they undertake to do or to get. Now if the gods were good for any thing, they would rather forward me, who have been careful to serve them with greater zeal. It remains, therefore, that if upon examination you find those new doctrines, which are now preached to us, better and more efficacious, we hasten to receive them without any delay."

Another of the king's chief men, approving of his wise words and exhortations, added thereafter: "The present life of man upon earth, O king, seems to me, in comparison with that time which is unknown to us, like to the swift flight of a sparrow through the house wherein you sit at supper in winter, with your ealdormen and thegns, while the fire blazes in the midst, and the hall is warmed, but the wintry storms of rain or snow are raging abroad. The sparrow, flying in at one door and immediately out at another, whilst he is within, is safe from the wintry tempest; but after a short space of fair weather, he immediately vanishes out of your sight, passing from winter into winter again. So this life of man appears for a little while, but of what is to follow or what went before we know nothing at all. If, therefore,

this new doctrine tells us something more certain, it seems justly to deserve to be followed." The other elders and king's counsellors, by Divine prompting, spoke to the same effect.

But Coifi added, that he wished more attentively to hear Paulinus discourse concerning the God Whom he preached. When he did so, at the king's command, Coifi, hearing his words, cried out, "This long time I have perceived that what we worshipped was naught; because the more diligently I sought after truth in that worship, the less I found it. But now I freely confess, that such truth evidently appears in this preaching as can confer on us the gifts of life, of salvation, and of eternal happiness. For which reason my counsel is, O king, that we instantly give up to ban and fire those temples and altars which we have consecrated without reaping any benefit from them." In brief, the king openly assented to the preaching of the Gospel by Paulinus, and renouncing idolatry, declared that he received the faith of Christ: and when he inquired of the aforesaid high priest of his religion, who should first desecrate the altars and temples of their idols, with the precincts that were about them, he answered, "I; for who can more fittingly than myself destroy those things which I worshipped in my folly, for an example to all others, through the wisdom which has been given me by the true God?" Then immediately, in contempt of his vain superstitions, he desired the king to furnish him with arms and a stallion, that he might mount and go forth to destroy the idols; for it was not lawful before for the high priest either to carry arms, or to ride on anything but a mare. Having, therefore, girt a sword about him, with a spear in his hand, he mounted the king's stallion, and went his way to the idols. The multitude, beholding it, thought that he was mad; but as soon as he drew near the temple he did not delay to desecrate it by casting into it the spear which he held; and rejoicing in the knowledge of the worship of the true God, he commanded his companions to tear down and set on fire the temple, with all its precincts. This place where the idols once stood is still shown, not far from York, to the eastward, beyond the river Derwent, and is now called Godmunddingaham, where the high priest, by the inspiration of the true God, profaned and destroyed the altars which he had himself consecrated.

Chap. XIV. How King Edwin and his nation became Christians; and where Paulinus baptized them. [627 ACE]

King Edwin, therefore, with all the nobility of the nation, and a large number of the common sort, received the faith, and the washing of holy regeneration, in the eleventh year of his reign, which is the year of our Lord 627, and about one hundred and eighty after the coming of the English into Britain. He was baptized at York, on the holy day of Easter, being the 12th of April, in the church of St. Peter the Apostle, which he himself had built of timber there in haste, whilst he was a catechumen receiving instruction in order to be admitted to baptism. In that city also he bestowed upon his instructor and bishop, Paulinus, his episcopal see. But as soon as he was baptized, he set about building, by the direction of Paulinus, in the same

place a larger and nobler church of stone, in the midst whereof the oratory which he had first erected should be enclosed. Having, therefore, laid the foundation, he began to build the church square, encompassing the former oratory. But before the walls were raised to their full height, the cruel death of the king left that work to be finished by Oswald his successor. Paulinus, for the space of six years from this time, that is, till the end of the king's reign, with his consent and favour, preached the Word of God in that country, and as many as were foreordained to eternal life believed and were baptized. Among them were Osfrid and Eadfrid, King Edwin's sons who were both born to him, whilst he was in banishment, of Quenburga, the daughter of Cearl, king of the Mercians.

Afterwards other children of his, by Queen Ethelberg, were baptized, Ethelhun and his daughter Ethelthryth, and another, Wuscfrea, a son; the first two were snatched out of this life whilst they were still in the white garments of the newly-baptized, and buried in the church at York. Yffi, the son of Osfrid, was also baptized, and many other noble and royal persons. So great was then the fervour of the faith, as is reported, and the desire for the laver of salvation among the nation of the Northumbrians, that Paulinus at a certain time coming with the king and queen to the royal township, which is called Adgefrin, stayed there with them thirty-six days, fully occupied in catechizing and baptizing; during which days, from morning till night, he did nothing else but instruct the people resorting from all villages and places, in Christ's saving Word; and when they were instructed, he washed them with the water of absolution in the river Glen, which is close by. This township, under the following kings, was abandoned, and another was built instead of it, at the place called Maelmin.

These things happened in the province of the Bernicians; but in that of the Deiri also, where he was wont often to be with the king, he baptized in the river Swale, which runs by the village of Cataract; for as yet oratories, or baptisteries, could not be built in the early infancy of the Church in those parts. But in Campodonum, where there was then a royal township, he built a church which the pagans, by whom King Edwin was slain, afterwards burnt, together with all the place. Instead of this royal seat the later kings built themselves a township in the country called Loidis. But the altar, being of stone, escaped the fire and is still preserved in the monastery of the most reverend abbot and priest, Thrydwulf, which is in the forest of Elmet.

Chap. XV. How the province of the East Angles received the faith of Christ. [627-628 ACE]

Edwin was so zealous for the true worship, that he likewise persuaded Earpwald, king of the East Angles, and son of Redwald, to abandon his idolatrous superstitions, and with his whole province to receive the faith and mysteries of Christ. And indeed his father Redwald had long before been initiated into the mysteries of the Christian faith in Kent, but in vain; for on his return home, he was seduced by his wife and certain perverse teachers, and turned aside from the sincerity of the faith; and thus his latter state was worse than the former; so that,

like the Samaritans of old, he seemed at the same time to serve Christ and the gods whom he served before; and in the same temple he had an altar for the Christian Sacrifice, and another small one at which to offer victims to devils. Aldwulf, king of that same province, who lived in our time, testifies that this temple had stood until his time, and that he had seen it when he was a boy. The aforesaid King Redwald was noble by birth, though ignoble in his actions, being the son of Tytilus, whose father was Uuffa, from whom the kings of the East Angles are called Uuffings.

Earpwald, not long after he had embraced the Christian faith, was slain by one Ricbert, a pagan; and from that time the province was in error for three years, till Sigbert succeeded to the kingdom, brother to the same Earpwald, a most Christian and learned man, who was banished, and went to live in Gaul during his brother's life, and was there initiated into the mysteries of the faith, whereof he made it his business to cause all his province to partake as soon as he came to the throne. His exertions were nobly promoted by Bishop Felix, who, coming to Honorius, the archbishop, from the parts of Burgundy, where he had been born and ordained, and having told him what he desired, was sent by him to preach the Word of life to the aforesaid nation of the Angles. Nor were his good wishes in vain; for the pious labourer in the spiritual field reaped therein a great harvest of believers, delivering all that province (according to the inner signification of his name) from long iniquity and unhappiness, and bringing it to the faith and works of righteousness, and the gifts of everlasting happiness. He had the see of his bishopric appointed him in the city Dommoc, and having presided over the same province with pontifical authority seventeen years, he ended his days there in peace.

Chap. XVI. How Paulinus preached in the province of Lindsey; and of the character of the reign of Edwin. [Circ. 628 ACE]

Paulinus also preached the Word to the province of Lindsey, which is the first on the south side of the river Humber, stretching as far as the sea; and he first converted to the Lord the reeve of the city of Lincoln, whose name was Blaecca, with his whole house. He likewise built, in that city, a stone church of beautiful workmanship; the roof of which has either fallen through long neglect, or been thrown down by enemies, but the walls are still to be seen standing, and every year miraculous cures are wrought in that place, for the benefit of those who have faith to seek them. In that church, when Justus had departed to Christ, Paulinus consecrated Honorius bishop in his stead, as will be hereafter mentioned in its proper place. A certain priest and abbot of the monastery of Peartaneu, a man of singular veracity, whose name was Deda, told me concerning the faith of this province that an old man had informed him that he himself had been baptized at noon-day, by Bishop Paulinus, in the presence of King Edwin, and with him a great multitude of the people, in the river Trent, near the city, which in the English tongue is called Tiouulfingacaestir; and he was also wont to describe the person of the same Paulinus, saying that he was tall of stature, stooping somewhat, his hair black, his visage thin, his nose slender and aquiline, his aspect both venerable and

awe-inspiring. He had also with him in the ministry, James, the deacon, a man of zeal and great fame in Christ and in the church, who lived even to our days.

It is told that there was then such perfect peace in Britain, wheresoever the dominion of King Edwin extended, that, as is still proverbially said, a woman with her new-born babe might walk throughout the island, from sea to sea, without receiving any harm. That king took such care for the good of his nation, that in several places where he had seen clear springs near the highways, he caused stakes to be fixed, with copper drinking-vessels hanging on them, for the refreshment of travellers; nor durst any man touch them for any other purpose than that for which they were designed, either through the great dread they had of the king, or for the affection which they bore him. His dignity was so great throughout his dominions, that not only were his banners borne before him in battle, but even in time of peace, when he rode about his cities, townships, or provinces, with his thegns, the standard-bearer was always wont to go before him. Also, when he walked anywhere along the streets, that sort of banner which the Romans call Tufa, and the English, Thuuf, was in like manner borne before him.

Chap. XVII. How Edwin received letters of exhortation from Pope Honorius, who also sent the pall to Paulinus. [634 ACE]

At that time Honorius, successor to Boniface, was Bishop of the Apostolic see. When he learned that the nation of the Northumbrians, with their king, had been, by the preaching of Paulinus, converted to the faith and confession of Christ, he sent the pall to the said Paulinus, and with it letters of exhortation to King Edwin, with fatherly love inflaming his zeal, to the end that he and his people should persist in belief of the truth which they had received. The contents of which letter were as follow:

“To his most noble son, and excellent lord, Edwin king of the Angles, Bishop Honorius, servant of the servants of God, greeting. The wholeheartedness of your Christian Majesty, in the worship of your Creator, is so inflamed with the fire of faith, that it shines out far and wide, and, being reported throughout the world, brings forth plentiful fruits of your labours. For the terms of your kingship you know to be this, that taught by orthodox preaching the knowledge of your King and Creator, you believe and worship God, and as far as man is able, pay Him the sincere devotion of your mind. For what else are we able to offer to our God, but our readiness to worship Him and to pay Him our vows, persisting in good actions, and confessing Him the Creator of mankind? And, therefore, most excellent son, we exhort you with such fatherly love as is meet, to labour to preserve this gift in every way, by earnest striving and constant prayer, in that the Divine Mercy has vouchsafed to call you to His grace; to the end that He, Who has been pleased to deliver you from all errors, and bring you to the knowledge of His name in this present world, may likewise prepare a place for you in the heavenly country. Employing yourself, therefore, in reading frequently the works of my lord Gregory, your Evangelist, of apostolic memory, keep before your eyes

that love of his doctrine, which he zealously bestowed for the sake of your souls; that his prayers may exalt your kingdom and people, and present you faultless before Almighty God. We are preparing with a willing mind immediately to grant those things which you hoped would be by us ordained for your bishops, and this we do on account of the sincerity of your faith, which has been made known to us abundantly in terms of praise by the bearers of these presents. We have sent two palls to the two metropolitans, Honorius and Paulinus; to the intent, that when either of them shall be called out of this world to his Creator, the other may, by this authority of ours, substitute another bishop in his place; which privilege we are induced to grant by the warmth of our love for you, as well as by reason of the great extent of the provinces which lie between us and you; that we may in all things support your devotion and likewise satisfy your desires. May God's grace preserve your Highness in safety!"

Chap. XVIII. How Honorius, who succeeded Justus in the bishopric of Canterbury, received the pall and letters from Pope Honorius. [634 ACE]

In the meantime, Archbishop Justus was taken up to the heavenly kingdom, on the 10th of November, and Honorius, who was elected to the see in his stead, came to Paulinus to be ordained, and meeting him at Lincoln was there consecrated the fifth prelate of the Church of Canterbury from Augustine. To him also the aforesaid Pope Honorius sent the pall, and a letter, wherein he ordains the same that he had before ordained in his epistle to King Edwin, to wit, that when either the Archbishop of Canterbury or of York shall depart this life, the survivor, being of the same degree, shall have power to ordain another bishop in the room of him that is departed; that it might not be necessary always to undertake the toilsome journey to Rome, at so great a distance by sea and land, to ordain an archbishop. Which letter we have also thought fit to insert in this our history:

"Honorius to his most beloved brother Honorius: Among the many good gifts which the mercy of our Redeemer is pleased to bestow on His servants He grants to us in His bounty, graciously conferred on us by His goodness, the special blessing of realizing by brotherly intercourse, as it were face to face, our mutual love. For which gift we continually render thanks to His Majesty; and we humbly beseech Him, that He will ever confirm your labour, beloved, in preaching the Gospel, and bringing forth fruit, and following the rule of your master and head, the holy Gregory; and that, for the advancement of His Church, He may by your means raise up further increase; to the end, that through faith and works, in the fear and love of God, what you and your predecessors have already gained from the seed sown by our lord Gregory, may grow strong and be further extended; that so the promises spoken by our Lord may hereafter be brought to pass in you; and that these words may summon you to everlasting happiness: 'Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.' And again, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee

ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.’ And we, most beloved brothers, sending you first these words of exhortation out of our enduring charity, do not fail further to grant those things which we perceive may be suitable for the privileges of your Churches.

“Wherefore, in accordance with your request, and that of the kings our sons, we do hereby in the name of the blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles, grant you authority, that when the Divine Grace shall call either of you to Himself, the survivor shall ordain a bishop in the room of him that is deceased. To which end also we have sent a pall to each of you, beloved, for celebrating the said ordination; that by the authority which we hereby commit to you, you may make an ordination acceptable to God; because the long distance of sea and land that lies between us and you, has obliged us to grant you this, that no loss may happen to your Church in any way, on any pretext whatever, but that the devotion of the people committed to you may increase the more. God preserve you in safety, most dear brother! Given the 11th day of June, in the reign of these our lords and emperors, in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of Heraclius, and the twenty-third after his consulship; and in the twenty-third of his son Constantine, and the third after his consulship; and in the third year of the most prosperous Caesar, his son Heraclius, the seventh indiction; that is, in the year of our Lord, 634.”

Chap. XIX. How the aforesaid Honorius first, and afterwards John, wrote letters to the nation of the Scots, concerning the observance of Easter, and the Pelagian heresy. [640 ACE]

The same Pope Honorius also wrote to the Scots, whom he had found to err in the observance of the holy Festival of Easter, as has been shown above, with subtlety of argument exhorting them not to think themselves, few as they were, and placed in the utmost borders of the earth, wiser than all the ancient and modern Churches of Christ, throughout the world; and not to celebrate a different Easter, contrary to the Paschal calculation and the decrees of all the bishops upon earth sitting in synod. Likewise John, who succeeded Severinus, successor to the same Honorius, being yet but Pope elect, sent to them letters of great authority and erudition for the purpose of correcting the same error; evidently showing, that Easter Sunday is to be found between the fifteenth of the moon and the twenty-first, as was approved in the Council of Nicaea. He also in the same epistle admonished them to guard against the Pelagian heresy, and reject it, for he had been informed that it was again springing up among them. The beginning of the epistle was as follows:

“To our most beloved and most holy Tomianus, Columbanus, Cromanus, Dinnaus, and Baithanus, bishops; to Cromanus, Ernianus, Laistranus, Scellanus, and Segenus, priests; to Saranus and the rest of the Scottish doctors and abbots, Hilarus, the arch-presbyter, and vice-gerent of the holy Apostolic See; John, the deacon, and elect in the name of God; likewise John, the chief of the notaries and vice-gerent of the holy Apostolic See, and John, the servant of God, and counsellor of the same Apostolic See. The writings which were brought by the bearers to Pope

Severinus, of holy memory, were left, when he departed from the light of this world, without an answer to the questions contained in them. Lest any obscurity should long remain undisputed in a matter of so great moment, we opened the same, and found that some in your province, endeavouring to revive a new heresy out of an old one, contrary to the orthodox faith, do through the darkness of their minds reject our Easter, when Christ was sacrificed; and contend that the same should be kept with the Hebrews on the fourteenth of the moon.”

By this beginning of the epistle it evidently appears that this heresy arose among them in very late times, and that not all their nation, but only some of them, were involved in the same.

After having laid down the manner of keeping Easter, they add this concerning the Pelagians in the same epistle:

“And we have also learnt that the poison of the Pelagian heresy again springs up among you; we, therefore, exhort you, that you put away from your thoughts all such venomous and superstitious wickedness. For you cannot be ignorant how that execrable heresy has been condemned; for it has not only been abolished these two hundred years, but it is also daily condemned by us and buried under our perpetual ban; and we exhort you not to rake up the ashes of those whose weapons have been burnt. For who would not detest that insolent and impious assertion, ‘That man can live without sin of his own free will, and not through the grace of God?’ And in the first place, it is blasphemous folly to say that man is without sin, which none can be, but only the one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, Who was conceived and born without sin; for all other men, being born in original sin, are known to bear the mark of Adam’s transgression, even whilst they are without actual sin, according to the saying of the prophet, ‘For behold, I was conceived in iniquity; and in sin did my mother give birth to me.’”

Chap. XX. How Edwin being slain, Paulinus returned into Kent, and had the bishopric of Rochester conferred upon him. [633 ACE]

Edwin reigned most gloriously seventeen years over the nations of the English and the Britons, six whereof, as has been said, he also was a soldier in the kingdom of Christ. Caedwalla, king of the Britons, rebelled against him, being supported by the vigorous Penda, of the royal race of the Mercians, who from that time governed that nation for twenty-two years with varying success. A great battle being fought in the plain that is called Haethfelth, Edwin was killed on the 12th of October, in the year of our Lord 633, being then forty-eight years of age, and all his army was either slain or dispersed. In the same war also, Osfrid, one of his sons, a warlike youth, fell before him; Eadfrid, another of them, compelled by necessity, went over to King Penda, and was by him afterwards slain in the reign of Oswald, contrary to his oath. At this time a great slaughter was made in the Church and nation of the Northumbrians; chiefly because one of the chiefs, by whom it was carried on, was a pagan, and the other a barbarian, more cruel than a pagan; for Penda, with all the

nation of the Mercians, was an idolater, and a stranger to the name of Christ; but Caedwalla, though he professed and called himself a Christian, was so barbarous in his disposition and manner of living, that he did not even spare women and innocent children, but with bestial cruelty put all alike to death by torture, and overran all their country in his fury for a long time, intending to cut off all the race of the English within the borders of Britain. Nor did he pay any respect to the Christian religion which had sprung up among them; it being to this day the custom of the Britons to despise the faith and religion of the English, and to have no part with them in anything any more than with pagans. King Edwin's head was brought to York, and afterwards taken into the church of the blessed Peter the Apostle, which he had begun, but which his successor Oswald finished, as has been said before. It was laid in the chapel of the holy Pope Gregory, from whose disciples he had received the word of life.

The affairs of the Northumbrians being thrown into confusion at the moment of this disaster, when there seemed to be no prospect of safety except in flight, Paulinus, taking with him Queen Ethelberg, whom he had before brought thither, returned into Kent by sea, and was very honourably received by the Archbishop Honorius and King Eadbald. He came thither under the conduct of Bassus, a most valiant thegn of King Edwin, having with him Eanfled, the daughter, and Wusefrea, the son of Edwin, as well as Yffi, the son of Osfrid, Edwin's son. Afterwards Ethelberg, for fear of the kings Eadbald and Oswald, sent Wusefrea and Yffi over into Gaul to be bred up by King Dagobert, who was her friend; and there they both died in infancy, and were buried in the church with the honour due to royal children and to Christ's innocents. He also brought with him many rich goods of King Edwin, among which were a large gold cross, and a golden chalice, consecrated to the service of the altar, which are still preserved, and shown in the church of Canterbury.

At that time the church of Rochester had no pastor, for Romanus, the bishop thereof, being sent on a mission to Pope Honorius by Archbishop Justus, was drowned in the Italian Sea; and thus Paulinus, at the request of Archbishop Honorius and King Eadbald, took upon him the charge of the same, and held it until he too, in his own time, departed to heaven, with the fruits of his glorious labours; and, dying in that Church, he left there the pall which he had received from the Pope of Rome. He had left behind him in his Church at York, James, the deacon, a true churchman and a holy man, who continuing long after in that Church, by teaching and baptizing, rescued much prey from the ancient enemy; and from him the village, where he chiefly dwelt, near Cataract, has its name to this day. He had great skill in singing in church, and when the province was afterwards restored to peace, and the number of the faithful increased, he began to teach church music to many, according to the custom of the Romans, or of the Cantuarians. And being old and full of days, as the Scripture says, he went the way of his fathers.

Book III**Chap. I. How King Edwin's next successors lost both the faith of their nation and the kingdom; but the most Christian King Oswald retrieved both. [633 ACE]**

Edwin being slain in battle, the kingdom of the Deiri, to which province his family belonged, and where he first began to reign, passed to Osric, the son of his uncle Aelfric, who, through the preaching of Paulinus, had also received the mysteries of the faith. But the kingdom of the Bernicians—for into these two provinces the nation of the Northumbrians was formerly divided—passed to Eanfrid, the son of Ethelfrid, who derived his origin from the royal family of that province. For all the time that Edwin reigned, the sons of the aforesaid Ethelfrid, who had reigned before him, with many of the younger nobility, lived in banishment among the Scots or Picts, and were there instructed according to the doctrine of the Scots, and were renewed with the grace of Baptism. Upon the death of the king, their enemy, they were allowed to return home, and the aforesaid Eanfrid, as the eldest of them, became king of the Bernicians. Both those kings, as soon as they obtained the government of their earthly kingdoms, abjured and betrayed the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom to which they had been admitted, and again delivered themselves up to defilement and perdition through the abominations of their former idolatry.

But soon after, the king of the Britons, Caedwalla, the unrighteous instrument of rightful vengeance, slew them both. First, in the following summer, he put Osric to death; for, being rashly besieged by him in the municipal town, he sallied out on a sudden with all his forces, took him by surprise, and destroyed him and all his army. Then, when he had occupied the provinces of the Northumbrians for a whole year, not ruling them like a victorious king, but ravaging them like a furious tyrant, he at length put an end to Eanfrid, in like manner, when he unadvisedly came to him with only twelve chosen soldiers, to sue for peace. To this day, that year is looked upon as ill-omened, and hateful to all good men; as well on account of the apostacy of the English kings, who had renounced the mysteries of the faith, as of the outrageous tyranny of the British king. Hence it has been generally agreed, in reckoning the dates of the kings, to abolish the memory of those faithless monarchs, and to assign that year to the reign of the following king, Oswald, a man beloved of God. This king, after the death of his brother Eanfrid, advanced with an army, small, indeed, in number, but strengthened with the faith of Christ; and the impious commander of the Britons, in spite of his vast forces, which he boasted nothing could withstand, was slain at a place called in the English tongue Denisesburna, that is, the brook of Denis.

Chap. II. How, among innumerable other miracles of healing wrought by the wood of the cross, which King Oswald, being ready to engage against the barbarians, erected, a certain man had his injured arm healed. [634 ACE]

The place is shown to this day, and held in much veneration, where Oswald, being about to engage in this battle, erected the symbol of the Holy Cross, and

knelt down and prayed to God that he would send help from Heaven to his worshippers in their sore need. Then, we are told, that the cross being made in haste, and the hole dug in which it was to be set up, the king himself, in the ardour of his faith, laid hold of it and held it upright with both his hands, till the earth was heaped up by the soldiers and it was fixed. Thereupon, uplifting his voice, he cried to his whole army, "Let us all kneel, and together beseech the true and living God Almighty in His mercy to defend us from the proud and cruel enemy; for He knows that we have undertaken a just war for the safety of our nation." All did as he had commanded, and accordingly advancing towards the enemy with the first dawn of day, they obtained the victory, as their faith deserved. In the place where they prayed very many miracles of healing are known to have been wrought, as a token and memorial of the king's faith; for even to this day, many are wont to cut off small splinters from the wood of the holy cross, and put them into water, which they give to sick men or cattle to drink, or they sprinkle them therewith, and these are presently restored to health.

The place is called in the English tongue Hefenfelth, or the Heavenly Field, which name it undoubtedly received of old as a presage of what was afterwards to happen, denoting, that the heavenly trophy was to be erected, the heavenly victory begun, and heavenly miracles shown forth to this day. The place is near the wall in the north which the Romans formerly drew across the whole of Britain from sea to sea, to restrain the onslaught of the barbarous nations, as has been said before. Hither also the brothers of the church of Hagustald, which is not far distant, long ago made it their custom to resort every year, on the day before that on which King Oswald was afterwards slain, to keep vigils there for the health of his soul, and having sung many psalms of praise, to offer for him in the morning the sacrifice of the Holy Oblation. And since that good custom has spread, they have lately built a church there, which has attached additional sanctity and honour in the eyes of all men to that place; and this with good reason; for it appears that there was no symbol of the Christian faith, no church, no altar erected throughout all the nation of the Bernicians, before that new leader in war, prompted by the zeal of his faith, set up this standard of the Cross as he was going to give battle to his barbarous enemy.

Nor is it foreign to our purpose to relate one of the many miracles that have been wrought at this cross. One of the brothers of the same church of Hagulstald, whose name is Bothelm, and who is still living, a few years ago, walking carelessly on the ice at night, suddenly fell and broke his arm; he was soon tormented with a most grievous pain in the broken part, so that he could not lift his arm to his mouth for the anguish. Hearing one morning that one of the brothers designed to go up to the place of the holy cross, he desired him, on his return, to bring him a piece of that sacred wood, saying, he believed that with the mercy of God he might thereby be healed. The brother did as he was desired; and returning in the evening, when the brothers were sitting at table, gave him some of the old moss which grew on the surface of the wood. As he sat at table, having no place to bestow the gift which was

brought him, he put it into his bosom; and forgetting, when he went to bed, to put it away, left it in his bosom. Awaking in the middle of the night, he felt something cold lying by his side, and putting his hand upon it to feel what it was, he found his arm and hand as sound as if he had never felt any such pain.

Chap. III. How the same king Oswald, asking a bishop of the Scottish nation, had Aidan sent him, and granted him an episcopal see in the Isle of Lindisfarne. [635 ACE]

The same Oswald, as soon as he ascended the throne, being desirous that all the nation under his rule should be endued with the grace of the Christian faith, whereof he had found happy experience in vanquishing the barbarians, sent to the elders of the Scots, among whom himself and his followers, when in banishment, had received the sacrament of Baptism, desiring that they would send him a bishop, by whose instruction and ministry the English nation, which he governed, might learn the privileges and receive the Sacraments of the faith of our Lord. Nor were they slow in granting his request; for they sent him Bishop Aidan, a man of singular gentleness, piety, and moderation; having a zeal of God, but not fully according to knowledge; for he was wont to keep Easter Sunday according to the custom of his country, which we have before so often mentioned, from the fourteenth to the twentieth of the moon; the northern province of the Scots, and all the nation of the Picts, at [pg 139]that time still celebrating Easter after that manner, and believing that in this observance they followed the writings of the holy and praiseworthy Father Anatolius. Whether this be true, every instructed person can easily judge. But the Scots which dwelt in the South of Ireland had long since, by the admonition of the Bishop of the Apostolic see, learned to observe Easter according to the canonical custom.

On the arrival of the bishop, the king appointed him his episcopal see in the island of Lindisfarne, as he desired. Which place, as the tide ebbs and flows, is twice a day enclosed by the waves of the sea like an island; and again, twice, when the beach is left dry, becomes contiguous with the land. The king also humbly and willingly in all things giving ear to his admonitions, industriously applied himself to build up and extend the Church of Christ in his kingdom; wherein, when the bishop, who was not perfectly skilled in the English tongue, preached the Gospel, it was a fair sight to see the king himself interpreting the Word of God to his ealdormen and thegns, for he had thoroughly learned the language of the Scots during his long banishment. From that time many came daily into Britain from the country of the Scots, and with great devotion preached the Word to those provinces of the English, over which King Oswald reigned, and those among them that had received priest's orders, administered the grace of Baptism to the believers. Churches were built in divers places; the people joyfully flocked together to hear the Word; lands and other property were given of the king's bounty to found monasteries; English children, as well as their elders, were instructed by their Scottish teachers in study and the observance of monastic discipline. For

most of those who came to preach were monks. Bishop Aidan was himself a monk, having been sent out from the island called Hii, whereof the monastery was for a long time the chief of almost all those of the northern Scots, and all those of the Picts, and had the direction of their people. That island belongs to Britain, being divided from it by a small arm of the sea, but had been long since given by the Picts, who inhabit those parts of Britain, to the Scottish monks, because they had received the faith of Christ through their preaching.

**Chap. IV. When the nation of the Picts received the faith of Christ.
[565 ACE]**

In the year of our Lord 565, when Justin, the younger, the successor of Justinian, obtained the government of the Roman empire, there came into Britain from Ireland a famous priest and abbot, marked as a monk by habit and manner of life, whose name was Columba, to preach the word of God to the provinces of the northern Picts, who are separated from the southern parts belonging to that nation by steep and rugged mountains. For the southern Picts, who dwell on this side of those mountains, had, it is said, long before forsaken the errors of idolatry, and received the true faith by the preaching of Bishop Ninias, a most reverend and holy man of the British nation, who had been regularly instructed at Rome in the faith and mysteries of the truth; whose episcopal see, named after St. Martin the bishop, and famous for a church dedicated to him (wherein Ninias himself and many other saints rest in the body), is now in the possession of the English nation. The place belongs to the province of the Bernicians, and is commonly called the White House, because he there built a church of stone, which was not usual among the Britons.

Columba came into Britain in the ninth year of the reign of Bridius, who was the son of Meilochon, and the powerful king of the Pictish nation, and he converted that nation to the faith of Christ, by his preaching and example. Wherefore he also received of them the gift of the aforesaid island whereon to found a monastery. It is not a large island, but contains about five families, according to the English computation; his successors hold it to this day; he was also buried therein, having died at the age of seventy-seven, about thirty-two years after he came into Britain to preach. Before he crossed over into Britain, he had built a famous monastery in Ireland, which, from the great number of oaks, is in the Scottish tongue called Dearthach—The Field of Oaks. From both these monasteries, many others had their beginning through his disciples, both in Britain and Ireland; but the island monastery where his body lies, has the pre-eminence among them all.

That island has for its ruler an abbot, who is a priest, to whose jurisdiction all the province, and even the bishops, contrary to the usual method, are bound to be subject, according to the example of their first teacher, who was not a bishop, but a priest and monk; of whose life and discourses some records are said to be preserved by his disciples. But whatsoever he was himself, this we know for certain concerning him, that he left successors renowned for their continence, their love

of God, and observance of monastic rules. It is true they employed doubtful cycles in fixing the time of the great festival, as having none to bring them the synodal decrees for the observance of Easter, by reason of their being so far away from the rest of the world; but they earnestly practised such works of piety and chastity as they could learn from the Prophets, the Gospels and the Apostolic writings. This manner of keeping Easter continued among them no little time, to wit, for the space of 150 years, till the year of our Lord 715.

But then the most reverend and holy father and priest, Egbert, of the English nation, who had long lived in banishment in Ireland for the sake of Christ, and was most learned in the Scriptures, and renowned for long perfection of life, came among them, corrected their error, and led them to observe the true and canonical day of Easter; which, nevertheless, they did not always keep on the fourteenth of the moon with the Jews, as some imagined, but on Sunday, although not in the proper week. For, as Christians, they knew that the Resurrection of our Lord, which happened on the first day of the week, was always to be celebrated on the first day of the week; but being rude and barbarous, they had not learned when that same first day after the Sabbath, which is now called the Lord's day, should come. But because they had not failed in the grace of fervent charity, they were accounted worthy to receive the full knowledge of this matter also, according to the promise of the Apostle, "And if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." Of which we shall speak more fully hereafter in its proper place.

Chap. V. Of the life of Bishop Aidan. [635 ACE]

From this island, then, and the fraternity of these monks, Aidan was sent to instruct the English nation in Christ, having received the dignity of a bishop. At that time Segeni, abbot and priest, presided over that monastery. Among other lessons in holy living, Aidan left the clergy a most salutary example of abstinence and continence; it was the highest commendation of his doctrine with all men, that he taught nothing that he did not practise in his life among his brethren; for he neither sought nor loved anything of this world, but delighted in distributing immediately among the poor whom he met whatsoever was given him by the kings or rich men of the world. He was wont to traverse both town and country on foot, never on horseback, unless compelled by some urgent necessity; to the end that, as he went, he might turn aside to any whomsoever he saw, whether rich or poor, and call upon them, if infidels, to receive the mystery of the faith, or, if they were believers, strengthen them in the faith, and stir them up by words and actions to giving of alms and the performance of good works.

His course of life was so different from the slothfulness of our times, that all those who bore him company, whether they were tonsured or laymen, had to study either reading the Scriptures, or learning psalms. This was the daily employment of himself and all that were with him, wheresoever they went; and if it happened, which was but seldom, that he was invited to the king's table, he went with one or two clerks, and having taken a little food, made haste to be gone, either to read with

his brethren or to pray. At that time, many religious men and women, led by his example, adopted the custom of prolonging their fast on Wednesdays and Fridays, till the ninth hour, throughout the year, except during the fifty days after Easter. Never, through fear or respect of persons, did he keep silence with regard to the sins of the rich; but was wont to correct them with a severe rebuke. He never gave money to the powerful men of the world, but only food, if he happened to entertain them; and, on the contrary, whatsoever gifts of money he received from the rich, he either distributed, as has been said, for the use of the poor, or bestowed in ransoming such as had been wrongfully sold for slaves. Moreover, he afterwards made many of those he had ransomed his disciples, and after having taught and instructed them, advanced them to priest's orders.

It is said, that when King Oswald had asked a bishop of the Scots to administer the Word of faith to him and his nation, there was first sent to him another man of more harsh disposition, who, after preaching for some time to the English and meeting with no success, not being gladly heard by the people, returned home, and in an assembly of the elders reported, that he had not been able to do any good by his teaching to the nation to whom he had been sent, because they were intractable men, and of a stubborn and barbarous disposition. They then, it is said, held a council and seriously debated what was to be done, being desirous that the nation should obtain the salvation it demanded, but grieving that they had not received the preacher sent to them. Then said Aidan, who was also present in the council, to the priest in question, "Methinks, brother, that you were more severe to your unlearned hearers than you ought to have been, and did not at first, conformably to the Apostolic rule, give them the milk of more easy doctrine, till, being by degrees nourished with the Word of God, they should be capable of receiving that which is more perfect and of performing the higher precepts of God." Having heard these words, all present turned their attention to him and began diligently to weigh what he had said, and they decided that he was worthy to be made a bishop, and that he was the man who ought to be sent to instruct the unbelieving and unlearned; since he was found to be endued preeminently with the grace of discretion, which is the mother of the virtues. So they ordained him and sent him forth to preach; and, as time went on, his other virtues became apparent, as well as that temperate discretion which had marked him at first.

Chap. VI. Of King Oswald's wonderful piety and religion. [635-642 ACE]

King Oswald, with the English nation which he governed, being instructed by the teaching of this bishop, not only learned to hope for a heavenly kingdom unknown to his fathers, but also obtained of the one God, Who made heaven and earth, a greater earthly kingdom than any of his ancestors. In brief, he brought under his dominion all the nations and provinces of Britain, which are divided into four languages, to wit, those of the Britons, the Picts, the Scots, and the English. Though raised to that height of regal power, wonderful to relate, he was always humble, kind, and generous to the poor and to strangers.

To give one instance, it is told, that when he was once sitting at dinner, on the holy day of Easter, with the aforesaid bishop, and a silver dish full of royal dainties was set before him, and they were just about to put forth their hands to bless the bread, the servant, whom he had appointed to relieve the needy, came in on a sudden, and told the king, that a great multitude of poor folk from all parts was sitting in the streets begging alms of the king; he immediately ordered the meat set before him to be carried to the poor, and the dish to be broken in pieces and divided among them. At which sight, the bishop who sat by him, greatly rejoicing at such an act of piety, clasped his right hand and said, "May this hand never decay." This fell out according to his prayer, for his hands with the arms being cut off from his body, when he was slain in battle, remain uncorrupted to this day, and are kept in a silver shrine, as revered relics, in St. Peter's church in the royal city, which has taken its name from Bebba, one of its former queens. Through this king's exertions the provinces of the Deiri and the Bernicians, which till then had been at variance, were peacefully united and moulded into one people. He was nephew to King Edwin through his sister Acha; and it was fit that so great a predecessor should have in his own family such an one to succeed him in his religion and sovereignty.

Chap. VII. How the West Saxons received the Word of God by the preaching of Birinus; and of his successors, Agilbert and Leutherius. [635-670 ACE]

At that time, the West Saxons, formerly called Gewissae, in the reign of Cynegils, received the faith of Christ, through the preaching of Bishop Birinus, who came into Britain by the counsel of Pope Honorius; having promised in his presence that he would sow the seed of the holy faith in the farthest inland regions of the English, where no other teacher had been before him. Hereupon at the bidding of the Pope he received episcopal consecration from Asterius, bishop of Genoa; but on his arrival in Britain, he first came to the nation of the Gewissae, and finding all in that place confirmed pagans, he thought it better to preach the Word there, than to proceed further to seek for other hearers of his preaching.

Now, as he was spreading the Gospel in the aforesaid province, it happened that when the king himself, having received instruction as a catechumen, was being baptized together with his people, Oswald, the most holy and victorious king of the Northumbrians, being present, received him as he came forth from baptism, and by an honourable alliance most acceptable to God, first adopted as his son, thus born again and dedicated to God, the man whose daughter he was about to receive in marriage. The two kings gave to the bishop the city called Dorcic, there to establish his episcopal see; where having built and consecrated churches, and by his pious labours called many to the Lord, he departed to the Lord, and was buried in the same city; but many years after, when Haedde was bishop, he was translated thence to the city of Venta, and laid in the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul.

When the king died, his son Coinwalch succeeded him on the throne, but refused to receive the faith and the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom; and not long after he lost also the dominion of his earthly kingdom; for he put away the sister of Penda, king of the Mercians, whom he had married, and took another wife; whereupon a war ensuing, he was by him deprived of his kingdom, and withdrew to Anna, king of the East Angles, where he lived three years in banishment, and learned and received the true faith; for the king, with whom he lived in his banishment, was a good man, and happy in a good and saintly offspring, as we shall show hereafter.

But when Coinwalch was restored to his kingdom, there came into that province out of Ireland, a certain bishop called Agilbert, a native of Gaul, but who had then lived a long time in Ireland, for the purpose of reading the Scriptures. He attached himself to the king, and voluntarily undertook the ministry of preaching. The king, observing his learning and industry, desired him to accept an episcopal see there and remain as the bishop of his people. Agilbert complied with the request, and presided over that nation as their bishop for many years. At length the king, who understood only the language of the Saxons, weary of his barbarous tongue, privately brought into the province another bishop, speaking his own language, by name Wini, who had also been ordained in Gaul; and dividing his province into two dioceses, appointed this last his episcopal see in the city of Venta, by the Saxons called Wintancaestir. Agilbert, being highly offended, that the king should do this without consulting him, returned into Gaul, and being made bishop of the city of Paris, died there, being old and full of days. Not many years after his departure out of Britain, Wini was also expelled from his bishopric by the same king, and took refuge with Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, of whom he purchased for money the see of the city of London, and remained bishop thereof till his death. Thus the province of the West Saxons continued no small time without a bishop.

During which time, the aforesaid king of that nation, sustaining repeatedly very great losses in his kingdom from his enemies, at length bethought himself, that as he had been before expelled from the throne for his unbelief, he had been restored when he acknowledged the faith of Christ; and he perceived that his kingdom, being deprived of a bishop, was justly deprived also of the Divine protection. He, therefore, sent messengers into Gaul to Agilbert, with humble apologies entreating him to return to the bishopric of his nation. But he excused himself, and protested that he could not go, because he was bound to the bishopric of his own city and diocese; notwithstanding, in order to give him some help in answer to his earnest request, he sent thither in his stead the priest Leutherius, his nephew, to be ordained as his bishop, if he thought fit, saying that he thought him worthy of a bishopric. The king and the people received him honourably, and asked Theodore, then Archbishop of Canterbury, to consecrate him as their bishop. He was accordingly consecrated in the same city, and many years diligently governed the whole bishopric of the West Saxons by synodical authority.

Chap. VIII. How Earconbert, King of Kent, ordered the idols to be destroyed; and of his daughter Earcongota, and his kinswoman Ethelberg, virgins consecrated to God. [640 ACE]

In the year of our Lord 640, Eadbald, king of Kent, departed this life, and left his kingdom to his son Earconbert, who governed it most nobly twenty-four years and some months. He was the first of the English kings that of his supreme authority commanded the idols throughout his whole kingdom to be forsaken and destroyed, and the fast of forty days to be observed; and that the same might not be lightly neglected, he appointed fitting and condign punishments for the offenders. His daughter Earcongota, as became the offspring of such a parent, was a most virtuous virgin, serving God in a monastery in the country of the Franks, built by a most noble abbess, named Fara, at a place called In Brige; for at that time but few monasteries had been built in the country of the Angles, and many were wont, for the sake of monastic life, to repair to the monasteries of the Franks or Gauls; and they also sent their daughters there to be instructed, and united to their Heavenly Bridegroom, especially in the monasteries of Brige, of Cale, and Andilegum. Among whom was also Saethryth, daughter of the wife of Anna, king of the East Angles, above mentioned; and Ethelberg, the king's own daughter; both of whom, though strangers, were for their virtue made abbesses of the monastery of Brige. Sexburg, that king's elder daughter, wife to Earconbert, king of Kent, had a daughter called Earcongota, of whom we are about to speak.

Many wonderful works and miracles of this virgin, dedicated to God, are to this day related by the inhabitants of that place; but for us it shall suffice to say something briefly of her departure out of this world to the heavenly kingdom. The day of her summoning drawing near, she began to visit in the monastery the cells of the infirm handmaidens of Christ, and particularly those that were of a great age, or most noted for their virtuous life, and humbly commending herself to their prayers, she let them know that her death was at hand, as she had learnt by revelation, which she said she had received in this manner. She had seen a band of men, clothed in white, come into the monastery, and being asked by her what they wanted, and what they did there, they answered, "They had been sent thither to carry away with them the gold coin that had been brought thither from Kent." Towards the close of that same night, as morning began to dawn, leaving the darkness of this world, she departed to the light of heaven. Many of the brethren of that monastery who were in other houses, declared they had then plainly heard choirs of singing angels, and, as it were, the sound of a multitude entering the monastery. Whereupon going out immediately to see what it might be, they beheld a great light coming down from heaven, which bore that holy soul, set loose from the bonds of the flesh, to the eternal joys of the celestial country. They also tell of other miracles that were wrought that night in the same monastery by the power of God; but as we must proceed to other matters, we leave them to be related by those whose concern they are. The body of this venerable virgin and bride of Christ was buried in the church of the blessed protomartyr, Stephen. It was thought fit, three days after, to take up the stone that covered the tomb, and to

raise it higher in the same place, and whilst they were doing this, so sweet a fragrance rose from below, that it seemed to all the brethren and sisters there present, as if a store of balsam had been opened.

Her aunt also, Ethelberg, of whom we have spoken, preserved the glory, acceptable to God, of perpetual virginity, in a life of great self-denial, but the extent of her virtue became more conspicuous after her death. Whilst she was abbess, she began to build in her monastery a church, in honour of all the Apostles, wherein she desired that her body should be buried; but when that work was advanced half way, she was prevented by death from finishing it, and was buried in the place in the church which she had chosen. After her death, the brothers occupied themselves with other things, and this structure was left untouched for seven years, at the expiration whereof they resolved, by reason of the greatness of the work, wholly to abandon the building of the church, and to remove the abbess's bones thence to some other church that was finished and consecrated. On opening her tomb, they found the body as untouched by decay as it had been free from the corruption of carnal concupiscence, and having washed it again and clothed it in other garments, they removed it to the church of the blessed Stephen, the Martyr. And her festival is wont to be celebrated there with much honour on the 7th of July.

Chap. IX. How miracles of healing have been frequently wrought in the place where King Oswald was killed; and how, first, a traveller's horse was restored and afterwards a young girl cured of the palsy. [642 ACE]

Oswald, the most Christian king of the Northumbrians, reigned nine years, including that year which was held accursed for the barbarous cruelty of the king of the Britons and the reckless apostacy of the English kings; for, as was said above, it is agreed by the unanimous consent of all, that the names and memory of the apostates should be erased from the catalogue of the Christian kings, and no year assigned to their reign. After which period, Oswald was killed in a great battle, by the same pagan nation and pagan king of the Mercians, who had slain his predecessor Edwin, at a place called in the English tongue Maserfelth, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, on the fifth day of the month of August.

How great his faith was towards God, and how remarkable his devotion, has been made evident by miracles even after his death; for, in the place where he was killed by the pagans, fighting for his country, sick men and cattle are frequently healed to this day. Whence it came to pass that many took up the very dust of the place where his body fell, and putting it into water, brought much relief with it to their friends who were sick. This custom came so much into use, that the earth being carried away by degrees, a hole was made as deep as the height of a man. Nor is it surprising that the sick should be healed in the place where he died; for, whilst he lived, he never ceased to provide for the poor and the sick, and to bestow alms on them, and assist them. Many miracles are said to have been wrought in that place, or with the dust carried from it; but we have thought it sufficient to mention two, which we have heard from our elders.

It happened, not long after his death, that a man was travelling on horseback near that place, when his horse on a sudden fell sick, stood still, hung his head, and foamed at the mouth, and, at length, as his pain increased, he fell to the ground; the rider dismounted, and taking off his saddle, waited to see whether the beast would recover or die. At length, after writhing for a long time in extreme anguish, the horse happened in his struggles to come to the very place where the great king died. Immediately the pain abated, the beast ceased from his frantic kicking, and, after the manner of horses, as if resting from his weariness, he rolled from side to side, and then starting up, perfectly recovered, began to graze hungrily on the green herbage. The rider observing this, and being an intelligent man, concluded that there must be some wonderful sanctity in the place where the horse had been healed, and he marked the spot. After which he again mounted his horse, and went on to the inn where he intended to stop. On his arrival he found a girl, niece to the landlord, who had long been sick of the palsy; and when the members of the household, in his presence, lamented the girl's grievous calamity, he gave them an account of the place where his horse had been cured. In brief, she was put into a wagon and carried to the place and laid down there. At first she slept awhile, and when she awoke, found herself healed of her infirmity. Upon which she called for water, washed her face, arranged her hair, put a kerchief on her head, and returned home on foot, in good health, with those who had brought her.

Chap. X. How the dust of that place prevailed against fire. [After 642 ACE]

About the same time, another traveller, a Briton, as is reported, happened to pass by the same place, where the aforesaid battle was fought. Observing one particular spot of ground greener and more beautiful than any other part of the field, he had the wisdom to infer that the cause of the unusual greenness in that place must be that some person of greater holiness than any other in the army had been killed there. He therefore took along with him some of the dust of that piece of ground, tying it up in a linen cloth, supposing, as was indeed the case, that it would be of use for curing sick people, and proceeding on his journey, came in the evening to a certain village, and entered a house where the villagers were feasting at supper. Being received by the owners of the house, he sat down with them at the entertainment, hanging the cloth, with the dust which he had carried in it, on a post in the wall. They sat long at supper and drank deep. Now there was a great fire in the middle of the room, and it happened that the sparks flew up and caught the roof of the house, which being made of wattles and thatch, was suddenly wrapped in flames; the guests ran out in panic and confusion, but they were not able to save the burning house, which was rapidly being destroyed. Wherefore the house was burnt down, and only that post on which the dust hung in the linen cloth remained safe and untouched by the fire. When they beheld this miracle, they were all amazed, and inquiring into it diligently, learned that the dust had been taken from the place where the blood of King Oswald had been shed. These wonderful

works being made known and reported abroad, many began daily to resort to that place, and received the blessing of health for themselves and their friends.

Chap. XI. How a light from Heaven stood all night over his relics, and how those possessed with devils were healed by them. [679-697 ACE]

Among the rest, I think we ought not to pass over in silence the miracles and signs from Heaven that were shown when King Oswald's bones were found, and translated into the church where they are now preserved. This was done by the zealous care of Osthryth, queen of the Mercians, the daughter of his brother Oswy, who reigned after him, as shall be said hereafter.

There is a famous monastery in the province of Lindsey, called Beardaneu, which that queen and her husband Ethelred greatly loved and venerated, conferring upon it many honours. It was here that she was desirous to lay the revered bones of her uncle. When the wagon in which those bones were carried arrived towards evening at the aforesaid monastery, they that were in it were unwilling to admit them, because, though they knew him to be a holy man, yet, as he was a native of another province, and had obtained the sovereignty over them, they retained their ancient aversion to him even after his death. Thus it came to pass that the relics were left in the open air all that night, with only a large tent spread over the wagon which contained them. But it was revealed by a sign from Heaven with how much reverence they ought to be received by all the faithful; for all that night, a pillar of light, reaching from the wagon up to heaven, was visible in almost every part of the province of Lindsey. Hereupon, in the morning, the brethren of that monastery who had refused it the day before, began themselves earnestly to pray that those holy relics, beloved of God, might be laid among them. Accordingly, the bones, being washed, were put into a shrine which they had made for that purpose, and placed in the church, with due honour; and that there might be a perpetual memorial of the royal character of this holy man, they hung up over the monument his banner of gold and purple. Then they poured out the water in which they had washed the bones, in a corner of the cemetery. From that time, the very earth which received that holy water, had the power of saving grace in casting out devils from the bodies of persons possessed.

Lastly, when the aforesaid queen afterwards abode some time in that monastery, there came to visit her a certain venerable abbess, who is still living, called Ethelhild, the sister of the holy men, Ethelwin and Aldwin, the first of whom was bishop in the province of Lindsey, the other abbot of the monastery of Peartaneu; not far from which was the monastery of Ethelhild. When this lady was come, in a conversation between her and the queen, the discourse, among other things, turning upon Oswald, she said, that she also had that night seen the light over his relics reaching up to heaven. The queen thereupon added, that the very dust of the pavement on which the water that washed the bones had been poured out, had already healed many sick persons. The abbess thereupon desired that some of that health-bringing dust might be given her, and, receiving it, she tied it

up in a cloth, and, putting it into a casket, returned home. Some time after, when she was in her monastery, there came to it a guest, who was wont often in the night to be on a sudden grievously tormented with an unclean spirit; he being hospitably entertained, when he had gone to bed after supper, was suddenly seized by the Devil, and began to cry out, to gnash his teeth, to foam at the mouth, and to writhe and distort his limbs. None being able to hold or bind him, the servant ran, and knocking at the door, told the abbess. She, opening the monastery door, went out herself with one of the nuns to the men's apartment, and calling a priest, desired that he would go with her to the sufferer. Being come thither, and seeing many present, who had not been able, by their efforts, to hold the tormented person and restrain his convulsive movements, the priest used exorcisms, and did all that he could to assuage the madness of the unfortunate man, but, though he took much pains, he could not prevail. When no hope appeared of easing him in his ravings, the abbess bethought herself of the dust, and immediately bade her handmaiden go and fetch her the casket in which it was. As soon as she came with it, as she had been bidden, and was entering the hall of the house, in the inner part whereof the possessed person was writhing in torment, he suddenly became silent, and laid down his head, as if he had been falling asleep, stretching out all his limbs to rest. "Silence fell upon all and intent they gazed," anxiously waiting to see the end of the matter. And after about the space of an hour the man that had been tormented sat up, and fetching a deep sigh, said, "Now I am whole, for I am restored to my senses." They earnestly inquired how that came to pass, and he answered, "As soon as that maiden drew near the hall of this house, with the casket she brought, all the evil spirits that vexed me departed and left me, and were no more to be seen." Then the abbess gave him a little of that dust, and the priest having prayed, he passed that night in great peace; nor was he, from that time forward, alarmed by night, or in any way troubled by his old enemy.

Chap. XII. How a little boy was cured of a fever at his tomb.

Some time after, there was a certain little boy in the said monastery, who had been long grievously troubled with a fever; he was one day anxiously expecting the hour when his fit was to come on, when one of the brothers, coming in to him, said, "Shall I tell you, my son, how you may be cured of this sickness? Rise, enter the church, and go close to Oswald's tomb; sit down and stay there quiet and do not leave it; do not come away, or stir from the place, till the time is past, when the fever leaves you: then I will go in and fetch you away." The boy did as he was advised, and the disease durst not assail him as he sat by the saint's tomb; but fled in such fear that it did not dare to touch him, either the second or third day, or ever after. The brother that came from thence, and told me this, added, that at the time when he was talking with me, the young man was then still living in the monastery, on whom, when a boy, that miracle of healing had been wrought. Nor need we wonder that the prayers of that king who is now reigning with our Lord, should be very efficacious with Him, since he, whilst yet governing his temporal kingdom,

was always wont to pray and labour more for that which is eternal. Nay, it is said, that he often continued in prayer from the hour of morning thanksgiving till it was day; and that by reason of his constant custom of praying or giving thanks to God, he was wont always, wherever he sat, to hold his hands on his knees with the palms turned upwards. It is also commonly affirmed and has passed into a proverb, that he ended his life in prayer; for when he was beset with the weapons of his enemies, and perceived that death was at hand, he prayed for the souls of his army. Whence it is proverbially said, “‘Lord have mercy on their souls,’ said Oswald, as he fell to the ground.”

Now his bones were translated to the monastery which we have mentioned, and buried therein: but the king who slew him commanded his head, and hands, with the arms, to be cut off from the body, and set upon stakes. But his successor in the throne, Oswy, coming thither the next year with his army, took them down, and buried his head in the cemetery of the church of Lindisfarne, and the hands and arms in his royal city.

Chap. XIII. How a certain person in Ireland was restored, when at the point of death, by his relics.

Nor was the fame of the renowned Oswald confined to Britain, but, spreading rays of healing light even beyond the sea, reached also to Germany and Ireland. For the most reverend prelate, Acca, is wont to relate, that when, in his journey to Rome, he and his bishop Wilfrid stayed some time with Wilbrord, the holy archbishop of the Frisians, he often heard him tell of the wonders which had been wrought in that province at the relics of that most worshipful king. And he used to say that in Ireland, when, being yet only a priest, he led the life of a stranger and pilgrim for love of the eternal country, the fame of that king's sanctity was already spread far and near in that island also. One of the miracles, among the rest, which he related, we have thought fit to insert in this our history.

“At the time,” said he, “of the plague which made such widespread havoc in Britain and Ireland, among others, a certain scholar of the Scottish race was smitten with the disease, a man learned in the study of letters, but in no way careful or studious of his eternal salvation; who, seeing his death near at hand, began to fear and tremble lest, as soon as he was dead, he should be hurried away to the prison-house of Hell for his sins. He called me, for I was near, and trembling and sighing in his weakness, with a lamentable voice made his complaint to me, after this manner: ‘You see that my bodily distress increases, and that I am now reduced to the point of death. Nor do I question but that after the death of my body, I shall be immediately snatched away to the everlasting death of my soul, and cast into the torments of hell, since for a long time, amidst all my reading of divine books, I have suffered myself to be ensnared by sin, instead of keeping the commandments of God. But it is my resolve, if the Divine Mercy shall grant me a new term of life, to correct my sinful habits, and wholly to devote anew my mind and life to obedience to the Divine will. But I know that I have no merits of my own whereby to obtain a

prolongation of life, nor can I hope to have it, unless it shall please God to forgive me, wretched and unworthy of pardon as I am, through the help of those who have faithfully served him. We have heard, and the report is widespread, that there was in your nation a king, of wonderful sanctity, called Oswald, the excellency of whose faith and virtue has been made famous even after his death by the working of many miracles. I beseech you, if you have any relics of his in your keeping, that you will bring them to me; if haply the Lord shall be pleased, through his merits, to have mercy on me.' I answered, 'I have indeed a part of the stake on which his head was set up by the pagans, when he was killed, and if you believe with steadfast heart, the Divine mercy may, through the merits of so great a man, both grant you a longer term of life here, and render you worthy to be admitted into eternal life.' He answered immediately that he had entire faith therein. Then I blessed some water, and put into it a splinter of the aforesaid oak, and gave it to the sick man to drink. He presently found ease, and, recovering of his sickness, lived a long time after; and, being entirely converted to God in heart and deed, wherever he went, he spoke of the goodness of his merciful Creator, and the honour of His faithful servant."

Chap. XIV. How on the death of Paulinus, Ithamar was made bishop of Rochester in his stead; and of the wonderful humility of King Oswin, who was cruelly slain by Oswy. [644-651 ACE]

Oswald being translated to the heavenly kingdom, his brother Oswy, a young man of about thirty years of age, succeeded him on the throne of his earthly kingdom, and held it twenty-eight years with much trouble, being attacked by the pagan nation of the Mercians, that had slain his brother, as also by his son Alchfrid, and by his nephew Oidilwald, the son of his brother who reigned before him. In his second year, that is, in the year of our Lord 644, the most reverend Father Paulinus, formerly Bishop of York, but at that time Bishop of the city of Rochester, departed to the Lord, on the 10th day of October, having held the office of a bishop nineteen years, two months, and twenty-one days; and was buried in the sacristy of the blessed Apostle Andrew, which King Ethelbert had built from the foundation, in the same city of Rochester. In his place, Archbishop Honorius ordained Ithamar, of the Kentish nation, but not inferior to his predecessors in learning and conduct of life.

Oswy, during the first part of his reign, had a partner in the royal dignity called Oswin, of the race of King Edwin, and son to Osric of whom we have spoken above, a man of wonderful piety and devotion, who governed the province of the Deiri seven years in very great prosperity, and was himself beloved by all men. But Oswy, who governed all the other northern part of the nation beyond the Humber, that is, the province of the Bernicians, could not live at peace with him; and at last, when the causes of their disagreement increased, he murdered him most cruelly. For when each had raised an army against the other, Oswin perceived that he could not maintain a war against his enemy who had more auxiliaries than himself, and he thought it better at that time to lay aside all thoughts of engaging, and to reserve himself for better times. He therefore disbanded the army which he had

assembled, and ordered all his men to return to their own homes, from the place that is called Wilfaraesdun, that is, Wilfar's Hill, which is about ten miles distant from the village called Cataract, towards the north-west. He himself, with only one trusty thegn, whose name was Tondhere, withdrew and lay concealed in the house of Hunwald, a noble, whom he imagined to be his most assured friend. But, alas! it was far otherwise; for Hunwald betrayed him, and Oswy, by the hands of his reeve, Ethilwin, foully slew him and the thegn aforesaid. This happened on the 20th of August, in the ninth year of his reign, at a place called Ingetlingum, where afterwards, to atone for this crime, a monastery was built, wherein prayers should be daily offered up to God for the redemption of the souls of both kings, to wit, of him that was murdered, and of him that commanded the murder.

King Oswin was of a goodly countenance, and tall of stature, pleasant in discourse, and courteous in behaviour; and bountiful to all, gentle and simple alike; so that he was beloved by all men for the royal dignity of his mind and appearance and actions, and men of the highest rank came from almost all provinces to serve him. Among all the graces of virtue and moderation by which he was distinguished and, if I may say so, blessed in a special manner, humility is said to have been the greatest, which it will suffice to prove by one instance.

He had given a beautiful horse to Bishop Aidan, to use either in crossing rivers, or in performing a journey upon any urgent necessity, though the Bishop was wont to travel ordinarily on foot. Some short time after, a poor man meeting the Bishop, and asking alms, he immediately dismounted, and ordered the horse, with all his royal trappings, to be given to the beggar; for he was very compassionate, a great friend to the poor, and, in a manner, the father of the wretched. This being told to the king, when they were going in to dinner, he said to the Bishop, "What did you mean, my lord Bishop, by giving the poor man that royal horse, which it was fitting that you should have for your own use? Had not we many other horses of less value, or things of other sorts, which would have been good enough to give to the poor, instead of giving that horse, which I had chosen and set apart for your own use?" Thereupon the Bishop answered, "What do you say, O king? Is that son of a mare more dear to you than that son of God?" Upon this they went in to dinner, and the Bishop sat in his place; but the king, who had come in from hunting, stood warming himself, with his attendants, at the fire. Then, on a sudden, whilst he was warming himself, calling to mind what the bishop had said to him, he ungirt his sword, and gave it to a servant, and hastened to the Bishop and fell down at his feet, beseeching him to forgive him; "For from this time forward," said he, "I will never speak any more of this, nor will I judge of what or how much of our money you shall give to the sons of God." The bishop was much moved at this sight, and starting up, raised him, saying that he was entirely reconciled to him, if he would but sit down to his meat, and lay aside all sorrow. The king, at the bishop's command and request, was comforted, but the bishop, on the other hand, grew sad and was moved even to tears. His priest then asking him, in the language of his country, which the king and his servants did not understand, why he wept, "I know," said he, "that the king

will not live long; for I never before saw a humble king; whence I perceive that he will soon be snatched out of this life, because this nation is not worthy of such a ruler." Not long after, the bishop's gloomy foreboding was fulfilled by the king's sad death, as has been said above. But Bishop Aidan himself was also taken out of this world, not more than twelve days after the death of the king he loved, on the 31st of August, to receive the eternal reward of his labours from the Lord.

Chap. XV. How Bishop Aidan foretold to certain seamen that a storm would arise, and gave them some holy oil to calm it. [Between 642 and 645 ACE]

How great the merits of Aidan were, was made manifest by the Judge of the heart, with the testimony of miracles, whereof it will suffice to mention three, that they may not be forgotten. A certain priest, whose name was Utta, a man of great weight and sincerity, and on that account honoured by all men, even the princes of the world, was sent to Kent, to bring thence, as wife for King Oswy, Eanfled, the daughter of King Edwin, who had been carried thither when her father was killed. Intending to go thither by land, but to return with the maiden by sea, he went to Bishop Aidan, and entreated him to offer up his prayers to the Lord for him and his company, who were then to set out on so long a journey. He, blessing them, and commending them to the Lord, at the same time gave them some holy oil, saying, "I know that when you go on board ship, you will meet with a storm and contrary wind; but be mindful to cast this oil I give you into the sea, and the wind will cease immediately; you will have pleasant calm weather to attend you and send you home by the way that you desire."

All these things fell out in order, even as the bishop had foretold. For first, the waves of the sea raged, and the sailors endeavoured to ride it out at anchor, but all to no purpose; for the sea sweeping over the ship on all sides and beginning to fill it with water, they all perceived that death was at hand and about to overtake them. The priest at last, remembering the bishop's words, laid hold of the phial and cast some of the oil into the sea, which at once, as had been foretold, ceased from its uproar. Thus it came to pass that the man of God, by the spirit of prophecy, foretold the storm that was to come to pass, and by virtue of the same spirit, though absent in the body, calmed it when it had arisen. The story of this miracle was not told me by a person of little credit, but by Cynimund, a most faithful priest of our church, who declared that it was related to him by Utta, the priest, in whose case and through whom the same was wrought.

Chap. XVI. How the same Aidan, by his prayers, saved the royal city when it was fired by the enemy [Before 651 ACE]

Another notable miracle of the same father is related by many such as were likely to have knowledge thereof; for during the time that he was bishop, the hostile army of the Mercians, under the command of Penda, cruelly ravaged the country of the Northumbrians far and near, even to the royal city, which has its

name from Bebba, formerly its queen. Not being able to take it by storm or by siege, he endeavoured to burn it down; and having pulled down all the villages in the neighbourhood of the city, he brought thither an immense quantity of beams, rafters, partitions, wattles and thatch, wherewith he encompassed the place to a great height on the land side, and when he found the wind favourable, he set fire to it and attempted to burn the town.

At that time, the most reverend Bishop Aidan was dwelling in the Isle of Farne, which is about two miles from the city; for thither he was wont often to retire to pray in solitude and silence; and, indeed, this lonely dwelling of his is to this day shown in that island. When he saw the flames of fire and the smoke carried by the wind rising above the city walls, he is said to have lifted up his eyes and hands to heaven, and cried with tears, "Behold, Lord, how great evil is wrought by Penda!" These words were hardly uttered, when the wind immediately veering from the city, drove back the flames upon those who had kindled them, so that some being hurt, and all afraid, they forebore any further attempts against the city, which they perceived to be protected by the hand of God.

Chap. XVII. How a prop of the church on which Bishop Aidan was leaning when he died, could not be consumed when the rest of the Church was on fire; and concerning his inward life. [651 ACE]

Aidan was in the king's township, not far from the city of which we have spoken above, at the time when death caused him to quit the body, after he had been bishop sixteen years; for having a church and a chamber in that place, he was wont often to go and stay there, and to make excursions from it to preach in the country round about, which he likewise did at other of the king's townships, having nothing of his own besides his church and a few fields about it. When he was sick they set up a tent for him against the wall at the west end of the church, and so it happened that he breathed his last, leaning against a buttress that was on the outside of the church to strengthen the wall. He died in the seventeenth year of his episcopate, on the 31st of August. His body was thence presently translated to the isle of Lindisfarne, and buried in the cemetery of the brethren. Some time after, when a larger church was built there and dedicated in honour of the blessed prince of the Apostles, his bones were translated thither, and laid on the right side of the altar, with the respect due to so great a prelate.

Finan, who had likewise been sent thither from Hii, the island monastery of the Scots, succeeded him, and continued no small time in the bishopric. It happened some years after, that Penda, king of the Mercians, coming into these parts with a hostile army, destroyed all he could with fire and sword, and the village where the bishop died, along with the church above mentioned, was burnt down; but it fell out in a wonderful manner that the buttress against which he had been leaning when he died, could not be consumed by the fire which devoured all about it. This miracle being noised abroad, the church was soon rebuilt in the same place, and that same buttress was set up on the outside, as

it had been before, to strengthen the wall. It happened again, some time after, that the village and likewise the church were carelessly burned down the second time. Then again, the fire could not touch the buttress; and, miraculously, though the fire broke through the very holes of the nails wherewith it was fixed to the building, yet it could do no hurt to the buttress itself. When therefore the church was built there the third time, they did not, as before, place that buttress on the outside as a support of the building, but within the church, as a memorial of the miracle; where the people coming in might kneel, and implore the Divine mercy. And it is well known that since then many have found grace and been healed in that same place, as also that by means of splinters cut off from the buttress, and put into water, many more have obtained a remedy for their own infirmities and those of their friends.

I have written thus much concerning the character and works of the aforesaid Aidan, in no way commending or approving his lack of wisdom with regard to the observance of Easter; nay, heartily detesting it, as I have most manifestly proved in the book I have written, "De Temporibus"; but, like an impartial historian, unreservedly relating what was done by or through him, and commending such things as are praiseworthy in his actions, and preserving the memory thereof for the benefit of the readers; to wit, his love of peace and charity; of continence and humility; his mind superior to anger and avarice, and despising pride and vainglory; his industry in keeping and teaching the Divine commandments, his power of study and keeping vigil; his priestly authority in reproofing the haughty and powerful, and at the same time his tenderness in comforting the afflicted, and relieving or defending the poor. To be brief, so far as I have learnt from those that knew him, he took care to neglect none of those things which he found in the Gospels and the writings of Apostles and prophets, but to the utmost of his power endeavoured to fulfil them all in his deeds.

These things I greatly admire and love in the aforesaid bishop, because I do not doubt that they were pleasing to God; but I do not approve or praise his observance of Easter at the wrong time, either through ignorance of the canonical time appointed, or, if he knew it, being prevailed on by the authority of his nation not to adopt it. Yet this I approve in him, that in the celebration of his Easter, the object which he had at heart and revered and preached was the same as ours, to wit, the redemption of mankind, through the Passion, Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven of the Man Christ Jesus, who is the mediator between God and man. And therefore he always celebrated Easter, not as some falsely imagine, on the fourteenth of the moon, like the Jews, on any day of the week, but on the Lord's day, from the fourteenth to the twentieth of the moon; and this he did from his belief that the Resurrection of our Lord happened on the first day of the week, and for the hope of our resurrection, which also he, with the holy Church, believed would truly happen on that same first day of the week, now called the Lord's day.

Chap. XVIII. Of the life and death of the religious King Sigbert. [Circ. 631 ACE]

At this time, the kingdom of the East Angles, after the death of Earpwald, the successor of Redwald, was governed by his brother Sigbert, a good and religious man, who some time before had been baptized in Gaul, whilst he lived in banishment, a fugitive from the enmity of Redwald. When he returned home, as soon as he ascended the throne, being desirous to imitate the good institutions which he had seen in Gaul, he founded a school wherein boys should be taught letters, and was assisted therein by Bishop Felix, who came to him from Kent, and who furnished them with masters and teachers after the manner of the people of Kent.

This king became so great a lover of the heavenly kingdom, that at last, quitting the affairs of his kingdom, and committing them to his kinsman Ecgric, who before had a share in that kingdom, he entered a monastery, which he had built for himself, and having received the tonsure, applied himself rather to do battle for a heavenly throne. A long time after this, it happened that the nation of the Mercians, under King Penda, made war on the East Angles; who finding themselves no match for their enemy, entreated Sigbert to go with them to battle, to encourage the soldiers. He was unwilling and refused, upon which they drew him against his will out of the monastery, and carried him to the army, hoping that the soldiers would be less afraid and less disposed to flee in the presence of one who had formerly been an active and distinguished commander. But he, still mindful of his profession, surrounded, as he was, by a royal army, would carry nothing in his hand but a wand, and was killed with King Ecgric; and the pagans pressing on, all their army was either slaughtered or dispersed.

They were succeeded in the kingdom by Anna, the son of Eni, of the blood royal, a good man, and the father of good children, of whom, in the proper place, we shall speak hereafter. He also was afterwards slain like his predecessors by the same pagan chief of the Mercians.

Chap. XIX. How Fursa built a monastery among the East Angles, and of his visions and sanctity, to which, his flesh remaining uncorrupted after death bore testimony. [Circ. 633 ACE]

Whilst Sigbert still governed the kingdom, there came out of Ireland a holy man called Fursa, renowned both for his words and actions, and remarkable for singular virtues, being desirous to live as a stranger and pilgrim for the Lord's sake, wherever an opportunity should offer. On coming into the province of the East Angles, he was honourably received by the aforesaid king, and performing his wonted task of preaching the Gospel, by the example of his virtue and the influence of his words, converted many unbelievers to Christ, and confirmed in the faith and love of Christ those that already believed.

Here he fell into some infirmity of body, and was thought worthy to see a vision of angels; in which he was admonished diligently to persevere in the ministry of the Word which he had undertaken, and indefatigably to apply himself to

his usual watching and prayers; inasmuch as his end was certain, but the hour thereof uncertain, according to the saying of our Lord, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour." Being confirmed by this vision, he set himself with all speed to build a monastery on the ground which had been given him by King Sigbert, and to establish a rule of life therein. This monastery was pleasantly situated in the woods, near the sea; it was built within the area of a fort, which in the English language is called Cnobheresburg, that is, Cnobhere's Town; afterwards, Anna, king of that province, and certain of the nobles, embellished it with more stately buildings and with gifts.

This man was of noble Scottish blood, but much more noble in mind than in birth. From his boyish years, he had earnestly applied himself to reading sacred books and observing monastic discipline, and, as is most fitting for holy men, he carefully practised all that he learned to be right.

Now, in course of time he himself built a monastery, wherein he might with more freedom devote himself to his heavenly studies. There, falling sick, as the book concerning his life clearly informs us, he fell into a trance, and quitting his body from the evening till cockcrow, he was accounted worthy to behold the sight of the choirs of angels, and to hear their glad songs of praise. He was wont to declare, that among other things he distinctly heard this refrain: "The saints shall go from strength to strength." And again, "The God of gods shall be seen in Sion." Being restored to his body, and again taken from it three days after, he not only saw the greater joys of the blessed, but also fierce conflicts of evil spirits, who by frequent accusations wickedly endeavoured to obstruct his journey to heaven; but the angels protected him, and all their endeavours were in vain. Concerning all these matters, if any one desires to be more fully informed, to wit, with what subtlety of deceit the devils recounted both his actions and idle words, and even his thoughts, as if they had been written down in a book; and what joyous or grievous tidings he learned from the holy angels and just men who appeared to him among the angels; let him read the little book of his life which I have mentioned, and I doubt not that he will thereby reap much spiritual profit.

But there is one thing among the rest, which we have thought it may be beneficial to many to insert in this history. When he had been taken up on high, he was bidden by the angels that conducted him to look back upon the world. Upon which, casting his eyes downward, he saw, as it were, a dark valley in the depths underneath him. He also saw four fires in the air, not far distant from each other. Then asking the angels, what fires those were, he was told, they were the fires which would kindle and consume the world. One of them was of falsehood, when we do not fulfil that which we promised in Baptism, to renounce the Devil and all his works. The next was of covetousness, when we prefer the riches of the world to the love of heavenly things. The third was of discord, when we do not fear to offend our neighbour even in needless things. The fourth was of ruthlessness when we think it a light thing to rob and to defraud the weak. These fires, increasing by degrees, extended so as to meet one another, and united in one immense flame.

When it drew near, fearing for himself, he said to the angel, "Lord, behold the fire draws near to me." The angel answered, "That which you did not kindle will not burn you; for though this appears to be a terrible and great pyre, yet it tries every man according to the merits of his works; for every man's concupiscence shall burn in this fire; for as a man burns in the body through unlawful pleasure, so, when set free from the body, he shall burn by the punishment which he has deserved."

Then he saw one of the three angels, who had been his guides throughout both visions, go before and divide the flaming fires, whilst the other two, flying about on both sides, defended him from the danger of the fire. He also saw devils flying through the fire, raising the flames of war against the just. Then followed accusations of the envious spirits against himself, the defence of the good spirits, and a fuller vision of the heavenly hosts; as also of holy men of his own nation, who, as he had learnt, had worthily held the office of priesthood in old times, and who were known to fame; from whom he heard many things very salutary to himself, and to all others that would listen to them. When they had ended their discourse, and returned to Heaven with the angelic spirits, there remained with the blessed Fursa, the three angels of whom we have spoken before, and who were to bring him back to the body. And when they approached the aforesaid great fire, the angel divided the flame, as he had done before; but when the man of God came to the passage so opened amidst the flames, the unclean spirits, laying hold of one of those whom they were burning in the fire, cast him against him, and, touching his shoulder and jaw, scorched them. He knew the man, and called to mind that he had received his garment when he died. The holy angel, immediately laying hold of the man, threw him back into the fire, and the malignant enemy said, "Do not reject him whom you before received; for as you received the goods of the sinner, so you ought to share in his punishment." But the angel withstood him, saying, "He did not receive them through avarice, but in order to save his soul." The fire ceased, and the angel, turning to him, said, "That which you kindled burned you; for if you had not received the money of this man that died in his sins, his punishment would not burn you." And he went on to speak with wholesome counsel of what ought to be done for the salvation of such as repented in the hour of death.

Being afterwards restored to the body, throughout the whole course of his life he bore the mark of the fire which he had felt in the spirit, visible to all men on his shoulder and jaw; and the flesh openly showed, in a wonderful manner, what the spirit had suffered in secret. He always took care, as he had done before, to teach all men the practice of virtue, as well by his example, as by preaching. But as for the story of his visions, he would only relate them to those who, from desire of repentance, questioned him about them. An aged brother of our monastery is still living, who is wont to relate that a very truthful and religious man told him, that he had seen Fursa himself in the province of the East Angles, and heard those visions from his lips; adding, that though it was in severe winter weather and a hard frost, and the man was sitting in a thin garment when he told the story, yet he sweated as if it had been in the heat of mid-summer, by reason of the great terror or joy of which he spoke.

To return to what we were saying before, when, after preaching the Word of God many years in Scotland, he could not well endure the disturbance of the crowds that resorted to him, leaving all that he looked upon as his own, he departed from his native island, and came with a few brothers through the Britons into the province of the English, and preaching the Word there, as has been said, built a famous monastery. When this was duly carried out, he became desirous to rid himself of all business of this world, and even of the monastery itself, and forthwith left the care of it and of its souls, to his brother Fullan, and the priests Gobban and Dicull, and being himself free from all worldly affairs, resolved to end his life as a hermit. He had another brother called Ultan, who, after a long monastic probation, had also adopted the life of an anchorite. So, seeking him out alone, he lived a whole year with him in self-denial and prayer, and laboured daily with his hands.

Afterwards seeing the province thrown into confusion by the irruptions of the pagans, and foreseeing that the monasteries would also be in danger, he left all things in order, and sailed over into Gaul, and being there honourably entertained by Clovis, king of the Franks, or by the patrician Ercinwald, he built a monastery in the place called Latineacum, and falling sick not long after, departed this life. The same Ercinwald, the patrician, took his body, and kept it in the porch of a church he was building in his town of Perrona, till the church itself should be dedicated. This happened twenty-seven days after, and the body being taken from the porch, to be re-buried near the altar, was found as whole as if he had died that very hour. And again, four years after, when a more beautiful shrine had been built to receive his body to the east of the altar, it was still found without taint of corruption, and was translated thither with due honour; where it is well known that his merits, through the divine operation, have been declared by many miracles. We have briefly touched upon these matters as well as the incorruption of his body, that the lofty nature of the man may be better known to our readers. All which, as also concerning the comrades of his warfare, whosoever will read it, will find more fully described in the book of his life.

Chap. XX. How, when Honorius died, Deusdedit became Archbishop of Canterbury; and of those who were at that time bishops of the East Angles, and of the church of Rochester. [653 ACE]

In the meantime, Felix, bishop of the East Angles, dying, when he had held that see seventeen years, Honorius ordained Thomas his deacon, of the province of the Gyrwas, in his place; and he being taken from this life when he had been bishop five years, Bertgils, surnamed Boniface, of the province of Kent, was appointed in his stead. Honorius himself also, having run his course, departed this life in the year of our Lord 653, on the 30th of September; and when the see had been vacant a year and six months, Deusdedit of the nation of the West Saxons, was chosen the sixth Archbishop of Canterbury. To ordain him, Ithamar, bishop of Rochester, came thither. His ordination was on the 26th of March, and he ruled the church

nine years, four months, and two days; and when Ithamar died, he consecrated in his place Damian, who was of the race of the South Saxons.

Chap. XXI. How the province of the Midland Angles became Christian under King Peada. [653 ACE]

At this time, the Middle Angles, that is, the Angles of the Midland country, under their Prince Peada, the son of King Penda, received the faith and mysteries of the truth. Being an excellent youth, and most worthy of the name and office of a king, he was by his father elevated to the throne of that nation, and came to Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, requesting to have his daughter Alchfled given him to wife; but he could not obtain his desire unless he would receive the faith of Christ, and be baptized, with the nation which he governed. When he heard the preaching of the truth, the promise of the heavenly kingdom, and the hope of resurrection and future immortality, he declared that he would willingly become a Christian, even though he should not obtain the maiden; being chiefly prevailed on to receive the faith by King Oswy's son Alchfrid, who was his brother-in-law and friend, for he had married his sister Cyneburg, the daughter of King Penda.

Accordingly he was baptized by Bishop Finan, with all his nobles and thegns, and their servants, that came along with him, at a noted township, belonging to the king, called At the Wall. And having received four priests, who by reason of their learning and good life were deemed proper to instruct and baptize his nation, he returned home with much joy. These priests were Cedd and Adda, and Betti and Diuna; the last of whom was by nation a Scot, the others English. Adda was brother to Utta, whom we have mentioned before, a renowned priest, and abbot of the monastery which is called At the Goat's Head. The aforesaid priests, arriving in the province with the prince, preached the Word, and were heard willingly; and many, as well of the nobility as the common sort, renouncing the abominations of idolatry, were daily washed in the fountain of the faith.

Nor did King Penda forbid the preaching of the Word even among his people, the Mercians, if any were willing to hear it; but, on the contrary, he hated and despised those whom he perceived to be without the works of faith, when they had once received the faith of Christ, saying, that they were contemptible and wretched who scorned to obey their God, in whom they believed. These things were set on foot two years before the death of King Penda.

But when he was slain, and the most Christian king, Oswy, succeeded him in the throne, as we shall hereafter relate, Diuna, one of the aforesaid four priests, was made bishop of the Midland Angles, as also of the Mercians, being ordained by Bishop Finan; for the scarcity of priests made it necessary that one prelate should be set over two nations. Having in a short time gained many people to the Lord, he died among the Midland Angles, in the country called Infepingum; and Ceollach, also of the Scottish nation, succeeded him in the bishopric. But he, not long after, left his bishopric, and returned to the island of Hii, which, among the Scots, was the chief and head of many monasteries. His successor in the bishopric

was Trumhere, a godly man, and trained in the monastic life, an Englishman, but ordained bishop by the Scots. This happened in the days of King Wulfhere, of whom we shall speak hereafter.

Chap. XXII. How under King Sigbert, through the preaching of Cedd, the East Saxons again received the faith, which they had before cast off. [653 ACE]

At that time, also, the East Saxons, at the instance of King Oswy, again received the faith, which they had formerly cast off when they expelled Mellitus, their bishop. For Sigbert, who reigned next to Sigbert surnamed The Little, was then king of that nation, and a friend to King Oswy, who, when Sigbert came to the province of the Northumbrians to visit him, as he often did, used to endeavour to convince him that those could not be gods that had been made by the hands of men; that a stock or a stone could not be proper matter to form a god, the residue whereof was either burned in the fire, or framed into any vessels for the use of men, or else was cast out as refuse, trampled on and turned into dust. That God is rather to be understood as incomprehensible in majesty and invisible to human eyes, almighty, eternal, the Creator of heaven and earth and of mankind; Who governs and will judge the world in righteousness, Whose eternal abode must be believed to be in Heaven, and not in base and perishable metal; and that it ought in reason to be concluded, that all those who learn and do the will of Him by Whom they were created, will receive from Him eternal rewards. King Oswy having often, with friendly counsel, like a brother, said this and much more to the like effect to King Sigbert, at length, aided by the consent of his friends, he believed, and after he had consulted with those about him, and exhorted them, when they all agreed and assented to the faith, he was baptized with them by Bishop Finan, in the king's township above spoken of, which is called At the Wall, because it is close by the wall which the Romans formerly drew across the island of Britain, at the distance of twelve miles from the eastern sea.

King Sigbert, having now become a citizen of the eternal kingdom, returned to the seat of his temporal kingdom, requesting of King Oswy that he would give him some teachers, to convert his nation to the faith of Christ, and cleanse them in the fountain of salvation. Wherefore Oswy, sending into the province of the Midland Angles, summoned the man of God, Cedd, and, giving him another priest for his companion, sent them to preach the Word to the East Saxons. When these two, travelling to all parts of that country, had gathered a numerous Church to the Lord, it happened once that Cedd returned home, and came to the church of Lindisfarne to confer with Bishop Finan; who, finding that the work of the Gospel had prospered in his hands, made him bishop of the nation of the East Saxons, calling to him two other bishops to assist at the ordination. Cedd, having received the episcopal dignity, returned to his province, and pursuing the work he had begun with more ample authority, built churches in divers places, and ordained priests and deacons to assist him in the Word of faith, and the ministry of Baptism, especially in the city

which, in the language of the Saxons, is called Ythancaestir, as also in that which is named Tilaburg. The first of these places is on the bank of the Pant, the other on the bank of the Thames. In these, gathering a flock of Christ's servants, he taught them to observe the discipline of a rule of life, as far as those rude people were then capable of receiving it.

Whilst the teaching of the everlasting life was thus, for no small time, making daily increase in that province to the joy of the king and of all the people, it happened that the king, at the instigation of the enemy of all good men, was murdered by his own kindred. They were two brothers who did this wicked deed; and being asked what had moved them to it, they had nothing else to answer, but that they had been incensed against the king, and hated him, because he was too apt to spare his enemies, and calmly forgave the wrongs they had done him, upon their entreaty. Such was the crime for which the king was killed, because he observed the precepts of the Gospel with a devout heart; but in this innocent death his real offence was also punished, according to the prediction of the man of God. For one of those nobles that murdered him was unlawfully married, and when the bishop was not able to prevent or correct the sin, he excommunicated him, and commanded all that would give ear to him not to enter this man's house, nor to eat of his meat. But the king made light of this command, and being invited by the noble, went to a banquet at his house. As he was going thence, the bishop met him. The king, beholding him, immediately dismounted from his horse, trembling, and fell down at his feet, begging pardon for his offence; for the bishop, who was likewise on horseback, had also alighted. Being much incensed, he touched the prostrate king with the rod he held in his hand, and spoke thus with the authority of his office: "I tell thee, forasmuch as thou wouldest not refrain from the house of that sinful and condemned man, thou shalt die in that very house." Yet it is to be believed, that such a death of a religious man not only blotted out his offence, but even added to his merit; because it happened on account of his piety and his observance of the commands of Christ.

Sigbert was succeeded in the kingdom by Suidhelm, the son of Sexbald, who was baptized by the same Cedd, in the province of the East Angles, in the royal township, called Rendlaesham, that is, Rendil's Dwelling; and Ethelwald, king of the East Angles, brother to Anna, king of the same people, received him as he came forth from the holy font.

Chap. XXIII. How Bishop Cedd, having a place for building a monastery given him by King Ethelwald, consecrated it to the Lord with prayer and fasting; and concerning his death. [659-664 ACE]

The same man of God, whilst he was bishop among the East Saxons, was also wont oftentimes to visit his own province, Northumbria, for the purpose of exhortation. Oidilwald, the son of King Oswald, who reigned among the Deiri, finding him a holy, wise, and good man, desired him to accept some land whereon to build a monastery, to which the king himself might frequently resort, to pray

to the Lord and hear the Word, and where he might be buried when he died; for he believed faithfully that he should receive much benefit from the daily prayers of those who were to serve the Lord in that place. The king had before with him a brother of the same bishop, called Caelin, a man no less devoted to God, who, being a priest, was wont to administer to him and his house the Word and the Sacraments of the faith; by whose means he chiefly came to know and love the bishop. So then, complying with the king's desires, the Bishop chose himself a place whereon to build a monastery among steep and distant mountains, which looked more like lurking-places for robbers and dens of wild beasts, than dwellings of men; to the end that, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, "In the habitation of dragons, where each lay, might be grass with reeds and rushes;" that is, that the fruits of good works should spring up, where before beasts were wont to dwell, or men to live after the manner of beasts.

But the man of God, desiring first to cleanse the place which he had received for the monastery from stain of former crimes, by prayer and fasting, and so to lay the foundations there, requested of the king that he would give him opportunity and leave to abide there for prayer all the time of Lent, which was at hand. All which days, except Sundays, he prolonged his fast till the evening, according to custom, and then took no other sustenance than a small piece of bread, one hen's egg, and a little milk and water. This, he said, was the custom of those of whom he had learned the rule of regular discipline, first to consecrate to the Lord, by prayer and fasting, the places which they had newly received for building a monastery or a church. When there were ten days of Lent still remaining, there came a messenger to call him to the king; and he, that the holy work might not be intermitted, on account of the king's affairs, entreated his priest, Cynibill, who was also his own brother, to complete his pious undertaking. Cynibill readily consented, and when the duty of fasting and prayer was over, he there built the monastery, which is now called Laestingaeu, and established therein religious customs according to the use of Lindisfarne, where he had been trained.

When Cedd had for many years held the office of bishop in the aforesaid province, and also taken charge of this monastery, over which he placed provosts, it happened that he came thither at a time when there was plague, and fell sick and died. He was first buried without the walls; but in the process of time a church was built of stone in the monastery, in honour of the Blessed Mother of God, and his body was laid in it, on the right side of the altar.

The bishop left the monastery to be governed after him by his brother Ceadda, who was afterwards made bishop, as shall be told hereafter. For, as it rarely happens, the four brothers we have mentioned, Cedd and Cynibill, and Caelin and Ceadda, were all celebrated priests of the Lord, and two of them also came to be bishops. When the brethren who were in his monastery, in the province of the East Saxons, heard that the bishop was dead and buried in the province of the Northumbrians, about thirty men of that monastery came thither, being desirous either to live near the body of their father, if it should please God, or to

die and be buried there. Being gladly received by their brethren and fellow soldiers in Christ, all of them died there struck down by the aforesaid pestilence, except one little boy, who is known to have been saved from death by the prayers of his spiritual father. For being alive long after, and giving himself to the reading of Scripture, he was told that he had not been regenerated by the water of Baptism, and being then cleansed in the laver of salvation, he was afterwards promoted to the order of priesthood, and was of service to many in the church. I do not doubt that he was delivered at the point of death, as I have said, by the intercession of his father, to whose body he had come for love of him, that so he might himself avoid eternal death, and by teaching, offer the ministry of life and salvation to others of the brethren.

Chap. XXIV. How when King Penda was slain, the province of the Mercians received the faith of Christ, and Oswy gave possessions and territories to God, for building monasteries, as a thank offering for the victory obtained. [655 ACE]

At this time, King Oswy was exposed to the cruel and intolerable invasions of Penda, king of the Mercians, whom we have so often mentioned, and who had slain his brother; at length, compelled by his necessity, he promised to give him countless gifts and royal marks of honour greater than can be believed, to purchase peace; provided that he would return home, and cease to waste and utterly destroy the provinces of his kingdom. The pagan king refused to grant his request, for he had resolved to blot out and extirpate all his nation, from the highest to the lowest; whereupon King Oswy had recourse to the protection of the Divine pity for deliverance from his barbarous and pitiless foe, and binding himself by a vow, said, "If the pagan will not accept our gifts, let us offer them to Him that will, the Lord our God." He then vowed, that if he should win the victory, he would dedicate his daughter to the Lord in holy virginity, and give twelve pieces of land whereon to build monasteries. After this he gave battle with a very small army: indeed, it is reported that the pagans had thirty times the number of men; for they had thirty legions, drawn up under most noted commanders. King Oswy and his son Alchfrid met them with a very small army, as has been said, but trusting in Christ as their Leader; his other son, Egfrid, was then kept as a hostage at the court of Queen Cynwise, in the province of the Mercians. King Oswald's son Oidilwald, who ought to have supported them, was on the enemy's side, and led them on to fight against his country and his uncle; though, during the battle, he withdrew, and awaited the event in a place of safety. The engagement began, the pagans were put to flight or killed, the thirty royal commanders, who had come to Penda's assistance, were almost all of them slain; among whom was Ethelhere, brother and successor to Anna, king of the East Angles. He had been the occasion of the war, and was now killed, having lost his army and auxiliaries. The battle was fought near the river Winwaed, which then, owing to the great rains, was in flood, and had overflowed its banks, so that many more were drowned in the flight than destroyed in battle by the sword.

Then King Oswy, according to the vow he had made to the Lord, returned thanks to God for the victory granted him, and gave his daughter Elfled, who was scarce a year old, to be consecrated to Him in perpetual virginity; bestowing also twelve small estates of land, wherein the practice of earthly warfare should cease, and place and means should be afforded to devout and zealous monks to wage spiritual warfare, and pray for the eternal peace of his nation. Of these estates six were in the province of the Deiri, and the other six in that of the Bernicians. Each of the estates contained ten families, that is, a hundred and twenty in all. The aforesaid daughter of King Oswy, who was to be dedicated to God, entered the monastery called Heruteu, or, "The Island of the Hart," at that time ruled by the Abbess Hilda, who, two years after, having acquired an estate of ten families, at the place called Streanaeshalch, built a monastery there, in which the aforesaid king's daughter was first trained in the monastic life and afterwards became abbess; till, at the age of fifty-nine, the blessed virgin departed to be united to her Heavenly Bridegroom. In this monastery, she and her father, Oswy, her mother, Eanfled, her mother's father, Edwin, and many other noble persons, are buried in the church of the holy Apostle Peter. King Oswy concluded this war in the district of Loidis, in the thirteenth year of his reign, on the 15th of November, to the great benefit of both nations; for he delivered his own people from the hostile depredations of the pagans, and, having made an end of their heathen chief, converted the Mercians and the adjacent provinces to the grace of the Christian faith.

Diurna was made the first bishop of the Mercians, as also of Lindsey and the Midland Angles, as has been said above, and he died and was buried among the Midland Angles. The second was Ceollach, who, giving up his episcopal office before his death, returned into Scotland. Both these bishops belonged to the nation of the Scots. The third was Trumhere, an Englishman, but educated and ordained by the Scots. He was abbot of the monastery that is called Ingetlingum, and is the place where King Oswin was killed, as has been said above; for Queen Eanfled, his kinswoman, in expiation of his unjust death, begged of King Oswy that he would give Trumhere, the aforesaid servant of God, a place there to build a monastery, because he also was kinsman to the slaughtered king; in which monastery continual prayers should be offered up for the eternal welfare of the kings, both of him that was murdered, and of him that commanded the murder. The same King Oswy governed the Mercians, as also the people of the other southern provinces, three years after he had slain King Penda; and he likewise subdued the greater part of the Picts to the dominion of the English.

At this time he gave to the above-mentioned Peada, son to King Penda, because he was his kinsman, the kingdom of the Southern Mercians, consisting, as is said, of 5,000 families, divided by the river Trent from the Northern Mercians, whose land contains 7,000 families; but Peada was foully slain in the following spring, by the treachery, as is said, of his wife, during the very time of the Easter festival. Three years after the death of King Penda, the Mercian chiefs, Immin, and Eafa, and Eadbert, rebelled against King Oswy, setting up for their king, Wulfhere, son to the

said Penda, a youth whom they had kept concealed; and expelling the ealdormen of the foreign king, they bravely recovered at once their liberty and their lands; and being thus free, together with their king, they rejoiced to serve Christ the true King, for the sake of an everlasting kingdom in heaven. This king governed the Mercians seventeen years, and had for his first bishop Trumhere, above spoken of; the second was Jaruman; the third Ceadda; the fourth Wynfrid. All these, succeeding each other in order under King Wulfhere, discharged episcopal duties to the Mercian nation.

Chap. XXV. How the question arose about the due time of keeping Easter, with those that came out of Scotland. [664 ACE]

In the meantime, Bishop Aidan being taken away from this life, Finan, who was ordained and sent by the Scots, succeeded him in the bishopric, and built a church in the Isle of Lindisfarne, fit for the episcopal see; nevertheless, after the manner of the Scots, he made it, not of stone, but entirely of hewn oak, and covered it with reeds; and it was afterwards dedicated in honour of the blessed Peter the Apostle, by the most reverend Archbishop Theodore. Eadbert, also bishop of that place, took off the thatch, and caused it to be covered entirely, both roof and walls, with plates of lead.

At this time, a great and frequently debated question arose about the observance of Easter; those that came from Kent or Gaul affirming, that the Scots celebrated Easter Sunday contrary to the custom of the universal Church. Among them was a most zealous defender of the true Easter, whose name was Ronan, a Scot by nation, but instructed in the rule of ecclesiastical truth in Gaul or Italy. Disputing with Finan, he convinced many, or at least induced them to make a more strict inquiry after the truth; yet he could not prevail upon Finan, but, on the contrary, embittered him the more by reproof, and made him a professed opponent of the truth, for he was of a violent temper. James, formerly the deacon of the venerable Archbishop Paulinus, as has been said above, observed the true and Catholic Easter, with all those that he could instruct in the better way. Queen Eanfled and her followers also observed it as she had seen it practised in Kent, having with her a Kentish priest who followed the Catholic observance, whose name was Romanus. Thus it is said to have sometimes happened in those times that Easter was twice celebrated in one year; and that when the king, having ended his fast, was keeping Easter, the queen and her followers were still fasting, and celebrating Palm Sunday. Whilst Aidan lived, this difference about the observance of Easter was patiently tolerated by all men, for they well knew, that though he could not keep Easter contrary to the custom of those who had sent him, yet he industriously laboured to practise the works of faith, piety, and love, according to the custom of all holy men; for which reason he was deservedly beloved by all, even by those who differed in opinion concerning Easter, and was held in veneration, not only by less important persons, but even by the bishops, Honorius of Canterbury, and Felix of the East Angles.

But after the death of Finan, who succeeded him, when Colman, who was also sent from Scotland, came to be bishop, a greater controversy arose about the observance of Easter, and other rules of ecclesiastical life. Whereupon this question began naturally to influence the thoughts and hearts of many who feared, lest haply, having received the name of Christians, they might run, or have run, in vain. This reached the ears of the rulers, King Oswy and his son Alchfrid. Now Oswy, having been instructed and baptized by the Scots, and being very perfectly skilled in their language, thought nothing better than what they taught; but Alchfrid, having for his teacher in Christianity the learned Wilfrid, who had formerly gone to Rome to study ecclesiastical doctrine, and spent much time at Lyons with Dalfinus, archbishop of Gaul, from whom also he had received the crown of ecclesiastical tonsure, rightly thought that this man's doctrine ought to be preferred before all the traditions of the Scots. For this reason he had also given him a monastery of forty families, at a place called Inhrypum; which place, not long before, he had given for a monastery to those that were followers of the Scots; but forasmuch as they afterwards, being left to their choice, preferred to quit the place rather than alter their custom, he gave it to him, whose life and doctrine were worthy of it.

Agilbert, bishop of the West Saxons, above-mentioned, a friend of King Alchfrid and of Abbot Wilfrid, had at that time come into the province of the Northumbrians, and was staying some time among them; at the request of Alchfrid, he made Wilfrid a priest in his aforesaid monastery. He had in his company a priest, whose name was Agatho. The question being raised there concerning Easter and the tonsure and other ecclesiastical matters, it was arranged, that a synod should be held in the monastery of Streanaeshalch, which signifies the Bay of the Lighthouse, where the Abbess Hilda, a woman devoted to the service of God, then ruled; and that there this question should be decided. The kings, both father and son, came thither, and the bishops, Colman with his Scottish clerks, and Agilbert with the priests Agatho and Wilfrid. James and Romanus were on their side; but the Abbess Hilda and her followers were for the Scots, as was also the venerable Bishop Cedd, long before ordained by the Scots, as has been said above, and he acted in that council as a most careful interpreter for both parties.

King Oswy first made an opening speech, in which he said that it behoved those who served one God to observe one rule of life; and as they all expected the same kingdom in heaven, so they ought not to differ in the celebration of the heavenly mysteries; but rather to inquire which was the truer tradition, that it might be followed by all in common; he then commanded his bishop, Colman, first to declare what the custom was which he observed, and whence it derived its origin. Then Colman said, "The Easter which I keep, I received from my elders, who sent me hither as bishop; all our forefathers, men beloved of God, are known to have celebrated it after the same manner; and that it may not seem to any contemptible and worthy to be rejected, it is the same which the blessed John the Evangelist, the disciple specially beloved of our Lord, with all the churches over which he presided, is recorded to have celebrated." When he had said thus much, and more to the like

effect, the king commanded Agilbert to make known the manner of his observance and to show whence it was derived, and on what authority he followed it. Agilbert answered, "I beseech you, let my disciple, the priest Wilfrid, speak in my stead; because we both concur with the other followers of the ecclesiastical tradition that are here present, and he can better and more clearly explain our opinion in the English language, than I can by an interpreter."

Then Wilfrid, being ordered by the king to speak, began thus:—"The Easter which we keep, we saw celebrated by all at Rome, where the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, lived, taught, suffered, and were buried; we saw the same done by all in Italy and in Gaul, when we travelled through those countries for the purpose of study and prayer. We found it observed in Africa, Asia, Egypt, Greece, and all the world, wherever the Church of Christ is spread abroad, among divers nations and tongues, at one and the same time; save only among these and their accomplices in obstinacy, I mean the Picts and the Britons, who foolishly, in these two remote islands of the ocean, and only in part even of them, strive to oppose all the rest of the world." When he had so said, Colman answered, "It is strange that you choose to call our efforts foolish, wherein we follow the example of so great an Apostle, who was thought worthy to lean on our Lord's bosom, when all the world knows him to have lived most wisely." Wilfrid replied, "Far be it from us to charge John with folly, for he literally observed the precepts of the Mosaic Law, whilst the Church was still Jewish in many points, and the Apostles, lest they should give cause of offence to the Jews who were among the Gentiles, were not able at once to cast off all the observances of the Law which had been instituted by God, in the same way as it is necessary that all who come to the faith should forsake the idols which were invented by devils. For this reason it was, that Paul circumcised Timothy, that he offered sacrifice in the temple, that he shaved his head with Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth; for no other advantage than to avoid giving offence to the Jews. Hence it was, that James said to the same Paul, 'Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the Law.' And yet, at this time, when the light of the Gospel is spreading throughout the world, it is needless, nay, it is not lawful, for the faithful either to be circumcised, or to offer up to God sacrifices of flesh. So John, according to the custom of the Law, began the celebration of the feast of Easter, on the fourteenth day of the first month, in the evening, not regarding whether the same happened on a Saturday, or any other week-day. But when Peter preached at Rome, being mindful that our Lord arose from the dead, and gave to the world the hope of resurrection, on the first day of the week, he perceived that Easter ought to be kept after this manner: he always awaited the rising of the moon on the fourteenth day of the first month in the evening, according to the custom and precepts of the Law, even as John did. And when that came, if the Lord's day, then called the first day of the week, was the next day, he began that very evening to celebrate Easter, as we all do at the present time. But if the Lord's day did not fall the next morning after the fourteenth moon, but on the sixteenth, or the seventeenth, or any other

moon till the twenty-first, he waited for that, and on the Saturday before, in the evening, began to observe the holy solemnity of Easter. Thus it came to pass, that Easter Sunday was only kept from the fifteenth moon to the twenty-first. Nor does this evangelical and apostolic tradition abolish the Law, but rather fulfil it; the command being to keep the passover from the fourteenth moon of the first month in the evening to the twenty-first moon of the same month in the evening; which observance all the successors of the blessed John in Asia, since his death, and all the Church throughout the world, have since followed; and that this is the true Easter, and the only one to be celebrated by the faithful, was not newly decreed by the council of Nicaea, but only confirmed afresh; as the history of the Church informs us.

“Thus it is plain, that you, Colman, neither follow the example of John, as you imagine, nor that of Peter, whose tradition you oppose with full knowledge, and that you neither agree with the Law nor the Gospel in the keeping of your Easter. For John, keeping the Paschal time according to the decree of the Mosaic Law, had no regard to the first day of the week, which you do not practise, seeing that you celebrate Easter only on the first day after the Sabbath. Peter celebrated Easter Sunday between the fifteenth and the twenty-first moon, which you do not practise, seeing that you observe Easter Sunday from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon; so that you often begin Easter on the thirteenth moon in the evening, whereof neither the Law made any mention, nor did our Lord, the Author and Giver of the Gospel, on that day either eat the old passover in the evening, or deliver the Sacraments of the New Testament, to be celebrated by the Church, in memory of His Passion, but on the fourteenth. Besides, in your celebration of Easter, you utterly exclude the twenty-first moon, which the Law ordered to be specially observed. Thus, as I have said before, you agree neither with John nor Peter, nor with the Law, nor the Gospel, in the celebration of the greatest festival.”

To this Colman rejoined: “Did the holy Anatolius, much commended in the history of the Church, judge contrary to the Law and the Gospel, when he wrote, that Easter was to be celebrated from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon? Is it to be believed that our most reverend Father Columba and his successors, men beloved by God, who kept Easter after the same manner, judged or acted contrary to the Divine writings? Whereas there were many among them, whose sanctity was attested by heavenly signs and miracles which they wrought; whom I, for my part, doubt not to be saints, and whose life, customs, and discipline I never cease to follow.”

“It is evident,” said Wilfrid, “that Anatolius was a most holy, learned, and commendable man; but what have you to do with him, since you do not observe his decrees? For he undoubtedly, following the rule of truth in his Easter, appointed a cycle of nineteen years, which either you are ignorant of, or if you know it, though it is kept by the whole Church of Christ, yet you despise it as a thing of naught. He so computed the fourteenth moon in our Lord’s Paschal Feast, that according

to the custom of the Egyptians, he acknowledged it to be the fifteenth moon on that same day in the evening; so in like manner he assigned the twentieth to Easter-Sunday, as believing that to be the twenty-first moon, when the sun had set. That you are ignorant of the rule of this distinction is proved by this, that you sometimes manifestly keep Easter before the full moon, that is, on the thirteenth day. Concerning your Father Columba and his followers, whose sanctity you say you imitate, and whose rule and precepts confirmed by signs from Heaven you say that you follow, I might answer, then when many, in the day of judgement, shall say to our Lord, that in His name they have prophesied, and have cast out devils, and done many wonderful works, our Lord will reply, that He never knew them. But far be it from me to speak thus of your fathers, for it is much more just to believe good than evil of those whom we know not. Wherefore I do not deny those also to have been God's servants, and beloved of God, who with rude simplicity, but pious intentions, have themselves loved Him. Nor do I think that such observance of Easter did them much harm, as long as none came to show them a more perfect rule to follow; for assuredly I believe that, if any teacher, reckoning after the Catholic manner, had come among them, they would have as readily followed his admonitions, as they are known to have kept those commandments of God, which they had learned and knew.

“But as for you and your companions, you certainly sin, if, having heard the decrees of the Apostolic see, nay, of the universal Church, confirmed, as they are, by Holy Scripture, you scorn to follow them; for, though your fathers were holy, do you think that those few men, in a corner of the remotest island, are to be preferred before the universal Church of Christ throughout the world? And if that Columba of yours, (and, I may say, ours also, if he was Christ's servant,) was a holy man and powerful in miracles, yet could he be preferred before the most blessed chief of the Apostles, to whom our Lord said, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven?”

When Wilfrid had ended thus, the king said, “Is it true, Colman, that these words were spoken to Peter by our Lord?” He answered, “It is true, O king!” Then said he, “Can you show any such power given to your Columba?” Colman answered, “None.” Then again the king asked, “Do you both agree in this, without any controversy, that these words were said above all to Peter, and that the keys of the kingdom of Heaven were given to him by our Lord?” They both answered, “Yes.” Then the king concluded, “And I also say unto you, that he is the door-keeper, and I will not gainsay him, but I desire, as far as I know and am able, in all things to obey his laws, lest haply when I come to the gates of the kingdom of Heaven, there should be none to open them, he being my adversary who is proved to have the keys.” The king having said this, all who were seated there or standing by, both great and small, gave their assent, and renouncing the less perfect custom, hastened to conform to that which they had found to be better.

Chap. XXVI. How Colman, being worsted, returned home; and Tuda succeeded him in the bishopric; and of the state of the church under those teachers. [664 ACE]

The disputation being ended, and the assembly broken up, Agilbert returned home. Colman, perceiving that his doctrine was rejected, and his party despised, took with him those who wished to follow him, to wit, such as would not accept the Catholic Easter and the tonsure in the form of a crown, (for there was no small dispute about that also,) and went back into Scotland, to consult with his people what was to be done in this case. Cedd, forsaking the practices of the Scots, returned to his bishopric, having submitted to the Catholic observance of Easter. This debate took place in the year of our Lord 664, which was the twenty-second year of the reign of King Oswy, and the thirtieth of the episcopate of the Scots among the English; for Aidan was bishop seventeen years, Finan ten, and Colman three.

When Colman had gone back into his own country, Tuda, the servant of Christ, was made bishop of the Northumbrians in his place, having been instructed and ordained bishop among the Southern Scots, having also the crown of the ecclesiastical tonsure, according to the custom of that province, and observing the Catholic rule with regard to the time of Easter. He was a good and religious man, but he governed the church a very short time; he had come from Scotland whilst Colman was yet bishop, and, both by word and deed, diligently taught all men those things that appertain to the faith and truth. But Eata, who was abbot of the monastery called Mailros, a man most reverend and gentle, was appointed abbot over the brethren that chose to remain in the church of Lindisfarne, when the Scots went away. It is said that Colman, upon his departure, requested and obtained this of King Oswy, because Eata was one of Aidan's twelve boys of the English nation, whom he received in the early years of his episcopate, to be instructed in Christ; for the king greatly loved Bishop Colman on account of his innate discretion. This is that Eata, who, not long after, was made bishop of the same church of Lindisfarne. Colman carried home with him part of the bones of the most reverend Father Aidan, and left part of them in the church where he had presided, ordering them to be interred in the sacristy.

The place which they governed shows how frugal and temperate he and his predecessors were, for there were very few houses besides the church found at their departure; indeed, no more than were barely sufficient to make civilized life possible; they had also no money, but only cattle; for if they received any money from rich persons, they immediately gave it to the poor; there being no need to gather money, or provide houses for the entertainment of the great men of the world; for such never resorted to the church, except to pray and hear the Word of God. The king himself, when occasion required, came only with five or six servants, and having performed his devotions in the church, departed. But if they happened to take a repast there, they were satisfied with the plain, daily food of the brethren, and required no more. For the whole care of those teachers was to serve God, not the world—to feed the soul, and not the belly.

For this reason the religious habit was at that time held in great veneration; so that wheresoever any clerk or monk went, he was joyfully received by all men, as God's servant; and even if they chanced to meet him upon the way, they ran to him, and with bowed head, were glad to be signed with the cross by his hand, or blessed by his lips. Great attention was also paid to their exhortations; and on Sundays they flocked eagerly to the church, or the monasteries, not to feed their bodies, but to hear the Word of God; and if any priest happened to come into a village, the inhabitants came together and asked of him the Word of life; for the priests and clerks went to the villages for no other reason than to preach, baptize, visit the sick, and, in a word, to take care of souls; and they were so purified from all taint of avarice, that none of them received lands and possessions for building monasteries, unless they were compelled to do so by the temporal authorities; which custom was for some time after universally observed in the churches of the Northumbrians. But enough has now been said on this subject.

Chap. XXVII. How Egbert, a holy man of the English nation, led a monastic life in Ireland. [664 ACE]

In the same year of our Lord 664, there happened an eclipse of the sun, on the third day of May, about the tenth hour of the day. In the same year, a sudden pestilence depopulated first the southern parts of Britain, and afterwards attacking the province of the Northumbrians, ravaged the country far and near, and destroyed a great multitude of men. By this plague the aforesaid priest of the Lord, Tuda, was carried off, and was honourably buried in the monastery called Paegnalaech. Moreover, this plague prevailed no less disastrously in the island of Ireland. Many of the nobility, and of the lower ranks of the English nation, were there at that time, who, in the days of the Bishops Finan and Colman, forsaking their native island, retired thither, either for the sake of sacred studies, or of a more ascetic life; and some of them presently devoted themselves faithfully to a monastic life, others chose rather to apply themselves to study, going about from one master's cell to another. The Scots willingly received them all, and took care to supply them with daily food without cost, as also to furnish them with books for their studies, and teaching free of charge.

Among these were Ethelhun and Egbert, two youths of great capacity, of the English nobility. The former of whom was brother to Ethelwin, a man no less beloved by God, who also at a later time went over into Ireland to study, and having been well instructed, returned into his own country, and being made bishop in the province of Lindsey, long and nobly governed the Church. These two being in the monastery which in the language of the Scots is called Rathmelsigi, and having lost all their companions, who were either cut off by the plague, or dispersed into other places, were both seized by the same sickness, and grievously afflicted. Of these, Egbert, (as I was informed by a priest venerable for his age, and of great veracity, who declared he had heard the story from his own lips,) concluding that he was at the point of death, went out of the chamber, where the sick lay, in the

morning, and sitting alone in a fitting place, began seriously to reflect upon his past actions, and, being full of compunction at the remembrance of his sins, bedewed his face with tears, and prayed fervently to God that he might not die yet, before he could forthwith more fully make amends for the careless offences which he had committed in his boyhood and infancy, or might further exercise himself in good works. He also made a vow that he would spend all his life abroad and never return into the island of Britain, where he was born; that besides singing the psalms at the canonical hours, he would, unless prevented by bodily infirmity, repeat the whole Psalter daily to the praise of God; and that he would every week fast one whole day and night. Returning home, after his tears and prayers and vows, he found his companion asleep; and going to bed himself, he began to compose himself to rest. When he had lain quiet awhile, his comrade awaking, looked on him, and said, "Alas! Brother Egbert, what have you done? I was in hopes that we should have entered together into life everlasting; but know that your prayer is granted." For he had learned in a vision what the other had requested, and that he had obtained his request.

In brief, Ethelhun died the next night; but Egbert, throwing off his sickness, recovered and lived a long time after to grace the episcopal office, which he received, by deeds worthy of it; and blessed with many virtues, according to his desire, lately, in the year of our Lord 729, being ninety years of age, he departed to the heavenly kingdom. He passed his life in great perfection of humility, gentleness, continence, simplicity, and justice. Thus he was a great benefactor, both to his own people, and to those nations of the Scots and Picts among whom he lived in exile, by the example of his life, his earnestness in teaching, his authority in reproof, and his piety in giving away of those things which he received from the rich. He also added this to the vows which we have mentioned: during Lent, he would eat but one meal a day, allowing himself nothing but bread and thin milk, and even that by measure. The milk, new the day before, he kept in a vessel, and skimming off the cream in the morning, drank the rest, as has been said, with a little bread. Which sort of abstinence he likewise always observed forty days before the Nativity of our Lord, and as many after the solemnity of Pentecost, that is, of the fifty days' festival.

Chap. XXVIII. How, when Tuda was dead, Wilfrid was ordained, in Gaul, and Ceadda, among the West Saxons, to be bishops for the province of the Northumbrians. [664 ACE]

In the meantime, King Alchfrid sent the priest, Wilfrid, to the king of Gaul, in order that he should cause him to be consecrated bishop for himself and his people. That prince sent him to be ordained by Agilbert, of whom we have before spoken, and who, having left Britain, was made bishop of the city of Paris; and by him Wilfrid was honourably consecrated, several bishops meeting together for that purpose in a village belonging to the king, called In Compendio. He stayed some time in the parts beyond the sea for his ordination, and King Oswy, following the example of his son's zeal, sent into Kent a holy man, of modest character, well

read in the Scripture, and diligently practising those things which he had learned therein, to be ordained bishop of the church of York. This was a priest called Ceadda, brother to the most reverend prelate Cedd, of whom mention has been often made, and abbot of the monastery of Laestingaeu. With him the king also sent his priest Eadhaed, who was afterwards, in the reign of Egfrid, made bishop of the church of Ripon. Now when they arrived in Kent, they found that Archbishop Deusdedit had departed this life, and no other bishop was as yet appointed in his place; whereupon they betook themselves to the province of the West Saxons, where Wini was bishop, and by him Ceadda was consecrated; two bishops of the British nation, who kept Easter Sunday, as has been often said, contrary to the canonical manner, from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon, being called in to assist at the ordination; for at that time there was no other bishop in all Britain canonically ordained, except Wini.

So Ceadda, being consecrated bishop, began immediately to labour for ecclesiastical truth and purity of doctrine; to apply himself to humility, self-denial, and study; to travel about, not on horseback, but after the manner of the Apostles, on foot, to preach the Gospel in towns, the open country, cottages, villages, and castles; for he was one of the disciples of Aidan, and endeavoured to instruct his people by the same manner of life and character, after his and his own brother Cedd's example. Wilfrid also having been now made a bishop, came into Britain, and in like manner by his teaching brought into the English Church many rules of Catholic observance. Whence it followed, that the Catholic principles daily gained strength, and all the Scots that dwelt in England either conformed to these, or returned into their own country.

Chap. XXIX. How the priest Wighard was sent from Britain to Rome, to be ordained archbishop; of his death there, and of the letters of the Apostolic Pope giving an account thereof. [667 ACE]

At this time the most noble kings of the English, Oswy, of the province of the Northumbrians, and Egbert of Kent, consulted together to determine what ought to be done about the state of the English Church, for Oswy, though educated by the Scots, had rightly perceived that the Roman was the Catholic and Apostolic Church. They selected, with the consent and by the choice of the holy Church of the English nation, a priest named Wighard, one of Bishop Deusdedit's clergy, a good man and fitted for the episcopate, and sent him to Rome to be ordained bishop, to the end that, having been raised to the rank of an archbishop, he might ordain Catholic prelates for the Churches of the English nation throughout all Britain. But Wighard, arriving at Rome, was cut off by death, before he could be consecrated bishop, and the following letter was sent back into Britain to King Oswy:—

“To the most excellent lord, our son, Oswy, king of the Saxons, Vitalian, bishop, servant of the servants of God. We have received to our comfort your Excellency's letters; by reading whereof we are acquainted with your most pious devotion and fervent love of the blessed life; and know that by the protecting hand of God

you have been converted to the true and Apostolic faith, in hope that even as you reign in your own nation, so you may hereafter reign with Christ. Blessed be the nation, therefore, that has been found worthy to have as its king one so wise and a worshipper of God; forasmuch as he is not himself alone a worshipper of God, but also studies day and night the conversion of all his subjects to the Catholic and Apostolic faith, to the redemption of his own soul. Who would not rejoice at hearing such glad tidings? Who would not exult and be joyful at these good works? For your nation has believed in Christ the Almighty God, according to the words of the Divine prophets, as it is written in Isaiah, 'In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek.' And again, 'Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken ye people from far.' And a little after, 'It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the outcast of Israel. I have given thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation unto the end of the earth.' And again, 'Kings shall see, princes also shall arise and worship.' And immediately after, 'I have given thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, and possess the scattered heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves.' And again, 'I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and have held thine hand, and have kept thee, and have given thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoner from the prison, and them that sit in darkness from the prison-house.'

"Behold, most excellent son, how it is plain as day that it was prophesied not only of you, but also of all the nations, that they should believe in Christ, the Creator of all things. Wherefore it behoves your Highness, as being a member of Christ, in all things continually to follow the pious rule of the chief of the Apostles, in celebrating Easter, and in all things delivered by the holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, whose doctrine daily enlightens the hearts of believers, even as the two lights of heaven illumine the world."

And after some lines, wherein he speaks of celebrating the true Easter uniformly throughout all the world,—

"Finally," he adds, "we have not been able now, on account of the length of the journey, to find a man, apt to teach, and qualified in all respects to be a bishop, according to the tenor of your letters. But, assuredly, as soon as such a fit person shall be found, we will send him well instructed to your country, that he may, by word of mouth, and through the Divine oracles, with the blessing of God, root out all the enemy's tares throughout your island. We have received the presents sent by your Highness to the blessed chief of the Apostles, for an eternal memorial of him, and return you thanks, and always pray for your safety with the clergy of Christ. But he that brought these presents has been removed out of this world, and is buried at the threshold of the Apostles, for whom we have been much grieved, because he died here. Nevertheless, we have caused the blessed gifts of the saints, that is, the relics of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, and of the holy martyrs, Laurentius,

John, and Paul, and Gregory, and Pancratius, to be given to your servants, the bearers of these our letters, to be by them delivered to your Excellency. And to your consort also, our spiritual daughter, we have by the aforesaid bearers sent a cross, with a gold key to it, made out of the most holy chains of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul; for, hearing of her pious zeal, all the Apostolic see rejoices with us, even as her pious works smell sweet and blossom before God.

“We therefore desire that your Highness should hasten, according to our wish, to dedicate all your island to Christ our God; for assuredly you have for your Protector, the Redeemer of mankind, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who will prosper you in all things, that you may gather together a new people of Christ, establishing there the Catholic and Apostolic faith. For it is written, ‘Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.’ Truly your Highness seeks, and shall obtain, and all your islands shall be made subject to you, even as we desire. Saluting your Excellency with fatherly affection, we never cease to pray to the Divine Goodness, to vouchsafe to assist you and yours in all good works, that you may reign with Christ in the world to come. May the Heavenly Grace preserve your Excellency in safety!”

In the next book we shall have a more suitable occasion to show who was selected and consecrated in Wighard’s place.

Chap. XXX. How the East Saxons, during a pestilence, returned to idolatry, but were soon brought back from their error by the zeal of Bishop Jaruman. [665 ACE]

At the same time, the Kings Sighere and Sebbi, though themselves subject to Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, governed the province of the East Saxons after Suidhelm, of whom we have spoken above. When that province was suffering from the aforesaid disastrous plague, Sighere, with his part of the people, forsook the mysteries of the Christian faith, and turned apostate. For the king himself, and many of the commons and nobles, loving this life, and not seeking after another, or even not believing in any other, began to restore the temples that had been abandoned, and to adore idols, as if they might by those means be protected against the plague. But Sebbi, his companion and co-heir in the kingdom, with all his people, very devoutly preserved the faith which he had received, and, as we shall show hereafter, ended his faithful life in great felicity.

King Wulfhere, hearing that the faith of the province was in part profaned, sent Bishop Jaruman, who was successor to Trumhere, to correct their error, and recall the province to the true faith. He acted with much discretion, as I was informed by a priest who bore him company in that journey, and had been his fellow labourer in the Word, for he was a religious and good man, and travelling through all the country, far and near, brought back both the people and the aforesaid king to the way of righteousness, so that, either forsaking or destroying the temples and altars which they had erected, they opened the churches, and gladly confessed the Name of Christ, which they had opposed, choosing rather to die in the faith of resurrection

in Him, than to live in the abominations of unbelief among their idols. Having thus accomplished their works, the priests and teachers returned home with joy.

Book IV

Chap. I. How when Deusdedit died, Wighard was sent to Rome to receive the episcopate; but he dying there, Theodore was ordained archbishop, and sent into Britain with the Abbot Hadrian. [664-669 ACE]

In the above-mentioned year of the aforesaid eclipse and of the pestilence which followed it immediately, in which also Bishop Colman, being overcome by the united effort of the Catholics, returned home, Deusdedit, the sixth bishop of the church of Canterbury, died on the 14th of July. Earconbert, also, king of Kent, departed this life the same month and day; leaving his kingdom to his son Egbert, who held it for nine years. The see then became vacant for no small time, until, the priest Wighard, a man of great learning in the teaching of the Church, of the English race, was sent to Rome by King Egbert and Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, as was briefly mentioned in the foregoing book, with a request that he might be ordained Archbishop of the Church of England; and at the same time presents were sent to the Apostolic pope, and many vessels of gold and silver. Arriving at Rome, where Vitalian presided at that time over the Apostolic see, and having made known to the aforesaid Apostolic pope the occasion of his journey, he was not long after carried off, with almost all his companions who had come with him, by a pestilence which fell upon them.

But the Apostolic pope having consulted about that matter, made diligent inquiry for some one to send to be archbishop of the English Churches. There was then in the monastery of Niridanum, which is not far from Naples in Campania, an abbot called Hadrian, by nation an African, well versed in Holy Scripture, trained in monastic and ecclesiastical teaching, and excellently skilled both in the Greek and Latin tongues. The pope, sending for him, commanded him to accept the bishopric and go to Britain. He answered, that he was unworthy of so great a dignity, but said that he could name another, whose learning and age were fitter for the episcopal office. He proposed to the pope a certain monk named Andrew, belonging to a neighbouring nunnery and he was by all that knew him judged worthy of a bishopric; but the weight of bodily infirmity prevented him from becoming a bishop. Then again Hadrian was urged to accept the episcopate; but he desired a respite, to see whether in time he could find another to be ordained bishop.

There was at that time in Rome, a monk, called Theodore, known to Hadrian, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, a man instructed in secular and Divine writings, as also in Greek and Latin; of high character and venerable age, being sixty-six years old. Hadrian proposed him to the pope to be ordained bishop, and prevailed; but upon the condition that he should himself conduct him into Britain, because he had already travelled through Gaul twice upon different occasions, and was, therefore, better acquainted with the way, and was, moreover, sufficiently provided with men of his own; as also, to the end that, being his fellow labourer in teaching, he might

take special care that Theodore should not, according to the custom of the Greeks, introduce any thing contrary to the truth of the faith into the Church where he presided. Theodore, being ordained subdeacon, waited four months for his hair to grow, that it might be shorn into the shape of a crown; for he had before the tonsure of St. Paul, the Apostle, after the manner of the eastern people. He was ordained by Pope Vitalian, in the year of our Lord 668, on Sunday, the 26th of March, and on the 27th of May was sent with Hadrian to Britain.

They proceeded together by sea to Marseilles, and thence by land to Arles, and having there delivered to John, archbishop of that city, Pope Vitalian's letters of recommendation, were by him detained till Ebroin, the king's mayor of the palace, gave them leave to go where they pleased. Having received the same, Theodore went to Agilbert, bishop of Paris, of whom we have spoken above, and was by him kindly received, and long entertained. But Hadrian went first to Emme, Bishop of the Senones, and then to Faro, bishop of the Meldi, and lived in comfort with them a considerable time; for the approach of winter had obliged them to rest wherever they could. King Egbert, being informed by sure messengers that the bishop they had asked of the Roman prelate was in the kingdom of the Franks, sent thither his reeve, Raedfrid, to conduct him. He, having arrived there, with Ebroin's leave took Theodore and conveyed him to the port called Quentavic; where, falling sick, he stayed some time, and as soon as he began to recover, sailed over into Britain. But Ebroin detained Hadrian, suspecting that he went on some mission from the Emperor to the kings of Britain, to the prejudice of the kingdom of which he at that time had the chief charge; however, when he found that in truth he had never had any such commission, he discharged him, and permitted him to follow Theodore. As soon as he came to him, Theodore gave him the monastery of the blessed Peter the Apostle, where the archbishops of Canterbury are wont to be buried, as I have said before; for at his departure, the Apostolic lord had enjoined upon Theodore that he should provide for him in his province, and give him a suitable place to live in with his followers.

Chap. II. How Theodore visited all places; how the Churches of the English began to be instructed in the study of Holy Scripture, and in the Catholic truth; and how Putta was made bishop of the Church of Rochester in the room of Damianus. [669 ACE]

Theodore came to his Church in the second year after his consecration, on Sunday, the 27th of May, and spent in it twenty-one years, three months, and twenty-six days. Soon after, he visited all the island, wherever the tribes of the English dwelt, for he was gladly received and heard by all persons; and everywhere attended and assisted by Hadrian, he taught the right rule of life, and the canonical custom of celebrating Easter. This was the first archbishop whom all the English Church consented to obey. And forasmuch as both of them were, as has been said before, fully instructed both in sacred and in secular letters, they gathered a crowd of disciples, and rivers of wholesome knowledge daily flowed from them to water

the hearts of their hearers; and, together with the books of Holy Scripture, they also taught them the metrical art, astronomy, and ecclesiastical arithmetic. A testimony whereof is, that there are still living at this day some of their scholars, who are as well versed in the Greek and Latin tongues as in their own, in which they were born. Nor were there ever happier times since the English came into Britain; for having brave Christian kings, they were a terror to all barbarous nations, and the minds of all men were bent upon the joys of the heavenly kingdom of which they had but lately heard; and all who desired to be instructed in sacred studies had masters at hand to teach them.

From that time also they began in all the churches of the English to learn Church music, which till then had been only known in Kent. And, excepting James, of whom we have spoken above, the first teacher of singing in the churches of the Northumbrians was Eddi, surnamed Stephen, invited from Kent by the most reverend Wilfrid, who was the first of the bishops of the English nation that learned to deliver to the churches of the English the Catholic manner of life.

Theodore, journeying through all parts, ordained bishops in fitting places, and with their assistance corrected such things as he found faulty. Among the rest, when he charged Bishop Ceadda with not having been duly consecrated, he, with great humility, answered, "If you know that I have not duly received episcopal ordination, I willingly resign the office, for I never thought myself worthy of it; but, though unworthy, for obedience sake I submitted, when bidden to undertake it." Theodore, hearing his humble answer, said that he should not resign the bishopric, and he himself completed his ordination after the Catholic manner. Now at the time when Deusdedit died, and a bishop for the church of Canterbury was by request ordained and sent, Wilfrid was also sent from Britain into Gaul to be ordained; and because he returned before Theodore, he ordained priests and deacons in Kent till the archbishop should come to his see. But when Theodore came to the city of Rochester, where the bishopric had been long vacant by the death of Damian, he ordained a man named Putta, trained rather in the teaching of the Church and more addicted to simplicity of life than active in worldly affairs, but specially skilful in Church music, after the Roman use, which he had learned from the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory.

Chap. III. How the above-mentioned Ceadda was made Bishop of the province of Mercians. Of his life, death, and burial. [669 ACE]

At that time, the province of the Mercians was governed by King Wulfhere, who, on the death of Jaruman, desired of Theodore that a bishop should be given to him and his people; but Theodore would not ordain a new one for them, but requested of King Oswy that Ceadda might be their bishop. He then lived in retirement at his monastery, which is at Laestingaeu, while Wilfrid administered the bishopric of York, and of all the Northumbrians, and likewise of the Picts, as far as King Oswy was able to extend his dominions. And, seeing that it was the custom of that most reverend prelate to go about the work of the Gospel everywhere on foot rather than

on horseback, Theodore commanded him to ride whenever he had a long journey to undertake; and finding him very unwilling, in his zeal and love for his pious labour, he himself, with his own hands, lifted him on horseback; for he knew him to be a holy man, and therefore obliged him to ride wherever he had need to go. Ceadda having received the bishopric of the Mercians and of Lindsey, took care to administer it with great perfection of life, according to the example of the ancient fathers. King Wulfhere also gave him land of the extent of fifty families, to build a monastery, at the place called Ad Barvae, or "At the Wood," in the province of Lindsey, wherein traces of the monastic life instituted by him continue to this day.

He had his episcopal see in the place called Lyccidfelth in which he also died, and was buried, and where the see of the succeeding bishops of that province continues to this day. He had built himself a retired habitation not far from the church, wherein he was wont to pray and read in private, with a few, it might be seven or eight of the brethren, as often as he had any spare time from the labour and ministry of the Word. When he had most gloriously governed the church in that province for two years and a half, the Divine Providence so ordaining, there came round a season like that of which Ecclesiastes says, "That there is a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;" for a plague fell upon them, sent from Heaven, which, by means of the death of the flesh, translated the living stones of the Church from their earthly places to the heavenly building. And when, after many of the Church of that most reverend prelate had been taken away out of the flesh, his hour also drew near wherein he was to pass out of this world to the Lord, it happened one day that he was in the aforesaid habitation with only one brother, called Owini, his other companions having upon some due occasion returned to the church. Now Owini was a monk of great merit, having forsaken the world with the sole desire of the heavenly reward; worthy in all respects to have the secrets of the Lord revealed to him in special wise, and worthy to have credit given by his hearers to what he said. For he had come with Queen Ethelthryth from the province of the East Angles, and was the chief of her thegns, and governor of her house. As the fervour of his faith increased, resolving to renounce the secular life, he did not go about it slothfully, but so entirely forsook the things of this world, that, quitting all that he had, clad in a plain garment, and carrying an axe and hatchet in his hand, he came to the monastery of the same most reverend father, which is called Laestingaeu. He said that he was not entering the monastery in order to live in idleness, as some do, but to labour; which he also confirmed by practice; for as he was less capable of studying the Scriptures, the more earnestly he applied himself to the labour of his hands. So then, forasmuch as he was reverent and devout, he was kept by the bishop in the aforesaid habitation with the brethren, and whilst they were engaged within in reading, he was without, doing such things as were necessary.

One day, when he was thus employed abroad, his companions having gone to the church, as I began to tell, and the bishop was alone reading or praying in the oratory of that place, on a sudden, as he afterwards said, he heard a sweet sound

of singing and rejoicing descend from heaven to earth. This sound he said he first heard coming from the sky in the south-east, above the winter sunrise, and that afterwards it drew near him gradually, till it came to the roof of the oratory where the bishop was, and entering therein, filled all the place and encompassed it about. He listened attentively to what he heard, and after about half an hour, perceived the same song of joy to ascend from the roof of the said oratory, and to return to heaven in the same way as it came, with unspeakable sweetness. When he had stood some time amazed, and earnestly considering in his mind what this might be, the bishop opened the window of the oratory, and making a sound with his hand, as he was often wont to do, bade anyone who might be without to come in to him. He went hastily in, and the bishop said to him, "Make haste to the church, and cause those seven brothers to come hither, and do you come with them." When they were come, he first admonished them to preserve the virtue of love and peace among themselves, and towards all the faithful; and with unwearied earnestness to follow the rules of monastic discipline, which they had either been taught by him, and had seen him observe, or had found in the words and actions of the former fathers. Then he added that the day of his death was at hand; for, said he, "that gracious guest, who was wont to visit our brethren, has vouchsafed also to come to me this day, and to call me out of this world. Return, therefore, to the church, and speak to the brethren, that in their prayers they commend my departure to the Lord, and that they be mindful to prepare for their own, the hour whereof is uncertain, by watching, and prayer, and good works."

When he had spoken thus much and more to the same end, and they, having received his blessing, had gone away in great sorrow, he who had heard the heavenly song returned alone, and prostrating himself on the ground, said, "I beseech you, father, may I be permitted to ask a question?"—"Ask what you will," answered the bishop. Then he said, "I beseech you to tell me what was that song which I heard as of a joyful company coming from heaven upon this oratory, and after some time returning to heaven?" The bishop answered: "If you heard the singing, and know of the coming of the heavenly company, I command you, in the Name of the Lord, that you tell it not to any before my death. But in truth they were angelic spirits, who came to call me to my heavenly reward, which I have always loved and longed after, and they promised that they would return seven days hence, and take me away with them." Which was indeed fulfilled, as had been said to him; for being presently seized with bodily infirmity, and the same daily increasing, on the seventh day, as had been promised to him, when he had prepared for death by receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord, his saintly soul being delivered from the prison of the body, led, as may justly be believed, by the attendant angels, he departed to the joys of Heaven.

It is no wonder that he joyfully beheld the day of his death, or rather the day of the Lord, the coming whereof he had always been mindful to await with earnest expectation. For with all his merits of continence, humility, teaching, prayer, voluntary poverty, and other virtues, he was so filled with the fear of the Lord, so

mindful of his latter end in all his actions, that, as I was wont to hear from one of the brothers who instructed me in the Scriptures, and who had been bred in his monastery, and under his direction, whose name was Trumbert, if it happened that there blew a sudden strong gust of wind, when he was reading or doing any other thing, he forthwith called upon the Lord for mercy, and begged that it might be granted to all mankind. If the wind grew stronger, he closed his book, and fell on his face, praying still more earnestly. But, if a violent storm of wind or rain came on, or if the earth and air were filled with the terror of thunder and lightning, he would go to the church, and anxiously devote himself with all his heart to prayers and psalms till the weather became calm. Being asked by his brethren why he did so, he answered, "Have not you read—'The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice. Yea, he sent out his arrows and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.' For the Lord moves the air, raises the winds, hurls lightning, and thunders from heaven, to rouse the inhabitants of the earth to fear him; to put them in mind of judgement to come; to dispel their pride, and confound their boldness, by recalling to their thoughts that dread time, when the heavens and the earth being on fire, He will come in the clouds, with great power and majesty, to judge the quick and the dead. Wherefore," said he, "it behoves us to respond to His heavenly admonition with due fear and love; that, as often as the air is moved and He puts forth His hand threatening to strike, but does not yet let it fall, we may immediately implore His mercy; and searching the recesses of our hearts, and casting out the dregs of our sins, we may carefully so act that we may never deserve to be struck down."

With this revelation and narrative of the aforesaid brother, concerning the death of this prelate, agrees the account of the most reverend Father Egbert, above spoken of, who long and zealously led a monastic life with the same Ceadda, when both were youths, in Ireland, in prayer and self-denial and meditation on the Holy Scriptures. But whereas Ceadda afterwards returned into his own country, Egbert continued to live abroad for the Lord's sake till the end of his life. A long time after, Hygbald, a man of great holiness and continence, who was an abbot in the province of Lindsey, came from Britain to visit him, and whilst, as became holy men, they were discoursing of the life of the former fathers, and rejoicing to imitate the same, mention was made of the most reverend prelate, Ceadda; whereupon Egbert said, "I know a man in this island, still in the flesh, who, when Ceadda passed away from this world, saw the soul of his brother Cedd, with a company of angels, descending from heaven, who, having taken Ceadda's soul along with them, returned again to the heavenly kingdom." Whether he said this of himself, or some other, we do not certainly know; but because it was said by so great a man, there can be no doubt of the truth thereof.

Ceadda died on the 2nd of March, and was first buried by St. Mary's Church, but afterwards, when the church of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, Peter, was built in the same place, his bones were translated into it. In both which places, as a testimony of his virtue, frequent miracles of healing are wont to be wrought.

And of late, a certain man that had a frenzy, wandering about everywhere, arrived there in the evening, unperceived or disregarded by the keepers of the place, and having rested there the whole of the night, came forth in his right mind the next morning, to the surprise and joy of all, and told what a cure had been wrought on him through the goodness of God. The place of the sepulchre is a wooden monument, made like a little house, covered, having a hole in the wall, through which those that go thither for devotion are wont to put in their hand and take out some of the dust. This they put into water and give to sick cattle or men to drink, whereupon they are presently eased of their infirmity, and restored to their desired health.

In his place, Theodore ordained Wynfrid, a man of good and sober life, to preside, like his predecessors, over the bishoprics of the Mercians, the Midland Angles, and Lindsey, of all which, Wulfhere, who was still living, was king. Wynfrid was one of the clergy of the prelate he succeeded, and had for no small time filled the office of deacon under him.

Chap. IV. How Bishop Colman, having left Britain, built two monasteries in the country of the Scots; the one for the Scots, the other for the English whom he had taken along with him. [667 ACE]

In the meantime, Colman, the Scottish bishop, departing from Britain, took along with him all the Scots whom he had gathered about him in the isle of Lindisfarne, and also about thirty of the English nation, for both these companies had been trained in duties of the monastic life; and leaving some brothers in his church, he went first to the isle of Hii, whence he had been sent to preach the Word of God to the English nation. Afterwards he retired to a small island, which is to the west of Ireland, and at some distance from it, called in the language of the Scots, Inisboufinde, the Island of the White Heifer. Arriving there, he built a monastery, and placed in it the monks he had brought of both nations. But they could not agree among themselves, by reason that the Scots, in the summer season, when the harvest was to be brought in, leaving the monastery, wandered about through places known to them; but returned again the next winter, and desired to use in common what the English had provided. Colman sought to put an end to this dissension, and travelling about far and near, he found a place in the island of Ireland fitted to be the site of a monastery, which, in the language of the Scots, is called Mageo. He bought a small part of it of the chief to whom it belonged, to build his monastery thereon; upon condition, that the monks dwelling there should pray to the Lord for him who let them have the place. Then at once building a monastery, with the assistance of the chief and all the neighbouring people, he placed the English there, leaving the Scots in the aforesaid island. This monastery is to this day occupied by English inhabitants; being the same that, grown from a small beginning to be very large, is commonly called Muigeo; and as all have long since been brought to adopt better customs, it contains a notable society of monks, who are gathered there from the province of the English, and live by the labour

of their own hands, after the example of the venerable fathers, under a rule and a canonical abbot, in much continence and singleness of life.

Chap. V. Of the death of the kings Oswy and Egbert, and of the synod held at the place Herutford, in which Archbishop Theodore presided. [670-673 ACE]

In the year of our Lord 670, being the second year after Theodore arrived in England, Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, fell sick, and died, in the fifty-eighth year of his age. He at that time bore so great affection to the Roman Apostolic usages, that he had designed, if he recovered from his sickness, to go to Rome, and there to end his days at the holy places, having asked Bishop Wilfrid, with a promise of no small gift of money, to conduct him on his journey. He died on the 15th of February, leaving his son Egfrid his successor in the kingdom. In the third year of his reign, Theodore assembled a council of bishops, along with many other teachers of the church, who loved and were acquainted with the canonical statutes of the fathers. When they were met together, he began, in the spirit which became a bishop, to enjoin the observance of such things as were in accordance with the unity and the peace of the Church. The purport of the proceedings of this synod is as follows:—

“In the name of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who reigns for ever and governs His Church, it was thought meet that we should assemble, according to the custom prescribed in the venerable canons, to treat about the necessary affairs of the Church. We met on the 24th day of September, the first indiction, at the place which is called Herutford: I, Theodore, albeit unworthy, appointed by the Apostolic see bishop of the church of Canterbury; our fellow priest and brother, the most reverend Bisi, bishop of the East Angles; and with us also our brother and fellow priest, Wilfrid, bishop of the nation of the Northumbrians, represented by his proxies. There were present also our brothers and fellow priests, Putta, bishop of the Kentish castle, called Rochester; Leutherius, bishop of the West Saxons, and Wynfrid, bishop of the province of the Mercians. When we were all met together, and had sat down in order, I said, ‘I beseech you, most dear brothers, for the fear and love of our Redeemer, that we may all treat in common on behalf of our faith; to the end that whatsoever has been decreed and defined by holy and approved fathers, may be inviolably observed by all of us.’ This and much more I spoke tending to charity and the preservation of the unity of the Church; and when I had ended my preface, I asked every one of them in order, whether they consented to observe the things that had been of old canonically decreed by the fathers? To which all our fellow priests answered, ‘Most assuredly we are all resolved to observe willingly and heartily whatsoever is laid down in the canons of the holy fathers.’ Then forthwith I produced the said book of canons, and in the presence of them all showed ten articles in the same, which I had marked in several places, because I knew them to be of the most importance to us, and entreated that these might be most particularly received by them all.

“Article I. That we all in common keep the holy day of Easter on the Sunday after the fourteenth moon of the first month.

“II. That no bishop intrude into the diocese of another, but be satisfied with the government of the people committed to him.

“III. That it shall not be lawful for any bishop to disturb in any matter monasteries dedicated to God, nor to take away forcibly any part of their property.

“IV. That the monks themselves do not move from one place to another, that is, from monastery to monastery, unless with the consent of their own abbot; but that they continue in the obedience which they promised at the time of their conversion.

“V. That no clerk, forsaking his own bishop, shall wander about, or be anywhere received without commendatory letters from his diocesan. But if he shall be once received, and will not return when summoned, both the receiver, and he that is received shall be under excommunication.

“VI. That bishops and clergy, when travelling, shall be content with the hospitality that is afforded them; and that it be not lawful for any one of them to exercise any priestly function without leave of the bishop in whose diocese he is known to be.

“VII. That a synod be assembled twice a year; but on account of divers hindrances, it was approved by all, that we should meet once a year, on the 1st of August, at the place called Clifeshoch.

“VIII. That no bishop, through ambition, shall set himself above another; but that they shall all observe the time and order of their consecration.

“IX. The ninth Article was discussed in common, to the effect that more bishops should be made, as the number of the faithful increased; but this matter for the present was passed over.

“X. Of marriages; that nothing be allowed but lawful wedlock; that none commit incest; no man leave his own wife, except it be, as the holy Gospel teaches, for fornication. And if any man shall put away his own wife, lawfully joined to him in matrimony, that he take no other, if he wishes to be a true Christian, but continue as he is, or else be reconciled to his own wife.

“These articles being thus discussed and defined in common, to the end, that for the future, no stumbling-block of contention might arise from any one of us, or that things be falsely set forth, it was thought fit that every one of us should, by the subscription of his own hand, confirm all the particulars so defined. Which judgement, as defined by us, I dictated to be written by Titillus our notary. Given in the month and indiction aforesaid. Whosoever, therefore, shall attempt in any way to oppose or infringe this decision, confirmed by our consent, and by the subscription of our hands, according to the decree of the canons, must know, that he is excluded from all sacerdotal functions, and from our fellowship. May the Grace of God keep us in safety, living in the unity of His Holy Church.”

This synod was held in the year of our Lord 673. In which year Egbert, king of Kent, died in the month of July; his brother Hlothere succeeded him on the throne, which he held eleven years and seven months. Bisi, the bishop of the East

Angles, who is said to have been in the aforesaid synod, a man of great saintliness and piety, was successor to Boniface, before spoken of; for when Boniface died, after having been bishop seventeen years, he was ordained by Theodore and made bishop in his place. Whilst he was still alive, but hindered by grievous infirmity from administering his episcopal functions, two bishops, Aecci and Badwin, were elected and consecrated in his place; from which time to the present, that province has had two bishops.

Chap. VI. How Wynfrid being deposed, Sexwulf received his bishopric, and Earconwald was made bishop of the East Saxons. [675 ACE]

Not long after these events, Theodore, the archbishop, taking offence at some act of disobedience of Wynfrid, bishop of the Mercians, deposed him from his bishopric when he had held it but a few years, and in his place ordained Sexwulf bishop, who was founder and abbot of the monastery which is called Medeshamstead, in the country of the Gyrwas. Wynfrid, thus deposed, returned to his monastery which is called Ad Barvae, and there ended his life in holy conversation.

Theodore then also appointed Earconwald, bishop of the East Saxons, in the city of London, over whom at that time reigned Sebbi and Sighere, of whom mention has been made above. This Earconwald's life and conversation, as well when he was bishop as before that time, is said to have been most holy, as is even now testified by heavenly miracles; for to this day, his horse-litter, in which he was wont to be carried when sick, is kept by his disciples, and continues to cure many of fevers and other ailments; and not only sick persons who are laid under that litter, or close by it, are cured; but the very splinters cut from it, when carried to the sick, are wont immediately to bring healing to them.

This man, before he was made bishop, had built two famous monasteries, the one for himself, and the other for his sister Ethelburg, and established them both in regular discipline of the best kind. That for himself was in the district of Sudergeona, by the river Thames, at a place called Cerotaesei, that is, the Island of Cerot; that for his sister in the province of the East Saxons, at a place called In Berecingum, wherein she might be a mother and nurse of women devoted to God. Being put into the government of that monastery, she showed herself in all respects worthy of her brother the bishop, by her own holy life and by her regular and pious care of those under her rule, as was also manifested by heavenly miracles.

Chap. VII. How it was indicated by a light from heaven where the bodies of the nuns should be buried in the monastery of Berecingum. [675 ACE?]

In this monastery many miracles were wrought, accounts of which have been committed to writing by those who were acquainted with them, that their memory might be preserved, and succeeding generations edified, and these are in the possession of many persons; some of them we also have taken pains to include in our History of the Church. At the time of the pestilence, already often

mentioned, which ravaged all the country far and wide, it had also seized on that part of this monastery where the men abode, and they were daily hurried away to the Lord. The careful mother of the community began often to inquire of the sisters, when they were gathered together; in what part of the monastery they desired to be buried and a cemetery to be made, when the same affliction should fall upon that part of the monastery in which the handmaids of the Lord dwelt together apart from the men, and they should be snatched away out of this world by the same destruction as the rest. Receiving no certain answer from the sisters, though she often questioned them, she and all of them received a most certain answer from the Divine Providence. For one night, after matins had been sung, and those handmaids of Christ had gone out of their chapel to the tombs of the brothers who had departed this life before them, and were singing the customary songs of praise to the Lord, on a sudden a light from heaven, like a great sheet, came down upon them all, and struck them with such amazement, that, in consternation, they even left off singing their hymn. But that resplendent light, in comparison wherewith the sun at noon-day might seem dark, soon after, rising from that place, removed to the south side of the monastery, that is, to the westward of the chapel, and having continued there some time, and rested upon those parts, in the sight of them all withdrew itself again to heaven, leaving no doubt in the minds of all, but that the same light, which was to lead or to receive the souls of those handmaids of Christ into Heaven, also showed the place in which their bodies were to rest and await the day of the resurrection. The radiance of this light was so great, that one of the older brethren, who at the same time was in their chapel with another younger than himself, related in the morning, that the rays of light which came in at the crannies of the doors and windows, seemed to exceed the utmost brightness of daylight.

Chap. VIII. How a little boy, dying in the same monastery, called upon a virgin that was to follow him; and how another nun, at the point of leaving her body, saw some small part of the future glory. [675 ACE?]

There was, in the same monastery, a boy, not above three years old, called Aesica; who, by reason of his tender age, was being brought up among the virgins dedicated to God, there to learn his lessons. This child being seized by the aforesaid pestilence, when his last hour was come, called three times upon one of the virgins consecrated to Christ, speaking to her by her own name, as if she had been present, Eadgyth! Eadgyth! Eadgyth! and thus ending his temporal life, entered into that which is eternal. The virgin, to whom he called, as he was dying, was immediately seized, where she was, with the same sickness, and departing this life the same day on which she had been summoned, followed him that called her into the heavenly kingdom.

Likewise, one of the same handmaids of God, being smitten with the same disease, and reduced to the last extremity, began on a sudden, about midnight, to cry out to them that ministered to her, desiring they would put out the lamp that was lighted there. And, when she had done this many times, and yet no one did

her will, at last she said, "I know that you think I am raving, when I say this, but be assured that it is not so; for I tell you truly, that I see this house filled with so great a light, that that lamp of yours seems to me to be altogether dark." And when still no one replied to what she said, or did her bidding, she added, "Burn your lamp, then, as long as you will; but know, that it is not my light, for my light will come to me at the dawn of day." Then she began to tell, that a certain man of God, who had died that same year, had appeared to her, telling her that at the break of day she should depart to the eternal light. The truth of which vision was speedily proved by the maiden's death as soon as the day appeared.

Chap. IX. Of the signs which were shown from Heaven when the mother of that community departed this life. [675 ACE?]

Now when Ethelburg herself, the pious mother of that community devoted to God, was about to be taken out of this world, a wonderful vision appeared to one of the sisters, called Tortgyth; who, having lived many years in that monastery, always endeavoured, in all humility and sincerity, to serve God herself, and to help the mother to maintain regular discipline, by instructing and reproving the younger ones. Now, in order that her virtue might, according to the Apostle, be made perfect in weakness, she was suddenly seized with a most grievous bodily disease, under which, through the merciful providence of our Redeemer, she was sorely tried for the space of nine years; to the end, that whatever stain of evil remained amidst her virtues, either through ignorance or neglect, might all be purified in the furnace of long tribulation. This woman, going out of the chamber where she abode one night, at dusk, plainly saw as it were a human body, which was brighter than the sun, wrapped in fine linen, and lifted up on high, being taken out of the house in which the sisters used to sleep. Then looking earnestly to see what it was that drew up that appearance of the glorious body which she beheld, she perceived that it was raised on high as it were by cords brighter than gold, until, entering into the open heavens, it could no longer be seen by her. Reflecting on this vision, she made no doubt that some one of the community would soon die, and her soul be lifted up to heaven by the good works which she had wrought, as it were by golden cords. And so in truth it befell; for a few days after, the beloved of God, Ethelburg, mother of that community, was delivered out of the prison of the flesh; and her life is proved to have been such that no one who knew her ought to doubt that an entrance into the heavenly country was open to her, when she departed from this life.

There was also, in the same monastery, a certain nun, of noble origin in this world, and still nobler in the love of the world to come; who had, for many years, been so disabled in all her body, that she could not move a single limb. When she heard that the body of the venerable abbess had been carried into the church, till it should be buried, she desired to be carried thither, and to be placed bending towards it, after the manner of one praying; which being done, she spoke to her as if she had been living, and entreated her that she would obtain of the mercy of our pitiful Creator, that she might be delivered from such great and long-continued pains; nor

was it long before her prayer was heard: for being delivered from the flesh twelve days after, she exchanged her temporal afflictions for an eternal reward.

For three years after the death of her Superior, the aforesaid handmaid of Christ, Tortgyth, was detained in this life and was so far spent with the sickness before mentioned, that her bones scarce held together. At last, when the time of her release was at hand, she not only lost the use of her other limbs, but also of her tongue; in which state having continued three days and as many nights, she was, on a sudden, restored by a spiritual vision, and opened her lips and eyes, and looking up to heaven, began thus to speak to the vision which she saw: "Very acceptable to me is thy coming, and thou art welcome!" Having so said, she was silent awhile, as it were, waiting for the answer of him whom she saw and to whom she spoke; then, as if somewhat displeased, she said, "I can in no wise gladly suffer this;" then pausing awhile, she said again, "If it can by no means be to-day, I beg that the delay may not be long;" and again holding her peace a short while, she concluded thus; "If it is certainly so determined, and the decree cannot be altered, I beg that it may be no longer deferred than this next night." Having so said, and being asked by those about her with whom she talked, she said, "With my most dear mother, Ethelburg;" by which they understood, that she was come to acquaint her that the time of her departure was at hand; for, as she had desired, after one day and night, she was delivered alike from the bonds of the flesh and of her infirmity and entered into the joys of eternal salvation.

Chap. X. How a blind woman, praying in the burial-place of that monastery, was restored to her sight. [675 ACE?]

Hildilid, a devout handmaid of God, succeeded Ethelburg in the office of abbess and presided over that monastery with great vigour many years, till she was of an extreme old age, in the observance of regular discipline, and carefully providing all things for the common use. The narrowness of the space where the monastery is built, led her to determine that the bones of the servants and handmaidens of Christ, who had been there buried, should be taken up, and should all be translated into the church of the Blessed Mother of God, and interred in one place. How often a brightness of heavenly light was seen there, when this was done, and a fragrant of wonderful sweetness arose, and what other signs were revealed, whosoever reads will find in the book from which we have taken these tales.

But in truth, I think it by no means fit to pass over the miracle of healing, which the same book informs us was wrought in the cemetery of that community dedicated to God. There lived in that neighbourhood a certain thegn, whose wife was seized with a sudden dimness in her eyes, and as the malady increased daily, it became so burdensome to her, that she could not see the least glimpse of light. Having continued some time wrapped in the night of this blindness, on a sudden she bethought herself that she might recover her lost sight, if she were carried to the monastery of the nuns, and there prayed at the relics of the saints. Nor did she lose any time in fulfilling that which she had conceived in her mind: for being

conducted by her maids to the monastery, which was very near, and professing that she had perfect faith that she should be there healed, she was led into the cemetery, and having long prayed there on her knees, she did not fail to be heard, for as she rose from prayer, before she went out of the place, she received the gift of sight which she had desired; and whereas she had been led thither by the hands of her maids, she now returned home joyfully without help: as if she had lost the light of this world to no other end than that she might show by her recovery how great a light is vouchsafed to the saints of Christ in Heaven, and how great a grace of healing power.

Chap. XI. How Sebbi, king of the same province, ended his life in a monastery. [694 ACE]

At that time, as the same little book informs us, Sebbi, a very devout man, of whom mention has been made above, governed the kingdom of the East Saxons. His mind was set on religious acts, frequent prayer and pious fruits of almsgiving; he esteemed a private and monastic life better than all the wealth and honours of his kingdom, and he would have long before left his kingdom and adopted that life, had not his wife firmly refused to be divorced from him; for which reason many were of opinion and often said that a man of such a disposition ought rather to have been made a bishop than a king. When he had spent thirty years as a king and a soldier of the heavenly kingdom, he fell into great bodily infirmity, of which he afterwards died, and he admonished his wife, that they should then at least together devote themselves to the service of God, since they could no longer together enjoy, or rather serve, the world. Having with much difficulty obtained this of her, he went to Waldhere, bishop of London, who had succeeded Earconwald, and with his blessing received the religious habit, which he had long desired. He also carried to him a considerable sum of money, to be given to the poor, reserving nothing to himself, but rather coveting to remain poor in spirit for the sake of the kingdom of Heaven.

When the aforesaid sickness increased, and he perceived the day of his death to be drawing near, being a man of a royal disposition, he began to apprehend lest, when in great pain, at the approach of death, he might commit anything unworthy of his character, either by word or gesture. Wherefore, calling to him the aforesaid bishop of London, in which city he then was, he entreated him that none might be present at his death, besides the bishop himself, and two of his own attendants. The bishop having promised that he would most willingly grant his request, not long after the man of God composed himself to sleep, and saw a consoling vision, which took from him all anxiety concerning the aforesaid uneasiness; and, moreover, showed him on what day he was to end his life. For, as he afterwards related, he saw three men in shining garments come to him; one of whom sat down by his bed, whilst his companions who had come with him stood and inquired about the state of the sick man they had come to visit, and he said that the king's soul should quit his body without any pain, and with a great splendour of light; and told him that he

should die the third day after. Both these things came to pass, as he had learnt from the vision; for on the third day after, at the ninth hour, he suddenly fell, as it were, into a light slumber, and without any sense of pain he gave up the ghost.

A stone coffin had been prepared for his burial, but when they came to lay him in it, they found his body a span longer than the coffin. Hereupon they chipped away as much of the stone as they could, and made the coffin about two inches longer; but not even so would it contain the body. Wherefore because of this difficulty of entombing him, they had thoughts either to get another coffin, or else to shorten the body, by bending it at the knees, if they could, so that the coffin might contain it. But Heaven interposed and a miracle prevented the execution of either of those designs; for on a sudden, in the presence of the bishop and Sighard, who was the son of that same king and monk, and who reigned after him jointly with his brother Sufred, and of no small number of men, that coffin was found to fit the length of the body, insomuch that a pillow might even be put in at the head; and at the feet the coffin was four inches longer than the body. He was buried in the church of the blessed teacher of the Gentiles, by whose doctrine he had learned to hope for heavenly things.

Chap. XII. How Haedde succeeded Leutherius in the bishopric of the West Saxons; how Cuichelm succeeded Putta in the bishopric of the church of Rochester, and was himself succeeded by Gebmund; and who were then bishops of the Northumbrians. [673-681 ACE]

Leutherius was the fourth bishop of the West Saxons; for Birinus was the first, Agilbert the second, and Wini the third. When Coinwalch, in whose reign the said Leutherius was made bishop, died, the sub-kings took upon them the government of the nation, and dividing it among themselves, held it for about ten years; and during their rule he died, and Haedde succeeded him in the bishopric, having been consecrated by Theodore, in the city of London. During his episcopate, Caedwalla, having subdued and removed the sub-kings, took upon himself the supreme authority. When he had held it for two years, and whilst the same bishop still governed the church, at length impelled by love of the heavenly kingdom, he quitted it and, going away to Rome, ended his days there, as shall be said more fully hereafter.

In the year of our Lord 676, when Ethelred, king of the Mercians, ravaged Kent with a hostile army, and profaned churches and monasteries, without regard to pity, or the fear of God, in the general destruction he laid waste the city of Rochester; Putta, who was bishop, was absent at that time, but when he understood that his church was ravaged, and everything taken away from it, he went to Sexwulf, bishop of the Mercians, and having received of him a certain church, and a small piece of land, ended his days there in peace; in no way endeavouring to restore his bishopric, for, as has been said above, he was more industrious in ecclesiastical than in worldly affairs; serving God only in that church, and going wherever he was desired, to teach Church music. Theodore consecrated Cuichelm bishop of Rochester in his

stead; but he, not long after, departing from his bishopric for want of necessaries, and withdrawing to other parts, Gebmund was put in his place by Theodore.

In the year of our Lord 678, which is the eighth of the reign of Egfrid, in the month of August, appeared a star, called a comet, which continued for three months, rising in the morning, and sending forth, as it were, a tall pillar of radiant flame. The same year a dissension broke out between King Egfrid and the most reverend prelate, Wilfrid, who was driven from his see, and two bishops substituted for him, to preside over the nation of the Northumbrians, namely, Bosa, to govern the province of the Deiri; and Eata that of the Bernicians; the former having his episcopal see in the city of York, the latter either in the church of Hagustald, or of Lindisfarne; both of them promoted to the episcopal dignity from a community of monks. With them also Eadhaed was ordained bishop for the province of Lindsey, which King Egfrid had but newly acquired, having defeated Wulfhere and put him to flight; and this was the first bishop of its own which that province had; the second was Ethelwin; the third Edgar; the fourth Cynibert, who is there at present. Before Eadhaed, Sexwulf was bishop as well of that province as of the Mercians and Midland Angles; so that, when expelled from Lindsey, he continued in the government of those provinces. Eadhaed, Bosa, and Eata, were ordained at York by archbishop Theodore; who also, three years after the departure of Wilfrid, added two bishops to their number: Tunbert, appointed to the church of Hagustald, Eata still continuing in that of Lindisfarne; and Trumwine to the province of the Picts, which at that time was subject to English rule. Eadhaed returning from Lindsey, because Ethelred had recovered that province, was placed by Theodore over the church of Ripon.

Chap. XIII. How Bishop Wilfrid converted the province of the South Saxons to Christ. [681 ACE]

But Wilfrid was expelled from his bishopric, and having long travelled in many lands, went to Rome, and afterwards returned to Britain. Though he could not, by reason of the enmity of the aforesaid king, be received into his own country or diocese, yet he could not be restrained from the ministry of the Gospel; for, taking his way into the province of the South Saxons, which extends from Kent to the south and west, as far as the West Saxons, containing land of 7,000 families, and was at that time still in bondage to pagan rites, he administered to them the Word of faith, and the Baptism of salvation. Ethelwalch, king of that nation, had been, not long before, baptized in the province of the Mercians, at the instance of King Wulfhere, who was present, and received him as his godson when he came forth from the font, and in token of this adoption gave him two provinces, to wit, the Isle of Wight, and the province of the Meanware, in the country of the West Saxons. The bishop, therefore, with the king's consent, or rather to his great joy, cleansed in the sacred font the foremost ealdormen and thegns of that country; and the priests, Eappa, and Padda, and Burghelm, and Oiddi, either then, or afterwards, baptized the rest of the people. The queen, whose name was Eabae,

had been baptized in her own country, the province of the Hwiccas. She was the daughter of Eanfrid, the brother of Aenhere, who were both Christians, as were their people; but all the province of the South Saxons was ignorant of the Name of God and the faith. But there was among them a certain monk of the Scottish nation, whose name was Dicul, who had a very small monastery, at the place called Bosanhamm, encompassed by woods and seas, and in it there were five or six brothers, who served the Lord in humility and poverty; but none of the natives cared either to follow their course of life, or hear their preaching.

But Bishop Wilfrid, while preaching the Gospel to the people, not only delivered them from the misery of eternal damnation, but also from a terrible calamity of temporal death. For no rain had fallen in that district for three years before his arrival in the province, whereupon a grievous famine fell upon the people and pitilessly destroyed them; insomuch that it is said that often forty or fifty men, wasted with hunger, would go together to some precipice, or to the sea-shore, and there, hand in hand, in piteous wise cast them themselves down either to perish by the fall, or be swallowed up by the waves. But on the very day on which the nation received the Baptism of the faith, there fell a soft but plentiful rain; the earth revived, the fields grew green again, and the season was pleasant and fruitful. Thus the old superstition was cast away, and idolatry renounced, the heart and flesh of all rejoiced in the living God, for they perceived that He Who is the true God had enriched them by His heavenly grace with both inward and outward blessings. For the bishop, when he came into the province, and found so great misery from famine there, taught them to get their food by fishing; for their sea and rivers abounded in fish, but the people had no skill to take any of them, except eels alone. The bishop's men having gathered eel-nets everywhere, cast them into the sea, and by the blessing of God took three hundred fishes of divers sorts, which being divided into three parts, they gave a hundred to the poor, a hundred to those of whom they had the nets, and kept a hundred for their own use. By this benefit the bishop gained the affections of them all, and they began more readily at his preaching to hope for heavenly blessings, seeing that by his help they had received those which are temporal.

At this time, King Ethelwalch gave to the most reverend prelate, Wilfrid, land to the extent of eighty-seven families, to maintain his company who were wandering in exile. The place is called Selaeseu, that is, the Island of the Sea-Calf; it is encompassed by the sea on all sides, except the west, where is an entrance about the cast of a sling in width; which sort of place is by the Latins called a peninsula, by the Greeks, a cherronesos. Bishop Wilfrid, having this place given him, founded therein a monastery, chiefly of the brethren he had brought with him, and established a rule of life; and his successors are known to be there to this day. He himself, both in word and deed performed the duties of a bishop in those parts during the space of five years, until the death of King Egfrid, and was justly honoured by all. And forasmuch as the king, together with the said place, gave him all the goods that were therein, with the lands and men, he instructed all the people

in the faith of Christ, and cleansed them in the water of Baptism. Among whom were two hundred and fifty bondsmen and bondswomen, all of whom he saved by Baptism from slavery to the Devil, and in like manner, by giving them their liberty, set them free from slavery to man.

Chap. XIV. How a pestilence ceased through the intercession of King Oswald. [681-686 ACE]

In this monastery, at that time, certain special manifestations of the heavenly grace are said to have been shown forth; in as much as the tyranny of the Devil had been recently cast out and Christ had begun to reign there. Of these I have thought it proper to perpetuate the memory of one which the most reverend Bishop Acca was wont often to relate to me, affirming that it had been told him by most creditable brothers of the same monastery. About the same time that this province had received the faith of Christ, a grievous pestilence fell upon many provinces of Britain; which, also, by the Divine dispensation, reached to the aforesaid monastery, then governed by the most religious priest of Christ, Eappa; and many, as well of those that had come thither with the bishop, as of those of the same province of the South Saxons who had been lately called to the faith, were snatched away out of this world. The brethren, therefore, thought fit to keep a fast of three days, and humbly to implore the Divine goodness to vouchsafe to have mercy on them, either by delivering from instant death those that were in danger by reason of the disease, or by saving those who were hurried out of this life from the eternal damnation of their souls.

There was at that time in the monastery, a little boy, of the Saxon nation, lately called to the faith, who had been attacked by the same infirmity, and had long kept his bed. On the second day of the aforesaid fasting and prayer, it happened about the second hour of the day, that this boy was left alone in the place where he lay sick, when on a sudden, through the Divine disposition, the most blessed chiefs of the Apostles vouchsafed to appear to him; for he was a boy of a very simple and gentle disposition, and with sincere devotion observed the mysteries of the faith which he had received. The Apostles therefore, greeting him with loving words, said, "My son, fear not death, concerning which thou art troubled; for this day we will bring thee to the kingdom of Heaven; but first thou must needs wait till the Masses are celebrated, that having received thy voyage provision, the Body and Blood of our Lord, and so being set free from sickness and death, thou mayest be taken up to the everlasting joys in Heaven.

"Call therefore to thee the priest, Eappa, and tell him, that the Lord has heard your prayers, and has favourably looked upon your devotion and your fast, and not one more shall die of this plague, either in the monastery or the lands adjacent to it; but all your people who any where labour under this sickness, shall be raised up from their weakness, and restored to their former health, saving thee alone, who art this day to be delivered from death, and to be carried into Heaven, to behold our Lord Christ, whom thou hast faithfully served. This favour the Divine mercy

has vouchsafed to grant you, through the intercession of the godly King Oswald, beloved of God, who formerly nobly ruled over the nation of the Northumbrians, with the authority of a temporal kingdom and the devotion of Christian piety which leads to the eternal kingdom. For this very day that king was killed in body by the infidels in war, and straightway taken up to Heaven to the everlasting joys of souls, and brought into fellowship with the number of the elect. Let them look in their records, wherein the burial of the dead is set down, and they will find that he was, this day, as we have said, taken out of this world. Let them, therefore, celebrate Masses in all the oratories of this monastery, either in thanksgiving because their prayers are heard, or else in memory of the aforesaid King Oswald, who once governed their nation, and therefore humbly prayed to the Lord for them, as for converts of his nation; and let all the brethren assemble in the church, and all communicate in the heavenly Sacrifices, and so let them cease to fast, and refresh the body also with the food that belongs to it.”

The boy called the priest, and repeated all these words to him; and the priest carefully inquired after the habit and form of the men that had appeared to him. He answered, “Their habit was altogether noble, and their countenances most pleasant and beautiful, such as I had never seen before, nor did I think there could be any men so fair and comely. One of them indeed was shorn like a clerk, the other had a long beard; and they said that one of them was called Peter, the other Paul; and they were the servants of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, sent by Him from Heaven to protect our monastery.” The priest believed what the boy said, and going thence immediately, looked in his chronicle, and found that King Oswald had been killed on that very day. He then called the brethren, ordered dinner to be provided, Masses to be said, and all of them to communicate as usual; causing also a part of the same Sacrifice of the Lord’s Oblation to be carried to the sick boy.

Soon after this, the boy died, on that same day; and by his death proved that the words which he had heard from the Apostles of Christ were true. And this moreover bore witness to the truth of his words, that none besides himself, belonging to the same monastery, was taken away at that time. And without doubt, by this vision, many that heard of it were wonderfully excited to implore the Divine mercy in adversity, and to submit to the wholesome remedy of fasting. From that time, the day of commemoration of that king and soldier of Christ began to be yearly honoured with the celebration of Masses, not only in that monastery, but in many other places.

Chap. XV. How King Caedwalla, king of the Gewissae, having slain Ethelwalch, wasted that Province with cruel slaughter and devastation. [685 ACE]

In the meantime, Caedwalla, a young man of great vigour, of the royal race of the Gewissae, an exile from his country, came with an army, slew Ethelwalch, and wasted that province with cruel slaughter and devastation; but he was soon expelled by Berthun and Andhun, the king’s ealdormen, who held in succession the

government of the province. The first of them was afterwards killed by the same Caedwalla, when he was king of the Gewissae, and the province was reduced to more grievous slavery: Ini, likewise, who reigned after Caedwalla, oppressed that country with the like servitude for many years; for which reason, during all that time, they could have no bishop of their own; but their first bishop, Wilfrid, having been recalled home, they were subject to the bishop of the Gewissae, that is, the West Saxons, who were in the city of Venta.

Chap. XVI. How the Isle of Wight received Christian inhabitants, and two royal youths of that island were killed immediately after Baptism. [686 ACE]

After Caedwalla had obtained possession of the kingdom of the Gewissae, he took also the Isle of Wight, which till then was entirely given over to idolatry, and by merciless slaughter endeavoured to destroy all the inhabitants thereof, and to place in their stead people from his own province; binding himself by a vow, though it is said that he was not yet regenerated in Christ, to give the fourth part of the land and of the spoil to the Lord, if he took the island. He fulfilled this vow by giving the same for the service of the Lord to Bishop Wilfrid, who happened at the time to have come thither from his own people. The measure of that island, according to the computation of the English, is of twelve hundred families, wherefore an estate of three hundred families was given to the Bishop. The part which he received, he committed to one of his clerks called Bernwin, who was his sister's son, assigning to him a priest, whose name was Hiddila, to administer the Word and laver of life to all that would be saved.

Here I think it ought not to be omitted that, as the first fruits of those of that island who believed and were saved, two royal boys, brothers to Arwald, king of the island, were crowned with the special grace of God. For when the enemy approached, they made their escape out of the island, and crossed over into the neighbouring province of the Jutes. Coming to the place called At the Stone, they thought to be concealed from the victorious king, but they were betrayed and ordered to be killed. This being made known to a certain abbot and priest, whose name was Cynibert, who had a monastery not far from there, at a place called Hreutford, that is, the Ford of Reeds, he came to the king, who then lay in concealment in those parts to be cured of the wounds which he had received whilst he was fighting in the Isle of Wight, and begged of him, that if the boys must needs be killed, he might be allowed first to instruct them in the mysteries of the Christian faith. The king consented, and the bishop having taught them the Word of truth, and cleansed them in the font of salvation, assured to them their entrance into the kingdom of Heaven. Then the executioner came, and they joyfully underwent the temporal death, through which they did not doubt they were to pass to the life of the soul, which is everlasting. Thus, after this manner, when all the provinces of Britain had received the faith of Christ, the Isle of Wight also received the same; yet because it was suffering under the affliction of foreign

subjection, no man there received the office or see of a bishop, before Daniel, who is now bishop of the West Saxons.

The island is situated opposite the borders of the South Saxons and the Gewissae, being separated from it by a sea, three miles wide, which is called Solvente. In this sea, the two tides of the ocean, which break upon Britain all round its coasts from the boundless northern ocean, daily meet in conflict beyond the mouth of the river Homelea, which runs into the aforesaid sea, through the lands of the Jutes, belonging to the country of the Gewissae; and after this struggle of the tides, they fall back and return into the ocean whence they come.

Chap. XVII. Of the Synod held in the plain of Haethfelth, Archbishop Theodore being president. [680 ACE]

About this time, Theodore being informed that the faith of the Church at Constantinople was much perplexed by the heresy of Eutyches, and desiring that the Churches of the English, over which he presided, should remain free from all such taint, convened an assembly of venerable bishops and many learned men, and diligently inquired into the faith of each. He found them all of one mind in the Catholic faith, and this he caused to be committed to writing by the authority of the synod as a memorial, and for the instruction of succeeding generations; the beginning of which document is as follows:

“In the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, under the rule of our most pious lords, Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, in the tenth year of his reign, the seventeenth of September, the eighth indiction; Ethelred, king of the Mercians, in the sixth year of his reign; Aldwulf king of the East Angles, in the seventeenth year of his reign; and Hlothere, king of Kent, in the seventh year of his reign; Theodore, by the grace of God, archbishop of the island of Britain, and of the city of Canterbury, being president, and the other venerable bishops of the island of Britain sitting with him, the holy Gospels being laid before them, at the place which, in the Saxon tongue, is called Haethfelth, we conferred together, and set forth the right and orthodox faith, as our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh delivered the same to His disciples, who beheld His Presence and heard His words, and as it is delivered by the creed of the holy fathers, and by all holy and universal synods in general, and by the consent of all approved doctors of the Catholic Church. We, therefore, following them, in piety and orthodoxy, and professing accordance with their divinely inspired doctrine, do believe agreeably to it, and with the holy fathers confess the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, to be properly and truly a Trinity consubstantial in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, that is, one God in three Subsistences or consubstantial persons, of equal glory and honour.”

And after much more of the same sort, appertaining to the confession of the right faith, this holy synod added to its document, “We acknowledge the five holy and general councils of the blessed fathers acceptable to God; that is, of the 318 assembled at Nicaea, against the most impious Arius and his tenets; and at Constantinople, of 150, against the madness of Macedonius and Eudoxius, and

their tenets; and at Ephesus, for the first time, of 200, against the most wicked Nestorius, and his tenets; and at Chalcedon, of 630, against Eutyches and Nestorius, and their tenets; and again, at Constantinople, in a fifth council, in the time of Justinian the younger, against Theodorus, and the epistles of Theodoret and Ibas, and their tenets in opposition to Cyril." And again a little lower, "the synod held in the city of Rome, in the time of the blessed Pope Martin, in the eighth indiction, and in the ninth year of the most pious Emperor Constantine, we also acknowledge. And we glorify our Lord Jesus Christ, as they glorified Him, neither adding aught nor taking away; anathematizing with hearts and lips those whom they anathematized, and receiving those whom they received; glorifying God the Father, Who is without beginning, and His only-begotten Son, begotten of the Father before the worlds, and the Holy Ghost proceeding ineffably from the Father and the Son, even as those holy Apostles, prophets, and doctors, whom we have above-mentioned, did declare. And all we, who, with Archbishop Theodore, have thus set forth the Catholic faith, thereto subscribe."

Chap. XVIII. Of John, the precentor of the Apostolic see, who came into Britain to teach. [680 ACE]

Among those who were present at this synod, and confirmed the decrees of the Catholic faith, was the venerable John, archchanter of the church of the holy Apostle Peter, and abbot of the monastery of the blessed Martin, who had come lately from Rome, by order of Pope Agatho, together with the most reverend Abbot Biscop, surnamed Benedict, of whom mention has been made above. For the said Benedict, having built a monastery in Britain, in honour of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, at the mouth of the river Wear, went to Rome with Ceolfrid, his companion and fellow-labourer in that work, who was after him abbot of the same monastery; he had been several times before at Rome, and was now honourably received by Pope Agatho of blessed memory; from whom he also asked and obtained, in order to secure the immunities of the monastery which he had founded, a letter of privilege confirmed by apostolic authority, according to what he knew to be the will and grant of King Egfrid, by whose consent and gift of land he had built that monastery.

He was also allowed to take the aforesaid Abbot John with him into Britain, that he might teach in his monastery the system of singing throughout the year, as it was practised at St. Peter's at Rome. The Abbot John did as he had been commanded by the Pope, teaching the singers of the said monastery the order and manner of singing and reading aloud, and committing to writing all that was requisite throughout the whole course of the year for the celebration of festivals; and these writings are still preserved in that monastery, and have been copied by many others elsewhere. The said John not only taught the brothers of that monastery, but such as had skill in singing resorted from almost all the monasteries of the same province to hear him, and many invited him to teach in other places.

Besides his task of singing and reading, he had also received a commission from the Apostolic Pope, carefully to inform himself concerning the faith of the English

Church, and to give an account thereof on his return to Rome. For he also brought with him the decision of the synod of the blessed Pope Martin, held not long before at Rome, with the consent of one hundred and five bishops, chiefly to refute those who taught that there is but one operation and will in Christ, and he gave it to be transcribed in the aforesaid monastery of the most religious Abbot Benedict. The men who followed such opinion greatly perplexed the faith of the Church of Constantinople at that time; but by the help of God they were then discovered and overcome. Wherefore, Pope Agatho, being desirous to be informed concerning the state of the Church in Britain, as well as in other provinces, and to what extent it was clear from the contagion of heretics, gave this matter in charge to the most reverend Abbot John, then appointed to go to Britain. The synod we have spoken of having been called for this purpose in Britain, the Catholic faith was found untainted in all, and a report of the proceedings of the same was given him to carry to Rome.

But in his return to his own country, soon after crossing the sea, he fell sick and died; and his body, for the sake of St. Martin, in whose monastery he presided, was by his friends carried to Tours, and honourably buried; for he had been kindly entertained by the Church there on his way to Britain, and earnestly entreated by the brethren, that in his return to Rome he would take that road, and visit their Church, and moreover he was there supplied with men to conduct him on his way, and assist him in the work enjoined upon him. Though he died by the way, yet the testimony of the Catholic faith of the English nation was carried to Rome, and received with great joy by the Apostolic Pope, and all those that heard or read it.

Chap. XIX. How Queen Ethelthryth always preserved her virginity, and her body suffered no corruption in the grave. [660-696 ACE]

King Egfrid took to wife Ethelthryth, the daughter of Anna, king of the East Angles, of whom mention has been often made; a man of true religion, and altogether noble in mind and deed. She had before been given in marriage to another, to wit, Tondbert, ealdorman of the Southern Gyrwas; but he died soon after he had married her, and she was given to the aforesaid king. Though she lived with him twelve years, yet she preserved the glory of perfect virginity, as I was informed by Bishop Wilfrid, of blessed memory, of whom I inquired, because some questioned the truth thereof; and he told me that he was an undoubted witness to her virginity, forasmuch as Egfrid promised to give him many lands and much money if he could persuade the queen to consent to fulfil her marriage duty, for he knew the queen loved no man more than himself. And it is not to be doubted that this might take place in our age, which true histories tell us happened sometimes in former ages, by the help of the same Lord who promises to abide with us always, even unto the end of the world. For the divine miracle whereby her flesh, being buried, could not suffer corruption, is a token that she had not been defiled by man.

She had long asked of the king that he would permit her to lay aside worldly cares, and to serve only Christ, the true King, in a monastery; and having at length

with difficulty prevailed, she entered the monastery of the Abbess Aebba, who was aunt to King Egfrid, at the place called the city of Coludi, having received the veil of the religious habit from the hands of the aforesaid Bishop Wilfrid; but a year after she was herself made abbess in the district called Elge, where, having built a monastery, she began, by the example of a heavenly life and by her teaching, to be the virgin mother of many virgins dedicated to God. It is told of her that from the time of her entering the monastery, she would never wear any linen but only woollen garments, and would seldom wash in a hot bath, unless just before the greater festivals, as Easter, Whitsuntide, and the Epiphany, and then she did it last of all, when the other handmaids of Christ who were there had been washed, served by her and her attendants. She seldom ate more than once a day, excepting on the greater festivals, or some urgent occasion. Always, except when grievous sickness prevented her, from the time of matins till day-break, she continued in the church at prayer. Some also say, that by the spirit of prophecy she not only foretold the pestilence of which she was to die, but also, in the presence of all, revealed the number of those that should be then snatched away from this world out of her monastery. She was taken to the Lord, in the midst of her flock, seven years after she had been made abbess; and, as she had ordered, was buried among them in a wooden coffin in her turn, according to the order in which she had passed away.

She was succeeded in the office of abbess by her sister Sexburg, who had been wife to Earconbert, king of Kent. This abbess, when her sister had been buried sixteen years, thought fit to take up her bones, and, putting them into a new coffin, to translate them into the church. Accordingly she ordered some of the brothers to find a stone whereof to make a coffin for this purpose. They went on board ship, for the district of Ely is on every side encompassed with water and marshes, and has no large stones, and came to a small deserted city, not far from thence, which, in the language of the English, is called Grantacaestir, and presently, near the city walls, they found a white marble coffin, most beautifully wrought, and fitly covered with a lid of the same sort of stone. Perceiving, therefore, that the Lord had prospered their journey, they returned thanks to Him and carried it to the monastery.

When the grave was opened and the body of the holy virgin and bride of Christ was brought into the light of day, it was found as free from corruption as if she had died and been buried on that very day; as the aforesaid Bishop Wilfrid, and many others that know it, testify. But the physician, Cynifrid, who was present at her death, and when she was taken up out of the grave, had more certain knowledge. He was wont to relate that in her sickness she had a very great tumour under her jaw. "And I was ordered," said he, "to lay open that tumour to let out the noxious matter in it, which I did, and she seemed to be somewhat more easy for two days, so that many thought she might recover from her infirmity; but on the third day she was attacked by the former pains, and being soon snatched out of the world, she exchanged all pain and death for everlasting life and health. And when, so many years after, her bones were to be taken out of the grave, a pavilion being spread over it, and all the congregation, the brothers on the one side, and the sisters on

the other, standing about it singing, while the abbess, with a few others, had gone within to take up and wash the bones, on a sudden we heard the abbess within cry out with a loud voice, 'Glory be to the name of the Lord.' Not long after they called me in, opening the door of the pavilion, and I found the body of the holy virgin taken out of the grave and laid on a bed, like one asleep; then taking off the veil from the face, they also showed me that the incision which I had made was healed up; so that, in marvellous wise, instead of the open gaping wound with which she had been buried, there then appeared only the slightest trace of a scar. Besides, all the linen clothes in which the body had been wrapped, appeared entire and as fresh as if they had been that very day put about her chaste limbs."

It is said that when she was sore troubled with the aforesaid tumour and pain in her jaw and neck, she took great pleasure in that sort of sickness, and was wont to say, "I know of a surety that I deservedly bear the weight of my trouble on my neck, for I remember that, when I was a young maiden, I bore on it the needless weight of necklaces; and therefore I believe the Divine goodness would have me endure the pain in my neck, that so I may be absolved from the guilt of my needless levity, having now, instead of gold and pearls, the fiery heat of a tumour rising on my neck." It happened also that by the touch of those same linen clothes devils were expelled from bodies possessed, and other diseases were at divers times healed; and the coffin wherein she was first buried is said to have cured some of infirmities of the eyes, who, praying with their heads resting upon that coffin, were presently relieved of the pain or dimness in their eyes. So they washed the virgin's body, and having clothed it in new garments, brought it into the church, and laid it in the sarcophagus that had been brought, where it is held in great veneration to this day. The sarcophagus was found in a wonderful manner to fit the virgin's body as if it had been made purposely for her, and the place for the head, which was fashioned separately, appeared exactly shaped to the measurement of her head.

Elge is in the province of the East Angles, a district of about six hundred families, of the nature of an island, encompassed, as has been said, with marshes or waters, and therefore it has its name from the great plenty of eels taken in those marshes; there the aforesaid handmaid of Christ desired to have a monastery, because, as we have before mentioned, she came, according to the flesh, of that same province of the East Angles.

Chap. XX. A Hymn concerning her.

It seems fitting to insert in this history a hymn concerning virginity, which we composed in elegiac verse many years ago, in praise and honour of the same queen and bride of Christ, and therefore truly a queen, because the bride of Christ; and to imitate the method of Holy Scripture, wherein many songs are inserted in the history, and these, as is well known, are composed in metre and verse.

"Trinity, Gracious, Divine, Who rulest all the ages; favour my task, Trinity, Gracious, Divine.

“Let Maro sound the trumpet of war, let us sing the gifts of peace; the gifts of Christ we sing, let Maro sound the trumpet of war.

“Chaste is my song, no rape of guilty Helen; light tales shall be told by the wanton, chaste is my song.

“I will tell of gifts from Heaven, not wars of hapless Troy; I will tell of gifts from Heaven, wherein the earth is glad.

“Lo! the high God comes to the womb of a holy virgin, to be the Saviour of men, lo! the high God comes.

“A hallowed maid gives birth to Him Who gave the world its being; Mary, the gate of God, a maiden gives Him birth.

“The company of her fellows rejoices over the Virgin Mother of Him Who wields the thunder; a shining virgin band, the company of her fellows rejoices.

“Her honour has made many a blossom to spring from that pure shoot, virgin blossoms her honour has made to spring.

“Scorched by the fierce flames, the maiden Agatha yielded not; in like manner Eulalia endures, scorched by the fierce flames.

“The lofty soul of chaste Tecla overcomes the wild beasts; chaste Euphemia overcomes the accursed wild beasts.

“Agnes joyously laughs at the sword, herself stronger than steel, Cecilia joyously laughs at the foemen’s sword.

“Many a triumph is mighty throughout the world in temperate hearts; throughout the world love of the temperate life is mighty.

“Yea, and our day likewise a peerless maiden has blessed; peerless our Ethelthryth shines.

“Child of a noble sire, and glorious by royal birth, more noble in her Lord’s sight, the child of a noble sire.

“Thence she receives queenly honour and a sceptre in this world; thence she receives honour, awaiting higher honour above.

“What need, gracious lady, to seek an earthly lord, even now given to the Heavenly Bridegroom?

“Christ is at hand, the Bridegroom (why seek an earthly lord?) that thou mayst follow even now, methinks, in the steps of the Mother of Heaven’s King, that thou too mayst be a mother in God.

“Twelve years she had reigned, a bride dedicated to God, then in the cloister dwelt, a bride dedicated to God.

“To Heaven all consecrated she lived, abounding in lofty deeds, then to Heaven all consecrated she gave up her soul.

“Twice eight Novembers the maid’s fair flesh lay in the tomb, nor did the maid’s fair flesh see corruption in the tomb.

“This was Thy work, O Christ, that her very garments were bright and undefiled even in the grave; O Christ, this was Thy work.

“The dark serpent flies before the honour due to the holy raiment; disease is driven away, and the dark serpent flies.

“Rage fills the foe who of old conquered Eve; exultant the maiden triumphs and rage fills the foe.

“Behold, O bride of God, thy glory upon earth; the glory that awaits thee in the Heavens behold, O bride of God.

“In gladness thou receivest gifts, bright amidst the festal torches; behold! the Bridegroom comes, in gladness thou receivest gifts.

“And a new song thou singest to the tuneful harp; a new-made bride, thou exuldest in the tuneful hymn.

“None can part her from them which follow the Lamb enthroned on high, whom none had severed from the Love enthroned on high.”

Chap. XXI. How Bishop Theodore made peace between the kings Egfrid and Ethelred. [679 ACE]

In the ninth year of the reign of King Egfrid, a great battle was fought between him and Ethelred, king of the Mercians, near the river Trent, and Aelfwine, brother to King Egfrid, was slain, a youth about eighteen years of age, and much beloved by both provinces; for King Ethelred had married his sister Osthryth. There was now reason to expect a more bloody war, and more lasting enmity between those kings and their fierce nations; but Theodore, the bishop, beloved of God, relying on the Divine aid, by his wholesome admonitions wholly extinguished the dangerous fire that was breaking out; so that the kings and their people on both sides were appeased, and no man was put to death, but only the due mulct paid to the king who was the avenger for the death of his brother; and this peace continued long after between those kings and between their kingdoms.

Chap. XXII. How a certain captive's chains fell off when Masses were sung for him. [679 ACE]

In the aforesaid battle, wherein King Aelfwine was killed, a memorable incident is known to have happened, which I think ought by no means to be passed over in silence; for the story will be profitable to the salvation of many. In that battle a youth called Imma, one of the king's thegns, was struck down, and having lain as if dead all that day and the next night among the bodies of the slain, at length he came to himself and revived, and sitting up, bound his own wounds as best as he could. Then having rested awhile, he stood up, and went away to see if he could find any friends to take care of him; but in so doing he was discovered and taken by some of the enemy's army, and carried before their lord, who was one of King Ethelred's nobles. Being asked by him who he was, and fearing to own himself a thegn, he answered that he was a peasant, a poor man and married, and he declared that he had come to the war with others like himself to bring provisions to the army. The noble entertained him, and ordered his wounds to be dressed, and when he began to recover, to prevent his escaping, he ordered him to be bound at night. But he could not be bound, for as soon as they that bound him were gone, his bonds were loosed.

Now he had a brother called Tunna, who was a priest and abbot of a monastery in the city which is still called Tunnacaestir after him. This man, hearing that his brother had been killed in the battle, went to see if haply he could find his body; and finding another very like him in all respects, he believed it to be his. So he carried it to his monastery, and buried it honourably, and took care often to say Masses for the absolution of his soul; the celebration whereof occasioned what I have said, that none could bind him but he was presently loosed again. In the meantime, the noble that had kept him was amazed, and began to inquire why he could not be bound; whether perchance he had any spells about him, such as are spoken of in stories. He answered that he knew nothing of those arts; "but I have," said he, "a brother who is a priest in my country, and I know that he, supposing me to be killed, is saying frequent Masses for me; and if I were now in the other life, my soul there, through his intercession, would be delivered from penalty."

When he had been a prisoner with the noble some time, those who attentively observed him, by his countenance, habit, and discourse, took notice, that he was not of the meaner sort, as he had said, but of some quality. The noble then privately sending for him, straitly questioned him, whence he came, promising to do him no harm on that account if he would frankly confess who he was. This he did, declaring that he had been a thegn of the king's, and the noble answered, "I perceived by all your answers that you were no peasant. And now you deserve to die, because all my brothers and relations were killed in that fight; yet I will not put you to death, that I may not break my promise."

As soon, therefore, as he was recovered, he sold him to a certain Frisian at London, but he could not in any wise be bound either by him, or as he was being led thither. But when his enemies had put all manner of bonds on him, and the buyer perceived that he could in no way be bound, he gave him leave to ransom himself if he could. Now it was at the third hour, when the Masses were wont to be said, that his bonds were most frequently loosed. He, having taken an oath that he would either return, or send his owner the money for the ransom, went into Kent to King Hlothere, who was son to the sister of Queen Ethelthryth, above spoken of, for he had once been that queen's thegn. From him he asked and obtained the price of his freedom, and as he had promised, sent it to his master for his ransom.

Returning afterwards into his own country, and coming to his brother, he gave him an exact account of all his misfortunes, and the consolation afforded to him in them; and from what his brother told him he understood, that his bonds had been generally loosed at those times when Masses had been celebrated for him; and he perceived that other advantages and blessings which had fallen to his lot in his time of danger, had been conferred on him from Heaven, through the intercession of his brother, and the Oblation of the saving Sacrifice. Many, on hearing this account from the aforesaid man, were stirred up in faith and pious devotion to prayer, or to alms-giving, or to make an offering to God of the Sacrifice of the holy Oblation, for the deliverance of their friends who had departed this world; for they knew that such saving Sacrifice availed for the eternal redemption both of body and soul.

This story was also told me by some of those who had heard it related by the man himself to whom it happened; therefore, since I had a clear understanding of it, I have not hesitated to insert it in my Ecclesiastical History.

Chap. XXIII. Of the life and death of the Abbess Hilda. [614-680 ACE]

In the year after this, that is the year of our Lord 680, the most religious handmaid of Christ, Hilda, abbess of the monastery that is called Streanaeshalch, as we mentioned above, after having done many heavenly deeds on earth, passed thence to receive the rewards of the heavenly life, on the 17th of November, at the age of sixty-six years. Her life falls into two equal parts, for the first thirty-three years of it she spent living most nobly in the secular habit; and still more nobly dedicated the remaining half to the Lord in the monastic life. For she was nobly born, being the daughter of Hereric, nephew to King Edwin, and with that king she also received the faith and mysteries of Christ, at the preaching of Paulinus, of blessed memory, the first bishop of the Northumbrians, and preserved the same undefiled till she attained to the vision of our Lord in Heaven.

When she had resolved to quit the secular habit, and to serve Him alone, she withdrew into the province of the East Angles, for she was allied to the king there; being desirous to cross over thence into Gaul, forsaking her native country and all that she had, and so to live a stranger for our Lord's sake in the monastery of Cale, that she might the better attain to the eternal country in heaven. For her sister Heresuid, mother to Aldwulf, king of the East Angles, was at that time living in the same monastery, under regular discipline, waiting for an everlasting crown; and led by her example, she continued a whole year in the aforesaid province, with the design of going abroad; but afterwards, Bishop Aidan recalled her to her home, and she received land to the extent of one family on the north side of the river Wear; where likewise for a year she led a monastic life, with very few companions.

After this she was made abbess in the monastery called Heruteu, which monastery had been founded, not long before, by the pious handmaid of Christ, Heiu, who is said to have been the first woman in the province of the Northumbrians who took upon her the vows and habit of a nun, being consecrated by Bishop Aidan; but she, soon after she had founded that monastery, retired to the city of Calcaria, which is called Kaelcacaestir by the English, and there fixed her dwelling. Hilda, the handmaid of Christ, being set over that monastery, began immediately to order it in all things under a rule of life, according as she had been instructed by learned men; for Bishop Aidan, and others of the religious that knew her, frequently visited her and loved her heartily, and diligently instructed her, because of her innate wisdom and love of the service of God.

When she had for some years governed this monastery, wholly intent upon establishing a rule of life, it happened that she also undertook either to build or to set in order a monastery in the place called Streanaeshalch, and this work which was laid upon her she industriously performed; for she put this monastery under the same rule of monastic life as the former; and taught there the strict observance

of justice, piety, chastity, and other virtues, and particularly of peace and charity; so that, after the example of the primitive Church, no one there was rich, and none poor, for they had all things common, and none had any private property. Her prudence was so great, that not only meaner men in their need, but sometimes even kings and princes, sought and received her counsel; she obliged those who were under her direction to give so much time to reading of the Holy Scriptures, and to exercise themselves so much in works of justice, that many might readily be found there fit for the priesthood and the service of the altar.

Indeed we have seen five from that monastery who afterwards became bishops, and all of them men of singular merit and sanctity, whose names were Bosa, Aetla, Offfor, John, and Wilfrid. Of the first we have said above that he was consecrated bishop of York; of the second, it may be briefly stated that he was appointed bishop of Dorchester. Of the last two we shall tell hereafter, that the former was ordained bishop of Hagustald, the other of the church of York; of the third, we may here mention that, having applied himself to the reading and observance of the Scriptures in both the monasteries of the Abbess Hilda, at length being desirous to attain to greater perfection, he went into Kent, to Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory; where having spent some time in sacred studies, he resolved to go to Rome also, which, in those days, was esteemed a very salutary undertaking. Returning thence into Britain, he took his way into the province of the Hwiccas, where King Osric then ruled, and continued there a long time, preaching the Word of faith, and showing an example of good life to all that saw and heard him. At that time, Bosel, the bishop of that province, laboured under such weakness of body, that he could not himself perform episcopal functions; for which reason, Offfor was, by universal consent, chosen bishop in his stead, and by order of King Ethelred, consecrated by Bishop Wilfrid, of blessed memory, who was then Bishop of the Midland Angles, because Archbishop Theodore was dead, and no other bishop ordained in his place. A little while before, that is, before the election of the aforesaid man of God, Bosel, Tatfrid, a man of great industry and learning, and of excellent ability, had been chosen bishop for that province, from the monastery of the same abbess, but had been snatched away by an untimely death, before he could be ordained.

Thus this handmaid of Christ, the Abbess Hilda, whom all that knew her called Mother, for her singular piety and grace, was not only an example of good life, to those that lived in her monastery, but afforded occasion of amendment and salvation to many who lived at a distance, to whom the blessed fame was brought of her industry and virtue. For it was meet that the dream of her mother, Bregusuid, during her infancy, should be fulfilled. Now Bregusuid, at the time that her husband, Hereric, lived in banishment, under Cerdic, king of the Britons, where he was also poisoned, fancied, in a dream, that he was suddenly taken away from her and she was seeking for him most carefully, but could find no sign of him anywhere. After an anxious search for him, all at once she found a most precious necklace under her garment, and whilst she was looking on it very attentively, it seemed to shine forth with such a blaze of light that it filled all Britain with the glory of its brilliance.

This dream was doubtless fulfilled in her daughter that we speak of, whose life was an example of the works of light, not only blessed to herself, but to many who desired to live aright.

When she had governed this monastery many years, it pleased Him Who has made such merciful provision for our salvation, to give her holy soul the trial of a long infirmity of the flesh, to the end that, according to the Apostle's example, her virtue might be made perfect in weakness. Struck down with a fever, she suffered from a burning heat, and was afflicted with the same trouble for six years continually; during all which time she never failed either to return thanks to her Maker, or publicly and privately to instruct the flock committed to her charge; for taught by her own experience she admonished all men to serve the Lord dutifully, when health of body is granted to them, and always to return thanks faithfully to Him in adversity, or bodily infirmity. In the seventh year of her sickness, when the disease turned inwards, her last day came, and about cockcrow, having received the voyage provision of Holy Housel, and called together the handmaids of Christ that were within the same monastery, she admonished them to preserve the peace of the Gospel among themselves, and with all others; and even as she spoke her words of exhortation, she joyfully saw death come, or, in the words of our Lord, passed from death unto life.

That same night it pleased Almighty God, by a manifest vision, to make known her death in another monastery, at a distance from hers, which she had built that same year, and which is called Hacanos. There was in that monastery, a certain nun called Begu, who, having dedicated her virginity to the Lord, had served Him upwards of thirty years in the monastic life. This nun was resting in the dormitory of the sisters, when on a sudden she heard in the air the well-known sound of the bell, which used to awake and call them to prayers, when any one of them was taken out of this world, and opening her eyes, as she thought, she saw the roof of the house open, and a light shed from above filling all the place. Looking earnestly upon that light, she saw the soul of the aforesaid handmaid of God in that same light, being carried to heaven attended and guided by angels. Then awaking, and seeing the other sisters lying round about her, she perceived that what she had seen had been revealed to her either in a dream or a vision; and rising immediately in great fear, she ran to the virgin who then presided in the monastery in the place of the abbess, and whose name was Frigyth, and, with many tears and lamentations, and heaving deep sighs, told her that the Abbess Hilda, mother of them all, had departed this life, and had in her sight ascended to the gates of eternal light, and to the company of the citizens of heaven, with a great light, and with angels for her guides. Frigyth having heard it, awoke all the sisters, and calling them to the church, admonished them to give themselves to prayer and singing of psalms, for the soul of their mother; which they did earnestly during the remainder of the night; and at break of day, the brothers came with news of her death, from the place where she had died. They answered that they knew it before, and then related in order how and when they had learnt it, by which it appeared that her death

had been revealed to them in a vision that same hour in which the brothers said that she had died. Thus by a fair harmony of events Heaven ordained, that when some saw her departure out of this world, the others should have knowledge of her entrance into the eternal life of souls. These monasteries are about thirteen miles distant from each other.

It is also told, that her death was, in a vision, made known the same night to one of the virgins dedicated to God, who loved her with a great love, in the same monastery where the said handmaid of God died. This nun saw her soul ascend to heaven in the company of angels; and this she openly declared, in the very same hour that it happened, to those handmaids of Christ that were with her; and aroused them to pray for her soul, even before the rest of the community had heard of her death. The truth of which was known to the whole community in the morning. This same nun was at that time with some other handmaids of Christ, in the remotest part of the monastery, where the women who had lately entered the monastic life were wont to pass their time of probation, till they were instructed according to rule, and admitted into the fellowship of the community.

Chap. XXIV. That there was in her monastery a brother, on whom the gift of song was bestowed by Heaven. [680 ACE]

There was in the monastery of this abbess a certain brother, marked in a special manner by the grace of God, for he was wont to make songs of piety and religion, so that whatever was expounded to him out of Scripture, he turned ere long into verse expressive of much sweetness and penitence, in English, which was his native language. By his songs the minds of many were often fired with contempt of the world, and desire of the heavenly life. Others of the English nation after him attempted to compose religious poems, but none could equal him, for he did not learn the art of poetry from men, neither was he taught by man, but by God's grace he received the free gift of song, for which reason he never could compose any trivial or vain poem, but only those which concern religion it behoved his religious tongue to utter. For having lived in the secular habit till he was well advanced in years, he had never learned anything of versifying; and for this reason sometimes at a banquet, when it was agreed to make merry by singing in turn, if he saw the harp come towards him, he would rise up from table and go out and return home.

Once having done so and gone out of the house where the banquet was, to the stable, where he had to take care of the cattle that night, he there composed himself to rest at the proper time. Thereupon one stood by him in his sleep, and saluting him, and calling him by his name, said, "Cædmon, sing me something." But he answered, "I cannot sing, and for this cause I left the banquet and retired hither, because I could not sing." Then he who talked to him replied, "Nevertheless thou must needs sing to me." "What must I sing?" he asked. "Sing the beginning of creation," said the other. Having received this answer he straightway began to sing verses to the praise of God the Creator, which he had never heard, the purport whereof was after this manner: "Now must we praise the Maker of the heavenly

kingdom, the power of the Creator and His counsel, the deeds of the Father of glory. How He, being the eternal God, became the Author of all wondrous works, Who being the Almighty Guardian of the human race, first created heaven for the sons of men to be the covering of their dwelling place, and next the earth." This is the sense but not the order of the words as he sang them in his sleep; for verses, though never so well composed, cannot be literally translated out of one language into another without loss of their beauty and loftiness. Awaking from his sleep, he remembered all that he had sung in his dream, and soon added more after the same manner, in words which worthily expressed the praise of God.

In the morning he came to the reeve who was over him, and having told him of the gift he had received, was conducted to the abbess, and bidden, in the presence of many learned men, to tell his dream, and repeat the verses, that they might all examine and give their judgement upon the nature and origin of the gift whereof he spoke. And they all judged that heavenly grace had been granted to him by the Lord. They expounded to him a passage of sacred history or doctrine, enjoining upon him, if he could, to put it into verse. Having undertaken this task, he went away, and returning the next morning, gave them the passage he had been bidden to translate, rendered in most excellent verse. Whereupon the abbess, joyfully recognizing the grace of God in the man, instructed him to quit the secular habit, and take upon him monastic vows; and having received him into the monastery, she and all her people admitted him to the company of the brethren, and ordered that he should be taught the whole course of sacred history. So he, giving ear to all that he could learn, and bearing it in mind, and as it were ruminating, like a clean animal, turned it into most harmonious verse; and sweetly singing it, made his masters in their turn his hearers. He sang the creation of the world, the origin of man, and all the history of Genesis, the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, their entrance into the promised land, and many other histories from Holy Scripture; the Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection of our Lord, and His Ascension into heaven; the coming of the Holy Ghost, and the teaching of the Apostles; likewise he made many songs concerning the terror of future judgement, the horror of the pains of hell, and the joys of heaven; besides many more about the blessings and the judgements of God, by all of which he endeavoured to draw men away from the love of sin, and to excite in them devotion to well-doing and perseverance therein. For he was a very religious man, humbly submissive to the discipline of monastic rule, but inflamed with fervent zeal against those who chose to do otherwise; for which reason he made a fair ending of his life.

For when the hour of his departure drew near, it was preceded by a bodily infirmity under which he laboured for the space of fourteen days, yet it was of so mild a nature that he could talk and go about the whole time. In his neighbourhood was the house to which those that were sick, and like to die, were wont to be carried. He desired the person that ministered to him, as the evening came on of the night in which he was to depart this life, to make ready a place there for him to take his rest. The man, wondering why he should desire it, because there was as yet no sign

of his approaching death, nevertheless did his bidding. When they had lain down there, and had been conversing happily and pleasantly for some time with those that were in the house before, and it was now past midnight, he asked them, whether they had the Eucharist within? They answered, "What need of the Eucharist? for you are not yet appointed to die, since you talk so merrily with us, as if you were in good health." "Nevertheless," said he, "bring me the Eucharist." Having received it into his hand, he asked, whether they were all in charity with him, and had no complaint against him, nor any quarrel or grudge. They answered, that they were all in perfect charity with him, and free from all anger; and in their turn they asked him to be of the same mind towards them. He answered at once, "I am in charity, my children, with all the servants of God." Then strengthening himself with the heavenly Viaticum, he prepared for the entrance into another life, and asked how near the time was when the brothers should be awakened to sing the nightly praises of the Lord? They answered, "It is not far off." Then he said, "It is well, let us await that hour;" and signing himself with the sign of the Holy Cross, he laid his head on the pillow, and falling into a slumber for a little while, so ended his life in silence.

Thus it came to pass, that as he had served the Lord with a simple and pure mind, and quiet devotion, so he now departed to behold His Presence, leaving the world by a quiet death; and that tongue, which had uttered so many wholesome words in praise of the Creator, spake its last words also in His praise, while he signed himself with the Cross, and commended his spirit into His hands; and by what has been here said, he seems to have had foreknowledge of his death.

Chap. XXV. Of the vision that appeared to a certain man of God before the monastery of the city Coludi was burned down.

At this time, the monastery of virgins, called the city of Coludi, above-mentioned, was burned down, through carelessness; and yet all that knew it might have been aware that it happened by reason of the wickedness of those who dwelt in it, and chiefly of those who seemed to be the greatest. But there wanted not a warning of the approaching punishment from the Divine mercy whereby they might have been led to amend their ways, and by fasting and tears and prayers, like the Ninevites, have averted the anger of the just Judge.

For there was in that monastery a man of the Scottish race, called Adamnan, leading a life entirely devoted to God in continence and prayer, insomuch that he never took any food or drink, except only on Sundays and Thursdays; and often spent whole nights in watching and prayer. This strictness in austerity of life he had first adopted from the necessity of correcting the evil that was in him; but in process of time the necessity became a custom.

For in his youth he had been guilty of some sin for which, when he came to himself, he conceived a great horror, and dreaded lest he should be punished for the same by the righteous Judge. Betaking himself, therefore, to a priest, who, he hoped, might show him the way of salvation, he confessed his guilt, and desired to be advised how he might escape the wrath to come. The priest having heard

his offence, said, "A great wound requires greater care in the healing thereof; wherefore give yourself as far as you are able to fasting and psalms, and prayer, to the end that thus coming before the presence of the Lord in confession," you may find Him merciful. But he, being oppressed with great grief by reason of his guilty conscience, and desiring to be the sooner loosed from the inward fetters of sin, which lay heavy upon him, answered, "I am still young in years and strong of body, and shall, therefore, easily bear all whatsoever you shall enjoin me to do, if so be that I may be saved in the day of the Lord, even though you should bid me spend the whole night standing in prayer, and pass the whole week in abstinence." The priest replied, "It is much for you to continue for a whole week without bodily sustenance; it is enough to observe a fast for two or three days; do this till I come again to you in a short time, when I will more fully show you what you ought to do, and how long to persevere in your penance." Having so said, and prescribed the measure of his penance, the priest went away, and upon some sudden occasion passed over into Ireland, which was his native country, and returned no more to him, as he had appointed. But the man remembering this injunction and his own promise, gave himself up entirely to tears of penitence, holy vigils and continence; so that he only took food on Thursdays and Sundays, as has been said; and continued fasting all the other days of the week. When he heard that his priest had gone to Ireland, and had died there, he ever after observed this manner of abstinence, which had been appointed for him as we have said; and as he had begun that course through the fear of God, in penitence for his guilt, so he still continued the same unremittingly for the love of God, and through delight in its rewards.

Having practised this carefully for a long time, it happened that he had gone on a certain day to a distance from the monastery, accompanied by one the brothers; and as they were returning from this journey, when they drew near to the monastery, and beheld its lofty buildings, the man of God burst into tears, and his countenance discovered the trouble of his heart. His companion, perceiving it, asked what was the reason, to which he answered: "The time is at hand when a devouring fire shall reduce to ashes all the buildings which you here behold, both public and private." The other, hearing these words, when they presently came into the monastery, told them to Aebba, the mother of the community. She with good cause being much troubled at that prediction, called the man to her, and straitly questioned him concerning the matter and how he came to know it. He answered, "Being engaged one night lately in watching and singing psalms, on a sudden I saw one standing by me whose countenance I did not know, and I was startled at his presence, but he bade me not to fear, and speaking to me like a friend he said, 'You do well in that you have chosen rather at this time of rest not to give yourself up to sleep, but to continue in watching and prayer.' I answered, 'I know I have great need to continue in wholesome watching and earnest prayer to the Lord to pardon my transgressions.' He replied, 'You speak truly, for you and many more have need to redeem their sins by good works, and when they cease from temporal labours, then to labour the more eagerly for desire of eternal blessings; but this

very few do; for I, having now gone through all this monastery in order, have looked into the huts and beds of all, and found none of them except yourself busy about the health of his soul; but all of them, both men and women, are either sunk in slothful sleep, or are awake in order to commit sin; for even the cells that were built for prayer or reading, are now converted into places of feasting, drinking, talking, and other delights; the very virgins dedicated to God, laying aside the respect due to their profession, whensoever they are at leisure, apply themselves to weaving fine garments, wherewith to adorn themselves like brides, to the danger of their state, or to gain the friendship of strange men; for which reason, as is meet, a heavy judgement from Heaven with raging fire is ready to fall on this place and those that dwell therein.’” The abbess said, “Why did you not sooner reveal to me what you knew?” He answered, “I was afraid to do it, out of respect to you, lest you should be too much afflicted; yet you may have this comfort, that the blow will not fall in your days.” This vision being made known, the inhabitants of that place were for a few days in some little fear, and leaving off their sins, began to do penance; but after the death of the abbess they returned to their former defilement, nay, they committed worse sins; and when they said “Peace and safety,” the doom of the aforesaid judgement came suddenly upon them.

That all this fell out after this manner, was told me by my most reverend fellow-priest, Aedgils, who then lived in that monastery. Afterwards, when many of the inhabitants had departed thence, on account of the destruction, he lived a long time in our monastery, and died there. We have thought fit to insert this in our History, to admonish the reader of the works of the Lord, how terrible He is in His doing toward the children of men, lest haply we should at some time or other yield to the snares of the flesh, and dreading too little the judgement of God, fall under His sudden wrath, and either in His righteous anger be brought low with temporal losses, or else be more strictly tried and snatched away to eternal perdition.

Chap. XXVI. Of the death of the Kings Egfrid and Hlothere. [684-685 ACE]

In the year of our Lord 684, Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, sending his general, Berct, with an army into Ireland, miserably laid waste that unoffending nation, which had always been most friendly to the English; insomuch that the invading force spared not even the churches or monasteries. But the islanders, while to the utmost of their power they repelled force with force, implored the assistance of the Divine mercy, and with constant imprecations invoked the vengeance of Heaven; and though such a curse cannot inherit the kingdom of God, yet it was believed, that those who were justly cursed on account of their impiety, soon suffered the penalty of their guilt at the avenging hand of God. For the very next year, when that same king had rashly led his army to ravage the province of the Picts, greatly against the advice of his friends, and particularly of Cuthbert, of blessed memory, who had been lately ordained bishop, the enemy made a feigned retreat, and the king was drawn into a narrow pass among remote mountains, and

slain, with the greater part of the forces he had led thither, on the 20th of May, in the fortieth year of his age, and the fifteenth of his reign. His friends, as has been said, advised him not to engage in this war; but since he had the year before refused to listen to the most reverend father, Egbert, advising him not to attack the Scots, who were doing him no harm, it was laid upon him as a punishment for his sin, that he should now not listen to those who would have prevented his death.

From that time the hopes and strength of the Anglian kingdom “began to ebb and fall away;” for the Picts recovered their own lands, which had been held by the English, and so did also the Scots that were in Britain; and some of the Britons regained their liberty, which they have now enjoyed for about forty-six years. Among the many English that then either fell by the sword, or were made slaves, or escaped by flight out of the country of the Picts, the most reverend man of God, Trumwine, who had been made bishop over them, withdrew with his people that were in the monastery of Aebbercurnig, in the country of the English, but close by the arm of the sea which is the boundary between the lands of the English and the Picts. Having commended his followers, wheresoever he could, to his friends in the monasteries, he chose his own place of abode in the monastery, which we have so often mentioned, of servants and handmaids of God, at Streanaeshalch; and there for many years, with a few of his own brethren, he led a life in all monastic austerity, not only to his own benefit, but to the benefit of many others, and dying there, he was buried in the church of the blessed Peter the Apostle, with the honour due to his life and rank. The royal virgin, Elfled, with her mother, Eanfled, whom we have mentioned before, then presided over that monastery; but when the bishop came thither, that devout teacher found in him the greatest help in governing, and comfort in her private life. Aldfrid succeeded Egfrid in the throne, being a man most learned in the Scriptures, said to be brother to Egfrid, and son to King Oswy; he nobly retrieved the ruined state of the kingdom, though within narrower bounds.

The same year, being the 685th from the Incarnation of our Lord, Hlothere, king of Kent, died on the 6th of February, when he had reigned twelve years after his brother Egbert, who had reigned nine years: he was wounded in battle with the South Saxons, whom Edric, the son of Egbert, had raised against him, and died whilst his wound was being dressed. After him, this same Edric reigned a year and a half. On his death, kings of doubtful title, or of foreign origin, for some time wasted the kingdom, till the lawful king, Wictred, the son of Egbert, being settled in the throne, by his piety and zeal delivered his nation from foreign invasion.

Chap. XXVII. How Cuthbert, a man of God, was made bishop; and how he lived and taught whilst still in the monastic life. [685 ACE]

In the same year in which King Egfrid departed this life, he, as has been said, caused the holy and venerable Cuthbert to be ordained bishop of the church of Lindisfarne. He had for many years led a solitary life, in great continence of body and mind, in a very small island, called Farne, in the ocean about nine miles distant from that same church. From his earliest childhood he had always been inflamed

with the desire of a religious life; and he adopted the name and habit of a monk when he was quite a young man: he first entered the monastery of Mailros, which is on the bank of the river Tweed, and was then governed by the Abbot Eata, a man of great gentleness and simplicity, who was afterward made bishop of the church of Hagustald or Lindisfarne, as has been said above. The provost of the monastery at that time was Boisil, a priest of great virtue and of a prophetic spirit. Cuthbert, humbly submitting himself to this man's direction, from him received both a knowledge of the Scriptures, and an example of good works.

After he had departed to the Lord, Cuthbert became provost of that monastery, where he instructed many in the rule of monastic life, both by the authority of a master, and the example of his own behaviour. Nor did he bestow his teaching and his example in the monastic life on his monastery alone, but laboured far and wide to convert the people dwelling round about from the life of foolish custom, to the love of heavenly joys; for many profaned the faith which they held by their wicked actions; and some also, in the time of a pestilence, neglecting the mysteries of the faith which they had received, had recourse to the false remedies of idolatry, as if they could have put a stop to the plague sent from God, by incantations, amulets, or any other secrets of the Devil's art. In order to correct the error of both sorts, he often went forth from the monastery, sometimes on horseback, but oftener on foot, and went to the neighbouring townships, where he preached the way of truth to such as had gone astray; which Boisil also in his time had been wont to do. It was then the custom of the English people, that when a clerk or priest came to a township, they all, at his summons, flocked together to hear the Word; willingly heard what was said, and still more willingly practised those things that they could hear and understand. And such was Cuthbert's skill in speaking, so keen his desire to persuade men of what he taught, such a light shone in his angelic face, that no man present dared to conceal from him the secrets of his heart, but all openly revealed in confession what they had done, thinking doubtless that their guilt could in nowise be hidden from him; and having confessed their sins, they wiped them out by fruits worthy of repentance, as he bade them. He was wont chiefly to resort to those places and preach in those villages which were situated afar off amid steep and wild mountains, so that others dreaded to go thither, and whereof the poverty and barbarity rendered them inaccessible to other teachers. But he, devoting himself entirely to that pious labour, so industriously ministered [pg 290]to them with his wise teaching, that when he went forth from the monastery, he would often stay a whole week, sometimes two or three, or even sometimes a full month, before he returned home, continuing among the hill folk to call that simple people by his preaching and good works to the things of Heaven.

This venerable servant of the Lord, having thus spent many years in the monastery of Mailros, and there become conspicuous by great tokens of virtue, his most reverend abbot, Eata, removed him to the isle of Lindisfarne, that he might there also, by his authority as provost and by the example of his own practice, instruct the brethren in the observance of regular discipline; for the same reverend father then governed that

place also as abbot. From ancient times, the bishop was wont to reside there with his clergy, and the abbot with his monks, who were likewise under the paternal care of the bishop; because Aidan, who was the first bishop of the place, being himself a monk, brought monks thither, and settled the monastic institution there; as the blessed Father Augustine is known to have done before in Kent, when the most reverend Pope Gregory wrote to him, as has been said above, to this effect: "But in that you, my brother, having been instructed in monastic rules, must not live apart from your clergy in the Church of the English, which has been lately, by the will of God, converted to the faith, you must establish the manner of conversation of our fathers in the primitive Church, among whom, none said that aught of the things which they possessed was his own; but they had all things common."

Chap. XXVIII. How the same St. Cuthbert, living the life of an Anchorite, by his prayers obtained a spring in a dry soil, and had a crop from seed sown by the labour of his hands out of season. [676 ACE]

After this, Cuthbert, as he grew in goodness and intensity of devotion, attained also to a hermit's life of contemplation in silence and solitude, as we have mentioned. But forasmuch as many years ago we wrote enough concerning his life and virtues, both in heroic verse and prose, it may suffice at present only to mention this, that when he was about to go to the island, he declared to the brothers, "If by the grace of God it shall be granted to me, that I may live in that place by the labour of my hands, I will willingly abide there; but if not, God willing, I will very soon return to you." The place was quite destitute of water, corn, and trees; and being infested by evil spirits, was very ill suited for human habitation; but it became in all respects habitable, at the desire of the man of God; for at his coming the wicked spirits departed. When, after expelling the enemy, he had, with the help of the brethren, built himself a narrow dwelling, with a mound about it, and the necessary cells in it, to wit, an oratory and a common living room, he ordered the brothers to dig a pit in the floor of the room, although the ground was hard and stony, and no hopes appeared of any spring. When they had done this relying upon the faith and prayers of the servant of God, the next day it was found to be full of water, and to this day affords abundance of its heavenly bounty to all that resort thither. He also desired that instruments for husbandry might be brought him, and some wheat; but having prepared the ground and sown the wheat at the proper season, no sign of a blade, not to speak of ears, had sprouted from it by the summer. Hereupon, when the brethren visited him according to custom, he ordered barley to be brought him, if haply it were either the nature of the soil, or the will of God, the Giver of all things, that such grain rather should grow there. He sowed it in the same field, when it was brought him, after the proper time of sowing, and therefore without any likelihood of its bearing fruit; but a plentiful crop immediately sprang up, and afforded the man of God the means which he had desired of supporting himself by his own labour.

When he had here served God in solitude many years, the mound which encompassed his dwelling being so high, that he could see nothing from it but

heaven, which he thirsted to enter, it happened that a great synod was assembled in the presence of King Egfrid, near the river Alne, at a place called Adtuifyrði, which signifies “at the two fords,” in which Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, presided, and there Cuthbert was, with one mind and consent of all, chosen bishop of the church of Lindisfarne. They could not, however, draw him from his hermitage, though many messengers and letters were sent to him. At last the aforesaid king himself, with the most holy Bishop Trumwine, and other religious and powerful men, sailed to the island; many also of the brothers from the isle of Lindisfarne itself, assembled together for the same purpose: they all knelt, and conjured him by the Lord, with tears and entreaties, till they drew him, also in tears, from his beloved retreat, and forced him to go to the synod. When he arrived there, he was very reluctantly overcome by the unanimous resolution of all present, and compelled to take upon himself the duties of the episcopate; being chiefly prevailed upon by the words of Boisil, the servant of God, who, when he had prophetically foretold all things that were to befall him, had also predicted that he should be a bishop. Nevertheless, the consecration was not appointed immediately; but when the winter, which was then at hand, was over, it was carried out at Easter, in the city of York, and in the presence of the aforesaid King Egfrid; seven bishops coming together for his consecration, among whom, Theodore, of blessed memory, was Primate. He was first elected bishop of the church of Hagustald, in the place of Tunbert, who had been deposed from the episcopate; but because he chose rather to be placed over the church of Lindisfarne, in which he had lived, it was thought fit that Eata should return to the see of the church of Hagustald, to which he had been first ordained, and that Cuthbert should take upon him the government of the church of Lindisfarne.

Following the example of the blessed Apostles, he adorned the episcopal dignity by his virtuous deeds; for he both protected the people committed to his charge by constant prayer, and roused them, by wholesome admonitions, to thoughts of Heaven. He first showed in his own life what he taught others to do, a practice which greatly strengthens all teaching; for he was above all things inflamed with the fire of Divine charity, of sober mind and patient, most diligently intent on devout prayers, and kindly to all that came to him for comfort. He thought it stood in the stead of prayer to afford the weak brethren the help of his exhortation, knowing that he who said “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,” said likewise, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour.” He was noted for penitential abstinence, and was always through the grace of compunction, intent upon heavenly things. And when he offered up to God the Sacrifice of the saving Victim, he commended his prayer to the Lord, not with uplifted voice, but with tears drawn from the bottom of his heart.

Chap. XXIX. How this bishop foretold that his own death was at hand to the anchorite Herebert. [687 ACE]

Having spent two years in his bishopric, he returned to his island and hermitage, being warned of God that the day of his death, or rather of his entrance

into that life which alone can be called life, was drawing near; as he, at that time, with his wonted candour, signified to certain persons, though in words which were somewhat obscure, but which were nevertheless afterwards plainly understood; while to others he declared the same openly.

There was a certain priest, called Herebert, a man of holy life, who had long been united with the man of God, Cuthbert, in the bonds of spiritual friendship. This man leading a solitary life in the island of that great lake from which the river Derwent flows at its beginning, was wont to visit him every year, and to receive from him the teaching of everlasting salvation. Hearing that Bishop Cuthbert was come to the city of Lugubalia, he went thither to him, according to his custom, seeking to be more and more inflamed in heavenly desires through his wholesome admonitions. Whilst they alternately entertained one another with draughts of the celestial life, the bishop, among other things, said, "Brother Herebert, remember at this time to ask me and speak to me concerning all whereof you have need to ask and speak; for, when we part, we shall never again see one another with bodily eyesight in this world. For I know of a surety that the time of my departure is at hand, and that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle." Hearing these words, Herebert fell down at his feet, with tears and lamentations, and said, "I beseech you, by the Lord, not to forsake me; but to remember your most faithful companion, and entreat the mercy of God that, as we have served Him together upon earth, so we may depart together to behold His grace in Heaven. For you know that I have always endeavoured to live according to the words of your lips, and likewise whatsoever faults I have committed, either through ignorance or frailty, I have instantly sought to amend according to the judgement of your will." The bishop applied himself to prayer, and having presently had intimation in the spirit that he had obtained what he asked of the Lord, he said, "Rise, brother, and do not weep, but rejoice greatly because the mercy of Heaven has granted what we desired."

The event established the truth of this promise and prophecy, for after their parting, they never again saw one another in the flesh; but their spirits quitting their bodies on one and the same day, to wit, the 20th of March, were immediately united in fellowship in the blessed vision, and together translated to the heavenly kingdom by the ministry of angels. But Herebert was first wasted by a long-continued infirmity, through the dispensation of the Lord's mercy, as may be believed, to the end that if he was in any wise inferior in merit to the blessed Cuthbert, that which was lacking might be supplied by the chastening pain of a long sickness, that being thus made equal in grace to his intercessor, as he departed out of the body at one and the same time with him, so he might be accounted worthy to be received into the like abode of eternal bliss.

The most reverend father died in the isle of Farne, earnestly entreating the brothers that he might also be buried there, where he had served no small time under the Lord's banner. But at length yielding to their entreaties, he consented to be carried back to the isle of Lindisfarne, and there buried in the church. This being done, the venerable Bishop Wilfrid held the episcopal see of that church one year, till such time

as a bishop should be chosen to be ordained in the room of Cuthbert. Afterwards Eadbert was ordained, a man renowned for his knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, as also for his observance of the heavenly precepts, and chiefly for almsgiving, so that, according to the law, he gave every year the tenth part, not only of four-footed beasts, but also of all corn and fruit, as also of his garments, to the poor.

Chap. XXX. How his body was found altogether uncorrupted after it had been buried eleven years; and how his successor in the bishopric departed this world not long after. [698 ACE]

In order to show forth the great glory of the life after death of the man of God, Cuthbert, whereas the loftiness of his life before his death had been revealed by the testimony of many miracles, when he had been buried eleven years, Divine Providence put it into the minds of the brethren to take up his bones. They thought to find them dry and all the rest of the body consumed and turned to dust, after the manner of the dead, and they desired to put them into a new coffin, and to lay them in the same place, but above the pavement, for the honour due to him. They made known their resolve to Bishop Eadbert, and he consented to it, and bade them to be mindful to do it on the anniversary of his burial. They did so, and opening the grave, found all the body whole, as if he were still alive, and the joints of the limbs pliable, like one asleep rather than dead; besides, all the vestments in which he was clothed were not only undefiled, but marvellous to behold, being fresh and bright as at the first. The brothers seeing this, were struck with a great dread, and hastened to tell the bishop what they had found; he being then alone in a place remote from the church, and encompassed on all sides by the shifting waves of the sea. There he always used to spend the time of Lent, and was wont to pass the forty days before the Nativity of our Lord, in great devotion with abstinence and prayer and tears. There also his venerable predecessor, Cuthbert, had for some time served as the soldier of the Lord in solitude before he went to the isle of Farne.

They brought him also some part of the garments that had covered the holy body; which presents he thankfully accepted, and gladly heard of the miracles, and he kissed the garments even, with great affection, as if they had been still upon his father's body, and said, "Let new garments be put upon the body, in place of these you have brought, and so lay it in the coffin which you have prepared; for I know of a surety that the place will not long remain empty, which has been hallowed with so great grace of heavenly miracles; and how happy is he to whom the Lord, the Author and Giver of all bliss, shall vouchsafe to grant the privilege of resting therein." When the bishop had made an end of saying this and more in like manner, with many tears and great compunction and with faltering tongue, the brothers did as he had commanded them, and when they had wrapped the body in new garments, and laid it in a new coffin, they placed it above the pavement of the sanctuary. Soon after, Bishop Eadbert, beloved of God, fell grievously sick, and his fever daily increasing in severity, ere long, that is, on the 6th of May, he also departed to the Lord, and they laid his body in the grave of the blessed father

Cuthbert, placing over it the coffin, with the uncorrupted remains of that father. The miracles of healing, sometimes wrought in that place testify to the merits of them both; of some of these we have before preserved the memory in the book of his life. But in this History we have thought fit to add some others which have lately come to our knowledge.

Chap. XXXI. Of one that was cured of a palsy at his tomb.

There was in that same monastery a brother whose name was Badudegn, who had for no small time ministered to the guests of the house, and is still living, having the testimony of all the brothers and strangers resorting thither, of being a man of much piety and religion, and serving the office put upon him only for the sake of the heavenly reward. This man, having one day washed in the sea the coverings or blankets which he used in the guest chamber, was returning home, when on the way, he was seized with a sudden infirmity, insomuch that he fell to the ground, and lay there a long time and could scarce at last rise again. When he got up, he felt one half of his body, from the head to the foot, struck with palsy, and with great trouble made his way home by the help of a staff. The disease increased by degrees, and as night approached, became still worse, so that when day returned, he could scarcely rise or walk alone. Suffering from this trouble, he conceived the wise resolve to go to the church, as best he could, and approach the tomb of the reverend father Cuthbert, and there, on his knees, humbly beseech the mercy of God that he might either be delivered from that disease, if it were well for him, or if by the grace of God it was ordained for him to be chastened longer by this affliction, that he might bear the pain which was laid upon him with patience and a quiet mind.

He did accordingly as he had determined, and supporting his weak limbs with a staff, entered the church. There prostrating himself before the body of the man of God, he prayed with pious earnestness, that, through his intercession, the Lord might be propitious to him. As he prayed, he seemed to fall into a deep sleep, and, as he was afterwards wont to relate, felt a large and broad hand touch his head, where the pain lay, and likewise pass over all that part of his body which had been benumbed by the disease, down to his feet. Gradually the pain departed and health returned. Then he awoke, and rose up in perfect health, and returning thanks to the Lord for his recovery, told the brothers what had been done for him; and to the joy of them all, returned the more zealously, as if chastened by the trial of his affliction, to the service which he was wont before to perform with care.

Moreover, the very garments which had been on Cuthbert's body, dedicated to God, either while he was alive, or after his death, were not without the virtue of healing, as may be seen in the book of his life and miracles, by such as shall read it.

Chap. XXXII. Of one who was lately cured of a disease in his eye at the relics of St. Cuthbert.

Nor is that cure to be passed over in silence, which was performed by his relics three years ago, and was told me lately by the brother himself, on whom

it was wrought. It happened in the monastery, which, being built near the river Dacore, has taken its name from the same, over which, at that time, the religious Suidbert presided as abbot. In that monastery was a youth whose eyelid was disfigured by an unsightly tumour, which growing daily greater, threatened the loss of the eye. The physicians endeavoured to mitigate it by applying ointments, but in vain. Some said it ought to be cut off; others opposed this course, for fear of greater danger. The brother having long laboured under this malady, when no human means availed to save his eye, but rather, it grew daily worse, on a sudden, through the grace of the mercy of God, it came to pass that he was cured by the relics of the holy father, Cuthbert. For when the brethren found his body uncorrupted, after having been many years buried, they took some part of the hair, to give, as relics, to friends who asked for them, or to show, in testimony of the miracle.

One of the priests of the monastery, named Thruired, who is now abbot there, had a small part of these relics by him at that time. One day he went into the church and opened the box of relics, to give some part of them to a friend who asked for it, and it happened that the youth who had the diseased eye was then in the church. The priest, having given his friend as much as he thought fit, gave the rest to the youth to put back into its place. But he having received the hairs of the holy head, prompted by some salutary impulse, applied them to the diseased eyelid, and endeavoured for some time, by the application of them, to abate and mitigate the tumour. Having done this, he again laid the relics in the box, as he had been bidden, believing that his eye would soon be cured by the hairs of the man of God, which had touched it; nor did his faith disappoint him. It was then, as he is wont to relate, about the second hour of the day; but while he was occupied with other thoughts and business of the day, on a sudden, about the sixth hour of the same, touching his eye, he found it and the eyelid as sound as if there never had been any disfigurement or tumour on it.

Book V

Chap. I. How Ethelwald, successor to Cuthbert, leading a hermit's life, calmed a tempest by his prayers when the brethren were in danger at sea. [687-699 ACE]

The venerable Ethelwald succeeded the man of God, Cuthbert, in the exercise of a solitary life, which he spent in the isle of Farne before he became a bishop. After he had received the priesthood, he consecrated his office by deeds worthy of that degree for many years in the monastery which is called Inhrypum. To the end that his merit and manner of life may be the more certainly made known, I will relate one miracle of his, which was told me by one of the brothers for and on whom the same was wrought; to wit, Guthfrid, the venerable servant and priest of Christ, who also, afterwards, as abbot, presided over the brethren of the same church of Lindisfarne, in which he was educated.

“I came,” says he, “to the island of Farne, with two others of the brethren, desiring to speak with the most reverend father, Ethelwald. Having been refreshed

with his discourse, and asked for his blessing, as we were returning home, behold on a sudden, when we were in the midst of the sea, the fair weather in which we were sailing, was broken, and there arose so great and terrible a tempest, that neither sails nor oars were of any use to us, nor had we anything to expect but death. After long struggling with the wind and waves to no effect, at last we looked back to see whether it was possible by any means at least to return to the island whence we came, but we found that we were on all sides alike cut off by the storm, and that there was no hope of escape by our own efforts. But looking further, we perceived, on the island of Farne, our father Ethelwald, beloved of God, come out of his retreat to watch our course; for, hearing the noise of the tempest and raging sea, he had come forth to see what would become of us. When he beheld us in distress and despair, he bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in prayer for our life and safety; and as he finished his prayer, he calmed the swelling water, in such sort that the fierceness of the storm ceased on all sides, and fair winds attended us over a smooth sea to the very shore. When we had landed, and had pulled up our small vessel from the waves, the storm, which had ceased a short time for our sake, presently returned, and raged furiously during the whole day; so that it plainly appeared that the brief interval of calm had been granted by Heaven in answer to the prayers of the man of God, to the end that we might escape.”

The man of God remained in the isle of Farne twelve years, and died there; but was buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, in the isle of Lindisfarne, beside the bodies of the aforesaid bishops. These things happened in the days of King Aldfrid, who, after his brother Egfrid, ruled the nation of the Northumbrians for nineteen years.

Chap. II. How Bishop John cured a dumb man by his blessing. [687 ACE]

In the beginning of Aldfrid’s reign, Bishop Eata died, and was succeeded in the bishopric of the church of Hagustald by the holy man John, of whom those that knew him well are wont to tell many miracles, and more particularly Berthun, a man worthy of all reverence and of undoubted truthfulness, and once his deacon, now abbot of the monastery called Inderauuda, that is, “In the wood of the Deiri”: some of which miracles we have thought fit to hand on to posterity. There is a certain remote dwelling enclosed by a mound, among scattered trees, not far from the church of Hagustald, being about a mile and a half distant and separated from it by the river Tyne, having an oratory dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel, where the man of God used frequently, as occasion offered, and specially in Lent, to abide with a few companions and in quiet give himself to prayer and study. Having come hither once at the beginning of Lent to stay, he bade his followers find out some poor man labouring under any grievous infirmity, or want, whom they might keep with them during those days, to receive alms, for so he was always used to do.

There was in a township not far off, a certain youth who was dumb, known to the bishop, for he often used to come into his presence to receive alms. He had never been able to speak one word; besides, he had so much scurf and scab on his

head, that no hair could ever grow on the top of it, but only some rough hairs stood on end round about it. The bishop caused this young man to be brought, and a little hut to be made for him within the enclosure of the dwelling, in which he might abide, and receive alms from him every day. When one week of Lent was over, the next Sunday he bade the poor [pg 304]man come to him, and when he had come, he bade him put his tongue out of his mouth and show it him; then taking him by the chin, he made the sign of the Holy Cross on his tongue, directing him to draw it back so signed into his mouth and to speak. "Pronounce some word," said he; "say 'gae,'" which, in the language of the English, is the word of affirming and consenting, that is, yes. The youth's tongue was immediately loosed, and he spoke as he was bidden. The bishop then added the names of the letters: "Say A." He said A. "Say B;" he said B also. When he had repeated all the letters after the bishop, the latter proceeded to put syllables and words to him, and when he had repeated them all rightly he bade him utter whole sentences, and he did it. Nor did he cease all that day and the next night, as long as he could keep awake, as those who were present relate, to say something, and to express his private thoughts and wishes to others, which he could never do before; after the manner of the man long lame, who, when he was healed by the Apostles Peter and John, leaping up, stood and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising the Lord, rejoicing to have the use of his feet, which he had so long lacked. The bishop, rejoicing with him at his cure, caused the physician to take in hand the healing of the sores of his head. He did as he was bidden, and with the help of the bishop's blessing and prayers, a goodly head of hair grew as the skin was healed. Thus the youth became fair of countenance, ready of speech, with hair curling in comely fashion, whereas before he had been ill-favoured, miserable, and dumb. Thus filled with joy at his recovered health, notwithstanding that the bishop offered to keep him in his own household, he chose rather to return home.

Chap. III. How he healed a sick maiden by his prayers. [705 ACE]

The same Berthun told another miracle concerning the said bishop. When the most reverend Wilfrid, after a long banishment, was admitted to the bishopric of the church of Hagustald, and the aforesaid John, upon the death of Bosa, a man of great sanctity and humility, was, in his place, appointed bishop of York, he himself came, once upon a time, to the monastery of nuns, at the place called Wetadun, where the Abbess Heriburg then presided. "When we were come thither," said he, "and had been received with great and universal joy, the abbess told us, that one of the nuns, who was her own daughter after the flesh, laboured under a grievous sickness, for she had been lately let blood in the arm, and whilst she was under treatment, was seized with an attack of sudden pain, which speedily increased, while the wounded arm became worse, and so much swollen, that it could scarce be compassed with both hands; and she lay in bed like to die through excess of pain. Wherefore the abbess entreated the bishop that he would vouchsafe to go in and give her his blessing; for she believed that she would soon be better if he blessed

her or laid his hands upon her. He asked when the maiden had been let blood, and being told that it was on the fourth day of the moon, said, 'You did very indiscreetly and unskilfully to let blood on the fourth day of the moon; for I remember that Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, said, that blood-letting at that time was very dangerous, when the light of the moon is waxing and the tide of the ocean is rising. And what can I do for the maiden if she is like to die?'

"But the abbess still earnestly entreated for her daughter, whom she dearly loved, and designed to make abbess in her stead, and at last prevailed with him to go in and visit the sick maiden. Wherefore he went in, taking me with him to the maid, who lay, as I said, in sore anguish, and her arm swelling so greatly that it could not be bent at all at the elbow; and he stood and said a prayer over her, and having given his blessing, went out. Afterwards, as we were sitting at table, at the usual hour, some one came in and called me out, saying, 'Quoenburg' (that was the maid's name) 'desires that you should immediately go back to her.' This I did, and entering the chamber, I found her of more cheerful countenance, and like one in good health. And while I was sitting beside her, she said, 'Shall we call for something to drink?'—'Yes,' said I, 'and right glad am I, if you can.' When the cup was brought, and we had both drunk, she said, 'As soon as the bishop had said the prayer for me and given me his blessing and had gone out, I immediately began to mend; and though I have not yet recovered my former strength, yet all the pain is quite gone both from my arm, where it was most burning, and from all my body, as if the bishop had carried it away with him; notwithstanding the swelling of the arm still seems to remain.' But when we departed thence, the cure of the pain in her limbs was followed by the assuaging of the grievous swelling; and the maiden being thus delivered from pains and death, returned praise to our Lord and Saviour, in company with His other servants who were there."

Chap. IV. How he healed a thegn's wife that was sick, with holy water.

The same abbot related another miracle, not unlike the former, of the aforesaid bishop. "Not very far from our monastery," he said, "to wit, about two miles off, was the township of one Puch, a thegn, whose wife had lain sick of a very grievous disease for nearly forty days, insomuch that for three weeks she could not be carried out of the chamber where she lay. It happened that the man of God was, at that time, called thither by the thegn to consecrate a church; and when that was done, the thegn desired him to come into his house and dine. The bishop declined, saying that he must return to the monastery, which was very near. The thegn, entreating him more earnestly, vowed he would also give alms to the poor, if so be that the bishop would vouchsafe to enter his house that day and break his fast. I joined my entreaties to his, promising in like manner to give alms for the relief of the poor, if he would but go and dine at the thegn's house, and give his blessing. Having at length, with much difficulty, prevailed, we went in to refresh ourselves. The bishop had sent to the woman that lay sick some of the holy water, which he had blessed for the consecration of the church, by one of the brothers who had come with

me, ordering him to give her some to drink, and wash that part of her where he found that her pain was greatest, with some of the same water. This being done, the woman immediately got up whole and sound, and perceiving that she had not only been delivered from her long sickness, but at the same time had recovered the strength which she had lost for so great a time, she presented the cup to the bishop and to us, and continued serving us with meat and drink as she had begun, till dinner was over; following the example of the blessed Peter's wife's mother, who, having been sick of a fever, arose at the touch of our Lord's hand, and having forthwith received health and strength, ministered to them."

Chap. V. How he likewise recalled by his prayers a thegn's servant from death.

At another time also, being called to consecrate the church of a thegn named Addi, when he had performed the required duty, he was entreated by the thegn to go in to one of his servants, who lay dangerously ill, insomuch that having lost all use of his limbs, he seemed to be at the point of death; and moreover the coffin had been made ready wherein to bury him after his death. The thegn urged his entreaties with tears, earnestly beseeching him that he would go in and pray for the servant, because his life was of great moment to him; and he believed that if the bishop would lay his hand upon him and give him his blessing, he would soon mend. So the bishop went in, and saw him very near death, and by his side the coffin in which he was to be laid for his burial, whilst all mourned. He said a prayer and blessed him, and going out, spake the wonted words of comfort, "Good health be yours and that speedily." Afterwards, when they were sitting at table, the servant sent to his lord, desiring that he would let him have a cup of wine, because he was thirsty. The thegn, rejoicing greatly that he could drink, sent him a cup of wine, blessed by the bishop; and, as soon as he had drunk it, he immediately got up, and, shaking off the heaviness of his infirmity, dressed himself and went forth, and going in to the bishop, saluted him and the other guests, saying that he also would gladly eat and drink with them. They bade him sit down with them at table, greatly rejoicing at his recovery. He sat down, ate and drank and made merry, and behaved himself like the rest of the company; and living many years after, continued in the same health which he had gained. The aforesaid abbot says this miracle was not wrought in his presence, but that he had it from those who were present.

Chap. VI. How, both by his prayers and blessing, he recalled from death one of his clerks, who had bruised himself by a fall.

Nor do I think that this miracle, which Herebald, the servant of Christ, says was wrought upon himself by the bishop, is to be passed over in silence. He was then one of that bishop's clergy, but now presides as abbot in the monastery at the mouth of the river Tyne. "Living with him," said he, "and being very well acquainted with his course of life, I found it to be in all points worthy of a bishop, as far as it is lawful for men to judge; but I have known by the experience of others, and more

particularly by my own, how great his merit was before Him Who seeth the heart; having been by his prayer and blessing recalled from the threshold of death and brought back to the way of life. For, when in the prime of my youth, I lived among his clergy, applying myself to reading and singing, but not having yet altogether withdrawn my heart from youthful pleasures, it happened one day that, as we were travelling with him, we came into a plain and open road, well fitted for galloping. The young men that were with him, and especially the laymen, began to entreat the bishop to give them leave to gallop, and make trial of their horses one with another. He at first refused, saying that it was an idle request; but at last, overcome by the unanimous desire of so many, 'Do so,' said he, 'if you will, but let Herebald have no part in the trial.' Then I earnestly prayed that I might have leave to compete with the rest, for I relied on an excellent horse, which he had himself given me, but I could in no wise obtain my request.

"When they had several times galloped backwards and forwards, the bishop and I looking on, my wanton humour prevailed, and I could no longer refrain, but though he forbade me, I struck in among them at their sport, and began to ride with them at full speed; whereat I heard him call after me with a groan, 'Alas! how much you grieve me by riding after that manner.' Though I heard him, I went on against his command; but immediately the fiery horse taking a great leap over a hollow place in the way, I fell, and at once lost all sense and motion, like one dying; for there was in that place a stone, level with the ground, covered with only a thin coating of turf, and no other stone was to be found in all that expanse of plain; and it happened by chance, or rather by Divine Providence so ordering it, to punish my disobedience, that my head and my hand, which in falling I had put under my head, struck upon that stone, so that my thumb was broken and my skull fractured, and I became, as I said, like one dead.

"And because I could not move, they stretched a tent there for me to lie in. It was about the seventh hour of the day, and having lain still and as it were dead from that time till the evening, I then revived a little, and was carried home by my companions, and lay speechless all the night, vomiting blood, because something was broken within me by the fall. The bishop was very much grieved at my fall and my misfortune, for he bore me extraordinary affection. Nor would he stay that night, as he was wont, among his clergy; but spent it alone in watching and prayer, imploring the Divine goodness, as I suppose, for my preservation. Coming to me early in the morning, and having said a prayer over me, he called me by my name, and when I awoke as it were out of a heavy sleep, he asked whether I knew who it was that spoke to me? I opened my eyes and said, 'Yes; you are my beloved bishop.'—'Can you live?' said he. I answered, 'I can, through your prayers, if the Lord will.'

"He then laid his hand on my head, with the words of blessing, and returned to prayer; when he came again to see me, in a short time, he found me sitting and able to talk; and, being moved by Divine inspiration, as it soon appeared, began to ask me, whether I knew for certain that I had been baptized? I answered that

I knew beyond all doubt that I had been washed in the font of salvation, for the remission of sins, and I named the priest by whom I knew that I had been baptized. He replied, 'If you were baptized by that priest, your baptism is not perfect; for I know him, and that when he was ordained priest, he could in no wise, by reason of the dulness of his understanding, learn the ministry of catechizing and baptizing; for which reason I enjoined upon him altogether to desist from presuming to exercise that ministry, which he could not duly perform.' This said, he set himself to catechize me that same hour; and it came to pass that when he breathed on my face, straightway I felt better. He called the surgeon and ordered him to set and bind up my skull where it was fractured; and presently having received his blessing, I was so much better that I mounted on horseback the next day, and travelled with him to another place; and being soon after perfectly recovered, I was washed in the water of life."

He continued in his bishopric thirty-three years, and then ascending to the heavenly kingdom, was buried in St. Peter's Chapel, in his own monastery, which is called, "In the wood of the Deiri," in the year of our Lord 721. For having, by his great age, become unable to govern his bishopric, he ordained Wilfrid, his priest, bishop of the church of York, and retired to the aforesaid monastery, and there ended his days in godly conversation.

Chap. VII. How Caedwalla, king of the West Saxons, went to Rome to be baptized; and his successor Ini, also devoutly journeyed to the same threshold of the holy Apostles. [688 ACE]

In the third year of the reign of Aldfrid, Caedwalla, king of the West Saxons, having most vigorously governed his nation for two years, quitted his crown for the sake of the Lord and an everlasting kingdom, and went to Rome, being desirous to obtain the peculiar honour of being cleansed in the baptismal font at the threshold of the blessed Apostles, for he had learned that in Baptism alone the entrance into the heavenly life is opened to mankind; and he hoped at the same time, that being made clean by Baptism, he should soon be freed from the bonds of the flesh and pass to the eternal joys of Heaven; both which things, by the help of the Lord, came to pass according as he had conceived in his mind. For coming to Rome, at the time that Sergius was pope, he was baptized on the Holy Saturday before Easter Day, in the year of our Lord 689, and being still in his white garments, he fell sick, and was set free from the bonds of the flesh on the 20th of April, and obtained an entrance into the kingdom of the blessed in Heaven. At his baptism, the aforesaid pope had given him the name of Peter, to the end, that he might be also united in name to the most blessed chief of the Apostles, to whose most holy body his pious love had led him from the utmost bounds of the earth. He was likewise buried in his church, and by the pope's command an epitaph was written on his tomb, wherein the memory of his devotion might be preserved for ever, and the readers or hearers thereof might be stirred up to give themselves to religion by the example of what he had done.

The epitaph was this:—

“High estate, wealth, offspring, a mighty kingdom, triumphs, spoils, chieftains, strongholds, the camp, a home; whatsoever the valour of his sires, whatsoever himself had won, Caedwal, mighty in war, left for the love of God, that, a pilgrim king, he might behold Peter and Peter’s seat, receive at his font pure waters of life, and in bright draughts drink of the shining radiance whence a quickening glory streams through all the world. And even as he gained with eager soul the prize of the new life, he laid aside barbaric rage, and, changed in heart, he changed his name with joy. Sergius the Pope bade him be called Peter, himself his father, when he rose born anew from the font, and the grace of Christ, cleansing him, bore him forthwith clothed in white raiment to the heights of Heaven. O wondrous faith of the king, but greatest of all the mercy of Christ, into whose counsels none may enter! For he came in safety from the ends of the earth, even from Britain, through many a nation, over many a sea, by many a path, and saw the city of Romulus and looked upon Peter’s sanctuary revered, bearing mystic gifts. He shall walk in white among the sheep of Christ in fellowship with them; for his body is in the tomb, but his soul on high. Thou mightest deem he did but change an earthly for a heavenly sceptre, whom thou seest attain to the kingdom of Christ.”

“Here was buried Caedwalla, called also Peter, king of the Saxons, on the twentieth day of April, in the second indiction, aged about thirty years, in the reign of our most pious lord, the Emperor Justinian, in the fourth year of his consulship, in the second year of the pontificate of our Apostolic lord, Pope Sergius.”

When Caedwalla went to Rome, Ini succeeded to the kingdom, being of the blood royal; and having reigned thirty-seven years over that nation, he in like manner left his kingdom and committed it to younger men, and went away to the threshold of the blessed Apostles, at the time when Gregory was pope, being desirous to spend some part of his pilgrimage upon earth in the neighbourhood of the holy places, that he might obtain to be more readily received into the fellowship of the saints in heaven. This same thing, about that time, was wont to be done most zealously by many of the English nation, nobles and commons, laity and clergy, men and women.

Chap. VIII. How, when Archbishop Theodore died, Bertwald succeeded him as archbishop, and, among many others whom he ordained, he made the learned Tobias bishop of the church of Rochester. [690 ACE]

The year after that in which Caedwalla died at Rome, that is, 690 after the Incarnation of our Lord, Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, departed this life, being old and full of days, for he was eighty-eight years of age; which number of years he had been wont long before to foretell to his friends that he should live, the same having been revealed to him in a dream. He held the bishopric twenty-two years, and was buried in St. Peter’s church, where all the bodies of the bishops of Canterbury are buried. Of whom, as well as of his fellows of the same degree, it may rightly and truly be said, that their bodies are buried in

peace, and their names shall live to all generations. For to say all in few words, the English Churches gained more spiritual increase while he was archbishop, than ever before. His character, life, age, and death, are plainly and manifestly described to all that resort thither, by the epitaph on his tomb, in thirty-four heroic verses. The first whereof are these:

“Here in the tomb rests the body of the holy prelate, called now in the Greek tongue Theodore. Chief pontiff, blest high priest, pure doctrine he set forth to his disciples.”

The last are as follow:

“For September had reached its nineteenth day, when his spirit went forth from the prison-bars of the flesh. Mounting in bliss to the gracious fellowship of the new life, he was united to the angelic citizens in the heights of Heaven.”

Bertwald succeeded Theodore in the archbishopric, being abbot of the monastery called Racuulfe, which stands at the northern mouth of the river Genlade. He was a man learned in the Scriptures, and perfectly instructed in ecclesiastical and monastic teaching, yet in no wise to be compared to his predecessor. He was chosen bishop in the year of our Lord 692, on the first day of July, when Wictred and Suaebhard were kings [pg 316]in Kent; but he was ordained the next year, on Sunday the 29th of June, by Godwin, metropolitan bishop of Gaul, and was enthroned on Sunday the 31st of August. Among the many bishops whom he ordained was Tobias, a man instructed in the Latin, Greek, and Saxon tongues, and otherwise of manifold learning, whom he consecrated in the stead of Gedmund, bishop of the Church of Rochester, who had died.

Chap. IX. How the holy man, Egbert, would have gone into Germany to preach, but could not; and how Wictbert went, but because he availed nothing, returned into Ireland, whence he came. [Circ. 688 ACE]

At that time the venerable servant of Christ, and priest, Egbert, who is to be named with all honour, and who, as was said before, lived as a stranger and pilgrim in Ireland to obtain hereafter a country in heaven, purposed in his mind to profit many, taking upon him the work of an apostle, and, by preaching the Gospel, to bring the Word of God to some of those nations that had not yet heard it; many of which tribes he knew to be in Germany, from whom the Angles or Saxons, who now inhabit Britain, are known to have derived their race and origin; for which reason they are still corruptly called “Garmans” by the neighbouring nation of the Britons. Such are the Frisians, the Rugini, the Danes, the Huns, the Old Saxons, and the Boructuari. There are also in the same parts many other peoples still enslaved to pagan rites, to whom the aforesaid soldier of Christ determined to go, sailing round Britain, if haply he could deliver any of them from Satan, and bring them to Christ; or if this might not be, he was minded to go to Rome, to see and adore the thresholds of the holy Apostles and martyrs of Christ.

But a revelation from Heaven and the working of God prevented him from achieving either of these enterprises; for when he had made choice of most

courageous companions, fit to preach the Word, inasmuch as they were renowned for their good deeds and their learning, and when all things necessary were provided for the voyage, there came to him on a certain day early in the morning one of the brethren, who had been a disciple of the priest, Boisil, beloved of God, and had ministered to him in Britain, when the said Boisil was provost of the [pg 318]monastery of Mailros, under the Abbot Eata, as has been said above. This brother told him a vision which he had seen that night. "When after matins," said he, "I had laid me down in my bed, and was fallen into a light slumber, Boisil, that was sometime my master and brought me up in all love, appeared to me, and asked, whether I knew him? I said, 'Yes, you are Boisil.' He answered, 'I am come to bring Egbert a message from our Lord and Saviour, which must nevertheless be delivered to him by you. Tell him, therefore, that he cannot perform the journey he has undertaken; for it is the will of God that he should rather go to teach the monasteries of Columba.'" Now Columba was the first teacher of the Christian faith to the Picts beyond the mountains northward, and the first founder of the monastery in the island of Hii, which was for a long time much honoured by many tribes of the Scots and Picts. The said Columba is now by some called Columcille, the name being compounded from "Columba" and "Cella." Egbert, having heard the words of the vision, charged the brother that had told it him, not to tell it to any other, lest haply it should be a lying vision. But when he considered the matter secretly with himself, he apprehended that it was true, yet would not desist from preparing for his voyage which he purposed to make to teach those nations.

A few days after the aforesaid brother came again to him, saying that Boisil had that night again appeared to him in a vision after matins, and said, "Why did you tell Egbert so negligently and after so lukewarm a manner that which I enjoined upon you to say? Yet, go now and tell him, that whether he will or no, he must go [pg 319]to Columba's monasteries, because their ploughs are not driven straight; and he must bring them back into the right way."Hearing this, Egbert again charged the brother not to reveal the same to any man. Though now assured of the vision, he nevertheless attempted to set forth upon his intended voyage with the brethren. When they had put aboard all that was requisite for so long a voyage, and had waited some days for fair winds, there arose one night so violent a storm, that part of what was on board was lost, and the ship itself was left lying on its side in the sea. Nevertheless, all that belonged to Egbert and his companions was saved. Then he, saying, in the words of the prophet, "For my sake this great tempest is upon you," withdrew himself from that undertaking and was content to remain at home.

But one of his companions, called Wictbert, notable for his contempt of the world and for his learning and knowledge, for he had lived many years as a stranger and pilgrim in Ireland, leading a hermit's life in great perfection, took ship, and arriving in Frisland, preached the Word of salvation for the space of two whole years to that nation and to its king, Rathbed; but reaped no fruit of all his great labour among his barbarous hearers. Returning then to the chosen place of his pilgrimage, he gave himself up to the Lord in his wonted life of silence, and since

he could not be profitable to strangers by teaching them the faith, he took care to be the more profitable to his own people by the example of his virtue.

Chap. X. How Wilbrord, preaching in Frisland, converted many to Christ; and how his two companions, the Hewalds, suffered martyrdom. [690 ACE]

When the man of God, Egbert, perceived that neither he himself was permitted to go and preach to the nations, being withheld for the sake of some other advantage to the holy Church, whereof he had been forewarned by a revelation; nor that Wictbert, when he went into those parts, had availed to do anything; he nevertheless still attempted to send holy and industrious men to the work of the Word, among whom the most notable was Wilbrord, a man eminent for his merit and rank as priest. They arrived there, twelve in number, and turning aside to Pippin, duke of the Franks, were gladly received by him; and as he had lately subdued the nearer part of Frisland, and expelled King Rathbed, he sent them thither to preach, supporting them at the same time with his sovereign authority, that none might molest them in their preaching, and bestowing many favours on those who consented to receive the faith. Thus it came to pass, that with the help of the Divine grace, in a short time they converted many from idolatry to the faith of Christ.

Following their example, two other priests of the English nation, who had long lived as strangers in Ireland, for the sake of the eternal country, went into the province of the Old Saxons, if haply they could there win any to Christ by their preaching. They were alike in name as in devotion, Hewald being the name of both, with this distinction, that, on account of the different colour of their hair, the one was called Black Hewald and the other White Hewald. They were both full of religious piety, but Black Hewald was the more learned of the two in Scripture. When they came into the province, these men took up their lodging in the guesthouse of a certain township-reeve, and asked of him that he would conduct them to the ealdorman who was over him, for that they had a message concerning matters of importance to communicate to him. For those Old Saxons have no king, but many ealdormen set over their nation; and when any war is on the point of breaking out, they cast lots indifferently, and on whomsoever the lot falls, him they all follow and obey during the time of war; but as soon as the war is ended, all those ealdormen are again equal in power. So the reeve received and entertained them in his house some days, promising to send them to the ealdorman who was over him, as they desired.

But when the barbarians perceived that they were of another religion,—for they continually gave themselves to singing of psalms and prayer, and daily offered up to God the Sacrifice of the saving Victim, having with them sacred vessels and a consecrated table for an altar,—they began to grow suspicious of them, lest if they should come into the presence of their ealdorman, and converse with him, they should turn his heart from their gods, and convert him to the new religion of the

Christian [pg 322]faith; and thus by degrees all their province should be forced to change its old worship for a new. Wherefore on a sudden they laid hold of them and put them to death; and White Hewald they slew outright with the sword; but they put Black Hewald to lingering torture and tore him limb from limb in horrible fashion, and they threw their bodies into the Rhine. The ealdorman, whom they had desired to see, hearing of it, was very angry that strangers who desired to come to him had not been suffered to come; and therefore he sent and put to death all those villagers and burned their village. The aforesaid priests and servants of Christ suffered on the 3rd of October.

Miracles from Heaven were not lacking at their martyrdom. For their dead bodies, having been cast into the river by the pagans, as has been said, were carried against the stream for the space of almost forty miles, to the place where their companions were. Moreover, a long ray of light, reaching up to heaven, shone every night above them wheresoever they chanced to be, and that too in the sight of the very pagans that had slain them. Moreover, one of them appeared in a vision by night to one of his companions, whose name was Tilmon, a man of renown and of noble birth in this world, who having been a thegn had become a monk, telling him that he might find their bodies in that place, where he should see rays of light reaching from heaven to the earth. And so it befell; and their bodies being found, were buried with the honour due to martyrs; and the day of their passion or of the finding of their bodies, is celebrated in those parts with fitting veneration. Finally, Pippin, the most glorious duke of the Franks, learning these things, caused the bodies to be brought to him, and buried them with much honour in the church of the city of Cologne, on the Rhine. And it is said that a spring burst forth in the place where they were killed, which to this day affords a plentiful stream in that same place.

Chap. XI. How the venerable Suidbert in Britain, and Wilbrord at Rome, were ordained bishops for Frisland. [692 ACE]

At their first coming into Frisland, as soon as Wilbrord found that he had leave given him by the prince to preach there, he made haste to go to Rome, where Pope Sergius then presided over the Apostolic see, that he might undertake the desired work of preaching the Gospel to the nations, with his licence and blessing; and hoping to receive of him some relics of the blessed Apostles and martyrs of Christ; to the end, that when he destroyed the idols, and erected churches in the nation to which he preached, he might have the relics of saints at hand to put into them, and having deposited them there, might accordingly dedicate each of those places to the honour of the saint whose relics they were. He desired also there to learn or to receive many other things needful for so great a work. Having obtained his desire in all these matters, he returned to preach.

At which time, the brothers who were in Frisland, attending on the ministry of the Word, chose out of their own number a man of sober life, and meek of heart, called Suidbert, to be ordained bishop for them. He, being sent into Britain, was

consecrated, at their request, by the most reverend Bishop Wilfrid, who, having been driven out of his country, chanced then to be living in banishment among the Mercians; for Kent had no bishop at that time, Theodore being dead, and Bertwald, his successor, who had gone beyond the sea to be ordained, having not yet returned to his episcopal see.

The said Suidbert, being made bishop, returned from Britain, and not long after departed to the Boructuari; and by his preaching brought many of them into the way of truth; but the Boructuari being not long after subdued by the Old Saxons, those who had received the Word were dispersed abroad; and the bishop himself with certain others went to Pippin, who, at the request of his wife, Blithryda, gave him a place of abode in a certain island on the Rhine, called in their tongue, Inlitore; there he built a monastery, which his successors still possess, and for a time dwelt in it, leading a most continent life, and there ended his days.

When they who had gone thither had spent some years teaching in Frisland, Pippin, with the consent of them all, sent the venerable Wilbrord to Rome, where Sergius was still pope, desiring that he might be consecrated archbishop over the nation of the Frisians; which was accordingly done, as he had made request, in the year of our Lord 696. He was consecrated in the church of the Holy Martyr Cecilia, on her festival; and the said pope gave him the name of Clement, and forthwith sent him back to his bishopric, to wit, fourteen days after his arrival in the city.

Pippin gave him a place for his episcopal see, in his famous fort, which in the ancient language of those people is called Wiltaburg, that is, the town of the Wilts; but, in the Gallic tongue, Trajectum. The most reverend prelate having built a church there, and preaching the Word of faith far and near, drew many from their errors, and built many churches and not a few monasteries. For not long after he himself constituted other bishops in those parts from the number of the brethren that either came with him or after him to preach there; of whom some are now fallen asleep in the Lord; but Wilbrord himself, surnamed Clement, is still living, venerable for his great age, having been thirty-six years a bishop, and now, after manifold conflicts of the heavenly warfare, he longs with all his heart for the recompense of the reward in Heaven.

Chap. XII. How one in the province of the Northumbrians, rose from the dead, and related many things which he had seen, some to be greatly dreaded and some to be desired. [Circ. 696 ACE]

At this time a memorable miracle, and like to those of former days, was wrought in Britain; for, to the end that the living might be roused from the death of the soul, a certain man, who had been some time dead, rose again to the life of the body, and related many memorable things that he had seen; some of which I have thought fit here briefly to describe. There was a certain householder in that district of the Northumbrians which is called Incuneningum, who led a godly life, with all his house. This man fell sick, and his sickness daily increasing, he was brought

to extremity, and died in the beginning of the night; but at dawn he came to life again, and suddenly sat up, whereat all those that sat about the body weeping fled away in great terror, only his wife, who loved him better, though trembling and greatly afraid, remained with him. And he comforting her, said, "Fear not, for I am now in very deed risen from death whereof I was holden, and permitted again to live among men; nevertheless, hereafter I must not live as I was wont, but after a very different manner." Then rising immediately, he went to the oratory of the little town, and continuing in prayer till day, forthwith divided all his substance into three parts; one whereof he gave to his wife, another to his children, and the third, which he kept himself, he straightway distributed among the poor. Not long after, being set free from the cares of this world, he came to the monastery of Mailros, which is almost enclosed by the winding of the river Tweed, and having received the tonsure, went apart into a place of abode which the abbot had provided, and there he continued till the day of his death, in so great contrition of mind and mortifying of the body, that even if his tongue had been silent, his life would have declared that he had seen many things either to be dreaded or coveted, which were hidden from other men.

Thus he related what he had seen. "He that led me had a countenance full of light, and shining raiment, and we went in silence, as it seemed to me, towards the rising of the summer sun. And as we walked we came to a broad and deep valley of infinite length; it lay on our left, and one side of it was exceeding terrible with raging flames, the other no less intolerable for violent hail and cold snows drifting and sweeping through all the place. Both sides were full of the souls of men which seemed to be tossed from one side to the other as it were by a violent storm; for when they could no longer endure the fervent heat, the hapless souls leaped into the midst of the deadly cold; and finding no rest there, they leaped back again to be burnt in the midst of the unquenchable flames. Now whereas an innumerable multitude of misshapen spirits were thus tormented far and near with this interchange of misery, as far as I could see, without any interval of rest, I began to think that peradventure this might be Hell, of whose intolerable torments I had often heard men talk. My guide, who went before me, answered to my thought, saying, 'Think not so, for this is not the Hell you believe it to be.'

"When he had led me farther by degrees, sore dismayed by that dread sight, on a sudden I saw the place before us begin to grow dark and filled with shadows. When we entered into them, the shadows by degrees grew so thick, that I could see nothing else, save only the darkness and the shape and garment of him that led me. As we went on 'through the shades in the lone night,' lo! on a sudden there appeared before us masses of foul flame constantly rising as it were out of a great pit, and falling back again into the same. When I had been led thither, my guide suddenly vanished, and left me alone in the midst of darkness and these fearful sights. As those same masses of fire, without intermission, at one time flew up and at another fell back into the bottom of the abyss, I perceived that the summits of all the flames, as they ascended were full of the spirits of men, which, like sparks

flying upwards with the smoke, were sometimes thrown on high, and again, when the vapours of the fire fell, dropped down into the depths below. Moreover, a stench, foul beyond compare, burst forth with the vapours, and filled all those dark places.

“Having stood there a long time in much dread, not knowing what to do, which way to turn, or what end awaited me, on a sudden I heard behind me the sound of a mighty and miserable lamentation, and at the same time noisy laughter, as of a rude multitude insulting captured enemies. When that noise, growing plainer, came up to me, I beheld a crowd of evil spirits dragging five souls of men, wailing and shrieking, into the midst of the darkness, whilst they themselves exulted and laughed. Among those human souls, as I could discern, there was one shorn like a clerk, one a layman, and one a woman. The evil spirits that dragged them went down into the midst of the burning pit; and it came to pass that as they went down deeper, I could no longer distinguish between the lamentation of the men and the laughing of the devils, yet I still had a confused sound in my ears. In the meantime, some of the dark spirits ascended from that flaming abyss, and running forward, beset me on all sides, and with their flaming eyes and the noisome fire which they breathed forth from their mouths and nostrils, tried to choke me; and threatened to lay hold on me with fiery tongs, which they had in their hands, yet they durst in no wise touch me, though they assayed to terrify me. Being thus on all sides encompassed with enemies and shades of darkness, and casting my eyes hither and thither if haply anywhere help might be found whereby I might be saved, there appeared behind me, on the way by which I had come, as it were, the brightness of a star shining amidst the darkness; which waxing greater by degrees, came rapidly towards me: and when it drew near, all those evil spirits, that sought to carry me away with their tongs, dispersed and fled.

“Now he, whose approach put them to flight, was the same that led me before; who, then turning towards the right, began to lead me, as it were, towards the rising of the winter sun, and having soon brought me out of the darkness, led me forth into an atmosphere of clear light. While he thus led me in open light, I saw a vast wall before us, the length on either side, and the height whereof, seemed to be altogether boundless. I began to wonder why we went up to the wall, seeing no door in it, nor window, nor any way of ascent. But when we came to the wall, we were presently, I know not by what means, on the top of it, and lo! there was a wide and pleasant plain full of such fragrance of blooming flowers that the marvellous sweetness of the scents immediately dispelled the foul stench of the dark furnace which had filled my nostrils. So great was the light shed over all this place that it seemed to exceed the brightness of the day, or the rays of the noontide sun. In this field were innumerable companies of men clothed in white, and many seats of rejoicing multitudes. As he led me through the midst of bands of happy inhabitants, I began to think that this perchance might be the kingdom of Heaven, of which I had often heard tell. He answered to my thought, saying, ‘Nay, this is not the kingdom of Heaven, as you think.’

“When we had also passed those mansions of blessed spirits, and gone farther on, I saw before me a much more beautiful light than before, and therein heard sweet sounds of singing, and so wonderful a fragrance was shed abroad from the place, that the other which I had perceived before and thought so great, then seemed to me but a small thing; even as that wondrous brightness of the flowery field, compared with this which I now beheld, appeared mean and feeble. When I began to hope that we should enter that delightful place, my guide, on a sudden stood still; and straightway turning, led me back by the way we came.

“In our return, when we came to those joyous mansions of the white-robed spirits, he said to me, ‘Do you know what all these things are which you have seen?’ I answered, ‘No,’ and then he said, ‘That valley which you beheld terrible with flaming fire and freezing cold, is the place in which the souls of those are tried and punished, who, delaying to confess and amend their crimes, at length have recourse to repentance at the point of death, and so go forth from the body; but nevertheless because they, even at their death, confessed and repented, they shall all be received into the kingdom of Heaven at the day of judgement; but many are succoured before the day of judgement, by the prayers of the living and their alms and fasting, and more especially by the celebration of Masses. Moreover that foul flaming pit which you saw, is the mouth of Hell, into which whosoever falls shall never be delivered to all eternity. This flowery place, in which you see this fair and youthful company, all bright and joyous, is that into which the souls of those are received who, indeed, when they leave the body have done good works, but who are not so perfect as to deserve to be immediately admitted into the kingdom of Heaven; yet they shall all, at the day of judgement, behold Christ, and enter into the joys of His kingdom; for such as are perfect in every word and deed and thought, as soon as they quit the body, forthwith enter into the kingdom of Heaven; in the neighbourhood whereof that place is, where you heard the sound of sweet singing amidst the savour of a sweet fragrance and brightness of light. As for you, who must now return to the body, and again live among men, if you will seek diligently to examine your actions, and preserve your manner of living and your words in righteousness and simplicity, you shall, after death, have a place of abode among these joyful troops of blessed souls which you behold. For when I left you for awhile, it was for this purpose, that I might learn what should become of you.’ When he had said this to me, I much abhorred returning to the body, being delighted with the sweetness and beauty of the place which I beheld, and with the company of those I saw in it. Nevertheless, I durst not ask my guide anything; but thereupon, on a sudden, I found myself, I know not how, alive among men.”

Now these and other things which this man of God had seen, he would not relate to slothful men, and such as lived negligently; but only to those who, being terrified with the dread of torments, or ravished with the hope of everlasting joys, would draw from his words the means to advance in piety. In the neighbourhood of his cell lived one Haemgils, a monk, and eminent in the priesthood, whose good works were worthy of his office: he is still living, and leading a solitary life in Ireland,

supporting his declining age with coarse bread and cold water. He often went to that man, and by repeated questioning, heard of him what manner of things he had seen when out of the body; by whose account those few particulars which we have briefly set down came also to our knowledge. And he related his visions to King Aldfrid, a man most learned in all respects, and was by him so willingly and attentively heard, that at his request he was admitted into the monastery above-mentioned, and received the crown of the monastic tonsure; and the said king, whensoever he came into those parts, very often went to hear him. At that time the abbot and priest Ethelwald, a man of godly and sober life, presided over that monastery. He now occupies the episcopal see of the church of Lindisfarne, leading a life worthy of his degree.

He had a place of abode assigned him apart in that monastery, where he might give himself more freely to the service of his Creator in continual prayer. And inasmuch as that place was on the banks of the river, he was wont often to go into the same for the great desire he had to do penance in his body, and oftentimes to plunge in it, and to continue saying psalms or prayers in the same as long as he could endure it, standing still, while the waves flowed over him, sometimes up to the middle, and sometimes even to the neck in water; and when he went ashore, he never took off his cold, wet garments till they grew warm and dry on his body. And when in the winter the cracking pieces of ice were floating about him, which he had himself sometimes broken, to make room to stand or plunge in the river, and those who beheld it would say, "We marvel, brother Drythelm (for so he was called), that you are able to endure such severe cold;" he answered simply, for he was a simple and sober-spirited man, "I have seen greater cold." And when they said, "We marvel that you choose to observe so hard a rule of continence," he replied, "I have seen harder things." And so, until the day of his calling hence, in his unwearied desire of heavenly bliss, he subdued his aged body with daily fasting, and forwarded the salvation of many by his words and life.

Chap. XIII. How another contrarywise before his death saw a book containing his sins, which was shown him by devils. [704-709 ACE]

But contrarywise there was a man in the province of the Mercians, whose visions and words, but not his manner of life, were of profit to others, though not to himself. In the reign of Coenred, who succeeded Ethelred, there was a layman who was a king's thegn, no less acceptable to the king for his outward industry, than displeasing to him for his neglect of his own soul. The king diligently admonished him to confess and amend, and to forsake his evil ways, lest he should lose all time for repentance and amendment by a sudden death. But though frequently warned, he despised the words of salvation, and promised that he would do penance at some future time. In the meantime, falling sick he betook himself to his bed, and was tormented with grievous pains. The king coming to him (for he loved the man much) exhorted him, even then, before death, to repent of his offences. But he answered that he would not then confess his sins, but would do it when he was

recovered of his sickness, lest his companions should upbraid him with having done that for fear of death, which he had refused to do in health. He thought he spoke very bravely, but it afterwards appeared that he had been miserably deceived by the wiles of the Devil.

The disease increasing, when the king came again to visit and instruct him, he cried out straightway with a lamentable voice, "What will you now? What are you come for? for you can no longer do aught for my profit or salvation." The king answered, "Say not so; take heed and be of sound mind." "I am not mad," replied he, "but I now know the worst and have it for certain before my eyes." "What is that?" said the king. "Not long since," said he, "there came into this room two fair youths, and sat down by me, the one at my head, and the other at my feet. One of them drew forth a book most beautiful, but very small, and gave it me to read; looking into it, I there found all the good actions I had ever done in my life written down, and they were very few and inconsiderable. They took back the book and said nothing to me. Then, on a sudden, appeared an army of evil spirits of hideous countenance, and they beset this house without, and sitting down filled the greater part of it within. Then he, who by the blackness of his gloomy face, and his sitting above the rest, seemed to be the chief of them, taking out a book terrible to behold, of a monstrous size, and of almost insupportable weight, commanded one of his followers to bring it to me to read. Having read it, I found therein most plainly written in hideous characters, all the crimes I ever committed, not only in word and deed, but even in the least thought; and he said to those glorious men in white raiment who sat by me, 'Why sit ye here, since ye know of a surety that this man is ours?' They answered, 'Ye speak truly; take him and lead him away to fill up the measure of your damnation.' This said, they forthwith vanished, and two wicked spirits arose, having in their hands ploughshares, and one of them struck me on the head, and the other on the foot. And these ploughshares are now with great torment creeping into the inward parts of my body, and as soon as they meet I shall die, and the devils being ready to snatch me away, I shall be dragged into the dungeons of hell."

Thus spoke that wretch in his despair, and soon after died, and now in vain suffers in eternal torments that penance which he failed to suffer for a short time with the fruits of forgiveness. Of whom it is manifest, that (as the blessed Pope Gregory writes of certain persons) he did not see these things for his own sake, since they did not avail him, but for the sake of others, who, knowing of his end, should be afraid to put off the time of repentance, whilst they have leisure, lest, being prevented by sudden death, they should perish impenitent. And whereas he saw diverse books laid before him by the good and evil spirits, this was done by Divine dispensation, that we may keep in mind that our deeds and thoughts are not scattered to the winds, but are all kept to be examined by the Supreme Judge, and will in the end be shown us either by friendly angels or by the enemy. And whereas the angels first drew forth a white book, and then the devils a black one; the former a very small one, the latter one very great; it is to be observed, that in his first years

he did some good actions, all which he nevertheless obscured by the evil actions of his youth. If, contrarywise, he had taken care in his youth to correct the errors of his boyhood, and by well-doing to put them away from the sight of God, he might have been admitted to the fellowship of those of whom the Psalm says, "Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." This story, as I learned it of the venerable Bishop Pechthelm, I have thought good to set forth plainly, for the salvation of such as shall read or hear it.

Chap. XIV. How another in like manner, being at the point of death, saw the place of punishment appointed for him in Hell.

I myself knew a brother, would to God I had not known him, whose name I could mention if it were of any avail, dwelling in a famous monastery, but himself living infamously. He was oftentimes rebuked by the brethren and elders of the place, and admonished to be converted to a more chastened life; and though he would not give ear to them, they bore with him long and patiently, on account of their need of his outward service, for he was a cunning artificer. But he was much given to drunkenness, and other pleasures of a careless life, and more used to stop in his workshop day and night, than to go to church to sing and pray and hear the Word of life with the brethren. For which reason it befell him according to the saying, that he who will not willingly humble himself and enter the gate of the church must needs be led against his will into the gate of Hell, being damned. For he falling sick, and being brought to extremity, called the brethren, and with much lamentation, like one damned, began to tell them, that he saw Hell opened, and Satan sunk in the depths thereof; and Caiaphas, with the others that slew our Lord, hard by him, delivered up to avenging flames. "In whose neighbourhood," said he, "I see a place of eternal perdition prepared for me, miserable wretch that I am." The brothers, hearing these words, began diligently to exhort him, that he should repent even then, whilst he was still in the flesh. He answered in despair, "There is no time for me now to change my course of life, when I have myself seen my judgement passed."

Whilst uttering these words, he died without having received the saving Viaticum, and his body was buried in the farthest parts of the monastery, nor did any one dare either to say Masses or sing psalms, or even to pray for him. Oh how far asunder hath God put light from darkness! The blessed Stephen, the first martyr, being about to suffer death for the truth, saw the heavens opened, and the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God; and where he was to be after death, there he fixed the eyes of his mind, that he might die the more joyfully. But this workman, of darkened mind and life, when death was at hand, saw Hell opened, and witnessed the damnation of the Devil and his followers; he saw also, unhappy wretch! his own prison among them, to the end that, despairing of salvation, he might himself die the more miserably, but might by his perdition afford cause of salvation to the living who should hear of it. This befell of late in the province of the Bernicians, and being noised abroad far and near, inclined many to do penance for

their sins without delay. Would to God that this also might come to pass through the reading of our words!

Chap. XV. How divers churches of the Scots, at the instance of Adamnan, adopted the Catholic Easter; and how the same wrote a book about the holy places. [703 ACE]

At this time a great part of the Scots in Ireland, and some also of the Britons in Britain, by the grace of God, adopted the reasonable and ecclesiastical time of keeping Easter. For when Adamnan, priest and abbot of the monks that were in the island of Hii, was sent by his nation on a mission to Aldfrid, king of the English, he abode some time in that province, and saw the canonical rites of the Church. Moreover, he was earnestly admonished by many of the more learned sort, not to presume to live contrary to the universal custom of the Church, either in regard to the observance of Easter, or any other ordinances whatsoever, with those few followers of his dwelling in the farthest corner of the world. Wherefore he so changed his mind, that he readily preferred those things which he had seen and heard in the English churches, to the customs which he and his people had hitherto followed. For he was a good and wise man, and excellently instructed in knowledge of the Scriptures. Returning home, he endeavoured to bring his own people that were in Hii, or that were subject to that monastery, into the way of truth, which he had embraced with all his heart; but he could not prevail. He sailed over into Ireland, and preaching to those people, and with sober words of exhortation making known to them the lawful time of Easter, he brought back many of them, and almost all that were free from the dominion of those of Hii, from the error of their fathers to the Catholic unity, and taught them to keep the lawful time of Easter.

Returning to his island, after having celebrated the canonical Easter in Ireland, he was instant in preaching the Catholic observance of the season of Easter in his monastery, yet without being able to achieve his end; and it so happened that he departed this life before the next year came round, the Divine goodness so ordaining it, that as he was a great lover of peace and unity, he should be taken away to everlasting life before he should be obliged, on the return of the season of Easter, to be at greater variance with those that would not follow him into the truth.

This same man wrote a book concerning the holy places, of great profit to many readers; his authority was the teaching and dictation of Arculf, a bishop of Gaul, who had gone to Jerusalem for the sake of the [pg 338]holy places; and having wandered over all the Promised Land, travelled also to Damascus, Constantinople, Alexandria, and many islands in the sea, and returning home by ship, was cast upon the western coast of Britain by a great tempest. After many adventures he came to the aforesaid servant of Christ, Adamnan, and being found to be learned in the Scriptures, and acquainted with the holy places, was most gladly received by him and gladly heard, insomuch that whatsoever he said that he had seen worthy of remembrance in the holy places, Adamnan straightway set himself to commit to

writing. Thus he composed a work, as I have said, profitable to many, and chiefly to those who, being far removed from those places where the patriarchs and Apostles lived, know no more of them than what they have learnt by reading. Adamnan presented this book to King Aldfrid, and through his bounty it came to be read by lesser persons. The writer thereof was also rewarded by him with many gifts and sent back into his country. I believe it will be of advantage to our readers if we collect some passages from his writings, and insert them in this our History.

Chap. XVI. The account given in the aforesaid book of the place of our Lord's Nativity, Passion, and Resurrection.

He wrote concerning the place of the Nativity of our Lord, after this manner: "Bethlehem, the city of David, is situated on a narrow ridge, encompassed on all sides with valleys, being a mile in length from west to east, and having a low wall without towers, built along the edge of the level summit. In the eastern corner thereof is a sort of natural half cave, the outward part whereof is said to have been the place where our Lord was born; the inner is called the manger of our Lord. This cave within is all covered with rich marble, and over the particular spot where our Lord is said to have been born, stands the great church of St. Mary." He likewise wrote about the place of His Passion and Resurrection in this manner: "Entering the city of Jerusalem on the north side, the first place to be visited, according to the disposition of the streets, is the church of Constantine, called the Martyrium. It was built by the Emperor Constantine, in a royal and magnificent manner, because the Cross of our Lord was said to have been found there by his mother Helena. Thence, to the westward, is seen the church of Golgotha, in which is also to be found the rock which once bore the Cross to which the Lord's body was nailed, and now it upholds a large silver cross, having a great brazen wheel with lamps hanging over it. Under the place of our Lord's Cross, a crypt is hewn out of the rock, in which the Sacrifice is offered on an altar for the dead that are held in honour, their bodies remaining meanwhile in the street. To the westward of this church is the round church of the Anastasis or Resurrection of our Lord, encompassed with three walls, and supported by twelve columns. Between each of the walls is a broad passage, which contains three altars at three different points of the middle wall; to the south, the north, and the west. It has eight doors or entrances in a straight line through the three walls; four whereof face the south-east, and four the east. In the midst of it is the round tomb of our Lord cut out of the rock, the top of of which a man standing within can touch with his hand; on the east is the entrance, against which that great stone was set. To this day the tomb bears the marks of the iron tools within, but on the outside it is all covered with marble to the very top of the roof, which is adorned with gold, and bears a large golden cross. In the north part of the tomb the sepulchre of our Lord is hewn out of the same rock, seven feet in length, and three hand-breadths above the floor; the entrance being on the south side, where twelve lamps burn day and night, four within the sepulchre, and eight above on the edge of the right side. The stone that was set at the entrance to the

tomb is now cleft in two; nevertheless, the lesser part of it stands as an altar of hewn stone before the door of the tomb; the greater part is set up as another altar, four-cornered, at the east end of the same church, and is covered with linen cloths. The colour of the said tomb and sepulchre is white and red mingled together.”

Chap. XVII. What he likewise wrote of the place of our Lord’s Ascension, and the tombs of the patriarchs.

Concerning the place of our Lord’s Ascension, the aforesaid author writes thus. “The Mount of Olives is equal in height to Mount Sion, but exceeds it in breadth and length; it bears few trees besides vines and olives, and is fruitful in wheat and barley, for the nature of that soil is not such as to yield thickets, but grass and flowers. On the very top of it, where our Lord ascended into heaven, is a large round church, having round about it three chapels with vaulted roofs. For the inner building could not be vaulted and roofed, by reason of the passage of our Lord’s Body; but it has an altar on the east side, sheltered by a narrow roof. In the midst of it are to be seen the last Footprints of our Lord, the place where He ascended being open to the sky; and though the earth is daily carried away by believers, yet still it remains, and retains the same appearance, being marked by the impression of the Feet. Round about these lies a brazen wheel, as high as a man’s neck, having an entrance from the west, with a great lamp hanging above it on a pulley and burning night and day. In the western part of the same church are eight windows; and as many lamps, hanging opposite to them by cords, shine through the glass as far as Jerusalem; and the light thereof is said to thrill the hearts of the beholders with a certain zeal and compunction. Every year, on the day of the Ascension of our Lord, when Mass is ended, a strong blast of wind is wont to come down, and to cast to the ground all that are in the church.”

Of the situation of Hebron, and the tombs of the fathers, he writes thus. “Hebron, once a habitation and the chief city of David’s kingdom, now only showing by its ruins what it then was, has, one furlong to the east of it, a double cave in the valley, where the sepulchres of the patriarchs are encompassed with a wall four-square, their heads lying to the north. Each of the tombs is covered with a single stone, hewn like the stones of a church, and of a white colour, for the three patriarchs. Adam’s is of meaner and poorer workmanship, and he lies not far from them at the farthest end of the northern part of that wall. There are also some poorer and smaller monuments of the three women. The hill Mamre is a mile from these tombs, and is covered with grass and flowers, having a level plain on the top. In the northern part of it, the trunk of Abraham’s oak, being twice as high as a man, is enclosed in a church.”

Thus much, gathered from the works of the aforesaid writer, according to the sense of his words, but more briefly and in fewer words, we have thought fit to insert in our History for the profit of readers. Whosoever desires to know more of the contents of that book, may seek it either in the book itself, or in that abridgement which we have lately made from it.

Chap. XVIII. How the South Saxons received Eadbert and Eolla, and the West Saxons, Daniel and Aldhelm, for their bishops; and of the writings of the same Aldhelm. [705 ACE]

In the year of our Lord 705, Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, died before the end of the twentieth year of his reign. His son Osred, a boy about eight years of age, succeeding him in the throne, reigned eleven years. In the beginning of his reign, Haedde, bishop of the West Saxons, departed to the heavenly life; for he was a good man and a just, and his life and doctrine as a bishop were guided rather by his innate love of virtue, than by what he had gained from books. The most reverend bishop, Pechthelm, of whom we shall speak hereafter in the proper place, and who while still deacon or monk was for a long time with his successor Aldhelm, was wont to relate that many miracles of healing have been wrought in the place where he died, through the merit of his sanctity; and that the men of that province used to carry the dust thence for the sick, and put it into water, and the drinking thereof, or sprinkling with it, brought health to many sick men and beasts; so that the holy dust being frequently carried away, a great hole was made there.

Upon his death, the bishopric of that province was divided into two dioceses. One of them was given to Daniel, which he governs to this day; the other to Aldhelm, wherein he presided most vigorously four years; both of them were fully instructed, as well in matters touching the Church as in the knowledge of the Scriptures. Aldhelm, when he was as yet only a priest and abbot of the monastery which is called the city of Maildufus, by order of a synod of his own nation, wrote a notable book against the error of the Britons, in not celebrating Easter at the due time, and in doing divers other things contrary to the purity of doctrine and the peace of the church; and through the reading of this book many of the Britons, who were subject to the West Saxons, were led by him to adopt the Catholic celebration of our Lord's Paschal Feast. He likewise wrote a famous book on Virginitie, which, after the example of Sedulius, he composed in twofold form, in hexameters and in prose. He wrote some other books, being a man most instructed in all respects, for he had a polished style, and was, as I have said, of marvellous learning both in liberal and ecclesiastical studies. On his death, Forthere was made bishop in his stead, and is living at this time, being likewise a man very learned in the Holy Scriptures.

Whilst they administered the bishopric, it was determined by a synodal decree, that the province of the South Saxons, which till that time belonged to the diocese of the city of Winchester, where Daniel then presided, should itself have an episcopal see, and a bishop of its own. Eadbert, at that time abbot of the monastery of Bishop Wilfrid, of blessed memory, called Selaeseu, was consecrated their first bishop. On his death, Eolla succeeded to the office of bishop. He also died some years ago, and the bishopric has been vacant to this day.

Chap. XIX. How Coinred, king of the Mercians, and Offa, king of the East Saxons, ended their days at Rome, in the monastic habit; and of the life and death of Bishop Wilfrid. [709 ACE]

In the fourth year of the reign of Osred, Coenred, who had for some time nobly governed the kingdom of the Mercians, much more nobly quitted the sceptre of his kingdom. For he went to Rome, and there receiving the tonsure and becoming a monk, when Constantine was pope, he continued to his last hour in prayer and fasting and alms-deeds at the threshold of the Apostles. He was succeeded in the throne by Ceolred, the son of Ethelred, who had governed the kingdom before Coenred. With him went the son of Sighere, the king of the East Saxons whom we mentioned before, by name Offa, a youth of a most pleasing age and comeliness, and greatly desired by all his nation to have and to hold the sceptre of the kingdom. He, with like devotion, quitted wife, and lands, and kindred and country, for Christ and for the Gospel, that he might “receive an hundred-fold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting.” He also, when they came to the holy places at Rome, received the tonsure, and ending his life in the monastic habit, attained to the vision of the blessed Apostles in Heaven, as he had long desired.

The same year that they departed from Britain, the great bishop, Wilfrid, ended his days in the province called Inundalum, after he had been bishop forty-five years. His body, being laid in a coffin, was carried to his monastery, which is called Inhrypum, and buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, with the honour due to so great a prelate. Concerning whose manner of life, let us now turn back, and briefly make mention of the things which were done. Being a boy of a good disposition, and virtuous beyond his years, he conducted himself so modestly and discreetly in all points, that he was deservedly beloved, respected, and cherished by his elders as one of themselves. At fourteen years of age he chose rather the monastic than the secular life; which, when he had signified to his father, for his mother was dead, he readily consented to his godly wishes and desires, and advised him to persist in that wholesome purpose. Wherefore he came to the isle of Lindisfarne, and there giving himself to the service of the monks, he strove diligently to learn and to practise those things which belong to monastic purity and piety; and being of a ready wit, he speedily learned the psalms and some other books, having not yet received the tonsure, but being in no small measure marked by those virtues of humility and obedience which are more important than the tonsure; for which reason he was justly loved by his elders and his equals. Having served God some years in that monastery, and being a youth of a good understanding, he perceived that the way of virtue delivered by the Scots was in no wise perfect, and he resolved to go to Rome, to see what ecclesiastical or monastic rites were in use at the Apostolic see. When he told the brethren, they commended his design, and advised him to carry out that which he purposed. He forthwith went to Queen Eanfled, for he was known to her, and it was by her counsel and support that he had been admitted into the aforesaid monastery, and he told her of his desire to visit the threshold of the blessed Apostles. She, being pleased with the

youth's good purpose, sent him into Kent, to King Earconbert, who was her uncle's son, requesting that he would send him to Rome in an honourable manner. At that time, Honorius, one of the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory, a man very highly instructed in ecclesiastical learning, was archbishop there. When he had tarried there for a space, and, being a youth of an active spirit, was diligently applying himself to learn those things which came under his notice, another youth, called Biscop, surnamed Benedict, of the English nobility, arrived there, being likewise desirous to go to Rome, of whom we have before made mention.

The king gave him Wilfrid for a companion, and bade Wilfrid conduct him to Rome. When they came to Lyons, Wilfrid was detained there by Dalfinus, the bishop of that city; but Benedict hastened on to Rome. For the bishop was delighted with the youth's prudent discourse, the grace of his comely countenance, his eager activity, and the consistency and maturity of his thoughts; for which reason he plentifully supplied him and his companions with all necessaries, as long as they stayed with him; and further offered, if he would have it, to commit to him the government of no small part of Gaul, to give him a maiden daughter of his own brother to wife, and to regard him always as his adopted son. But Wilfrid thanked him for the loving-kindness which he was pleased to show to a stranger, and answered, that he had resolved upon another course of life, and for that reason had left his country and set out for Rome.

Hereupon the bishop sent him to Rome, furnishing him with a guide and supplying plenty of all things requisite for his journey, earnestly requesting that he would come that way, when he returned into his own country. Wilfrid arriving at Rome, and daily giving himself with all earnestness to prayer and the study of ecclesiastical matters, as he had purposed in his mind, gained the friendship of the most holy and learned Boniface, the archdeacon, who was also counsellor to the Apostolic Pope, by whose instruction he learned in their order the four Gospels, and the true computation of Easter; and many other things appertaining to ecclesiastical discipline, which he could not learn in his own country, he acquired from the teaching of that same master. When he had spent some months there, in successful study, he returned into Gaul, to Dalfinus; and having stayed with him three years, received from him the tonsure, and Dalfinus esteemed him so highly in love that he had thoughts of making him his heir; but this was prevented by the bishop's cruel death, and Wilfrid was reserved to be a bishop of his own, that is, the English, nation. For Queen Baldhild sent soldiers with orders to put the bishop to death; whom Wilfrid, as his clerk, attended to the place where he was to be beheaded, being very desirous, though the bishop strongly opposed it, to die with him; but the executioners, understanding that he was a stranger, and of the English nation, spared him, and would not put him to death with his bishop.

Returning to Britain, he won the friendship of King Alchfrid, who had learnt to follow always and love the catholic rules of the Church; and therefore finding him to be a Catholic, he gave him presently land of ten families at the place

called Stanford; and not long after, the monastery, with land of thirty families, at the place called Inhrypum; which place he had formerly given to those that followed the doctrine of the Scots, to build a monastery there. But, forasmuch as they afterwards, being given the choice, had rather quit the place than adopt the Catholic Easter and other canonical rites, according to the custom of the Roman Apostolic Church, he gave the same to him whom he found to be instructed in better discipline and better customs.

At the same time, by the said king's command, he was ordained priest in the same monastery, by Agilbert, bishop of the Gewissae above-mentioned, the king being desirous that a man of so much learning and piety should attend him constantly as his special priest and teacher; and not long after, when the Scottish sect had been exposed and banished, as was said above, he, with the advice and consent of his father Oswy, sent him into Gaul, to be consecrated as his bishop, when he was about thirty years of age, the same Agilbert being then bishop of the city of Paris. Eleven other bishops met at the consecration of the new bishop, and that function was most honourably performed. Whilst he yet tarried beyond the sea, the holy man, Ceadda, was consecrated bishop of York by command of King Oswy, as has been said above; and having nobly ruled that church three years, he retired to take charge of his monastery of Laestingaeu, and Wilfrid was made bishop of all the province of the Northumbrians.

Afterwards, in the reign of Egfrid, he was expelled from his bishopric, and others were consecrated bishops in his stead, of whom mention has been made above. Designing to go to Rome, to plead his cause before the Apostolic Pope, he took ship, and was driven by a west wind into Frisland, and honourably received by that barbarous people and their King Aldgils, to whom he preached Christ, and he instructed many thousands of them in the Word of truth, washing them from the defilement of their sins in the Saviour's font. Thus he began there the work of the Gospel which was afterwards finished with great devotion by the most reverend bishop of Christ, Wilbrord. Having spent the winter there successfully among this new people of God, he set out again on his way to Rome, where his cause being tried before Pope Agatho and many bishops, he was by the judgement of them all acquitted of all blame, and declared worthy of his bishopric.

At the same time, the said Pope Agatho assembling a synod at Rome, of one hundred and twenty-five bishops, against those who asserted that there was only one will and operation in our Lord and Saviour, ordered Wilfrid also to be summoned, and, sitting among the bishops, to declare his own faith and the faith of the province or island whence he came; and he and his people being found orthodox in their faith, it was thought fit to record the same among the acts of that synod, which was done in in this manner: "Wilfrid, the beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, appealing to the Apostolic see, and being by that authority acquitted of every thing, whether specified against him or not, and being appointed to sit in judgement with one hundred and twenty-five other bishops in the synod, made confession of the true and catholic faith, and confirmed the same with his

subscription in the name of all the northern part of Britain and Ireland, and the islands inhabited by the nations of the English and Britons, as also by the Scots and Picts.”

After this, returning into Britain, he converted the province of the South Saxons from their idolatrous worship to the faith of Christ. He also sent ministers of the Word to the Isle of Wight; and in the second year of Aldfrid, who reigned after Egfrid, was restored to his see and bishopric by that king’s invitation. Nevertheless, five years after, being again accused, he was deprived of his bishopric by the same king and certain bishops. Coming to Rome, he was allowed to make his defence in the presence of his accusers, before a number of bishops and the Apostolic Pope John. It was shown by the judgement of them all, that his accusers had in part laid false accusations to his charge; and the aforesaid Pope wrote to the kings of the English, Ethelred and Aldfrid, to cause him to be restored to his bishopric, because he had been unjustly condemned.

His acquittal was much forwarded by the reading of the acts of the synod of Pope Agatho, of blessed memory, which had been formerly held, when Wilfrid was in Rome and sat in council among the bishops, as has been said before. For the acts of that synod being, as the case required, read, by order of the Apostolic Pope, before the nobility and a great number of the people for some days, they came to the place where it was written, “Wilfrid, the beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, appealing to the Apostolic see, and being by that authority acquitted of everything, whether specified against him or not,” and the rest as above stated. This being read, the hearers were amazed, and the reader ceasing, they began to ask of one another, who that Bishop Wilfrid was. Then Boniface, the Pope’s counsellor, and many others, who had seen him there in the days of Pope Agatho, said that he was the same bishop that lately came to Rome, to be tried by the Apostolic see, being accused by his people, and “who, said they, having long since come here upon the like accusation, the cause and contention of both parties being heard and examined, was proved by Pope Agatho, of blessed memory, to have been wrongfully expelled from his bishopric, and was held in such honour by him, that he commanded him to sit in the council of bishops which he had assembled, as a man of untainted faith and an upright mind.” This being heard, the Pope and all the rest said, that a man of so great authority, who had held the office of a bishop for nearly forty years, ought by no means to be condemned, but being altogether cleared of the faults laid to his charge, should return home with honour.

When he came to Gaul, on his way back to Britain, on a sudden he fell sick, and the sickness increasing, he was so weighed down by it, that he could not ride, but was carried in his bed by the hands of his servants. Being thus come to the city of Maeldum, in Gaul, he lay four days and nights, as if he had been dead, and only by his faint breathing showed that he had any life in him. Having continued thus four days, without meat or drink, without speech or hearing, at length, on the fifth day, at daybreak, as it were awakening out of a deep sleep, he raised himself and sat up, and opening his eyes, saw round about him a company of brethren singing

psalms and weeping. Sighing gently, he asked where Acca, the priest, was. This man, straightway being called, came in, and seeing him somewhat recovered and able to speak, knelt down, and gave thanks to God, with all the brethren there present. When they had sat awhile and begun to discourse, with great awe, of the judgements of heaven, the bishop bade the rest go out for a time, and spoke to the priest, Acca, after this manner:

“A dread vision has even now appeared to me, which I would have you hear and keep secret, till I know what God will please to do with me. There stood by me a certain one, glorious in white raiment, and he told me that he was Michael, the Archangel, and said, ‘I am sent to call you back from death: for the Lord has granted you life, through the prayers and tears of your disciples and brethren, and the intercession of His Blessed Mother Mary, of perpetual virginity; wherefore I tell you, that you shall now recover from this sickness; but be ready, for I will return and visit you at the end of four years. And when you come into your country, you shall recover the greater part of the possessions that have been taken from you, and shall end your days in peace and quiet.’” The bishop accordingly recovered, whereat all men rejoiced and gave thanks to God, and setting forward on his journey, he arrived in Britain.

Having read the letters which he brought from the Apostolic Pope, Bertwald, the archbishop, and Ethelred, sometime king, but then abbot, readily took his part; for the said Ethelred, calling to him Coenred, whom he had made king in his own stead, begged him to be friends with Wilfrid, in which request he prevailed; nevertheless Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, disdained to receive him. But he died soon after, and so it came to pass that, during the reign of his son Osred, when a synod was assembled before long by the river Nidd, after some contention on both sides, at length, by the consent of all, he was restored to the government of his own church; and thus he lived in peace four years, till the day of his death. He died in his monastery, which he had in the province of Undalum, under the government of the Abbot Cuthbald; and by the ministry of the brethren, he was carried to his first monastery which is called Inhrypum, and buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, hard by the altar on the south side, as has been mentioned above, and this epitaph was written over him:

“Here rests the body of the great Bishop Wilfrid, who, for love of piety, built these courts and consecrated them with the noble name of Peter, to whom Christ, the Judge of all the earth, gave the keys of Heaven. And devoutly he clothed them with gold and Tyrian purple; yea, and he placed here the trophy of the Cross, of shining ore, uplifted high; moreover he caused the four books of the Gospel to be written in gold in their order, and he gave a case meet for them of ruddy gold. And he also brought the holy season of Easter, returning in its course, to accord with the true teaching of the catholic rule which the Fathers fixed, and, banishing all doubt and error, gave his nation sure guidance in their worship. And in this place he gathered a great throng of monks, and with all diligence safeguarded the precepts which the Fathers’ rule enjoined. And long time sore vexed by many a

peril at home and abroad, when he had held the office of a bishop forty-five years, he passed away and with joy departed to the heavenly kingdom. Grant, O Jesus, that the flock may follow in the path of the shepherd.”

Chap. XX. How Albinus succeeded to the godly Abbot Hadrian, and Acca to Bishop Wilfrid. [709 ACE]

The next year after the death of the aforesaid father, which was the fifth year of King Osred, the most reverend father, Abbot Hadrian, fellow labourer in the Word of God with Bishop Theodore of blessed memory, died, and was buried in the church of the Blessed Mother of God, in his own monastery, this being the forty-first year after he was sent by Pope Vitalian with Theodore, and the thirty-ninth after his arrival in England. Among other proofs of his learning, as well as Theodore's, there is this testimony, that Albinus, his disciple, who succeeded him in the government of his monastery, was so well instructed in literary studies, that he had no small knowledge of the Greek tongue, and knew the Latin as well as the English, which was his native language.

Acca, his priest, succeeded Wilfrid in the bishopric of the church of Hagustald, being likewise a man of zeal and great in noble works in the sight of God and man. He enriched the structure of his church, which is dedicated in honour of the blessed Apostle Andrew with manifold adornments and marvellous workmanship. For he gave all diligence, as he does to this day, to procure relics of the blessed Apostles and martyrs of Christ from all parts, and to raise altars in their honour in separate side-chapels built for the purpose within the walls of the same church. Besides which, he industriously gathered the histories of their martyrdom, together with other ecclesiastical writings, and erected there a large and noble library. He likewise carefully provided holy vessels, lamps, and other such things as appertain to the adorning of the house of God. He in like manner invited to him a notable singer called Maban, who had been taught to sing by the successors of the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory in Kent, to instruct himself and his clergy, and kept him twelve years, to the end that he might teach such Church music as they did not know, and by his teaching restore to its former state that which was corrupted either by long use, or through neglect. For Bishop Acca himself was a most skilful singer, as well as most learned in Holy Writ, sound in the confession of the catholic faith, and well versed in the rules of ecclesiastical custom; nor does he cease to walk after this manner, till he receive the rewards of his pious devotion. For he was brought up from boyhood and instructed among the clergy of the most holy and beloved of God, Bosa, bishop of York. Afterwards, coming to Bishop Wilfrid in the hope of a better plan of life, he spent the rest of his days in attendance on him till that bishop's death, and going with him to Rome, learned there many profitable things concerning the ordinances of the Holy Church, which he could not have learned in his own country.

Chap. XXI. How the Abbot Ceolfrid sent master-builders to the King of the Picts to build a church, and with them an epistle concerning the Catholic Easter and the Tonsure. [710 ACE]

At that time, Naiton, King of the Picts, who inhabit the northern parts of Britain, taught by frequent meditation on the ecclesiastical writings, renounced the error whereby he and his nation had been holden till then, touching the observance of Easter, and brought himself and all his people to celebrate the catholic time of our Lord's Resurrection. To the end that he might bring this to pass with the more ease and greater authority, he sought aid from the English, whom he knew to have long since framed their religion after the example of the holy Roman Apostolic Church. Accordingly, he sent messengers to the venerable Ceolfrid, abbot of the monastery of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, which stands at the mouth of the river Wear, and near the river Tyne, at the place called Ingyruum, which he gloriously governed after Benedict, of whom we have before spoken; desiring, that he would send him a letter of exhortation, by the help of which he might the better confute those that presumed to keep Easter out of the due time; as also concerning the form and manner of tonsure whereby the clergy should be distinguished, notwithstanding that he himself had no small knowledge of these things. He also prayed to have master-builders sent him to build a church of stone in his nation after the Roman manner, promising to dedicate the same in honour of the blessed chief of the Apostles. Moreover, he and all his people, he said, would always follow the custom of the holy Roman Apostolic Church, in so far as men so distant from the speech and nation of the Romans could learn it. The most reverend Abbot Ceolfrid favourably receiving his godly desires and requests, sent the builders he desired, and likewise the following letter:

“To the most excellent lord, and glorious King Naiton, Abbot Ceolfrid, greeting in the Lord. We most readily and willingly endeavour, according to your desire, to make known to you the catholic observance of holy Easter, according to what we have learned of the Apostolic see, even as you, most devout king, in your godly zeal, have requested of us. For we know, that whensoever the lords of this world labour to learn, and to teach and to guard the truth, it is a gift of God to his Holy Church. For a certain profane writer has most truly said, that the world would be most happy if either kings were philosophers, or philosophers were kings. Now if a man of this world could judge truly of the philosophy of this world, and form a right choice concerning the state of this world, how much more is it to be desired, and most earnestly to be prayed for by such as are citizens of the heavenly country, and strangers and pilgrims in this world, that the more powerful any are in the world the more they may strive to hearken to the commands of Him who is the Supreme Judge, and by their example and authority may teach those that are committed to their charge, to keep the same, together with themselves.

“There are then three rules given in the Sacred Writings, whereby the time of keeping Easter has been appointed for us and may in no wise be changed by any authority of man; two whereof are divinely established in the law of Moses;

the third is added in the Gospel by reason of the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord. For the law enjoined, that the Passover should be kept in the first month of the year, and the third week of that month, that is, from the fifteenth day to the one-and-twentieth. It is added, by Apostolic institution, from the Gospel, that we are to wait for the Lord's day in that third week, and to keep the beginning of the Paschal season on the same. Which threefold rule whosoever shall rightly observe, will never err in fixing the Paschal feast. But if you desire to be more plainly and fully informed in all these particulars, it is written in Exodus, where the people of Israel, being about to be delivered out of Egypt, are commanded to keep the first Passover, that the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house." And a little after, "And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening." By which words it most plainly appears, that in the Paschal observance, though mention is made of the fourteenth day, yet it is not commanded that the Passover be kept on that day; but on the evening of the fourteenth day, that is, when the fifteenth moon, which is the beginning of the third week, appears in the sky, it is commanded that the lamb be killed; and that it was the night of the fifteenth moon, when the Egyptians were smitten and Israel was redeemed from long captivity. He says, "Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread." By which words all the third week of that same first month is appointed to be a solemn feast. But lest we should think that those same seven days were to be reckoned from the fourteenth to the twentieth, He forthwith adds, "Even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses; for whosoever eateth leavened bread, from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel;" and so on, till he says, "For in this selfsame day I will bring your army out of the land of Egypt."

"Thus he calls that the first day of unleavened bread, in which he was to bring their army out of Egypt. Now it is evident, that they were not brought out of Egypt on the fourteenth day, in the evening whereof the lamb was killed, and which is properly called the Passover or Phase, but on the fifteenth day, as is most plainly written in the book of Numbers: "and they departed from Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month, on the morrow after the Passover the Israelites went out with an high hand." Thus the seven days of unleavened bread, on the first whereof the people of the Lord were brought out of Egypt, are to be reckoned from the beginning of the third week, as has been said, that is, from the fifteenth day of the first month, till the end of the one-and-twentieth of the same month. But the fourteenth day is named apart from this number, by the title of the Passover, as is plainly shown by that which follows in Exodus: where, after it is said, "For in this self-same day I will bring your army out of the land of Egypt;" it is forthwith added, "And ye shall observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one-

and-twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses.' Now, who is there that does not perceive, that there are not only seven days, but rather eight, from the fourteenth to the one-and-twentieth, if the fourteenth be also reckoned in the number? But if, as appears by diligent study of the truth of the Scriptures, we reckon from the evening of the fourteenth day to the evening of the one-and-twentieth, we shall certainly find, that, while the Paschal feast begins on the evening of the fourteenth day, yet the whole sacred solemnity contains no more than only seven nights and as many days. Wherefore the rule which we laid down is proved to be true, when we said that the Paschal season is to be celebrated in the first month of the year, and the third week of the same. For it is in truth the third week, because it begins on the evening of the fourteenth day, and ends on the evening of the one-and-twentieth.

“But since Christ our Passover is sacrificed, and has made the Lord’s day, which among the ancients was called the first day of the week, a solemn day to us for the joy of His Resurrection, the Apostolic tradition has included it in the Paschal festival; yet has decreed that the time of the legal Passover be in no wise anticipated or diminished; but rather ordains, that according to the precept of the law, that same first month of the year, and the fourteenth day of the same, and the evening thereof be awaited. And when this day should chance to fall on a Saturday, every man should take to him a lamb, according to the house of his fathers, a lamb for an house, and he should kill it in the evening, that is, that all the Churches throughout the world, making one Catholic Church, should provide Bread and Wine for the Mystery of the Flesh and Blood of the spotless Lamb ‘that hath taken away the sins of the world;’ and after a fitting solemn service of lessons and prayers and Paschal ceremonies, they should offer up these to the Lord, in hope of redemption to come. For this is that same night in which the people of Israel were delivered out of Egypt by the blood of the lamb; this is the same in which all the people of God were, by Christ’s Resurrection, set free from eternal death. Then, in the morning, when the Lord’s day dawns, they should celebrate the first day of the Paschal festival; for that is the day on which our Lord made known the glory of His Resurrection to His disciples, to their manifold joy at the merciful revelation. The same is the first day of unleavened bread, concerning which it is plainly written in Leviticus, ‘In the fourteenth day of the first month, at even, is the Lord’s Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord; seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation.’

“If therefore it could be that the Lord’s day should always happen on the fifteenth day of the first month, that is, on the fifteenth moon, we might always celebrate the Passover at one and the same time with the ancient people of God, though the nature of the mystery be different, as we do it with one and the same faith. But inasmuch as the day of the week does not keep pace exactly with the moon, the Apostolic tradition, which was preached at Rome by the blessed Peter, and confirmed at Alexandria by Mark the Evangelist, his interpreter, appointed

that when the first month was come, and in it the evening of the fourteenth day, we should also wait for the Lord's day, between the fifteenth and the one-and-twentieth day of the same month. For on whichever of those days it shall fall, Easter will be rightly kept on the same; seeing that it is one of those seven days on which the feast of unleavened bread is commanded to be kept. Thus it comes to pass that our Easter never falls either before or after the third week of the first month, but has for its observance either the whole of it, to wit, the seven days of unleavened bread appointed by the law, or at least some of them. For though it comprises but one of them, that is, the seventh, which the Scripture so highly commends, saying, 'But the seventh day shall be a more holy convocation, ye shall do no servile work therein,' none can lay it to our charge, that we do not rightly keep Easter Sunday, which we received from the Gospel, in the third week of the first month, as the Law prescribes.

"The catholic reason of this observance being thus explained, the unreasonable error, on the other hand, of those who, without any necessity, presume either to anticipate, or to go beyond the term appointed in the Law, is manifest. For they that think Easter Sunday is to be observed from the fourteenth day of the first month till the twentieth moon, anticipate the time prescribed in the law, without any necessary reason; for when they begin to celebrate the vigil of the holy night from the evening of the thirteenth day, it is plain that they make that day the beginning of their Easter, whereof they find no mention in the commandment of the Law; and when they avoid celebrating our Lord's Easter on the one-and-twentieth day of the month, it is surely manifest that they wholly exclude that day from their solemnity, which the Law many times commends to be observed as a greater festival than the rest; and thus, perverting the proper order, they sometimes keep Easter Day entirely in the second week, and never place it on the seventh day of the third week. And again, they who think that Easter is to be kept from the sixteenth day of the said month till the two-and-twentieth no less erroneously, though on the other side, deviate from the right way of truth, and as it were avoiding shipwreck on Scylla, they fall into the whirlpool of Charybdis to be drowned. For when they teach that Easter is to be begun at the rising of the sixteenth moon of the first month, that is, from the evening of the fifteenth day, it is certain that they altogether exclude from their solemnity the fourteenth day of the same month, which the Law first and chiefly commends; so that they scarce touch the evening of the fifteenth day, on which the people of God were redeemed from Egyptian bondage, and on which our Lord, by His Blood, rescued the world from the darkness of sin, and on which being also buried, He gave us the hope of a blessed rest after death.

"And these men, receiving in themselves the recompense of their error, when they place Easter Sunday on the twenty-second day of the month, openly transgress and do violence to the term of Easter appointed by the Law, seeing that they begin Easter on the evening of that day in which the Law commanded it to be completed and brought to an end; and appoint that to be the first day of Easter, whereof no mention is any where found in the Law, to wit, the first of the fourth week. And

both sorts are mistaken, not only in fixing and computing the moon's age, but also sometimes in finding the first month; but this controversy is longer than can be or ought to be contained in this letter. I will only say thus much, that by the vernal equinox, it may always be found, without the chance of an error, which must be the first month of the year, according to the lunar computation, and which the last. But the equinox, according to the opinion of all the Eastern nations, and particularly of the Egyptians, who surpass all other learned men in calculation, falls on the twenty-first day of March, as we also prove by horological observation. Whatsoever moon therefore is at the full before the equinox, being on the fourteenth or fifteenth day, the same belongs to the last month of the foregoing year, and consequently is not meet for the celebration of Easter; but that moon which is full after the equinox, or at the very time of the equinox, belongs to the first month, and on that day, without a doubt, we must understand that the ancients were wont to celebrate the Passover; and that we also ought to keep Easter when the Sunday comes. And that this must be so, there is this cogent reason. It is written in Genesis, 'And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night.' Or, as another edition has it, 'The greater light to begin the day, and the lesser to begin the night.' As, therefore, the sun, coming forth from the midst of the east, fixed the vernal equinox by his rising, and afterwards the moon at the full, when the sun set in the evening, followed from the midst of the east; so every year the same first lunar month must be observed in the like order, so that its full moon must not be before the equinox; but either on the very day of the equinox, as it was in the beginning, or after it is past. But if the full moon shall happen to be but one day before the time of the equinox, the aforesaid reason proves that such moon is not to be assigned to the first month of the new year, but rather to the last of the preceding, and that it is therefore not meet for the celebration of the Paschal festival.

"Now if it please you likewise to hear the mystical reason in this matter, we are commanded to keep Easter in the first month of the year, which is also called the month of new things, because we ought to celebrate the mysteries of our Lord's Resurrection and our deliverance, with the spirit of our minds renewed to the love of heavenly things. We are commanded to keep it in the third week of the same month, because Christ Himself, who had been promised before the Law, and under the Law, came with grace, in the third age of the world, to be sacrificed as our Passover; and because rising from the dead the third day after the offering of His Passion, He wished this to be called the Lord's day, and the Paschal feast of His Resurrection to be yearly celebrated on the same; because, also, we do then only truly celebrate His solemn festival, if we endeavour with Him to keep the Passover, that is, the passing from this world to the Father, by faith, hope, and charity. We are commanded to observe the full moon of the Paschal month after the vernal equinox, to the end, that the sun may first make the day longer than the night, and then the moon may show to the world her full orb of light; inasmuch as first 'the Sun of righteousness, with healing in His wings,' that is, our Lord Jesus, by the triumph of His Resurrection, dispelled all the darkness of death, and so ascending

into Heaven, filled His Church, which is often signified by the name of the moon, with the light of inward grace, by sending down upon her His Spirit. Which order of our salvation the prophet had in his mind, when he said 'The sun was exalted and the moon stood in her order.'

"He, therefore, who shall contend that the full Paschal moon can happen before the equinox, disagrees with the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, in the celebration of the greatest mysteries, and agrees with those who trust that they may be saved without the grace of Christ preventing them, and who presume to teach that they might have attained to perfect righteousness, though the true Light had never by death and resurrection vanquished the darkness of the world. Thus, after the rising of the sun at the equinox, and after the full moon of the first month following in her order, that is, after the end of the fourteenth day of the same month, all which we have received by the Law to be observed, we still, as we are taught in the Gospel, wait in the third week for the Lord's day; and so, at length, we celebrate the offering of our Easter solemnity, to show that we are not, with the ancients, doing honour to the casting off of the yoke of Egyptian bondage; but that, with devout faith and love, we worship the Redemption of the whole world, which having been prefigured in the deliverance of the ancient people of God, was fulfilled in Christ's Resurrection, and that we may signify that we rejoice in the sure and certain hope of our own resurrection, which we believe will likewise happen on the Lord's day.

"Now this computation of Easter, which we set forth to you to be followed, is contained in a cycle of nineteen years, which began long since to be observed in the Church, to wit, even in the time of the Apostles, especially at Rome and in Egypt, as has been said above. But by the industry of Eusebius, who took his surname from the blessed martyr Pamphilus, it was reduced to a plainer system; insomuch that what till then used to be enjoined every year throughout all the Churches by the Bishop of Alexandria, might, from that time forward, be most easily known by all men, the occurrence of the fourteenth moon being regularly set forth in its course. This Paschal computation, Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, made for the Emperor Theodosius, for a hundred years to come. Cyril also, his successor, comprised a series of ninety-five years in five cycles of nineteen years. After whom, Dionysius Exiguus added as many more, in order, after the same manner, reaching down to our own time. The expiration of these is now drawing near, but there is at the present day so great a number of calculators, that even in our Churches throughout Britain, there are many who, having learned the ancient rules of the Egyptians, can with great ease carry on the Paschal cycles for any length of time, even to five hundred and thirty-two years, if they will; after the expiration of which, all that appertains to the succession of sun and moon, month and week, returns in the same order as before. We therefore forbear to send you these same cycles of the times to come, because, desiring only to be instructed respecting the reason for the Paschal time, you show that you have enough of those catholic cycles concerning Easter.

"But having said thus much briefly and succinctly, as you required, concerning Easter, I also exhort you to take heed that the tonsure, concerning which likewise

you desired me to write to you, be in accordance with the use of the Church and the Christian Faith. And we know indeed that the Apostles were not all shorn after the same manner, nor does the Catholic Church now, as it agrees in one faith, hope, and charity towards God, use one and the same form of tonsure throughout the world. Moreover, to look back to former times, to wit, the times of the patriarchs, Job, the pattern of patience, when tribulation came upon him, shaved his head, and thus made it appear that he had used, in time of prosperity, to let his hair grow. But concerning Joseph, who more than other men practised and taught chastity, humility, piety, and the other virtues, we read that he was shorn when he was to be delivered from bondage, by which it appears, that during the time of his bondage, he was in the prison with unshorn hair. Behold then how each of these men of God differed in the manner of their appearance abroad, though their inward consciences agreed in a like grace of virtue. But though we may be free to confess, that the difference of tonsure is not hurtful to those whose faith is pure towards God, and their charity sincere towards their neighbour, especially since we do not read that there was ever any controversy among the Catholic fathers about the difference of tonsure, as there has been a contention about the diversity in keeping Easter, and in matters of faith; nevertheless, among all the forms of tonsure that are to be found in the Church, or among mankind at large, I think none more meet to be followed and received by us than that which that disciple wore on his head, to whom, after his confession of Himself, our Lord said, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven.' Nor do I think that any is more rightly to be abhorred and detested by all the faithful, than that which that man used, to whom that same Peter, when he would have bought the grace of the Holy Ghost, said, 'Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this word.' Nor do we shave ourselves in the form of a crown only because Peter was so shorn; but because Peter was so shorn in memory of the Passion of our Lord, therefore we also, who desire to be saved by the same Passion, do with him bear the sign of the same Passion on the top of our head, which is the highest part of our body. For as all the Church, because it was made a Church by the death of Him that gave it life, is wont to bear the sign of His Holy Cross on the forehead, to the end, that it may, by the constant protection of His banner, be defended from the assaults of evil spirits, and by the frequent admonition of the same be taught, in like manner, to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts; so also it behoves those, who having either taken the vows of a monk, or having the degree of a clerk, must needs curb themselves the more strictly by continence, for the Lord's sake, to bear each one of them on his head, by the tonsure, the form of the crown of thorns which He bore on His head in His Passion, that He might bear the thorns and thistles of our sins, that is, that he might bear them away and take them from us; to the end that they may show on their foreheads that they also willingly, and readily, endure all scoffing and reproach for his sake; and that they may signify that they

await always 'the crown of eternal life, which God hath promised to them that love him,' and that for the sake of attaining thereto they despise both the evil and the good of this world. But as for the tonsure which Simon Magus is said to have used, who is there of the faithful, I ask you, who does not straightway detest and reject it at the first sight of it, together with his magic? Above the forehead it does seem indeed to resemble a crown; but when you come to look at the neck, you will find the crown cut short which you thought you saw; so that you may perceive that such a use properly belongs not to Christians but to Simoniacs, such as were indeed in this life by erring men thought worthy of the glory of an everlasting crown; but in that which is to follow this life are not only deprived of all hope of a crown, but are moreover condemned to eternal punishment.

"But do not think that I have said thus much, as though I judged them worthy to be condemned who use this tonsure, if they uphold the catholic unity by their faith and works; nay, I confidently declare, that many of them have been holy men and worthy servants of God. Of which number is Adamnan, the notable abbot and priest of the followers of Columba, who, when sent on a mission by his nation to King Aldfrid, desired to see our monastery, and forasmuch as he showed wonderful wisdom, humility, and piety in his words and behaviour, I said to him among other things, when I talked with him, 'I beseech you, holy brother, how is it that you, who believe that you are advancing to the crown of life, which knows no end, wear on your head, after a fashion ill-suited to your belief, the likeness of a crown that has an end? And if you seek the fellowship of the blessed Peter, why do you imitate the likeness of the tonsure of him whom St. Peter anathematized? and why do you not rather even now show that you choose with all your heart the fashion of him with whom you desire to live in bliss for ever.' He answered, 'Be assured, my dear brother, that though I wear the tonsure of Simon, according to the custom of my country, yet I detest and abhor with all my soul the heresy of Simon; and I desire, as far as lies in my small power, to follow the footsteps of the most blessed chief of the Apostles.' I replied, 'I verily believe it; nevertheless it is a token that you embrace in your inmost heart whatever is of Peter the Apostle, if you also observe in outward form that which you know to be his. For I think your wisdom easily discerns that it is much better to estrange from your countenance, already dedicated to God, the fashion of his countenance whom with all your heart you abhor, and of whose hideous face you would shun the sight; and, on the other hand, that it beseems you to imitate the manner of his appearance, whom you seek to have for your advocate before God, even as you desire to follow his actions and his teaching.'

"This I said at that time to Adamnan, who indeed showed how much he had profited by seeing the ordinances of our Churches, when, returning into Scotland, he afterwards by his preaching led great numbers of that nation to the catholic observance of the Paschal time; though he was not yet able to bring back to the way of the better ordinance the monks that lived in the island of Hii over whom he presided with the special authority of a superior. He would also have been mindful to amend the tonsure, if his influence had availed so far.

“But I now also admonish your wisdom, O king, that together with the nation, over which the King of kings, and Lord of lords, has placed you, you strive to observe in all points those things which are in accord with the unity of the Catholic and Apostolic Church; for so it will come to pass, that after you have held sway in a temporal kingdom, the blessed chief of the Apostles will also willingly open to you and yours with all the elect the entrance into the heavenly kingdom. The grace of the eternal King preserve you in safety, long reigning for the peace of us all, my dearly beloved son in Christ.”

This letter having been read in the presence of King Naiton and many learned men, and carefully interpreted into his own language by those who could understand it, he is said to have much rejoiced at the exhortation thereof; insomuch that, rising from among his nobles that sat about him, he knelt on the ground, giving thanks to God that he had been found worthy to receive such a gift from the land of the English. “And indeed,” he said, “I knew before, that this was the true celebration of Easter, but now I so fully learn the reason for observing this time, that I seem in all points to have known but little before concerning these matters. Therefore I publicly declare and protest to you that are here present, that I will for ever observe this time of Easter, together with all my nation; and I do decree that this tonsure, which we have heard to be reasonable, shall be received by all clerks in my kingdom.” Without delay he accomplished by his royal authority what he had said. For straightway the Paschal cycles of nineteen years were sent by command of the State throughout all the provinces of the Picts to be transcribed, learned, and observed, the erroneous cycles of eighty-four years being everywhere blotted out. All the ministers of the altar and monks were shorn after the fashion of the crown; and the nation thus reformed, rejoiced, as being newly put under the guidance of Peter, the most blessed chief of the Apostles, and committed to his protection.

Chap. XXII. How the monks of Hii, and the monasteries subject to them, began to celebrate the canonical Easter at the preaching of Egbert. [716 ACE]

Not long after, those monks also of the Scottish nation, who lived in the isle of Hii, with the other monasteries that were subject to them, were by the Lord’s doing brought to the canonical observance with regard to Easter, and the tonsure. For in the year of our Lord 716, when Osred was slain, and Coenred took upon him the government of the kingdom of the Northumbrians, the father and priest, Egbert, beloved of God, and worthy to be named with all honour, whom we have before often mentioned, came to them from Ireland, and was honourably and joyfully received. Being a most gracious teacher, and most devout in practising those things which he taught, and being willingly heard by all, by his pious and diligent exhortations, he converted them from that deep-rooted tradition of their fathers, of whom may be said those words of the Apostle, “That they had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.” He taught them to celebrate the principal solemnity after the catholic and apostolic manner, as has been said, wearing on their heads

the figure of an unending crown. It is manifest that this came to pass by a wonderful dispensation of the Divine goodness; to the end, that the same nation which had willingly, and without grudging, taken heed to impart to the English people that learning which it had in the knowledge of God, should afterwards, by means of the English nation, be brought, in those things which it had not, to a perfect rule of life. Even as, contrarywise, the Britons, who would not reveal to the English the knowledge which they had of the Christian faith, now, when the English people believe, and are in all points instructed in the rule of the Catholic faith, still persist in their errors, halting and turned aside from the true path, expose their heads without a crown, and keep the Feast of Christ apart from the fellowship of the Church of Christ.

The monks of Hii, at the teaching of Egbert, adopted the catholic manner of conversation, under Abbot Dunchad, about eighty years after they had sent Bishop Aidan to preach to the English nation. The man of God, Egbert, remained thirteen years in the aforesaid island, which he had thus consecrated to Christ, as it were, by a new ray of the grace of fellowship and peace in the Church; and in the year of our Lord 729, in which Easter was celebrated on the 24th of April, when he had celebrated the solemnity of the Mass, in memory of the Resurrection of our Lord, that same day he departed to the Lord and thus finished, or rather never ceases endlessly to celebrate, with our Lord, and the Apostles, and the other citizens of heaven, the joy of that greatest festival, which he had begun with the brethren, whom he had converted to the grace of unity. And it was a wonderful dispensation of the Divine Providence, that the venerable man passed from this world to the Father, not only at Easter, but also when Easter was celebrated on that day, on which it had never been wont to be celebrated in those parts. The brethren rejoiced in the sure and catholic knowledge of the time of Easter, and were glad in that their father, by whom they had been brought into the right way, passing hence to the Lord should plead for them. He also gave thanks that he had so long continued in the flesh, till he saw his hearers accept and keep with him as Easter that day which they had ever before avoided. Thus the most reverend father being assured of their amendment, rejoiced to see the day of the Lord, and he saw it and was glad.

**Chap. XXIII. Of the present state of the English nation, or of all Britain.
[725-731 ACE]**

In the year of our Lord 725, being the seventh year of Osric, king of the Northumbrians, who had succeeded Coenred, Wictred, the son of Egbert, king of Kent, died on the 23rd of April, and left his three sons, Ethelbert, Eadbert, and Alric, heirs of that kingdom, which he had governed thirty-four years and a half. The next year Tobias, bishop of the church of Rochester, died, a most learned man, as has been said before; for he was disciple to those masters of blessed memory, Theodore, the archbishop, and Abbot Hadrian, wherefore, as has been said, besides having a great knowledge of letters both ecclesiastical and general, he learned both the Greek and Latin tongues to such perfection, that they were as

well known and familiar to him as his native language. He was buried in the chapel of St. Paul the Apostle, which he had built within the church of St. Andrew for his own place of burial. After him Aldwulf took upon him the office of bishop, having been consecrated by Archbishop Bertwald.

In the year of our Lord 729, two comets appeared about the sun, to the great terror of the beholders. One of them went before the sun in the morning at his rising, the other followed him when he set in the evening, as it were presaging dire disaster to both east and west; or without doubt one was the forerunner of the day, and the other of the night, to signify that mortals were threatened with calamities at both times. They carried their flaming brands towards the north, as it were ready to kindle a conflagration. They appeared in January, and continued nearly a fortnight. At which time a grievous blight fell upon Gaul, in that it was laid waste by the Saracens with cruel bloodshed; but not long after in that country they received the due reward of their unbelief. In that year the holy man of God, Egbert, departed to the Lord, as has been said above, on Easter day; and immediately after Easter, that is, on the 9th of May, Osric, king of the Northumbrians, departed this life, after he had reigned eleven years, and appointed Ceolwulf, brother to Coenred, who had reigned before him, his successor; the beginning and progress of whose reign have been so filled with many and great commotions and conflicts, that it cannot yet be known what is to be said concerning them, or what end they will have.

In the year of our Lord 731, Archbishop Bertwald died of old age, on the 13th of January, having held his see thirty-seven years, six months and fourteen days. In his stead, the same year, Tatwine, of the province of the Mercians, was made archbishop, having been a priest in the monastery called Briudun. He was consecrated in the city of Canterbury by the venerable men, Daniel, bishop of Winchester, Ingwald of London, Aldwin of Lichfield, and Aldwulf of Rochester, on Sunday, the 10th of June, being a man renowned for piety and wisdom, and of notable learning in Holy Scripture.

Thus at the present time, the bishops Tatwine and Aldwulf preside in the churches of Kent; Ingwald is bishop in the province of the East Saxons. In the province of the East Angles, the bishops are Aldbert and Hadulac; in the province of the West Saxons, Daniel and Forthere; in the province of the Mercians, Aldwin. Among those peoples who dwell beyond the river Severn to the westward, Walhstod is bishop; in the province of the Hwiccas, Wilfrid; in the province of Lindsey, Bishop Cynibert presides; the bishopric of the Isle of Wight belongs to Daniel, bishop of the city of Winchester. The province of the South Saxons, having now continued some years without a bishop, receives episcopal ministrations from the prelate of the West Saxons. All these provinces, and the other southern provinces, as far as the boundary formed by the river Humber, with their several kings, are subject to King Ethelbald.

But in the province of the Northumbrians, where King Ceolwulf reigns, four bishops now preside; Wilfrid in the church of York, Ethelwald in that of Lindisfarne, Acca in that of Hagustald, Pecthelm in that which is called the White House, which, as the number of the faithful has increased, has lately become an episcopal see, and

has him for its first prelate. The Pictish people also at this time are at peace with the English nation, and rejoice in having their part in Catholic peace and truth with the universal Church. The Scots that inhabit Britain, content with their own territories, devise no plots nor hostilities against the English nation. The Britons, though they, for the most part, as a nation hate and oppose the English nation, and wrongfully, and from wicked lewdness, set themselves against the appointed Easter of the whole Catholic Church; yet, inasmuch as both Divine and human power withstand them, they can in neither purpose prevail as they desire; for though in part they are their own masters, yet part of them are brought under subjection to the English. In these favourable times of peace and calm, many of the Northumbrians, as well of the nobility as private persons, laying aside their weapons, and receiving the tonsure, desire rather both for themselves and their children to take upon them monastic vows, than to practise the pursuit of war. What will be the end hereof, the next age will see. This is for the present the state of all Britain; about two hundred and eighty-five years after the coming of the English into Britain, and in the 731st year of our Lord, in Whose kingdom that shall have no end let the earth rejoice; and Britain being one with them in the joy of His faith, let the multitude of isles be glad, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness.

Chap. XXIV. Chronological recapitulation of the whole work: also concerning the author himself.

I have thought fit briefly to sum up those things which have been related at length under their particular dates, that they may be the better kept in memory.

In the sixtieth year before the Incarnation of our Lord, Caius Julius Cæsar, first of the Romans invaded Britain, and was victorious, yet could not maintain the supreme power there. [I, 2.]

In the year of our Lord, 46, Claudius, being the second of the Romans who came to Britain, received the surrender of a great part of the island, and added the Orkney islands to the Roman empire. [I, 3.]

In the year of our Lord 167, Eleuther, being made bishop at Rome, governed the Church most gloriously fifteen years. To whom Lucius, king of Britain, sent a letter, asking to be made a Christian, and succeeded in obtaining his request. [I, 4.]

In the year of our Lord 189, Severus, being made emperor, reigned seventeen years; he fortified Britain with a rampart from sea to sea. [I, 5.]

In the year 381, Maximus, being made emperor in Britain, crossed over into Gaul, and slew Gratian. [I, 9.]

In the year 409, Rome was overthrown by the Goths, from which time the Romans ceased to rule in Britain. [I, 11.]

In the year 430, Palladius was sent by Pope Celestine [pg 383] to the Scots that believed in Christ to be their first bishop. [I, 13.]

In the year 449, Marcian being made emperor with Valentinian, reigned seven years; in whose time the English, being called in by the Britons, came into Britain. [I, 15.]

In the year 538, an eclipse of the sun came to pass on the 16th of February, from the first hour until the third.

In the year 540, an eclipse of the sun came to pass on the 20th of June, and the stars appeared during almost half an hour after the third hour of the day.

In the year 547, Ida began to reign; he was the founder of the royal family of the Northumbrians, and he reigned twelve years.

In the year 565, the priest, Columba, came out of Scotland, into Britain, to teach the Picts, and he built a monastery in the isle of Hii. [III, 4.]

In the year 596, Pope Gregory sent Augustine with monks into Britain, to preach the good tidings of the Word of God to the English nation. [I, 23.]

In the year 597, the aforesaid teachers arrived in Britain; being about the 150th year from the coming of the English into Britain. [I, 25.]

In the year 601, Pope Gregory sent the pall into Britain to Augustine, who was already made bishop; he sent also several ministers of the Word, among whom was Paulinus. [I, 29.]

In the year 603, a battle was fought at Degsastan. [I, 34.]

In the year 604, the East Saxons received the faith of Christ, under King Sabert, Mellitus being bishop. [II, 3.]

[pg 384]

In the year 605, Gregory died. [II, 1.]

In the year 616, Ethelbert, king of Kent died. [II, 5.]

In the year 625, Paulinus was ordained bishop of the Northumbrians by Archbishop Justus. [II, 9.]

In the year 626, Eanfled, daughter of King Edwin, was baptized with twelve others, on the eve of Whitsunday. [*Ib.*]

In the year 627, King Edwin was baptized, with his nation, at Easter. [II, 14.]

In the year 633, King Edwin being killed, Paulinus returned to Kent. [II, 20.]

In the year 640, Eadbald, king of Kent, died. [III, 8.]

In the year 642, King Oswald was slain. [III, 9.]

In the year 644, Paulinus, formerly bishop of York, but then of the city of Rochester, departed to the Lord. [III, 14.]

In the year 651, King Oswin was killed, and Bishop Aidan died. [*Ibid.*]

In the year 653, the Middle Angles, under their prince, Penda, were admitted to the mysteries of the faith. [III, 21.]

In the year 655, Penda was slain, and the Mercians became Christians. [III, 24.]

In the year 664, an eclipse came to pass; Earconbert, king of Kent, died; and Colman with the Scots returned to his people; a pestilence arose; Ceadda and Wilfrid were ordained bishops of the Northumbrians. [III, 26-28, IV, 1.]

In the year 668, Theodore was ordained bishop. [IV, 1.]

In the year 670, Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, died. [IV, 5.]

In the year 673, Egbert, king of Kent, died; and a synod was held at Hertford, in the presence of King Egfrid, Archbishop Theodore presiding: the synod was of great profit, and its decrees are contained in ten articles. [*Ibid.*]

In the year 675, Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, [pg 385]when he had reigned seventeen years, died and left the government to his brother Ethelred.

In the year 676, Ethelred ravaged Kent. [IV, 12.]

In the year 678, a comet appeared; Bishop Wilfrid was driven from his see by King Egfrid; and Bosa, Eata, and Eadhaed were consecrated bishops in his stead. [*Ibid.*; V, 19.]

In the year 679, Aelfwine was killed. [IV, 21.]

In the year 680, a synod was held in the plain of Haethfelth, concerning the Catholic faith, Archbishop Theodore presiding; John, the Roman abbot, was also present. The same year also the Abbess Hilda died at Streanaeshalch. [IV, 17, 18, 23.]

In the year 685, Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, was slain. The same year Hlothere, king of Kent, died. [IV, 26.]

In the year 688, Caedwald, king of the West Saxons, went to Rome from Britain. [V, 7.]

In the year 690, Archbishop Theodore died. [V, 8.]

In the year 697, Queen Osthryth was murdered by her own nobles, to wit, the nobles of the Mercians.

In the year 698, Berctred, an ealdorman of the king of the Northumbrians, was slain by the Picts.

In the year 704, Ethelred, after he had reigned thirty-one years over the nation of the Mercians, became a monk, and gave up the kingdom to Coenred. [V, 19.]

In the year 705, Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, died. [V, 18.]

In the year 709, Coenred, king of the Mercians, having reigned five years, went to Rome. [V, 19.]

In the year 711, the commander Bertfrid fought with the Picts.

In the year 716, Osred, king of the Northumbrians, was killed; and Ceolred, king of the Mercians, died; and the man of God, Egbert, brought the monks of Hii to observe the Catholic Easter and the ecclesiastical tonsure. [V, 22.]

In the year 725, Wictred, king of Kent, died. [V, 23.]

In the year 729, comets appeared; the holy Egbert passed away; and Osric died. [*Ibid.*]

In the year 731, Archbishop Bertwald died. [*Ibid.*]

The same year Tatwine was consecrated ninth archbishop of the church of Canterbury, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Ethelbald, king of the Mercians. [*Ibid.*]

Thus much of the Ecclesiastical History of Britain, and more especially of the English nation, as far as I could learn either from the writings of the ancients, or the tradition of our forefathers, or of my own knowledge, with the help of the Lord, I, Bede, the servant of Christ, and priest of the monastery of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, which is at Wearmouth and Jarrow, have set forth. Having been born in the territory of that same monastery, I was given, by the care of kinsmen,

at seven years of age, to be educated by the most reverend Abbot Benedict, and afterwards by Ceolfrid, and spending all the remaining time of my life a dweller in that monastery, I wholly applied myself to the study of Scripture; and amidst the observance of monastic rule, and the daily charge of singing in the church, I always took delight in learning, or teaching, or writing. In the nineteenth year of my age, I received deacon's orders; in the thirtieth, those of the priesthood, both of them by the ministry of the most reverend Bishop John, and at the bidding of the Abbot Ceolfrid. From the time when I received priest's orders, till the fifty-ninth year of my age, I have made it my business, for my own needs and those of my brethren, to compile out of the works of the venerable Fathers, the following brief notes on the Holy Scriptures, and also to make some additions after the manner of the meaning and interpretation given by them:

On the Beginning of Genesis, to the birth of Isaac and the casting out of Ishmael, four books.

Concerning the Tabernacle and its Vessels, and of the Vestments of the Priests, three books.

On the first part of Samuel, to the Death of Saul, three books.

Concerning the Building of the Temple, of Allegorical Exposition, and other matters, two books.

Likewise on the Book of Kings, thirty Questions.

On the Proverbs of Solomon, three books.

On the Song of Songs, seven books.

On Isaiah, Daniel, the twelve Prophets, and Part of Jeremiah, Divisions of Chapters, collected from the Treatise of the blessed Jerome.

On Ezra and Nehemiah, three books.

On the song of Habakkuk, one book.

On the Book of the blessed Father Tobias, one Book of Allegorical Explanation concerning Christ and the Church.

Also, Chapters of Readings on the Pentateuch of Moses, Joshua, and Judges;

On the Books of Kings and Chronicles;

On the Book of the blessed Father Job;

On the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs;

On the Prophets Isaiah, Ezra, and Nehemiah.

On the Gospel of Mark, four books.

On the Gospel of Luke, six books.

Of Homilies on the Gospel, two books.

On the Apostle, whatsoever I have found in the works of St. Augustine I have taken heed to transcribe in order.

On the Acts of the Apostles, two books.

On the seven Catholic Epistles, a book on each.

On the Revelation of St. John, three books.

Likewise, Chapters of Lessons on all the New Testament, except the Gospel.

Likewise a book of Epistles to divers Persons, of which one is of the Six Ages

of the world; one of the Halting-places of the Children of Israel; one on the words of Isaiah, “And they shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited”; one of the Reason of Leap-Year, and one of the Equinox, according to Anatolius.

Likewise concerning the Histories of Saints: I translated the Book of the Life and Passion of St. Felix, Confessor, from the metrical work of Paulinus, into prose; the Book of the Life and Passion of St. Anastasius, which was ill translated from the Greek, and worse amended by some ignorant person, I have corrected as to the sense as far as I could; I have written the Life of the Holy Father Cuthbert, who was both monk and bishop, first in heroic verse, and afterwards in prose.

The History of the Abbots of this monastery, in which I rejoice to serve the Divine Goodness, to wit, Benedict, Ceolfrid, and Huaetbert, in two books.

The Ecclesiastical History of our Island and Nation, in five books.

The Martyrology of the Festivals of the Holy Martyrs, in which I have carefully endeavoured to set down all whom I could find, and not only on what day, but also by what sort of combat, and under what judge they overcame the world.

A Book of Hymns in divers sorts of metre, or rhythm.

A Book of Epigrams in heroic or elegiac verse.

Of the Nature of Things, and of the Times, one book of each; likewise, of the Times, one larger book.

A book of Orthography arranged in Alphabetical Order.

Likewise a Book of the Art of Poetry, and to it I have added another little Book of Figures of Speech or Tropes; that is, of the Figures and Modes of Speech in which the Holy Scriptures are written.

And I beseech Thee, good Jesus, that to whom Thou hast graciously granted sweetly to drink in the words of Thy knowledge, Thou wilt also vouchsafe in Thy loving-kindness that he may one day come to Thee, the Fountain of all wisdom, and appear for ever before Thy face.

1.9.2 Reading and Review Questions

1. What does Bede’s epithet, “Venerable,” mean? (Consult a dictionary.) How would that affect the reader’s perception of the work?
2. Before the miracle, what would Caedmon do at feasts when they passed the harp around?
3. Who teaches Caedmon how to create poetry and sing beautifully? Why?
4. What is the topic of the poem? Is it an actual hymn? Why or why not?
5. What is the only topic about which Caedmon is allowed to compose, and how does the Abbess use that gift?

1.10 ANGLO-SAXON RIDDLES

Authors unknown

Dates unknown (probably seventh to eighth century)

Collections of riddles in Latin date back to the fourth century. Most of the authors are unknown, although the names of a few Anglo-Saxon authors survive: Aldhelm, Tatwine, and Eusebius. The first two were born in the seventh century and died in the eighth century, and the third may have been eighth century. The riddles written in Latin usually had the answer as the title, and they were considered enigmas: logic games that could be quite sophisticated and detailed. The most famous collection of riddles written in Anglo-Saxon are found in the Exeter Book; these riddles, in contrast to the Latin ones, often ask the reader to guess the answer, and no answer is provided. While the topics of the riddles range from animals and natural phenomena to weapons and writing, there are some riddles that contain double meanings (one of them obscene) that demonstrate an earthy sense of humor. Riddles appear to have occupied an important place in Anglo-Saxon culture and beyond. The concept of riddles as a standard game can be found in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* (which has numerous Anglo-Saxon borrowings), with the riddle competition between Bilbo Baggins and Gollum.

1.10.1 Selections from *Old English Poems*

I. A Storm

What man is so clever, so crafty of mind,
 As to say for a truth who sends me a-traveling?
 When I rise in my wrath, raging at times,
 Savage is my sound. Sometimes I travel,
 Go forth among the folk, set fire to their homes
 And ravage and rob them; then rolls the smoke
 Gray over the gables; great is the noise,
 The death-struggle of the stricken. Then I stir up the woods
 And the fruitful forests; I fell the trees,
 I, roofed over with rain, on my reckless journey,
 Wandering widely at the will of heaven.
 I bear on my back the bodily raiment,
 The fortunes of folk, their flesh and their spirits,
 Together to sea. Say who may cover me,
 Or what I am called, who carry this burden?

II. A Storm

At times I travel in tracks undreamed of,
 In vasty wave-depths to visit the earth,

The floor of the ocean. Fierce is the sea
 the foam rolls high;
 The whale-pool roars and rages loudly;
 The streams beat the shores, and they sling at times
 Great stones and sand on the steep cliffs,
 With weeds and waves, while wildly striving
 Under the burden of billows on the bottom of ocean
 The sea-ground I shake. My shield of waters
 I leave not ere he lets me who leads me always
 In all my travels. Tell me, wise man,
 Who was it that drew me from the depth of the ocean
 When the streams again became still and quiet,
 Who before had forced me in fury to rage?

III. A Storm

At times I am fast confined by my Master,
 Who sendeth forth under the fertile plain
 My broad bosom, but bridles me in.
 He drives in the dark a dangerous power
 To a narrow cave, where crushing my back
 Sits the weight of the world. No way of escape
 Can I find from the torment; so I tumble about
 The homes of heroes. The halls with their gables,
 The tribe-dwellings tremble; the trusty walls shake,
 Steep over the head. Still seems the air
 Over all the country and calm the waters,
 Till I press in my fury from my prison below,
 Obeying His bidding who bound me fast
 In fetters at first when he fashioned the world,
 In bonds and in chains, with no chance of escape
 From his power who points out the paths I must follow.
 Downward at times I drive the waves,
 Stir up the streams; to the strand I press
 The flint-gray flood: the foamy wave
 Lashes the wall. A lurid mountain
 Rises on the deep; dark in its trail
 Stirred up with the sea a second one comes,
 And close to the coast it clashes and strikes
 On the lofty hills. Loud soundeth the boat,
 The shouting of shipmen. Unshaken abide
 The stone cliffs steep through the strife of the waters,
 The dashing of waves, when the deadly tumult
 Crowds to the coast. Of cruel strife

The sailors are certain if the sea drive their craft
With its terrified guests on the grim rolling tide;
They are sure that the ship will be shorn of its power,
Be deprived of its rule, and will ride foam-covered
On the ridge of the waves. Then ariseth a panic,
Fear among folk of the force that commands me,
Strong on my storm-track. Who shall still that power?
At times I drive through the dark wave-vessels
That ride on my back, and wrench them asunder
And lash them with sea-streams; or I let them again
Glide back together. It is the greatest of noises,
Of clamoring crowds, of crashes the loudest,
When clouds as they strive in their courses shall strike
Edge against edge; inky of hue
In flight o'er the folk bright fire they sweat,
A stream of flame; destruction they carry
Dark over men with a mighty din.
Fighting they fare. They let fall from their bosom
A deafening rain of rattling liquid,
Of storm from their bellies. In battle they strive,
The awful army; anguish arises,
Terror of mind to the tribes of men,
Distress in the strongholds, when the stalking goblins,
The pale ghosts shoot with their sharp weapons.
The fool alone fears not their fatal spears;
But he perishes too if the true God send
Straight from above in streams of rain,
Whizzing and whistling the whirlwind's arrows,
The flying death. Few shall survive
Whom that violent guest in his grimness shall visit.
I always stir up that strife and commotion;
Then I bear my course to the battle of clouds,
Powerfully strive and press through the tumult,
Over the bosom of the billows; bursteth loudly
The gathering of elements. Then again I descend
In my helmet of air and hover near the land,
And lift on my back the load I must bear,
Minding the mandates of the mighty Lord.
So I, a tried servant, sometimes contend:
Now under the earth; now from over the waves
I drive to the depths; now dropping from heaven,
I stir up the streams, or strive to the skies,
Where I war with the welkin. Wide do I travel,

Swift and noisily. Say now my name,
 Or who raises me up when rest is denied me,
 Or who stays my course when stillness comes to me?

V. A Shield

A lonely warrior, I am wounded with iron,
 Scarred with sword-points, sated with battle-play,
 Weary of weapons. I have witnessed much fighting,
 Much stubborn strife. From the strokes of war
 I have no hope for help or release
 Ere I pass from the world with the proud warrior band.
 With brands and billies they beat upon me;
 The hard edges hack me; the handwork of smiths
 In crowds I encounter; with courage I endure
 Ever bitterer battles. No balm may I find,
 And no doctor to heal me in the whole field of battle,
 To bind me with ointments and bring me to health,
 But my grievous gashes grow ever sorer
 Through death-dealing strokes by day and night.

VII. A Swan

My robe is noiseless when I roam the earth,
 Or stay in my home, or stir up the water.
 At times I am lifted o'er the lodgings of men
 By the aid of my trappings and the air above.
 The strength of the clouds then carries me far,
 Bears me on its bosom. My beautiful ornament,
 My raiment rustles and raises a song,
 Sings without tiring. I touch not the earth
 But wander a stranger over stream and wood.

VIII. A Nightingale

With my mouth I am master of many a language;
 Cunningly I carol; I discourse full oft
 In melodious lays; loud do I call,
 Ever mindful of melody, undiminished in voice.
 An old evening-scop, to earls I bring
 Solace in cities; when, skillful in music,
 My voice I raise, restful at home
 They sit in silence. Say what is my name,
 That call so clearly and cleverly imitate

The song of the scop, and sing unto men
Words full welcome with my wonderful voice.

XIV. A Horn

I was once an armed warrior. Now the worthy youth
Gorgeously gears me with gold and silver,
Curiously twisted. At times men kiss me.
Sometimes I sound and summon to battle
The stalwart company. A steed now carries me
Across the border. The courser of the sea
Now bears me o'er the billows, bright in my trappings.
Now a comely maiden covered with jewels
Fills my bosom with beer. On the board now I lie
Lidless and lonely and lacking my trappings.
Now fair in my fretwork at the feast I hang
In my place on the wall while warriors drink.
Now brightened for battle, on the back of a steed
A war-chief shall bear me. Then the wind I shall breathe,
Shall swell with sound from someone's bosom.
At times with my voice I invite the heroes,
The warriors to wine; or I watch for my master,
And sound an alarm and save his goods,
Put the robber to flight. Now find out my name.

XV. A Badger

My throat is like snow, and my sides and my head
Are a swarthy brown; I am swift in flight.
Battle-weapons I bear; on my back stand hairs,
And also on my cheeks. O'er my eyes on high
Two ears tower; with my toes I step
On the green grass. Grief comes upon me
If the slaughter-grim hunter shall see me in hiding,
Shall find me alone where I fashion my dwelling,
Bold with my brood. I abide in this place
With my strong young children till a stranger shall come
And bring dread to my door. Death then is certain.
Hence, trembling I carry my terrified children
Far from their home and flee unto safety.
If he crowds me close as he comes behind,
I bare my breast. In my burrow I dare not
Meet my furious foe (it were foolish to do so),
But, wildly rushing, I work a road

Through the high hill with my hands and feet.
 I fail not in defending my family's lives;
 If I lead the little ones below to safety,
 Through a secret hole inside the hill,
 My beloved brood, no longer need I
 Fear the offense of the fierce-battling dogs.
 Whenever the hostile one hunts on my trail,
 Follows me close, he will fail not of conflict,
 Of a warm encounter, when he comes on my war-path,
 If I reach, in my rage, through the roof of my hill
 And deal my deadly darts of battle
 On the foe I have feared and fled from long.

XXIII. A Bow

My name is spelled *AGOB* with the order reversed.
 I am marvelously fashioned and made for fighting.
 When I am bent and my bosom sends forth
 Its poisoned stings, I straightway prepare
 My deadly darts to deal afar.
 As soon as my master, who made me for torment,
 Loosens my limbs, my length is increased
 Till I vomit the venom with violent motions,
 The swift-killing poison I swallowed before.
 Not any man shall make his escape,
 Not one that I spoke of shall speed from the fight,
 If there falls on him first what flies from my belly.
 He pays with his strength for the poisonous drink,
 For the fatal cup which forfeits his life.
 Except when fettered fast, I am useless.
 Unbound I shall fail. Now find out my name.

XXVI. A Bible

A stern destroyer struck out my life,
 Deprived me of power; he put me to soak,
 Dipped me in water, dried me again,
 And set me in the sun, where I straightway lost
 The hairs that I had. Then the hard edge
 Of the keen knife cut me and cleansed me of soil;
 Then fingers folded me. The fleet quill of the bird
 With speedy drops spread tracks often
 Over the brown surface, swallowed the tree-dye,
 A deal of the stream, stepped again on me,

Traveled a black track. With protecting boards
 Then a crafty one covered me, enclosed me with hide,
 Made me gorgeous with gold. Hence I am glad and rejoice
 At the smith's fair work with its wondrous adornments.
 Now may these rich trappings, and the red dye's tracings,
 And all works of wisdom spread wide the fame
 Of the Sovereign of nations! Read me not as a penance!
 If the children of men will cherish and use me,
 They shall be safer and sounder and surer of victory,
 More heroic of heart and happier in spirit,
 More unfailing in wisdom. More friends shall they have,
 Dear and trusty, and true and good,
 And faithful always, whose honors and riches
 Shall increase with their love, and who cover their friends
 With kindness and favors and clasp them fast
 With loving arms. I ask how men call me
 Who aid them in need. My name is far famed.
 I am helpful to men, and am holy myself.

XLV. Dough

In a corner I heard a curious weak thing
 Swelling and sounding and stirring its cover.
 On that boneless body a beautiful woman
 Laid hold with her hands; the high-swelled thing
 She covered with a cloth, the clever lord's daughter.

XLVII. A Bookworm

A moth ate a word. To me that seemed
 A curious happening when I heard of that wonder,
 That a worm should swallow the word of a man,
 A thief in the dark eat a thoughtful discourse
 And the strong base it stood on. He stole, but he was not
 A whit the wiser when the word had been swallowed.

LX. A Reed

I stood on the strand to the sea-cliffs near,
 Hard by the billows. To the home of my birth
 Fast was I fixed. Few indeed are there
 Of men who have ever at any time
 Beheld my home in the hard waste-land.
 In the brown embrace of the billows and waves
 I was locked each dawn. Little I dreamed

That early or late I ever should
With men at the mead-feast mouthless speak forth
Words of wisdom. It is a wondrous thing,
And strange to the sight when one sees it first
That the edge of a knife and the active hand
And wit of the earl who wields the blade
Should bring it about that I bear unto thee
A secret message, meant for thee only,
Boldly announce it, so that no other man
May speak our secrets or spread them abroad.

1.10.2 Reading and Review Questions

1. If there were no answers in the titles, which riddles would be the most difficult to guess, and why?
2. What do we learn about Anglo-Saxon culture from the riddles? What details and ideas do the riddles expect the audience to know?
3. Why do you think that the answers for the Anglo-Latin riddles are in the titles? What does that tell us about the intended audience?
4. Which of the riddles has a double meaning? Compare it to another of the “obscene” Anglo-Saxon riddles (easily found online). What seems to be the most common theme?
5. Look at the riddles used during the riddle game in Tolkien’s *The Hobbit*. How do they compare to the riddles found here?

ANGLO-NORMAN LITERATURE

1.11 MARIE DE FRANCE

All we know about the author is that her name is Marie and she is from France. Since the English royal court at the time spoke French and had extensive ties to France, it is possible that she worked for an English king (some speculate Henry II). The very fact that she is “of France” could mean that she is not in France and is being identified that way in an English court. Unless more evidence is found, however, there is no way to know for certain. She is considered the first female French medieval poet.

We do know that Marie’s works were popular. Denis Pyramus, in his *Life of St. Edmund the King* (written not too long after Marie’s works), praises “...Dame Marie, who turned into rhyme and made verses of ‘Lays’ which are not in the least true. For these she is much praised, and her rhyme is loved everywhere; for counts, barons, and knights greatly admire it, and hold it dear. And they love her writing so much, and take such pleasure in it, that they have it read, and often copied. These Lays are wont to please ladies, who listen to them with delight, for they are after their own hearts.” Sadly, he neglects to tell us any more about her, since he assumes that his audience knows exactly who she is.

Marie states that her *lais* (lays) are versions of oral tales that she heard from Breton minstrels (from Brittany, on the French coast). Breton is a Brittonic (Celtic) language, brought by immigrants from southwestern England, especially Cornwall (possibly when the Angles and the Saxons were moving into Britain). Marie writes in Anglo-Norman, which is a version of medieval French, with the occasional English word thrown in. Not surprisingly, several of the *lais* (lays) deal with British stories, including the two presented in the anthology. In *Launfal*, the titular knight is a neglected member of King Arthur’s court, until he encounters a fairy lady who will grant him any wish, as long as he keeps their love a secret. In *The Lay of the Honeysuckle*, the knight Tristan has a brief meeting with his true love, Queen Isolde (who is the wife of his uncle, King Mark of Cornwall).



Image 1.10 | Marie de France

Artist | Richard of Verdun

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1.11.1 *The Lay of Sir Launfal*

Written in the late 1100s ACE

I will tell you the story of another Lay. It relates the adventures of a rich and mighty baron, and the Breton calls it, the Lay of Sir Launfal.

King Arthur—that fearless knight and courteous lord—removed to Wales, and lodged at Caerleon-on-Usk, since the Picts and Scots did much mischief in the land. For it was the wont of the wild people of the north to enter in the realm of Logres, and burn and damage at their will. At the time of Pentecost, the King cried a great feast. Thereat he gave many rich gifts to his counts and barons, and to the Knights of the Round Table. Never were such worship and bounty shown before at any feast, for Arthur bestowed honours and lands on all his servants—save only on one. This lord, who was forgotten and disliked of the King, was named Launfal. He was beloved by many of the Court, because of his beauty and prowess, for he was a worthy knight, open of heart and heavy of hand. These lords, to whom their comrade was dear, felt little joy to see so stout a knight misprized. Sir Launfal was son to a King of high descent, though his heritage was in a distant land. He was of the King's household, but since Arthur gave him naught, and he was of too proud a mind to pray for his due, he had spent all that he had. Right heavy was Sir Launfal, when he considered these things, for he knew himself taken in the toils. Gentles, marvel not overmuch hereat. Ever must the pilgrim go heavily in a strange land, where there is none to counsel and direct him in the path.

Now, on a day, Sir Launfal got him on his horse, that he might take his pleasure for a little. He came forth from the city, alone, attended by neither servant nor squire. He went his way through a green mead, till he stood by a river of clear running water. Sir Launfal would have crossed this stream, without thought of pass or ford, but he might not do so, for reason that his horse was all fearful and trembling. Seeing that he was hindered in this fashion, Launfal unbitted his steed, and let him pasture in that fair meadow, where they had come. Then he folded his cloak to serve him as a pillow, and lay upon the ground. Launfal lay in great misease, because of his heavy thoughts, and the discomfort of his bed. He turned from side to side, and might not sleep. Now as the knight looked towards the river he saw two damsels coming towards him; fairer maidens Launfal had never seen. These two maidens were richly dressed in kirtles closely laced and shapen to their persons and wore mantles of a goodly purple hue. Sweet and dainty were the damsels, alike in raiment and in face. The elder of these ladies carried in her hands a basin of pure gold, cunningly wrought by some crafty smith—very fair and precious was the cup; and the younger bore a towel of soft white linen. These maidens turned neither to the right hand nor to the left, but went directly to the place where Launfal lay. When Launfal saw that their business was with him, he stood upon his feet, like a discreet and courteous gentleman. After they had greeted the knight, one of the maidens delivered the message with which she was charged.

“Sir Launfal, my demoiselle, as gracious as she is fair, prays that you will follow us, her messengers, as she has a certain word to speak with you. We will lead you swiftly to her pavilion, for our lady is very near at hand. If you but lift your eyes you may see where her tent is spread.”

Right glad was the knight to do the bidding of the maidens. He gave no heed to his horse, but left him at his provand in the meadow. All his desire was to go with the damsels, to that pavilion of silk and divers colours, pitched in so fair a place. Certainly neither Semiramis in the days of her most wanton power, nor Octavian, the Emperor of all the West, had so gracious a covering from sun and rain. Above the tent was set an eagle of gold, so rich and precious, that none might count the cost. The cords and fringes thereof were of silken thread, and the lances which bore aloft the pavilion were of refined gold. No King on earth might have so sweet a shelter, not though he gave in fee the value of his realm. Within this pavilion Launfal came upon the Maiden. Whiter she was than any altar lily, and more sweetly flushed than the new born rose in time of summer heat. She lay upon a bed with napery and coverlet of richer worth than could be furnished by a castle's spoil. Very fresh and slender showed the lady in her vesture of spotless linen. About her person she had drawn a mantle of ermine, edged with purple dye from the vats of Alexandria. By reason of the heat her raiment was unfastened for a little, and her throat and the rondure of her bosom showed whiter and more untouched than hawthorn in May. The knight came before the bed, and stood gazing on so sweet a sight. The Maiden beckoned him to draw near, and when he had seated himself at the foot of her couch, spoke her mind.

“Launfal,” she said, “fair friend, it is for you that I have come from my own far land. I bring you my love. If you are prudent and discreet, as you are goodly to the view, there is no emperor nor count, nor king, whose day shall be so filled with riches and with mirth as yours.”

When Launfal heard these words he rejoiced greatly, for his heart was litten by another's torch.

“Fair lady,” he answered, “since it pleases you to be so gracious, and to dower so graceless a knight with your love, there is naught that you may bid me do—right or wrong, evil or good—that I will not do to the utmost of my power. I will observe your commandment, and serve in your quarrels. For you I renounce my father and my father's house. This only I pray, that I may dwell with you in your lodging, and that you will never send me from your side.”

When the Maiden heard the words of him whom so fondly she desired to love, she was altogether moved, and granted him forthwith her heart and her tenderness. To her bounty she added another gift besides. Never might Launfal be desirous of aught, but he would have according to his wish. He might waste and spend at will and pleasure, but in his purse ever there was to spare. No more was Launfal sad. Right merry was the pilgrim, since one had set him on the way, with such a gift, that the more pennies he bestowed, the more silver and gold were in his pouch.

But the Maiden had yet a word to say.

“Friend,” she said, “hearken to my counsel. I lay this charge upon you, and pray you urgently, that you tell not to any man the secret of our love. If you show this matter, you will lose your friend, for ever and a day. Never again may you see my face. Never again will you have seisin of that body, which is now so tender in your eyes.”

Launfal plighted faith, that right strictly he would observe this commandment. So the Maiden granted him her kiss and her embrace, and very sweetly in that fair lodging passed the day till evensong was come.

Right loath was Launfal to depart from the pavilion at the vesper hour, and gladly would he have stayed, had he been able, and his lady wished.

“Fair friend,” said she, “rise up, for no longer may you tarry. The hour is come that we must part. But one thing I have to say before you go. When you would speak with me I shall hasten to come before your wish. Well I deem that you will only call your friend where she may be found without reproach or shame of men. You may see me at your pleasure; my voice shall speak softly in your ear at will; but I must never be known of your comrades, nor must they ever learn my speech.”

Right joyous was Launfal to hear this thing. He sealed the covenant with a kiss, and stood upon his feet. Then there entered the two maidens who had led him to the pavilion, bringing with them rich raiment, fitting for a knight’s apparel. When Launfal had clothed himself therewith, there seemed no goodlier varlet under heaven, for certainly he was fair and true. After these maidens had refreshed him with clear water, and dried his hands upon the napkin, Launfal went to meat. His friend sat at table with him, and small will had he to refuse her courtesy. Very serviceably the damsels bore the meats, and Launfal and the Maiden ate and drank with mirth and content. But one dish was more to the knight’s relish than any other. Sweeter than the dainties within his mouth, was the lady’s kiss upon his lips.

When supper was ended, Launfal rose from table, for his horse stood waiting without the pavilion. The destrier was newly saddled and bridled, and showed proudly in his rich gay trappings. So Launfal kissed, and bade farewell, and went his way. He rode back towards the city at a slow pace. Often he checked his steed, and looked behind him, for he was filled with amazement, and all bemused concerning this adventure. In his heart he doubted that it was but a dream. He was altogether astonished, and knew not what to do. He feared that pavilion and Maiden alike were from the realm of faery.

Launfal returned to his lodging, and was greeted by servitors, clad no longer in ragged raiment. He fared richly, lay softly, and spent largely, but never knew how his purse was filled. There was no lord who had need of a lodging in the town, but Launfal brought him to his hall, for refreshment and delight. Launfal bestowed rich gifts. Launfal redeemed the poor captive. Launfal clothed in scarlet the minstrel. Launfal gave honour where honour was due. Stranger and friend alike he comforted at need. So, whether by night or by day, Launfal lived greatly at his ease. His lady, she came at will and pleasure, and, for the rest, all was added unto him.

Now it chanced, the same year, about the feast of St. John, a company of knights came, for their solace, to an orchard, beneath that tower where dwelt the Queen.

Together with these lords went Gawain and his cousin, Yvain the fair. Then said Gawain, that goodly knight, beloved and dear to all,

“Lords, we do wrong to disport ourselves in this pleasaunce without our comrade Launfal. It is not well to slight a prince as brave as he is courteous, and of a lineage prouder than our own.”

Then certain of the lords returned to the city, and finding Launfal within his hostel, entreated him to take his pastime with them in that fair meadow. The Queen looked out from a window in her tower, she and three ladies of her fellowship. They saw the lords at their pleasure, and Launfal also, whom well they knew. So the Queen chose of her Court thirty damsels—the sweetest of face and most dainty of fashion—and commanded that they should descend with her to take their delight in the garden. When the knights beheld this gay company of ladies come down the steps of the perron, they rejoiced beyond measure. They hastened before to lead them by the hand, and said such words in their ear as were seemly and pleasant to be spoken. Amongst these merry and courteous lords hasted not Sir Launfal. He drew apart from the throng, for with him time went heavily, till he might have clasp and greeting of his friend. The ladies of the Queen’s fellowship seemed but kitchen wenches to his sight, in comparison with the loveliness of the maiden. When the Queen marked Launfal go aside, she went his way, and seating herself upon the herb, called the knight before her. Then she opened out her heart.

“Launfal, I have honoured you for long as a worthy knight, and have praised and cherished you very dearly. You may receive a queen’s whole love, if such be your care. Be content: he to whom my heart is given, has small reason to complain him of the alms.”

“Lady,” answered the knight, “grant me leave to go, for this grace is not for me. I am the King’s man, and dare not break my troth. Not for the highest lady in the world, not even for her love, will I set this reproach upon my lord.”

When the Queen heard this, she was full of wrath, and spoke many hot and bitter words.

“Launfal,” she cried, “well I know that you think little of woman and her love. There are sins more black that a man may have upon his soul. Traitor you are, and false. Right evil counsel gave they to my lord, who prayed him to suffer you about his person. You remain only for his harm and loss.”

Launfal was very dolent to hear this thing. He was not slow to take up the Queen’s glove, and in his haste spake words that he repented long, and with tears.

“Lady,” said he, “I am not of that guild of which you speak. Neither am I a despiser of woman, since I love, and am loved, of one who would bear the prize from all the ladies in the land. Dame, know now and be persuaded, that she, whom I serve, is so rich in state, that the very meanest of her maidens, excels you, Lady Queen, as much in clerkly skill and goodness, as in sweetness of body and face, and in every virtue.”

The Queen rose straightway to her feet, and fled to her chamber, weeping. Right wrathful and heavy was she, because of the words that had besmirched her.

She lay sick upon her bed, from which, she said, she would never rise, till the King had done her justice, and righted this bitter wrong. Now the King that day had taken his pleasure within the woods. He returned from the chase towards evening, and sought the chamber of the Queen. When the lady saw him, she sprang from her bed, and kneeling at his feet, pleaded for grace and pity. Launfal—she said—had shamed her, since he required her love. When she had put him by, very foully had he reviled her, boasting that his love was already set on a lady, so proud and noble, that her meanest wench went more richly, and smiled more sweetly, than the Queen. Thereat the King waxed marvellously wrathful, and swore a great oath that he would set Launfal within a fire, or hang him from a tree, if he could not deny this thing, before his peers.

Arthur came forth from the Queen's chamber, and called to him three of his lords. These he sent to seek the knight who so evilly had entreated the Queen. Launfal, for his part, had returned to his lodging, in a sad and sorrowful case. He saw very clearly that he had lost his friend, since he had declared their love to men. Launfal sat within his chamber, sick and heavy of thought. Often he called upon his friend, but the lady would not hear his voice. He bewailed his evil lot, with tears; for grief he came nigh to swoon; a hundred times he implored the Maiden that she would deign to speak with her knight. Then, since the lady yet refrained from speech, Launfal cursed his hot and unruly tongue. Very near he came to ending all this trouble with his knife. Naught he found to do but to wring his hands, and call upon the Maiden, begging her to forgive his trespass, and to talk with him again, as friend to friend.

But little peace is there for him who is harassed by a King. There came presently to Launfal's hostel those three barons from the Court. These bade the knight forthwith to go with them to Arthur's presence, to acquit him of this wrong against the Queen. Launfal went forth, to his own deep sorrow. Had any man slain him on the road, he would have counted him his friend. He stood before the King, downcast and speechless, being dumb by reason of that great grief, of which he showed the picture and image.

Arthur looked upon his captive very evilly.

"Vassal," said he, harshly, "you have done me a bitter wrong. It was a foul deed to seek to shame me in this ugly fashion, and to smirch the honour of the Queen. Is it folly or lightness which leads you to boast of that lady, the least of whose maidens is fairer, and goes more richly, than the Queen?"

Launfal protested that never had he set such shame upon his lord. Word by word he told the tale of how he denied the Queen, within the orchard. But concerning that which he had spoken of the lady, he owned the truth, and his folly. The love of which he bragged was now lost to him, by his own exceeding fault. He cared little for his life, and was content to obey the judgment of the Court.

Right wrathful was the King at Launfal's words. He conjured his barons to give him such wise counsel herein, that wrong might be done to none. The lords did the King's bidding, whether good came of the matter, or evil. They gathered themselves together, and appointed a certain day that Launfal should abide the

judgment of his peers. For his part Launfal must give pledge and surety to his lord, that he would come before this judgment in his own body. If he might not give such surety then he should be held captive till the appointed day. When the lords of the King's household returned to tell him of their counsel, Arthur demanded that Launfal should put such pledge in his hand, as they had said. Launfal was altogether mazed and bewildered at this judgment, for he had neither friend nor kindred in the land. He would have been set in prison, but Gawain came first to offer himself as his surety, and with him, all the knights of his fellowship. These gave into the King's hand as pledge, the fiefs and lands that they held of his Crown. The King having taken pledges from the sureties, Launfal returned to his lodging, and with him certain knights of his company. They blamed him greatly because of his foolish love, and chastened him grievously by reason of the sorrow he made before men. Every day they came to his chamber, to know of his meat and drink, for much they feared that presently he would become mad.

The lords of the household came together on the day appointed for this judgment. The King was on his chair, with the Queen sitting at his side. The sureties brought Launfal within the hall, and rendered him into the hands of his peers. Right sorrowful were they because of his plight. A great company of his fellowship did all that they were able to acquit him of this charge. When all was set out, the King demanded the judgment of the Court, according to the accusation and the answer. The barons went forth in much trouble and thought to consider this matter. Many amongst them grieved for the peril of a good knight in a strange land; others held that it were well for Launfal to suffer, because of the wish and malice of their lord. Whilst they were thus perplexed, the Duke of Cornwall rose in the council, and said,

“Lords, the King pursues Launfal as a traitor, and would slay him with the sword, by reason that he bragged of the beauty of his maiden, and roused the jealousy of the Queen. By the faith that I owe this company, none complains of Launfal, save only the King. For our part we would know the truth of this business, and do justice between the King and his man. We would also show proper reverence to our own liege lord. Now, if it be according to Arthur's will, let us take oath of Launfal, that he seek this lady, who has put such strife between him and the Queen. If her beauty be such as he has told us, the Queen will have no cause for wrath. She must pardon Launfal for his rudeness, since it will be plain that he did not speak out of a malicious heart. Should Launfal fail his word, and not return with the lady, or should her fairness fall beneath his boast, then let him be cast off from our fellowship, and be sent forth from the service of the King.”

This counsel seemed good to the lords of the household. They sent certain of his friends to Launfal, to acquaint him with their judgment, bidding him to pray his damsel to the Court, that he might be acquitted of this blame. The knight made answer that in no wise could he do this thing. So the sureties returned before the judges, saying that Launfal hoped neither for refuge nor for succour from the lady, and Arthur urged them to a speedy ending, because of the prompting of the Queen.

The judges were about to give sentence upon Launfal, when they saw two maidens come riding towards the palace, upon two white ambling palfreys. Very sweet and dainty were these maidens, and richly clothed in garments of crimson sendal, closely girt and fashioned to their bodies. All men, old and young, looked willingly upon them, for fair they were to see. Gawain, and three knights of his company, went straight to Launfal, and showed him these maidens, praying him to say which of them was his friend. But he answered never a word. The maidens dismounted from their palfreys, and coming before the dais where the King was seated, spake him fairly, as they were fair.

“Sire, prepare now a chamber, hung with silken cloths, where it is seemly for my lady to dwell; for she would lodge with you awhile.”

This gift the King granted gladly. He called to him two knights of his household, and bade them bestow the maidens in such chambers as were fitting to their degree. The maidens being gone, the King required of his barons to proceed with their judgment, saying that he had sore displeasure at the slowness of the cause.

“Sire,” replied the barons, “we rose from Council, because of the damsels who entered in the hall. We will at once resume the sitting, and give our judgment without more delay.”

The barons again were gathered together, in much thought and trouble, to consider this matter. There was great strife and dissension amongst them, for they knew not what to do. In the midst of all this noise and tumult, there came two other damsels riding to the hall on two Spanish mules. Very richly arrayed were these damsels in raiment of fine needlework, and their kirtles were covered by fresh fair mantles, embroidered with gold. Great joy had Launfal’s comrades when they marked these ladies. They said between themselves that doubtless they came for the succour of the good knight. Gawain, and certain of his company, made haste to Launfal, and said, “Sir, be not cast down. Two ladies are near at hand, right dainty of dress, and gracious of person. Tell us truly, for the love of God, is one of these your friend?”

But Launfal answered very simply that never before had he seen these damsels with his eyes, nor known and loved them in his heart.

The maidens dismounted from their mules, and stood before Arthur, in the sight of all. Greatly were they praised of many, because of their beauty, and of the colour of their face and hair. Some there were who deemed already that the Queen was overborne.

The elder of the damsels carried herself modestly and well, and sweetly told over the message wherewith she was charged.

“Sire, make ready for us chambers, where we may abide with our lady, for even now she comes to speak with thee.”

The King commanded that the ladies should be led to their companions, and bestowed in the same honourable fashion as they. Then he bade the lords of his household to consider their judgment, since he would endure no further respite. The Court already had given too much time to the business, and the Queen was

growing wrathful, because of the blame that was hers. Now the judges were about to proclaim their sentence, when, amidst the tumult of the town, there came riding to the palace the flower of all the ladies of the world. She came mounted upon a palfrey, white as snow, which carried her softly, as though she loved her burthen. Beneath the sky was no goodlier steed, nor one more gentle to the hand. The harness of the palfrey was so rich, that no king on earth might hope to buy trappings so precious, unless he sold or set his realm in pledge. The Maiden herself showed such as I will tell you. Passing slim was the lady, sweet of bodice and slender of girdle. Her throat was whiter than snow on branch, and her eyes were like flowers in the pallor of her face. She had a witching mouth, a dainty nose, and an open brow. Her eyebrows were brown, and her golden hair parted in two soft waves upon her head. She was clad in a shift of spotless linen, and above her snowy kirtle was set a mantle of royal purple, clasped upon her breast. She carried a hooded falcon upon her glove, and a greyhound followed closely after. As the Maiden rode at a slow pace through the streets of the city, there was none, neither great nor small, youth nor sergeant, but ran forth from his house, that he might content his heart with so great beauty. Every man that saw her with his eyes, marvelled at a fairness beyond that of any earthly woman. Little he cared for any mortal maiden, after he had seen this sight. The friends of Sir Launfal hastened to the knight, to tell him of his lady's succour, if so it were according to God's will.

"Sir comrade, truly is not this your friend? This lady is neither black nor golden, mean nor tall. She is only the most lovely thing in all the world."

When Launfal heard this, he sighed, for by their words he knew again his friend. He raised his head, and as the blood rushed to his face, speech flowed from his lips.

"By my faith," cried he, "yes, she is indeed my friend. It is a small matter now whether men slay me, or set me free; for I am made whole of my hurt just by looking on her face."

The Maiden entered in the palace—where none so fair had come before—and stood before the King, in the presence of his household. She loosed the clasp of her mantle, so that men might the more easily perceive the grace of her person. The courteous King advanced to meet her, and all the Court got them on their feet, and pained themselves in her service. When the lords had gazed upon her for a space, and praised the sum of her beauty, the lady spake to Arthur in this fashion, for she was anxious to begone.

"Sire, I have loved one of thy vassals,—the knight who stands in bonds, Sir Launfal. He was always misprized in thy Court, and his every action turned to blame. What he said, that thou knowest; for over hasty was his tongue before the Queen. But he never craved her in love, however loud his boasting. I cannot choose that he should come to hurt or harm by me. In the hope of freeing Launfal from his bonds, I have obeyed thy summons. Let now thy barons look boldly upon my face, and deal justly in this quarrel between the Queen and me."

The King commanded that this should be done, and looking upon her eyes, not one of the judges but was persuaded that her favour exceeded that of the Queen.

Since then Launfal had not spoken in malice against his lady, the lords of the household gave him again his sword. When the trial had come thus to an end the Maiden took her leave of the King, and made her ready to depart. Gladly would Arthur have had her lodge with him for a little, and many a lord would have rejoiced in her service, but she might not tarry. Now without the hall stood a great stone of dull marble, where it was the wont of lords, departing from the Court, to climb into the saddle, and Launfal by the stone. The Maiden came forth from the doors of the palace, and mounting on the stone, seated herself on the palfrey, behind her friend. Then they rode across the plain together, and were no more seen.

The Bretons tell that the knight was ravished by his lady to an island, very dim and very fair, known as Avalon. But none has had speech with Launfal and his faery love since then, and for my part I can tell you no more of the matter.

1.11.2 *The Lay of the Honeysuckle*

Written in the late 1100s ACE

With a glad heart and right good mind will I tell the Lay that men call Honeysuckle; and that the truth may be known of all it shall be told as many a minstrel has sung it to my ear, and as the scribe hath written it for our delight. It is of Tristan and Isoude, the Queen. It is of a love which passed all other love, of love from whence came wondrous sorrow, and whereof they died together in the self-same day.

King Mark was sorely wrath with Tristan, his sister's son, and bade him avoid his realm, by reason of the love he bore the Queen. So Tristan repaired to his own land, and dwelt for a full year in South Wales, where he was born. Then since he might not come where he would be, Tristan took no heed to his ways, but let his life run waste to Death. Marvel not overmuch thereat, for he who loves beyond measure must ever be sick in heart and hope, when he may not win according to his wish. So sick in heart and mind was Tristan that he left his kingdom, and returned straight to the realm of his banishment, because that in Cornwall dwelt the Queen. There he hid privily in the deep forest, withdrawn from the eyes of men; only when the evening was come, and all things sought their rest, he prayed the peasant and other mean folk of that country, of their charity to grant him shelter for the night. From the serf he gathered tidings of the King. These gave again to him what they, in turn, had taken from some outlawed knight. Thus Tristan learned that when Pentecost was come King Mark purposed to hold high Court at Tintagel, and keep the feast with pomp and revelry; moreover that thither would ride Isoude, the Queen.

When Tristan heard this thing he rejoiced greatly, since the Queen might not adventure through the forest, except he saw her with his eyes. After the King had gone his way, Tristan entered within the wood, and sought the path by which the Queen must come. There he cut a wand from out a certain hazel-tree, and having trimmed and peeled it of its bark, with his dagger he carved his name upon the wood. This he placed upon her road, for well he knew that should the Queen but mark his name she would bethink her of her friend. Thus had it chanced before. For

this was the sum of the writing set upon the wand, for Queen Isoude's heart alone: how that in this wild place Tristan had lurked and waited long, so that he might look upon her face, since without her he was already dead. Was it not with them as with the Honeysuckle and the Hazel tree she was passing by! So sweetly laced and taken were they in one close embrace, that thus they might remain whilst life endured. But should rough hands part so fond a clasping, the hazel would wither at the root, and the honeysuckle must fail. Fair friend, thus is the case with us, nor you without me, nor I without you.

Now the Queen fared at adventure down the forest path. She spied the hazel wand set upon her road, and well she remembered the letters and the name. She bade the knights of her company to draw rein, and dismount from their palfreys, so that they might refresh themselves a little. When her commandment was done she withdrew from them a space, and called to her Brangwaine, her maiden, and own familiar friend. Then she hastened within the wood, to come on him whom more she loved than any living soul. How great the joy between these twain, that once more they might speak together softly, face to face. Isoude showed him her delight. She showed in what fashion she strove to bring peace and concord betwixt Tristan and the King, and how grievously his banishment had weighed upon her heart. Thus sped the hour, till it was time for them to part; but when these lovers freed them from the other's arms, the tears were wet upon their cheeks. So Tristan returned to Wales, his own realm, even as his uncle bade. But for the joy that he had had of her, his friend, for her sweet face, and for the tender words that she had spoken, yea, and for that writing upon the wand, to remember all these things, Tristan, that cunning harper, wrought a new Lay, as shortly I have told you. Goatleaf, men call this song in English. Chèvrefeuille it is named in French; but Goatleaf or Honeysuckle, here you have the very truth in the Lay that I have spoken.

1.11.3 Reading and Review Questions

1. In *Launfal*, how are Arthur and Guinevere portrayed? What do you make of Gawain's behavior towards Launfal, and how does that affect our view of him?
2. In *Launfal*, does anything surprise you about the relationship between Launfal and his lady? Is the story's ending an endorsement or rejection of chivalry? Why?
3. In *Launfal*, is there an underlying message for the original audience? What are they supposed to think about Launfal, and why?
4. In *The Lay of the Honeysuckle*, what does Marie say about the process of writing? How does the story contribute to the discussion of how to convey meaning?
5. In *The Lay of the Honeysuckle*, how does Marie seem to feel about the adulterous lovers? How might the original audience be expected to interpret the situation?

MIDDLE ENGLISH

1.12 MIDDLE ENGLISH LYRICS

Approximately 1250-1350 (for the lyrics included here)

Authors unknown

The anonymous Middle English lyric poetry that we have is doubtless only a fraction of what existed. Since the lyrics were part of an oral tradition, it is difficult to know exactly when they were written. In general, the lyric tradition appears to have been most prominent from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries, and the similarities to French lyric poetry indicate that there was some kind of influence (probably earlier French lyrics influencing the medieval English lyrics). Some lyric poems include music, and the form of the poems usually follows a song-like rhyme scheme, often with a refrain. The topics of the lyrics are varied, just as the authors were, but they tend to fall into certain categories. Perhaps the most well-known Middle English lyric poem is the *Cuckoo Song*, with its joyful celebration of spring, complete with a farting deer (a typical kind of medieval humor). In poems such as *Spring Song*, *Alysoun*, *Blow Northern Wind*, and *When the Nightingale Sings*, a man laments that he does not have the love of a beautiful woman (the subject of songs to this day). The poem *Ubi Sunt Qui Ante Nos Fuerunt?* (“Where are those who were before us?”) uses the same motif as earlier Anglo-Saxon poetry such as *The Wanderer* (found in this anthology). Many of the lyrics were religious, whether they were about Jesus or the Virgin Mary (such as *Ave Maria* or *Lullaby*), mankind’s sinful nature (such as the poem *Earth*), or reflections on death and the afterlife (such as *Life* and *Winter Song*).

1.12.1 Cuckoo Song

Summer is a-coming in,
 Sing loud Cuckoo!
 Groweth seed, and bloweth mead
 And springeth the woode noo
 Sing Cuckoo!

Ewe bleatheth after lamb,
 Lows for her calf coo;
 Bullock sterteth, buck verteth,
 Merry sing Cuckoo!

Cuckoo, Cuckoo, well sing'st thou Cuckoo:
 So cease thou never noo.
 Sing Cuckoo, noo, sing Cuckoo!

1.12.2 Spring Song

Spring is come to town with love
 With blossom and with bird in grove,
 That all this bliss now bringeth.
 There are daisies in the dales;
 Notes full sweet of nightingales;
 Each bird song singeth.
 The throstlecock out-sings them all;
 Away is fled the Winter's thrall,
 When woodrow springeth.
 Then chanting birds in wondrous throng
 Thrill out their joy the glades among
 Till all the woodland ringeth.

The crimson rose is seen,
 New leaves of tender green
 With good-will grow,
 The moon shines white and clear,
 Fennel and Thyme are here,
 Fair lilies blow.
 Their mates the wild drakes find,
 Each creature seeks his kind.
 As stream that trickles slow,
 We plain when life is drear,
 For cruel love the tear
 Unchecked must flow.

The moon sends forth her light,
 The goodly sun shines bright,
 And birds sing well.
 Dews drench the soft young grass,
 And whispering lovers pass,
 Their tale to tell;
 Snakes woo beneath the clod,
 Women grow wondrous proud
 On field and fell.
 If one shall say me no
 Spring joy I will forgo
 And banished dwell.

1.12.3 Winter Song

Winter wakeneth all my care;
 Leaves are few and branches bare;

Oft I sigh and mourn full sair,
 When there cometh to my thought
 All the world's joy, how it all goes to nought.

Now it is, now no more seen;
 Gone as it had never been,
 Many men say truth, I ween,
 That all goes by God's will.
 We all must surely die, though it seem ill.

All that green that graced the year,
 Now is dying, brown and sere.
 Jesus, let thy help be near
 And shield us now from hell.
 For I know not whither I shall go nor how long here shall dwell.

1.12.4 Alysoun

Between soft March and April showers,
 When sprays of bloom from branches spring,
 And when the little bird 'mid flowers
 Doth song of sweetness loudly sing:
 To her with longing love I cling,
 Of all the world the fairest thing,
 Whose thrall I am, who bliss can bring
 And give to me life's crown.
 A gracious fate to me is sent;
 Methinks it is by Heaven lent
 From women all, my heart is bent,
 To light on Alysoun.

Her sheeny locks are fair to see,
 Her lashes brown, her eyes of black;
 With lovely mouth she smiles on me;
 Her waist is slim, of lissom make.
 Unless as mate she will me take,
 To be her own, my heart will break;
 Longer to live I will forsake,
 And dead I will fall down.
 A gracious fate, etc.

All for thy sake I restless turn,
 And wakeful hours sigh through at night;
 For thee, sweet lady, do I yearn;

My cheeks wax wan in woful plight.
 No man so wise that can aright
 Her goodness tell, her beauties bright;
 Her throat is than the swan's more white,
 The fairest maid in town.
 A gracious fate, etc.

Weary as water in the weir,
 With wooing I am spent and worn;
 Lest any reave me, much I fear,
 And leave me mate less and forlorn.
 A sharp, short pain is better borne,
 Than now and evermore to mourn.
 My love, O fair one, do not scorn,
 No longer on me frown.
 A gracious fate to me is sent;
 Methinks it is by Heaven lent;
 From women all, my heart is bent,
 To light on Alysoun.

1.12.5 Blow, Northern Wind

I know a maid in bower bright,
 That full seemly is to sight
 Maid of majesty and might,
 Of loyal heart and hand.
 'Midst many a nobler one
 A maid of blood and bone,
 I know not ever none
 So fair in all the land.
 Blow, Northern Wind,
 Send thou me my sweeting
 Blow, Northern Wind, blow, blow, blow.

With her long and lovely tresses,
 Forehead and face fair for caresses
 Blest be the joy my lady blesses
 That bird so bright in bour,
 With lovesome eyes so large and good
 With blissful brows beneath her hood,
 He that once hung upon the Rood
 Her life holds in honour.
 Blow, Northern Wind,

Send thou me my sweeting
Blow, Northern Wind, blow, blow, blow

Her face is full of light,
As a lantern in the night
She sheds a radiance bright,
So fair is she and fine.
Her neck is slender to enfold
Her loving arms bring joy untold
Her little hands are soft to hold
Would God that she were mine.
Blow, Northern Wind,
Send thou me my sweeting
Blow, Northern Wind, blow, blow, blow.

She is coral of goodnesse
Ruby she of rightfulnessse
She is christal of cleannesse
Beauty's banner she.
She is lily of largesse
Periwinkle of promesse
She the sunflower of sweetnessse
Lady of loyalty.
Blow, Northern Wind,
Send thou me my sweeting
Blow, Northern Wind, blow, blow, blow.

For her love I mourn and moan,
For her love I grieve and groan,
For her love my good is gone
And I wax all wan.
For her love in sleep I sigh
For her love I wakeful lie
For her love I droop and cry
More than any man.
Blow, Northern Wind,
Send thou me my sweeting
Blow, Northern Wind, blow, blow, blow

1.12.6 When the Nightingale Sings

When the nightingale sings, the woodes waxen greene,
Leaf and grass and blossom springs, in Averil I weene,
And love is to my hearte gone, with a spear so keene.

Night and day my blood it drinks, mine heartes death to teene.

I have loved all this year, that I can love no more,
 I have sighed many sighs, Lady, for thine ore,
 Ne'er my love comes near to thee, and that me grieveth sore.
 Sweetest Lady think on me, I loved thee of yore.

Sweetest Lady, speak I pray, one word of love to me,
 While in this wide world I stay, I'll seek for none but thee,
 Your kind love might give me bliss, from pain might set me free,
 A sweet kiss of thy dear mouth, might my surgeon be.

Sweetest Lady, here I pray, one boon of love bestowe,
 If you love me, as men say, as I, dearest, knowe,
 If you will it, look on me, just a look will showe,
 So much have I thought of thee, I all ghastly growe

Between Lincoln and Lindesey, North-Hamptoun and Londoune,
 I wot not of so fair a may, by tower, dale, or toune,
 Dearest one, I humbly pray, love me a little soone.

I now will plain my song,
 To her to whom it doth belong.

1.12.7 Ubi Sunt Qui Ante Nos Fuerunt?

Where are they that lived before,
 Hounds they led and hawks they bore
 And had both field and chase?
 Ladies rich in bowers fair,
 Nets of gold bind up the hair,
 Rosy-bright of face.

They ate and drank and made them glad
 Their life was all with pleasure led,
 Men kneeled them beforne,
 They bore themselves full proud and high
 And in the twinkling of an eye
 Their souls were all forlorn.

Where is that laughing and that song
 The pride with which they passed along,
 The hawk, and hound, and bower?
 All that joy is gone away,

That weal is come to welaway,
To many a bitter hour.

They took their heaven while they were here
And now in hell they lie in fere;
 The fire it burneth ever,
Long is ay, and long is o,
Long is wy, and long is wo,
From thence come they never.

1.12.8 Earth

[Note: That this singular and impressive little poem may be more readily understood, the word *earth* has been here printed with a capital wherever it is used to signify man, the creature made of the dust of the earth. This emphasizes the distinction between the different senses in which the word earth is used throughout the poem.]

Earth out of earth is wondrously wrought,
Earth of earth hath got a dignity of naught,
Earth upon earth hath set all his thought,
How that Earth upon earth may be high brought.

Earth upon earth would be a King;
But how Earth shall to earth thinketh nothing;
When that earth biddeth Earth his rentes home bring,
Then shall Earth out of earth have a piteous parting.

Earth upon earth winneth castles and towers,
Then saith Earth to earth: "Now all this is ours!"
When that Earth upon earth hath built up his bowers,
Then shall Earth upon earth suffer sharp showres.

Earth goes upon earth as mold upon mold,
So goes Earth upon earth all glittering in gold,
As though Earth unto earth never go should,
And yet Earth shall to earth before that he would.

O thou Earth that on earth travailest night and day,
To deck thee, Earth, to paint thee with wanton array;
Yet shalt thou, Earth, for all thy earth, make thou it never so quaint and gay,
Out of this earth into the earth, there to cling as a clod of clay.

O wretched man, why art thou proud that art of earth maked?
 Hither broughtest thou no shroud, but poor came thou and naked!
 When thy soul is gone out, and thy body in earth raked,
 Then thy body that was rank and undevout, of all men is hated.

Out of this earth came to this earth this wretched garment,
 To hide this Earth, to hap this Earth, to him was clothing lent;
 Now goes Earth upon earth, rueful, ragged, and rent,
 Therefore shall Earth under earth have hideous torment.

Why that Earth too must love earth, wonder me think,
 Or why that Earth for superflue earth, too sore sweat will or swink;
 For when that Earth upon earth is brought within the brink,
 Then shall Earth of the earth have a rueful swink.

So, Earth upon earth, consider thou may
 How Earth cometh into earth naked alway,
 Why should Earth upon earth go now so stout or gay
 When Earth shall pass out of earth in so poor array?

Therefore, thou Earth upon earth that so wickedly hast wrought,
 While that thou, Earth, art upon earth, turn again thy thought,
 And pray to that God upon earth that all the earth hath wrought,
 That thou, Earth upon earth, to bliss may be brought.

O Thou Lord that madest this earth for this Earth, and suffered here paines ill,
 Let not this Earth for this earth evil e'er spille,
 But that this Earth on this earth be ever working Thy will.
 So that this Earth from this earth may fly up to Thy high hill.

Amen.

1.12.9 Life

The life of this world
 Is ruled with wind,
 Weeping, darkness,
 And stirring:
 With wind we blowen,
 With wind we lassen:
 With weeping we comen,
 With weeping we passen.
 With stirring we beginnen
 With stirring we enden,

With dread we dwellen,
With dread we enden.

1.12.10 Ave Maria

Ave maris stella
The star upon the sea
Dei mater alma
Blessed mayest thou be
Atque semper virgo
Pray thy son for me
Felix cell porta
That I may come to thee.

1.12.11 Lullaby (1)

I saw a fair maiden a-sitting to sing
She lulled a little child, a sweete lording
Lullaby my litling, my dear son, my sweeting.
Lullaby my dear heart, my own dear darling.

That child is the Lord who hath made everything,
Of all lords he is Lord, of all kings he is King.
Lullaby, etc.

There was mickle melody in that child's birth
All dwellers in heaven's bliss, they made mickle mirth
Lullaby, etc.

Angels brought their song that night and said unto the child
"Blessed be thou and so be she that is both meek and mild."
Lullaby, etc.

Pray we now to that Child and his Mother dear
To grant them his blessing that now make good cheer.
Lullaby my litling, my dear son, my sweeting,
Lullaby my dear heart my own dear darling.

1.12.12 Lullaby (2)

Lullay, lullay, little child!
Why weepest thou so sore?
Nedes must thou weep,
Thou wert doomed of yore
Ever to live in sorrow,

Ever to sigh and strive,
 As thy fathers did ere this
 Whilst they were alive.
 Lullay, lullay, little child!
 Child lullay, lullow!
 To this world unknown
 Sadly come art thou.

Beasts and birds and cattle,
 The fishes in the flood,
 And each thing that liveth
 Made of bone and blood,
 When into the world they come
 They do themselves some good,
 All but that poor imp
 That is of Adam's blood.
 With care art thou beset;
 Thou knowest naught of this world's wild
 That is before thee set.

Child, if it betideth
 That Time shall prosper thee,
 Think how thou wert fostered
 On thy mother's knee;
 Ever mind thee in thine heart
 Of those thinges three,—
 Whence thou earnest, where thou art,
 And what shall come of thee.
 Lullay, lullay, little child!
 Child lullai, lullay!
 With sorrow thou earnest to this world,
 With sorrow shalt wend away.

O! trust not to this world,
 It is thy fell foe.
 The rich it maketh poor,
 The poor man sick also.
 It turneth woe to weal,
 And also weal to woe.
 Trust not man this changing world
 While it turneth so.
 Lullay, lullay, little child!
 The foot is on the wheel,

How 'twill turn thou knowest not,
Whether to woe or weal.

Child, thou art a pilgrim
In wickedness yborn;
Thou wanderest in this false world,
Look thou well beforne.
Death shall come with sudden blast
Out of the darkness hoar,
Adam's children down to cast,
Adam he slew before.

Lullay, lullay, little child!
Adam did woes oppress
In the land of Paradise
Through Satan's wickedness

Child, thou'rt not a pilgrim,
But a helpless guest.
Thy day already told,
Thy lot already cast.
Whether thou shalt wend
North, or East, or West,
Death shall thee betide,
With bitter bale in breast.

Lullay, lullay, little child!
Child lullay, lullow!
To this unknown world
Sadly come art thou.

1.12.13 Reading and Review Questions

1. How does the poem *Ubi Sunt Qui Ante Nos Fuerunt*? compare to the *ubi sunt* passage in *The Wanderer*? For that matter, how does it compare to Aragorn's speech in Tolkien's *The Two Towers* (see the introduction to *The Wanderer* for the context)?
2. What is the attitude about the afterlife presented by the speakers in the poems *Life* and *Winter Song*? Why do you think so?
3. In the poems, how do the descriptions of religious love compare to the descriptions of romantic love?
4. Taking one of the poems, discuss how the author conveys a certain emotion. How effectively does the poem convey that emotion? Why?
5. Take one of the love poems and compare it to a modern love song. Which themes and topics in the medieval poem are similar to or different from the modern love song?

1.13 GEOFFREY CHAUCER

(ca. 1340-1400)

Geoffrey Chaucer's influence on later British literature is difficult to overstate. The most important English writer before Shakespeare (who re-wrote Chaucer's version of the Troilus and Criseyde story), Chaucer introduced new words into English (such as "cosmos"), and his stories draw on a wealth of previous authors, especially Ovid and Boccaccio. Part of his importance to English literature is that Chaucer chose to write in English, despite his understanding of French, Italian, and Latin; his friend and contemporary poet John Gower chose to write in French, Latin, and English, specifically because he was not sure which language would preserve his writing the best. Chaucer is part of a line of poets who chose to write in their own country's vernacular. In the ancient world, Virgil had written in Latin, rather than in Greek, despite Greek's prestige at the time, and in doing so had elevated Latin to a prestigious literary language. Dante had followed the same pattern with Italian. After Chaucer, Cervantes would write in his *Don Quixote* that the poet's goal should be to make the literature of his own language competitive with that of any other country, citing poets such as Virgil. Chaucer lays the foundation for the English writers who followed him.

Chaucer was a product of what we would now call the middle class, although that term did not exist in Chaucer's time. Medieval England followed the three estates model, recognizing only aristocracy, clergy, and the workers. As certain groups became more prosperous, the usual goal was to work for and marry into the lower levels of the aristocracy, which is the route that Chaucer takes. Chaucer received an excellent education, and he had the opportunity to serve as a page in the household of the Countess of Ulster. Chaucer married Philippa de Roet, a lady-in-waiting, whose sister Katherine was first the mistress and then the third wife of John of Gaunt (one of the sons of Edward III and Chaucer's patron). Chaucer served as a soldier when younger, and he held a variety of jobs over the years: diplomat, customs official, justice of the peace, and member of parliament (MP) for Kent, among others, all while writing. Although Chaucer received royal annuities from both Edward III and Richard II, his most important patron remained John of Gaunt, whose son became Henry IV after deposing Richard II in 1399 (and granted Chaucer an annuity shortly thereafter).

For individuals who were not as highly educated as Chaucer, it was a more difficult prospect to advance. The British class system was not based on money, but on bloodlines; a dirt-poor aristocrat was still an aristocrat, while a rich peasant was still a peasant. Chaucer's Miller in *The Canterbury Tales* is keenly aware of this distinction. The Miller objects to the idea that a "better man" (line 22) than he is—namely, the Monk—should tell the next tale, claiming to have a story every bit as good as the tale just finished by the Knight. If he is insulted by being forced to yield to the Monk, the Miller threatens to leave the pilgrimage. Several of the middle class characters show a similar reluctance to accept a lower place in the social hierarchy.

Social class plays a role in Chaucer's *Parlement of Fowles* (sometimes called *The Parliament of Birds* in modern translations), which is an example of one of Chaucer's dream visions. Dream visions were popular with medieval writers because anything can happen in a dream; the narrator can talk to anyone from the past, or find himself in any location, and the writer can present the action metaphorically, rather than literally. As in all of his poems, a version of Chaucer appears as the narrator of the story: a socially-awkward book lover who portrays himself as a romantic failure. The poem begins with the narrator reading Cicero's *Dream of Scipio* (*Somnium Scipionis*), after which he falls asleep. In his dream, Scipio Africanus the Elder leads him to a garden gate with inscriptions on it (a parallel to Virgil guiding Dante to the gate of Hell in *Inferno*). Inside, the narrator first encounters the temple of Venus, and then a gathering of birds presided over by Nature. The birds represent various groups in society, with the birds of prey as the nobility. Three male eagles use the language of courtly love poetry to attempt to win the same female eagle; when there is no immediate choice made, all the birds of lower class levels begin to offer their comic opinions. Courtly love poetry often focuses on the male perspective exclusively; the female is the object to be obtained, and she usually is not given a voice (or, ultimately, a choice) in the matter. The *Parliament of Fowles* gives the female a voice, if not necessarily a choice, about whether she wants any of them.



Image 1.12 | Manuscript Portrait of Chaucer

Artist | Unknown

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The Canterbury Tales is Chaucer's masterpiece of social satire. The story was incomplete at his death (although scholars have debated whether the story is, in some ways, thematically complete). Unlike previous versions of frame tales, such as Boccaccio's *Decameron*, Chaucer's frame is every bit as important as the stories. The *General Prologue* to *The Canterbury Tales* may be about group on a pilgrimage to Canterbury, but the travelers do nothing that identifies them as pilgrims; they eat too much instead of fasting, get drunk, wear fancy clothes, ride instead of walk, and tell stories instead of saying prayers (plus it begins and will end in a tavern). The narrator offers no overt judgment of the pilgrims, while providing enough information in the *General Prologue* for the audience to judge for themselves. Among the many topics satirized in Chaucer's work is, once again, courtly love. *The Miller's Tale* is a mocking revision of the genre by the Miller, who is responding to the story of courtly love that had just been told by the Knight. *The Wife of Bath's Tale* and *The Franklin's Tale* both offer fascinating alternatives to the regular courtly love scenario, while the Pardoner's Tale takes aim at every vice imaginable. Chaucer may follow standard medieval procedure by offering a *Retraction* at the end of *The Canterbury Tales* (asking forgiveness for anything he wrote that tended towards sin), but it is worth noting that the reader has finished his collection of stories before reaching it.

1.13.1 Bibliography

Sections taken from my introduction to Chaucer in *The Compact Anthology of World Literature* and *World Literature I: Beginnings to 1650*

1.13.2 *The Parliament of Birds*

(ca. 1381-1382)

The life so short, the craft so long to learn,
 Th'assay so hard, so sharp the conquering,
 The dreadful joy, alway that flits so yern;
 All this mean I by Love, that my feeling
 Astoneth with his wonderful working,
 So sore, y-wis, that, when I on him think,
 Naught wit I well whether I fleet or sink,
 For all be that I know not Love indeed, albeit,
 Nor wot how that he quiteth folk their hire,
 Yet happeth me full oft in books to read their service
 Of his miracles, and of his cruel ire;
 There read I well, he will be lord and sire;
 I dare not saye, that his strokes be sore;
 But God save such a lord! I can no more.
 Of usage, what for lust and what for lore,

On bookes read I oft, as I you told.
 But wherefore speak I alle this? Not yore
 Agone, it happed me for to behold
 Upon a book written with letters old;
 And thereupon, a certain thing to learn,
 The longe day full fast I read and yern.
 For out of the old fieldes, as men saith,
 Cometh all this new corn, from year to year;
 And out of olde bookes, in good faith,
 Cometh all this new science that men lear.
 But now to purpose as of this mattere:
 To reade forth it gan me so delight,
 That all the day me thought it but a lite.
 This book, of which I make mention,
 Entitled was right thus, as I shall tell;
 "Tullius, of the Dream of Scipion:"
 Chapters seven it had, of heav'n, and hell,
 And earth, and soules that therein do dwell;
 Of which, as shortly as I can it treat,
 Of his sentence I will you say the great.
 First telleth it, when Scipio was come
 To Africa, how he met Massinisse,
 That him for joy in armes hath y-nome.
 Then telleth he their speech, and all the bliss
 That was between them till the day gan miss.
 And how his ancestor Africane so dear
 Gan in his sleep that night to him appear.
 Then telleth it, that from a starry place
 How Africane hath him Carthage y-shew'd,
 And warned him before of all his grace
 And said him, what man, learned either lewd,
 That loveth common profit, well y-thew'd,
 He should unto a blissful place wend,
 Where as the joy is without any end.
 Then asked he, if folk that here be dead
 Have life, and dwelling, in another place?
 And Africane said, "Yea, withoute dread;"
 And how our present worldly lives' space
 Meant but a manner death, what way we trace;
 And rightful folk should go, after they die,
 To Heav'n; and showed him the galaxy.
 Then show'd he him the little earth that here is,
 To regard the heaven's quantity;

And after show'd he him the nine spheres;
 And after that the melody heard he,
 That cometh of those spheres thrice three,
 That wells of music be and melody
 In this world here, and cause of harmony.
 Then said he him, since earthe was so lite,
 And full of torment and of harde grace,
 That he should not him in this world delight.
 Then told he him, in certain yeares' space,
 That ev'ry star should come into his place,
 Where it was first; and all should out of mind,
 That in this world is done of all mankind.
 Then pray'd him Scipio, to tell him all
 The way to come into that Heaven's bliss;
 And he said: "First know thyself immortal,
 And look aye busily that thou work and wiss
 To common profit, and thou shalt not miss
 To come swiftly unto that place dear,
 That full of bliss is, and of soules clear.
 "And breakers of the law, the sooth to sayn,
 And likerous folk, after that they be dead,
 Shall whirl about the world always in pain,
 Till many a world be passed, out of dread;
 And then, forgiven all their wicked deed,
 They shalle come unto that blissful place,
 To which to come God thee sende grace!"
 The day gan failen, and the darke night,
 That reaveth beastes from their business,
 Berefte me my book for lack of light,
 And to my bed I gan me for to dress,
 Full fill'd of thought and busy heaviness;
 For both I hadde thing which that I n'old,
 And eke I had not that thing that I wo'ld.
 But, finally, my spirit at the last,
 Forweary of my labour all that day,
 Took rest, that made me to sleepe fast;
 And in my sleep I mette, as that I say,
 How Africane, right in the self array
 That Scipio him saw before that tide,
 Was come, and stood right at my bedde's side.
 The weary hunter, sleeping in his bed,
 To wood again his mind goeth anon;
 The judge dreameth how his pleas be sped;

The carter dreameth how his cartes go'n;
 The rich of gold, the knight fights with his fone;
 The sicke mette he drinketh of the tun;
 The lover mette he hath his lady won.
 I cannot say, if that the cause were,
 For I had read of Africane beforne,
 That made me to mette that he stood there;
 But thus said he; "Thou hast thee so well borne
 In looking of mine old book all to-torn,
 Of which Macrobius raught not a lite,
 That somedeal of thy labour would I quite."
 Cytherea, thou blissful Lady sweet!
 That with thy firebrand dauntest when thee lest,
 That madest me this sweven for to mette,
 Be thou my help in this, for thou may'st best!
 As wisly as I saw the north-north-west,
 When I began my sweven for to write,
 So give me might to rhyme it and endite.
 This foresaid Africane me hent anon,
 And forth with him unto a gate brought
 Right of a park, walled with greene stone;
 And o'er the gate, with letters large y-wrought,
 There were verses written, as me thought,
 On either half, of full great difference,
 Of which I shall you say the plain sentence.
 "Through me men go into the blissful place
 Of hearte's heal and deadly woundes' cure;
 Through me men go unto the well of grace;
 Where green and lusty May shall ever dure;
 This is the way to all good adventure;
 Be glad, thou reader, and thy sorrow off cast;
 All open am I; pass in and speed thee fast."
 "Through me men go," thus spake the other side,
 "Unto the mortal strokes of the spear,
 Of which disdain and danger is the guide;
 There never tree shall fruit nor leaves bear;
 This stream you leadeth to the sorrowful weir,
 Where as the fish in prison is all dry;
 Th'eschewing is the only remedy."
 These verses of gold and azure written were,
 On which I gan astonish'd to behold;
 For with that one increased all my fear,
 And with that other gan my heart to bold;

That one me het, that other did me cold;
 No wit had I, for error, for to choose
 To enter or fly, or me to save or lose.
 Right as betwixten adamantes two
 Of even weight, a piece of iron set,
 Ne hath no might to move to nor fro;
 For what the one may hale, the other let;
 So far'd I, that n'ist whether me was bet
 T' enter or leave, till Africane, my guide, better for me
 Me hent and shov'd in at the gates wide.
 And said, "It standeth written in thy face,
 Thine error, though thou tell it not to me;
 But dread thou not to come into this place;
 For this writing is nothing meant by thee,
 Nor by none, but he Love's servant be; unless
 For thou of Love hast lost thy taste, I guess,
 As sick man hath of sweet and bitterness.
 "But natheless, although that thou be dull,
 That thou canst not do, yet thou mayest see;
 For many a man that may not stand a pull,
 Yet likes it him at wrestling for to be,
 And deeme whether he doth bet, or he;
 And, if thou haddest cunning to endite,
 I shall thee showe matter of to write."
 With that my hand in his he took anon,
 Of which I comfort caught, and went in fast.
 But, Lord! so I was glad and well-begone!
 For over all, where I my eyen cast,
 Were trees y-clad with leaves that ay shall last,
 Each in his kind, with colour fresh and green
 As emerald, that joy it was to see'n.
 The builder oak; and eke the hardy ash;
 The pillar elm, the coffer unto carrain;
 The box, pipe tree; the holm, to whippe's lash
 The sailing fir; the cypress death to plain;
 The shooter yew; the aspe for shaftes plain;
 Th'olive of peace, and eke the drunken vine;
 The victor palm; the laurel, too, divine.
 A garden saw I, full of blossom'd boughes,
 Upon a river, in a greene mead,
 Where as sweetness evermore enow is,
 With flowers white, blue, yellow, and red,
 And colde welle streames, nothing dead,

That swamme full of smalle fishes light,
With finnes red, and scales silver bright.
On ev'ry bough the birdes heard I sing,
With voice of angels in their harmony,
That busied them their birdes forth to bring;
The pretty conies to their play gan hie;
And further all about I gan espy
The dreadful roe, the buck, the hart, and hind,
Squirrels, and beastes small, of gentle kind.
Of instruments of stringes in accord
Heard I so play a ravishing sweetness,
That God, that Maker is of all and Lord,
Ne hearde never better, as I guess:
Therewith a wind, unneth it might be less,
Made in the leaves green a noise soft,
Accordant the fowles' song on loft.
Th'air of the place so attemper was,
That ne'er was there grievance of hot nor cold;
There was eke ev'ry wholesome spice and grass,
Nor no man may there waxe sick nor old:
Yet was there more joy a thousand fold
Than I can tell, or ever could or might;
There ever is clear day, and never night.
Under a tree, beside a well, I sey
Cupid our lord his arrows forge and file;
And at his feet his bow all ready lay;
And well his daughter temper'd, all the while,
The heades in the well; and with her wile
She couch'd them after, as they shoulde serve
Some for to slay, and some to wound and kerve.
Then was I ware of Pleasance anon right,
And of Array, and Lust, and Courtesy,
And of the Craft, that can and hath the might
To do by force a wight to do folly;
Disfigured was she, I will not lie;
And by himself, under an oak, I guess,
Saw I Delight, that stood with Gentleness.
Then saw I Beauty, with a nice attire,
And Youthe, full of game and jollity,
Foolhardiness, Flattery, and Desire,
Messagerie, and Meed, and other three;
Their names shall not here be told for me:
And upon pillars great of jasper long

I saw a temple of brass y-founded strong.
 And [all] about the temple danc'd alway
 Women enough, of whiche some there were
 Fair of themselves, and some of them were gay
 In kirtles all dishevell'd went they there;
 That was their office ever, from year to year;
 And on the temple saw I, white and fair,
 Of doves sitting many a thousand pair.

Before the temple door, full soberly,
 Dame Peace sat, a curtain in her hand;
 And her beside, wonder discretely,
 Dame Patience sitting there I fand,
 With face pale, upon a hill of sand;
 And althernext, within and eke without,
 Behest, and Art, and of their folk a rout.

Within the temple, of sighes hot as fire
 I heard a swough, that gan aboute ren,
 Which sighes were engender'd with desire,
 That made every hearte for to bren
 Of newe flame; and well espied I then,
 That all the cause of sorrows that they dree
 Came of the bitter goddess Jealousy.

The God Priapus saw I, as I went
 Within the temple, in sov'reign place stand,
 In such array, as when the ass him shent
 With cry by night, and with sceptre in hand:
 Full busily men gan assay and fand
 Upon his head to set, of sundry hue,
 Garlandes full of freshe flowers new.

And in a privy corner, in disport,
 Found I Venus and her porter Richess,
 That was full noble and hautain of her port;
 Dark was that place, but afterward lightness
 I saw a little, unneth it might be less;
 And on a bed of gold she lay to rest,
 Till that the hote sun began to west.

Her gilded haire with a golden thread
 Y-bounden were, untressed, as she lay;
 And naked from the breast unto the head
 Men might her see; and, soothly for to say,
 The remnant cover'd, welle to my pay,
 Right with a little kerchief of Valence;
 There was no thicker clothe of defence.

The place gave a thousand savours sweet;
 And Bacchus, god of wine, sat her beside;
 And Ceres next, that doth of hunger boot;
 And, as I said, amidstes lay Cypride,
 To whom on knees the younge folke cried
 To be their help: but thus I let her lie,
 And farther in the temple gan espy,
 That, in despite of Diana the chaste,
 Full many a bowe broke hung on the wall,
 Of maidens, such as go their time to waste
 In her service: and painted over all
 Of many a story, of which I touche shall
 A few, as of Calist', and Atalant',
 And many a maid, of which the name I want.
 Semiramis, Canace, and Hercules,
 Biblis, Dido, Thisbe and Pyramus,
 Tristram, Isoude, Paris, and Achilles,
 Helena, Cleopatra, Troilus,
 Scylla, and eke the mother of Romulus;
 All these were painted on the other side,
 And all their love, and in what plight they died.
 When I was come again into the place
 That I of spake, that was so sweet and green,
 Forth walk'd I then, myselfe to solace:
 Then was I ware where there sat a queen,
 That, as of light the summer Sunne sheen
 Passeth the star, right so over measure
 She fairer was than any creature.
 And in a lawn, upon a hill of flowers,
 Was set this noble goddess of Nature;
 Of branches were her halles and her bowers
 Y-wrought, after her craft and her measure;
 Nor was there fowl that comes of engendrure
 That there ne were prest, in her presence,
 To take her doom, and give her audience.
 For this was on Saint Valentine's Day,
 When ev'ry fowl cometh to choose her make,
 Of every kind that men thinken may;
 And then so huge a noise gan they make,
 That earth, and sea, and tree, and ev'ry lake,
 So full was, that unnethes there was space
 For me to stand, so full was all the place.
 And right as Alain, in his Plaint of Kind,

Deviseth Nature of such array and face;
 In such array men mighte her there find.
 This noble Emperess, full of all grace,
 Bade ev'ry fowle take her owen place,
 As they were wont alway, from year to year,
 On Saint Valentine's Day to stande there.
 That is to say, the fowles of ravine
 Were highest set, and then the fowles smale,
 That eaten as them Nature would incline;
 As worme-fowl, of which I tell no tale;
 But waterfowl sat lowest in the dale,
 And fowls that live by seed sat on the green,
 And that so many, that wonder was to see'n.
 There mighte men the royal eagle find,
 That with his sharpe look pierceth the Sun;
 And other eagles of a lower kind,
 Of which that clerkes well devise con;
 There was the tyrant with his feathers dun can describe
 And green, I mean the goshawk, that doth pine
 To birds, for his outrageous ravine.
 The gentle falcon, that with his feet distraïneth
 The kinge's hand; the hardy sperhawk eke,
 The quaile's foe; the merlion that paineth
 Himself full oft the larke for to seek;
 There was the dove, with her eyen meek;
 The jealous swan, against his death that singeth;
 The owl eke, that of death the bode bringeth
 The crane, the giant, with his trumpet soun';
 The thief the chough; and eke the chatt'ring pie;
 The scorning jay; the eel's foe the heroun;
 The false lapwing, full of treachery;
 The starling, that the counsel can betray;
 The tame ruddock, and the coward kite;
 The cock, that horologe is of thorpes lite.
 The sparrow, Venus' son; the nightingale,
 That calleth forth the freshe leaves new;
 The swallow, murd'rer of the bees smale,
 That honey make of flowers fresh of hue;
 The wedded turtle, with his hearte true;
 The peacock, with his angel feathers bright;
 The pheasant, scorner of the cock by night;
 The waker goose; the cuckoo ever unkind;
 The popinjay, full of delicacy;

The drake, destroyer of his owen kind;
 The stork, the wreker of adultery;
 The hot cormorant, full of gluttony;
 The raven and the crow, with voice of care;
 The throstle old; and the frosty fieldfare.
 What should I say? Of fowls of ev'ry kind
 That in this world have feathers and stature,
 Men mighten in that place assembled find,
 Before that noble goddess of Nature;
 And each of them did all his busy cure
 Benignely to choose, or for to take,
 By her accord, his formel or his make.
 But to the point. Nature held on her hand
 A formel eagle, of shape the gentilest
 That ever she among her workes fand,
 The most benign, and eke the goodliest;
 In her was ev'ry virtue at its rest,
 So farforth that Nature herself had bliss
 To look on her, and oft her beak to kiss.
 Nature, the vicar of th'Almighty Lord, —
 That hot, cold, heavy, light, and moist, and dry,
 Hath knit, by even number of accord, —
 In easy voice began to speak, and say:
 "Fowles, take heed of my sentence," I pray;
 And for your ease, in furth'ring of your need,
 As far as I may speak, I will me speed.
 "Ye know well how, on Saint Valentine's Day,
 By my statute, and through my governance,
 Ye choose your mates, and after fly away
 With them, as I you pricke with pleasance;
 But natheless, as by rightful ordinance,
 May I not let, for all this world to win,
 But he that most is worthy shall begin.
 "The tercel eagle, as ye know full weel,
 The fowl royal, above you all in degree,
 The wise and worthy, secret, true as steel,
 The which I formed have, as ye may see,
 In ev'ry part, as it best liketh me, —
 It needeth not his shape you to devise, —
 He shall first choose, and speaken in his guise.
 "And, after him, by order shall ye choose,
 After your kind, evereach as you liketh;
 And as your hap is, shall ye win or lose;

But which of you that love most entriketh,
 God send him her that sorest for him siketh.”
 And therewithal the tercel gan she call,
 And said, “My son, the choice is to thee fall.
 “But natheless, in this condition
 Must be the choice of ev’reach that is here,
 That she agree to his election,
 Whoso he be, that shoulde be her fere;
 This is our usage ay, from year to year;
 And whoso may at this time have this grace,
 In blissful time he came into this place.”
 With head inclin’d, and with full humble cheer,
 This royal tercel spake, and tarried not:
 “Unto my sov’ reign lady, and not my fere,
 I chose and choose, with will, and heart, and thought,
 The formel on your hand, so well y-wrought,
 Whose I am all, and ever will her serve,
 Do what her list, to do me live or sterve.
 “Beseeching her of mercy and of grace,
 As she that is my lady sovereign,
 Or let me die here present in this place,
 For certes long may I not live in pain;
 For in my heart is carven ev’ry vein:
 Having regard only unto my truth, wounded with love
 My deare heart, have on my woe some ruth.
 “And if that I be found to her untrue,
 Disobeisant, or wilful negligent,
 Avaunter, or in process love a new,
 I pray to you, this be my judgement, of time
 That with these fowles I be all to-rent,
 That ilke day that she me ever find
 To her untrue, or in my guilt unkind.
 “And since none loveth her so well as I,
 Although she never of love me behet,
 Then ought she to be mine, through her mercy;
 For other bond can I none on her knit;
 For weal or for woe, never shall I let
 To serve her, how far so that she wend;
 Say what you list, my tale is at an end.”
 Right as the freshe redde rose new
 Against the summer Sunne colour’d is,
 Right so, for shame, all waxen gan the hue
 Of this formel, when she had heard all this;

Neither she answer'd well, nor said amiss,
 So sore abashed was she, till Nature either well or ill
 Said, "Daughter, dread you not, I you assure."
 Another tercel eagle spake anon,
 Of lower kind, and said that should not be;
 "I love her better than ye do, by Saint John!
 Or at the least I love her as well as ye,
 And longer have her serv'd in my degree;
 And if she should have lov'd for long loving,
 To me alone had been the guerdoning.
 "I dare eke say, if she me finde false,
 Unkind, janglere, rebel in any wise,
 Or jealous, do me hange by the halse;
 And but I beare me in her service
 As well ay as my wit can me suffice,
 From point to point, her honour for to save,
 Take she my life and all the good I have."
 A thirde tercel eagle answer'd tho:
 "Now, Sirs, ye see the little leisure here;
 For ev'ry fowl cries out to be ago
 Forth with his mate, or with his lady dear;
 And eke Nature herselfe will not hear,
 For tarrying her, not half that I would say;
 And but I speak, I must for sorrow dey.
 Of long service avaunt I me no thing,
 But as possible is me to die to-day,
 For woe, as he that hath been languishing
 This twenty winter; and well happen may
 A man may serve better, and more to pay,
 In half a year, although it were no more.
 Than some man doth that served hath full yore.
 "I say not this by me for that I can
 Do no service that may my lady please;
 But I dare say, I am her truest man
 As to my doom, and fainest would her please;
 At shorte words, until that death me seize,
 I will be hers, whether I wake or wink.
 And true in all that hearte may bethink."
 Of all my life, since that day I was born,
 So gentle plea, in love or other thing,
 Ye hearde never no man me befor;
 Whoso that hadde leisure and cunning
 For to rehearse their cheer and their speaking:

And from the morrow gan these speeches last,
 Till downward went the Sunne wonder fast.
 The noise of fowles for to be deliver'd
 So loude rang, "Have done and let us wend,"
 That well ween'd I the wood had all to-shiver'd:
 "Come off!" they cried; "alas! ye will us shend!
 When will your cursed pleading have an end?
 How should a judge either party believe,
 For yea or nay, withouten any preve?"
 The goose, the duck, and the cuckoo also,
 So cried "keke, keke," "cuckoo," "queke queke," high,
 That through mine ears the noise wente tho.
 The goose said then, "All this n'is worth a fly!
 But I can shape hereof a remedy;
 And I will say my verdict, fair and swith,
 For water-fowl, whoso be wroth or blith."
 "And I for worm-fowl," said the fool cuckow;
 For I will, of mine own authority,
 For common speed, take on me the charge now;
 For to deliver us is great charity."
 "Ye may abide a while yet, pardie,"
 Quoth then the turtle; "if it be your will
 A wight may speak, it were as good be still.
 "I am a seed-fowl, one th'unworthiest,
 That know I well, and the least of cunning;
 But better is, that a wight's tongue rest,
 Than entremette him of such doing meddle with
 Of which he neither rede can nor sing; counsel
 And who it doth, full foul himself accloyeth,
 For office uncommanded oft annoyeth."
 Nature, which that alway had an ear
 To murmur of the lewedness behind,
 With facond voice said, "Hold your tongues there,
 And I shall soon, I hope, a counsel find,
 You to deliver, and from this noise unbind;
 I charge of ev'ry flock ye shall one call,
 To say the verdict of you fowles all."
 The tercelet said then in this mannere;
 "Full hard it were to prove it by reason,
 Who loveth best this gentle formel here;
 For ev'reach hath such replication,
 That by skilles may none be brought adown;
 I cannot see that arguments avail;

Then seemeth it that there must be battaile.”
 “All ready!” quoth those eagle tercelles tho;
 “Nay, Sirs!” quoth he; “if that I durst it say,
 Ye do me wrong, my tale is not y-do,done
 For, Sirs, — and take it not agrief, I pray, —
 It may not be as ye would, in this way:
 Ours is the voice that have the charge in hand,
 And to the judges’ doom ye muste stand.
 “And therefore ‘Peace!’ I say; as to my wit,
 Me woulde think, how that the worthiest
 Of knighthood, and had longest used it,
 Most of estate, of blood the gentilest,
 Were fitting most for her, if that her lest
 And, of these three she knows herself, I trow,
 Which that he be; for it is light to know.” easy
 The water-fowles have their heades laid
 Together, and of short advisement, after brief deliberation
 When evereach his verdict had y-said
 They saide soothly all by one assent,
 How that “The goose with the facond gent,
 That so desired to pronounce our need,
 Shall tell our tale;” and prayed God her speed.
 And for those water-fowles then began
 The goose to speak. and in her cackeling
 She saide, “Peace, now! take keep ev’ry man,
 And hearken what reason I shall forth bring;
 My wit is sharp, I love no tarrying;
 I say I rede him, though he were my brother,
 But she will love him, let him love another!”
 “Lo! here a perfect reason of a goose!”
 Quoth the sperhawke. “Never may she the!
 Lo such a thing ’tis t’have a tongue loose!
 Now, pardie: fool, yet were it bet for thee
 Have held thy peace, than show’d thy nicety;
 It lies not in his wit, nor in his will,
 But sooth is said, a fool cannot be still.”
 The laughter rose of gentle fowles all;
 And right anon the seed-fowls chosen had
 The turtle true, and gan her to them call,
 And prayed her to say the soothe sad
 Of this mattere, and asked what she rad;
 And she answer’d, that plainly her intent
 She woulde show, and soothly what she meant.

“Nay! God forbid a lover shoulde change!”
 The turtle said, and wax’d for shame all red:
 “Though that his lady evermore be strange,
 Yet let him serve her ay, till he be dead;
 For, sooth, I praise not the goose’s rede
 For, though she died, I would none other make;
 I will be hers till that the death me take.”

“Well bourded!” quoth the ducke, “by my hat!
 That men should loven alway causeless,
 Who can a reason find, or wit, in that?
 Danceth he merry, that is mirtheless?
 Who shoulde reck of that is reckeless?
 Yea! queke yet,” quoth the duck, “full well and fair! no care for him
 There be more starres, God wot, than a pair!”

“Now fy, churl!” quoth the gentle tercelet,
 “Out of the dunghill came that word aright;
 Thou canst not see which thing is well beset;
 Thou far’st by love, as owles do by light,—
 The day them blinds, full well they see by night;
 Thy kind is of so low a wretchedness,
 That what love is, thou caust not see nor guess.”

Then gan the cuckoo put him forth in press,
 For fowl that eateth worm, and said belive:
 “So I,” quoth he, “may have my mate in peace,
 I recke not how longe that they strive.
 Let each of them be solain all their life;
 This is my rede, since they may not accord;
 This shorte lesson needeth not record.”

“Yea, have the glutton fill’d enough his paunch,
 Then are we well!” saide the emerlon;
 “Thou murd’rer of the heggsugg, on the branch
 That brought thee forth, thou most rueful glutton,
 Live thou solain, worme’s corruption!
 For no force is to lack of thy nature;
 Go! lewed be thou, while the world may dare!”
 “Now peace,” quoth Nature, “I commande here;
 For I have heard all your opinion,
 And in effect yet be we ne’er the nere.
 But, finally, this is my conclusion, —
 That she herself shall have her election
 Of whom her list, whoso be wroth or blith;
 Him that she chooseth, he shall her have as swith.
 “For since it may not here discussed be

Who loves her best, as said the tercelet,
 Then will I do this favour t' her, that she
 Shall have right him on whom her heart is set,
 And he her, that his heart hath on her knit:
 This judge I, Nature, for I may not lie
 To none estate; I have none other eye.
 "But as for counsel for to choose a make,
 If I were Reason, [certes] then would I
 Counsaile you the royal tercel take,
 As saith the tercelet full skillfully,
 As for the gentilest, and most worthy,
 Which I have wrought so well to my pleasance,
 That to you it ought be a suffisance."
 With dreadful voice the formel her answer'd:
 "My rightful lady, goddess of Nature,
 Sooth is, that I am ever under your yerd,
 As is every other creature,
 And must be yours, while that my life may dure;
 And therefore grante me my firste boon,
 And mine intent you will I say right soon."
 "I grant it you," said she; and right anon
 This formel eagle spake in this degree:
 "Almighty queen, until this year be done
 I aske respite to advise me;
 And after that to have my choice all free;
 This is all and some that I would speak and say;
 Ye get no more, although ye do me dey.
 "I will not serve Venus, nor Cupide,
 For sooth as yet, by no manner [of] way."
 "Now since it may none other ways betide,"
 Quoth Dame Nature, "there is no more to say;
 Then would I that these fowles were away,
 Each with his mate, for longer tarrying here."
 And said them thus, as ye shall after hear.
 "To you speak I, ye tercels," quoth Nature;
 "Be of good heart, and serve her alle three;
 A year is not so longe to endure;
 And each of you pain him in his degree
 For to do well, for, God wot, quit is she
 From you this year, what after so befall;
 This entremess is dressed for you all."
 And when this work y-brought was to an end,
 To ev'ry fowle Nature gave his make,

By even accord, and on their way they wend:
 And, Lord! the bliss and joye that they make!
 For each of them gan other in his wings take,
 And with their neckes each gan other wind,
 Thanking alway the noble goddess of Kind.
 But first were chosen fowles for to sing,—
 As year by year was alway their usance, —
 To sing a roundel at their departing,
 To do to Nature honour and pleasance;
 The note, I trowe, maked was in France;
 The wordes were such as ye may here find
 The nexte verse, as I have now in mind:
 Qui bien aime, tard oublie.
 “Now welcome summer, with thy sunnes soft,
 That hast these winter weathers overshake
 Saint Valentine, thou art full high on loft,
 Which driv’st away the longe nightes blake;
 Thus singe smalle fowles for thy sake:
 Well have they cause for to gladden oft,
 Since each of them recover’d hath his make;
 Full blissful may they sing when they awake.”
 And with the shouting, when their song was do,
 That the fowls maden at their flight away,
 I woke, and other bookes took me to,
 To read upon; and yet I read alway.
 I hope, y-wis, to reade so some day,
 That I shall meete something for to fare
 The bet; and thus to read I will not spare.

1.13.3 Selections from *The Canterbury Tales*

General Prologue

WHEN that Aprilis, with his showers swoot,
 The drought of March hath pierced to the root,
 And bathed every vein in such licour,
 Of which virtue engender’d is the flower;
 When Zephyrus eke with his swoote breath
 Inspired hath in every holt and heath
 The tender croppes and the younge sun
 Hath in the Ram his halfe course y-run,
 And smalle fowles make melody,
 That sleepen all the night with open eye,

(So pricketh them nature in their corage);
Then longe folk to go on pilgrimages,
And palmers for to seeke strange strands,
To ferne hallows couth in sundry lands;
And specially, from every shire's end
Of Engleland, to Canterbury they wend,
The holy blissful Martyr for to seek,
That them hath holpen, when that they were sick.
Befell that, in that season on a day,
In Southwark at the Tabard as I lay,
Ready to wenden on my pilgrimage
To Canterbury with devout corage,
At night was come into that hostelry
Well nine and twenty in a company
Of sundry folk, by aventure y-fall
In fellowship, and pilgrims were they all,
That toward Canterbury woulde ride.
The chamber, and the stables were wide,
And well we weren eased at the best.
And shortly, when the sunne was to rest,
So had I spoken with them every one,
That I was of their fellowship anon,
And made forword early for to rise,
To take our way there as I you devise.
But natheless, while I have time and space,
Ere that I farther in this tale pace,
Me thinketh it accordant to reason,
To tell you alle the condition
Of each of them, so as it seemed me,
And which they weren, and of what degree;
And eke in what array that they were in:
And at a Knight then will I first begin.
A KNIGHT there was, and that a worthy man,
That from the time that he first began
To riden out, he loved chivalry,
Truth and honour, freedom and courtesy.
Full worthy was he in his Lorde's war,
And thereto had he ridden, no man farre,
As well in Christendom as in Heatheness,
And ever honour'd for his worthiness
At Alisandre he was when it was won.
Full often time he had the board begun
Above alle nations in Prusse.

In Lettowe had he reysed, and in Russe,
No Christian man so oft of his degree.
In Grenade at the siege eke had he be
Of Algesir, and ridden in Belmarie.
At Leyes was he, and at Satalie,
When they were won; and in the Greate Sea
At many a noble army had he be.
At mortal battles had he been fifteen,
And foughten for our faith at Tramissene.
In listes thrives, and aye slain his foe.
This ilke worthy knight had been also
Some time with the lord of Palatie,
Against another heathen in Turkie:
And evermore he had a sovereign price.
And though that he was worthy he was wise,
And of his port as meek as is a maid.
He never yet no villainy ne said
In all his life, unto no manner wight.
He was a very perfect gentle knight.
But for to telle you of his array,
His horse was good, but yet he was not gay.
Of fustian he weared a gipon,
Alle besmotted with his habergeon,
For he was late y-come from his voyage,
And wente for to do his pilgrimage.
With him there was his son, a younge SQUIRE,
A lover, and a lusty bachelor,
With lockes crulle as they were laid in press.
Of twenty year of age he was I guess.
Of his stature he was of even length,
And wonderly deliver, and great of strength.
And he had been some time in chevachie,
In Flanders, in Artois, and Picardie,
And borne him well, as of so little space,
In hope to standen in his lady's grace.
Embroider'd was he, as it were a mead
All full of freshe flowers, white and red.
Singing he was, or fluting all the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
Short was his gown, with sleeves long and wide.
Well could he sit on horse, and faire ride.
He coulde songes make, and well indite,
Joust, and eke dance, and well pourtray and write.

So hot he loved, that by nightertale
He slept no more than doth the nightingale.
Courteous he was, lowly, and serviceable,
And carv'd before his father at the table.
A YEOMAN had he, and servants no mo'
At that time, for him list ride so
And he was clad in coat and hood of green.
A sheaf of peacock arrows bright and keen
Under his belt he bare full thriftily.
Well could he dress his tackle yeomanly:
His arrows drooped not with feathers low;
And in his hand he bare a mighty bow.
A nut-head had he, with a brown visiage:
Of wood-craft coud he well all the usage:
Upon his arm he bare a gay bracer,
And by his side a sword and a buckler,
And on that other side a gay daggere,
Harnessed well, and sharp as point of spear:
A Christopher on his breast of silver sheen.
An horn he bare, the baldric was of green:
A forester was he soothly as I guess.
There was also a Nun, a PRIORESS,
That of her smiling was full simple and coy;
Her greatest oathe was but by Saint Loy;
And she was cleped Madame Eglentine.
Full well she sang the service divine,
Entuned in her nose full seemly;
And French she spake full fair and fetisly
After the school of Stratford atte Bow,
For French of Paris was to her unknow.
At meate was she well y-taught withal;
She let no morsel from her lippes fall,
Nor wet her fingers in her sauce deep.
Well could she carry a morsel, and well keep,
That no droppe ne fell upon her breast.
In courtesy was set full much her lest.
Her over-lippe wiped she so clean,
That in her cup there was no farthing seen
Of grease, when she drunken had her draught;
Full seemely after her meat she raught:
And sickerly she was of great disport,
And full pleasant, and amiable of port,
And pained her to counterfeite cheer

Of court, and be estately of mannere,
And to be holden digne of reverence.
But for to speaken of her conscience,
She was so charitable and so pitous,
She woulde weep if that she saw a mouse
Caught in a trap, if it were dead or bled.
Of smalle houndes had she, that she fed
With roasted flesh, and milk, and wastel bread.
But sore she wept if one of them were dead,
Or if men smote it with a yarde smart:
And all was conscience and tender heart.
Full seemly her wimple y-pinched was;
Her nose tretis; her eyen gray as glass;
Her mouth full small, and thereto soft and red;
But sickerly she had a fair forehead.
It was almost a spanne broad I trow;
For hardily she was not undergrow.
Full fetis was her cloak, as I was ware.
Of small coral about her arm she bare
A pair of beades, gauded all with green;
And thereon hung a brooch of gold full sheen,
On which was first y-written a crown'd A,
And after, Amor vincit omnia.
Another Nun also with her had she,
That was her chapelleine, and PRIESTES three.
A MONK there was, a fair for the mast'ry
An out-rider, that loved venery;
A manly man, to be an abbot able.
Full many a dainty horse had he in stable:
And when he rode, men might his bridle hear
Jingeling in a whistling wind as clear,
And eke as loud, as doth the chapel bell,
There as this lord was keeper of the cell.
The rule of Saint Maur and of Saint Benet,
Because that it was old and somedeal strait
This ilke monk let olde thinges pace,
And held after the newe world the trace.
He gave not of the text a pulled hen,
That saith, that hunters be not holy men:
Ne that a monk, when he is cloisterless;
Is like to a fish that is waterless;
This is to say, a monk out of his cloister.
This ilke text held he not worth an oyster;

And I say his opinion was good.
Why should he study, and make himselfe wood
Upon a book in cloister always pore,
Or swinken with his handes, and labour,
As Austin bid? how shall the world be served?
Let Austin have his swink to him reserved.
Therefore he was a prickasour aright:
Greyhounds he had as swift as fowl of flight;
Of pricking and of hunting for the hare
Was all his lust, for no cost would he spare.
I saw his sleeves purfil'd at the hand
With gris, and that the finest of the land.
And for to fasten his hood under his chin,
He had of gold y-wrought a curious pin;
A love-knot in the greater end there was.
His head was bald, and shone as any glass,
And eke his face, as it had been anoint;
He was a lord full fat and in good point;
His eyen steep, and rolling in his head,
That steamed as a furnace of a lead.
His bootes supple, his horse in great estate,
Now certainly he was a fair prelate;
He was not pale as a forpined gost:
A fat swan lov'd he best of any roast.
His palfrey was as brown as is a berry.
A FRIAR there was, a wanton and a merry,
A limitour a full solemne man.
In all the orders four is none that can
So much of dalliance and fair language.
He had y-made full many a marriage
Of younge women, at his owen cost.
Unto his order he was a noble post;
Full well belov'd, and familiar was he
With franklins over all in his country,
And eke with worthy women of the town:
For he had power of confession,
As said himselfe, more than a curate,
For of his order he was licentiate.
Full sweetely heard he confession,
And pleasant was his absolution.
He was an easy man to give penance,
There as he wist to have a good pittance:
For unto a poor order for to give

Is signe that a man is well y-shrive.
For if he gave, he durste make avant,
He wiste that the man was repentant.
For many a man so hard is of his heart,
He may not weep although him sore smart.
Therefore instead of weeping and prayeres,
Men must give silver to the poore freres.
His tippet was aye farsed full of knives
And pinnes, for to give to faire wives;
And certainly he had a merry note:
Well could he sing and playen on a rote;
Of yeddings he bare utterly the prize.
His neck was white as is the fleur-de-lis.
Thereto he strong was as a champion,
And knew well the taverns in every town.
And every hosteler and gay tapstere,
Better than a lazar or a beggere,
For unto such a worthy man as he
Accordeth not, as by his faculty,
To have with such lazars acquaintance.
It is not honest, it may not advance,
As for to deale with no such pouraille
But all with rich, and sellers of vitaille.
And ov'r all there as profit should arise,
Courteous he was, and lowly of service;
There n'as no man nowhere so virtuous.
He was the beste beggar in all his house:
And gave a certain farme for the grant,
None of his bretheren came in his haunt.
For though a widow hadde but one shoe,
So pleasant was his In Principio
Yet would he have a farthing ere he went;
His purchase was well better than his rent.
And rage he could and play as any whelp,
In lovedays there could he muchel help.
For there was he not like a cloisterer,
With threadbare cope as is a poor scholer;
But he was like a master or a pope.
Of double worsted was his semicope,
That rounded was as a bell out of press.
Somewhat he lisped for his wantonness,
To make his English sweet upon his tongue;
And in his harping, when that he had sung,

His eyen twinkled in his head aright,
As do the starres in a frosty night.
This worthy limitour was call'd Huberd.
A MERCHANT was there with a forked beard,
In motley, and high on his horse he sat,
Upon his head a Flandrish beaver hat.
His bootes clasped fair and fetisly.
His reasons aye spake he full solemnly,
Sounding alway th' increase of his winning.
He would the sea were kept for any thing
Betwixte Middleburg and Orewell
Well could he in exchange shieldes sell
This worthy man full well his wit beset;
There wiste no wight that he was in debt,
So estately was he of governance
With his bargains, and with his chevisance.
For sooth he was a worthy man withal,
But sooth to say, I n'ot how men him call.
A CLERK there was of Oxenford also,
That unto logic hadde long y-go.
As leane was his horse as is a rake,
And he was not right fat, I undertake;
But looked hollow, and thereto soberly.
Full threadbare was his overest courtepy,
For he had gotten him yet no benefice,
Ne was not worldly, to have an office.
For him was lever have at his bed's head
Twenty bookes, clothed in black or red,
Of Aristotle, and his philosophy,
Than robes rich, or fiddle, or psalt'ry.
But all be that he was a philosopher,
Yet hadde he but little gold in coffer,
But all that he might of his friendes hent,
On bookes and on learning he it spent,
And busily gan for the soules pray
Of them that gave him wherewith to scholay
Of study took he moste care and heed.
Not one word spake he more than was need;
And that was said in form and reverence,
And short and quick, and full of high sentence.
Sounding in moral virtue was his speech,
And gladly would he learn, and gladly teach.
A SERGEANT OF THE LAW, wary and wise,

That often had y-been at the Parvis,
There was also, full rich of excellence.
Discreet he was, and of great reverence:
He seemed such, his wordes were so wise,
Justice he was full often in assize,
By patent, and by plein commission;
For his science, and for his high renown,
Of fees and robes had he many one.
So great a purchaser was nowhere none.
All was fee simple to him, in effect
His purchasing might not be in suspect
Nowhere so busy a man as he there was
And yet he seemed busier than he was
In termes had he case' and doomes all
That from the time of King William were fall.
Thereto he could indite, and make a thing
There coulde no wight pinch at his writing.
And every statute coud he plain by rote
He rode but homely in a medley coat,
Girt with a seint of silk, with barres small;
Of his array tell I no longer tale.
A FRANKELIN was in this company;
White was his beard, as is the daisy.
Of his complexion he was sanguine.
Well lov'd he in the morn a sop in wine.
To liven in delight was ever his won,
For he was Epicurus' owen son,
That held opinion, that plein delight
Was verily felicity perfite.
An householder, and that a great, was he;
Saint Julian he was in his country.
His bread, his ale, was alway after one;
A better envined man was nowhere none;
Withoute bake-meat never was his house,
Of fish and flesh, and that so plenteous,
It snowed in his house of meat and drink,
Of alle dainties that men coulde think.
After the sundry seasons of the year,
So changed he his meat and his soupere.
Full many a fat partridge had he in mew,
And many a bream, and many a luce in stew
Woe was his cook, but if his sauce were
Poignant and sharp, and ready all his gear.

His table dormant in his hall alway
Stood ready cover'd all the longe day.
At sessions there was he lord and sire.
Full often time he was knight of the shire
An anlace, and a gipciere all of silk,
Hung at his girdle, white as morning milk.
A sheriff had he been, and a countour
Was nowhere such a worthy vavasour
An HABERDASHER, and a CARPENTER,
A WEBBE, a DYER, and a TAPISER,
Were with us eke, cloth'd in one livery,
Of a solemn and great fraternity.
Full fresh and new their gear y-picked was.
Their knives were y-chaped not with brass,
But all with silver wrought full clean and well,
Their girdles and their pouches every deal.
Well seemed each of them a fair burgess,
To sitten in a guild-hall, on the dais.
Evereach, for the wisdom that he can,
Was shapely for to be an alderman.
For chattels hadde they enough and rent,
And eke their wives would it well assent:
And elles certain they had been to blame.
It is full fair to be y-clep'd madame,
And for to go to vigils all before,
And have a mantle royally y-bore.
A COOK they hadde with them for the nones,
To boil the chickens and the marrow bones,
And powder merchant tart and galingale.
Well could he know a draught of London ale.
He could roast, and stew, and broil, and fry,
Make mortrewes, and well bake a pie.
But great harm was it, as it thoughte me,
That, on his shin a mormal hadde he.
For blanc manger, that made he with the best
A SHIPMAN was there, wonned far by West:
For ought I wot, be was of Dartemouth.
He rode upon a rouncey, as he couth,
All in a gown of falding to the knee.
A dagger hanging by a lace had he
About his neck under his arm adown;
The hot summer had made his hue all brown;
And certainly he was a good fellow.

Full many a draught of wine he had y-draw
From Bourdeaux-ward, while that the chapmen sleep;
Of nice conscience took he no keep.
If that he fought, and had the higher hand,
By water he sent them home to every land.
But of his craft to reckon well his tides,
His streames and his strandes him besides,
His herberow, his moon, and lodemanage,
There was none such, from Hull unto Carthage
Hardy he was, and wise, I undertake:
With many a tempest had his beard been shake.
He knew well all the havens, as they were,
From Scotland to the Cape of Finisterre,
And every creek in Bretagne and in Spain:
His barge y-cleped was the Magdelain.
With us there was a DOCTOR OF PHYSIC;
In all this worlde was there none him like
To speak of physic, and of surgery:
For he was grounded in astronomy.
He kept his patient a full great deal
In houres by his magic natural.
Well could he fortune the ascendent
Of his images for his patient.
He knew the cause of every malady,
Were it of cold, or hot, or moist, or dry,
And where engender'd, and of what humour.
He was a very perfect practisour
The cause y-know, and of his harm the root,
Anon he gave to the sick man his boot
Full ready had he his apothecaries,
To send his drugges and his lectuaries
For each of them made other for to win
Their friendship was not newe to begin
Well knew he the old Esculapius,
And Dioscorides, and eke Rufus;
Old Hippocras, Hali, and Gallien;
Serapion, Rasis, and Avicen;
Averrois, Damascene, and Constantin;
Bernard, and Gatisden, and Gilbertin.
Of his diet measurable was he,
For it was of no superfluity,
But of great nourishing, and digestible.
His study was but little on the Bible.

In sanguine and in perse he clad was all
Lined with taffeta, and with sendall.
And yet he was but easy of dispense:
He kept that he won in the pestilence.
For gold in physic is a cordial;
Therefore he loved gold in special.
A good WIFE was there OF beside BATH,
But she was somedeal deaf, and that was scath.
Of cloth-making she hadde such an haunt,
She passed them of Ypres, and of Gaunt.
In all the parish wife was there none,
That to the off ring before her should gon,
And if there did, certain so wroth was she,
That she was out of alle charity
Her coverchiefs were full fine of ground
I durste swear, they weighede ten pound
That on the Sunday were upon her head.
Her hosen weren of fine scarlet red,
Full strait y-tied, and shoes full moist and new
Bold was her face, and fair and red of hue.
She was a worthy woman all her live,
Husbands at the church door had she had five,
Withouten other company in youth;
But thereof needeth not to speak as nouth.
And thrice had she been at Jerusalem;
She hadde passed many a strange stream
At Rome she had been, and at Bologne,
In Galice at Saint James, and at Cologne;
She coude much of wand'rng by the Way.
Gat-toothed was she, soothly for to say.
Upon an ambler easily she sat,
Y-wimpled well, and on her head an hat
As broad as is a buckler or a targe.
A foot-mantle about her hippes large,
And on her feet a pair of spurres sharp.
In fellowship well could she laugh and carp
Of remedies of love she knew perchance
For of that art she coud the olde dance.
A good man there was of religion,
That was a poore PARSON of a town:
But rich he was of holy thought and werk.
He was also a learned man, a clerk,
That Christe's gospel truly woulde preach.

His parishens devoutly would he teach.
Benign he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversity full patient:
And such he was y-proved often sithes.
Full loth were him to curse for his tithes,
But rather would he given out of doubt,
Unto his poore parishens about,
Of his off ring, and eke of his substance.
He could in little thing have suffisance.
Wide was his parish, and houses far asunder,
But he ne left not, for no rain nor thunder,
In sickness and in mischief to visit
The farthest in his parish, much and lit,
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staff.
This noble ensample to his sheep he gaf,
That first he wrought, and afterward he taught.
Out of the gospel he the wordes caught,
And this figure he added yet thereto,
That if gold ruste, what should iron do?
For if a priest be foul, on whom we trust,
No wonder is a lewed man to rust:
And shame it is, if that a priest take keep,
To see a shitten shepherd and clean sheep:
Well ought a priest ensample for to give,
By his own cleanness, how his sheep should live.
He sette not his benefice to hire,
And left his sheep eucumber'd in the mire,
And ran unto London, unto Saint Paul's,
To seeke him a chantery for souls,
Or with a brotherhood to be withhold:
But dwelt at home, and kepte well his fold,
So that the wolf ne made it not miscarry.
He was a shepherd, and no mercenary.
And though he holy were, and virtuous,
He was to sinful men not dispitous
Nor of his speeche dangerous nor dign
But in his teaching discreet and benign.
To drawen folk to heaven, with fairness,
By good ensample, was his business:
But it were any person obstinate,
What so he were of high or low estate,
Him would he snibbe sharply for the nones.
A better priest I trow that nowhere none is.

He waited after no pomp nor reverence,
Nor maked him a spiced conscience,
But Christe's lore, and his apostles' twelve,
He taught, and first he follow'd it himselve.
With him there was a PLOUGHMAN, was his brother,
That had y-laid of dung full many a fother.
A true swinker and a good was he,
Living in peace and perfect charity.
God loved he beste with all his heart
At alle times, were it gain or smart,
And then his neighebour right as himselve.
He woulde thresh, and thereto dike, and delve,
For Christe's sake, for every poore wight,
Withouten hire, if it lay in his might.
His tithes payed he full fair and well,
Both of his proper swink, and his chattel
In a tabard he rode upon a mare.
There was also a Reeve, and a Millere,
A Sompnour, and a Pardoner also,
A Manciple, and myself, there were no mo'.
The MILLER was a stout carle for the nones,
Full big he was of brawn, and eke of bones;
That proved well, for ov'r all where he came,
At wrestling he would bear away the ram.
He was short-shouldered, broad, a thicke gnarr,
There was no door, that he n'old heave off bar,
Or break it at a running with his head.
His beard as any sow or fox was red,
And thereto broad, as though it were a spade.
Upon the cop right of his nose he had head
A wart, and thereon stood a tuft of hairs
Red as the bristles of a sowe's ears.
His nose-thirles blacke were and wide.
A sword and buckler bare he by his side.
His mouth as wide was as a furnace.
He was a jangler, and a goliardais,
And that was most of sin and harlotries.
Well could he steale corn, and tolle thrice
And yet he had a thumb of gold, pardie.
A white coat and a blue hood weared he
A baggepipe well could he blow and soun',
And therewithal he brought us out of town.
A gentle MANCIPILE was there of a temple,

Of which achatours mighte take ensample
For to be wise in buying of vitaille.
For whether that he paid, or took by taile,
Algate he waited so in his achate,
That he was aye before in good estate.
Now is not that of God a full fair grace
That such a lewed mannes wit shall pace
The wisdom of an heap of learned men?
Of masters had he more than thries ten,
That were of law expert and curious:
Of which there was a dozen in that house,
Worthy to be stewards of rent and land
Of any lord that is in Engleland,
To make him live by his proper good,
In honour debtless, but if he were wood,
Or live as scarcely as him list desire;
And able for to helpen all a shire
In any case that mighte fall or hap;
And yet this Manciple set their aller cap
The REEVE was a slender choleric man
His beard was shav'd as nigh as ever he can.
His hair was by his eares round y-shorn;
His top was docked like a priest befor
Full longe were his legges, and full lean
Y-like a staff, there was no calf y-seen
Well could he keep a garner and a bin
There was no auditor could on him win
Well wist he by the drought, and by the rain,
The yielding of his seed and of his grain
His lorde's sheep, his neat, and his dairy
His swine, his horse, his store, and his poultry,
Were wholly in this Reeve's governing,
And by his cov'nant gave he reckoning,
Since that his lord was twenty year of age;
There could no man bring him in arrearage
There was no bailiff, herd, nor other hine
That he ne knew his sleight and his covine
They were adrad of him, as of the death
His wonnin was full fair upon an heath
With greene trees y-shadow'd was his place.
He coulde better than his lord purchase
Full rich he was y-stored privily
His lord well could he please subtilly,

To give and lend him of his owen good,
And have a thank, and yet a coat and hood.
In youth he learned had a good mistere
He was a well good wright, a carpentere
This Reeve sate upon a right good stot,
That was all pomel gray, and highte Scot.
A long surcoat of perse upon he had,
And by his side he bare a rusty blade.
Of Norfolk was this Reeve, of which I tell,
Beside a town men clepen Baldeswell,
Tucked he was, as is a friar, about,
And ever rode the hinderest of the rout.
A SOMPNOUR was there with us in that place,
That had a fire-red cherubennes face,
For sausefleme he was, with eyen narrow.
As hot he was and lecherous as a sparrow,
With scalled browes black, and pilled beard:
Of his visage children were sore afeard.
There n'as quicksilver, litharge, nor brimstone,
Boras, ceruse, nor oil of tartar none,
Nor ointement that woulde cleanse or bite,
That him might helpen of his whelkes white,
Nor of the knobbes sitting on his cheeks.
Well lov'd he garlic, onions, and leeks,
And for to drink strong wine as red as blood.
Then would he speak, and cry as he were wood;
And when that he well drunken had the wine,
Then would he speake no word but Latin.
A fewe termes knew he, two or three,
That he had learned out of some decree;
No wonder is, he heard it all the day.
And eke ye knowen well, how that a jay
Can clepen "Wat," as well as can the Pope.
But whoso would in other thing him grope
Then had he spent all his philosophy,
Aye, *Questio quid juris*, would he cry.
He was a gentle harlot and a kind;
A better fellow should a man not find.
He woulde suffer, for a quart of wine,
A good fellow to have his concubine
A twelvemonth, and excuse him at the full.
Full privily a finch eke could he pull.
And if he found owhere a good fellow,

He woulde teache him to have none awe
In such a case of the archdeacon's curse;
But if a manne's soul were in his purse;
For in his purse he should y-punished be.
"Purse is the archdeacon's hell," said he.
But well I wot, he lied right indeed:
Of cursing ought each guilty man to dread,
For curse will slay right as assoiling saveth;
And also 'ware him of a significavit.
In danger had he at his owen guise
The younge girles of the diocese,
And knew their counsel, and was of their rede.
A garland had he set upon his head,
As great as it were for an alestake:
A buckler had he made him of a cake.
With him there rode a gentle PARDONERE
Of Ronceval, his friend and his compere,
That straight was comen from the court of Rome.
Full loud he sang, "Come hither, love, to me"
This Sompnour bare to him a stiff burdoun,
Was never trump of half so great a soun.
This Pardoner had hair as yellow as wax,
But smooth it hung, as doth a strike of flax:
By ounces hung his lockes that he had,
And therewith he his shoulders oversprad.
Full thin it lay, by culpons one and one,
But hood for jollity, he weared none,
For it was trussed up in his wallet.
Him thought he rode all of the newe get,
Dishevel, save his cap, he rode all bare.
Such glaring eyen had he, as an hare.
A vernicle had he sew'd upon his cap.
His wallet lay before him in his lap,
Bretful of pardon come from Rome all hot.
A voice he had as small as hath a goat.
No beard had he, nor ever one should have.
As smooth it was as it were new y-shave;
I trow he were a gelding or a mare.
But of his craft, from Berwick unto Ware,
Ne was there such another pardonere.
For in his mail he had a pillowbere,
Which, as he saide, was our Lady's veil:
He said, he had a gobbet of the sail

That Sainte Peter had, when that he went
Upon the sea, till Jesus Christ him hent.
He had a cross of latoun full of stones,
And in a glass he hadde pigge's bones.
But with these relics, whenne that he fond
A poore parson dwelling upon lond,
Upon a day he got him more money
Than that the parson got in moneths tway;
And thus with feigned flattering and japes,
He made the parson and the people his apes.
But truely to tellen at the last,
He was in church a noble ecclesiast.
Well could he read a lesson or a story,
But alderbest he sang an offertory:
For well he wiste, when that song was sung,
He muste preach, and well afile his tongue,
To winne silver, as he right well could:
Therefore he sang full merrily and loud.
Now have I told you shortly in a clause
Th' estate, th' array, the number, and eke the cause
Why that assembled was this company
In Southwark at this gentle hostelry,
That highte the Tabard, fast by the Bell.
But now is time to you for to tell
How that we baren us that ilke night,
When we were in that hostelry alight.
And after will I tell of our voyage,
And all the remnant of our pilgrimage.
But first I pray you of your courtesy,
That ye arette it not my villainy,
Though that I plainly speak in this matter.
To tellen you their wordes and their cheer;
Not though I speak their wordes properly.
For this ye knowen all so well as I,
Whoso shall tell a tale after a man,
He must rehearse, as nigh as ever he can,
Every word, if it be in his charge,
All speak he ne'er so rudely and so large;
Or elles he must tell his tale untrue,
Or feigne things, or finde wordes new.
He may not spare, although he were his brother;
He must as well say one word as another.
Christ spake Himself full broad in Holy Writ,

And well ye wot no villainy is it.
Eke Plato saith, whoso that can him read,
The wordes must be cousin to the deed.
Also I pray you to forgive it me,
All have I not set folk in their degree,
Here in this tale, as that they shoulde stand:
My wit is short, ye may well understand.
Great cheere made our Host us every one,
And to the supper set he us anon:
And served us with victual of the best.
Strong was the wine, and well to drink us lest.
A seemly man Our Hoste was withal
For to have been a marshal in an hall.
A large man he was with eyen steep,
A fairer burgess is there none in Cheap:
Bold of his speech, and wise and well y-taught,
And of manhoode lacked him right naught.
Eke thereto was he right a merry man,
And after supper playen he began,
And spake of mirth amonges other things,
When that we hadde made our reckonings;
And saide thus; "Now, lordinges, truly
Ye be to me welcome right heartily:
For by my troth, if that I shall not lie,
I saw not this year such a company
At once in this herberow, am is now.
Fain would I do you mirth, an I wist how.
And of a mirth I am right now bethought.
To do you ease, and it shall coste nought.
Ye go to Canterbury; God you speed,
The blissful Martyr quite you your meed;
And well I wot, as ye go by the way,
Ye shapen you to talken and to play:
For truely comfort nor mirth is none
To ride by the way as dumb as stone:
And therefore would I make you disport,
As I said erst, and do you some comfort.
And if you liketh all by one assent
Now for to standen at my judgement,
And for to worken as I shall you say
To-morrow, when ye riden on the way,
Now by my father's soule that is dead,
But ye be merry, smiteth off mine head.

Hold up your hands without more speech.”
Our counsel was not longe for to seech:
Us thought it was not worth to make it wise,
And granted him without more advise,
And bade him say his verdict, as him lest.
“Lordings (quoth he), now hearken for the best;
But take it not, I pray you, in disdain;
This is the point, to speak it plat and plain.
That each of you, to shorten with your way
In this voyage, shall tellen tales tway,
To Canterbury-ward, I mean it so,
And homeward he shall tellen other two,
Of adventures that whilom have befall.
And which of you that bear’th him best of all,
That is to say, that telleth in this case
Tales of best sentence and most solace,
Shall have a supper at your aller cost
Here in this place, sitting by this post,
When that ye come again from Canterbury.
And for to make you the more merry,
I will myselve gladly with you ride,
Right at mine owen cost, and be your guide.
And whoso will my judgement withsay,
Shall pay for all we spenden by the way.
And if ye vouchesafe that it be so,
Tell me anon without wordes mo’,
And I will early shape me therefore.”
This thing was granted, and our oath we swore
With full glad heart, and prayed him also,
That he would vouchesafe for to do so,
And that he would be our governour,
And of our tales judge and reportour,
And set a supper at a certain price;
And we will ruled be at his device,
In high and low: and thus by one assent,
We be accorded to his judgement.
And thereupon the wine was fet anon.
We drunken, and to reste went each one,
Withouten any longer tarrying
A-morrow, when the day began to spring,
Up rose our host, and was our aller cock,
And gather’d us together in a flock,
And forth we ridden all a little space,

Unto the watering of Saint Thomas:
 And there our host began his horse arrest,
 And saide; “Lordes, hearken if you lest.
 Ye weet your forword, and I it record.
 If even-song and morning-song accord,
 Let see now who shall telle the first tale.
 As ever may I drinke wine or ale,
 Whoso is rebel to my judgement,
 Shall pay for all that by the way is spent.
 Now draw ye cuts ere that ye farther twin.
 He which that hath the shortest shall begin.”
 “Sir Knight (quoth he), my master and my lord,
 Now draw the cut, for that is mine accord.
 Come near (quoth he), my Lady Prioress,
 And ye, Sir Clerk, let be your shamefastness,
 Nor study not: lay hand to, every man.”
 Anon to drawen every wight began,
 And shortly for to tellen as it was,
 Were it by a venture, or sort, or cas,
 The sooth is this, the cut fell to the Knight,
 Of which full blithe and glad was every wight;
 And tell he must his tale as was reason,
 By forword, and by composition,
 As ye have heard; what needeth wordes mo’?
 And when this good man saw that it was so,
 As he that wise was and obedient
 To keep his forword by his free assent,
 He said; “Sithen I shall begin this game,
 Why, welcome be the cut in Godde’s name.
 Now let us ride, and hearken what I say.”
 And with that word we ridden forth our way;
 And he began with right a merry cheer
 His tale anon, and said as ye shall hear.

The Miller’s Tale

THE PROLOGUE

When that the Knight had thus his tale told
 In all the rout was neither young nor old,
 That he not said it was a noble story,
 And worthy to be drawn to memory;
 And namely the gentles every one.
 Our Host then laugh’d and swore, “So may I gon,
 This goes aright; unbuckled is the mail;

Let see now who shall tell another tale:
For truly this game is well begun.
Now telleth ye, Sir Monk, if that ye conne,
Somewhat, to quiten with the Knighte's tale."
The Miller that fordrunken was all pale,
So that unnethes upon his horse he sat,
He would avalen neither hood nor hat,
Nor abide no man for his courtesy,
But in Pilate's voice he gan to cry,
And swore by armes, and by blood, and bones,
"I can a noble tale for the nones,
With which I will now quite the Knighte's tale."
Our Host saw well how drunk he was of ale,
And said; "Robin, abide, my leve brother,
Some better man shall tell us first another:
Abide, and let us worke thriftily."
By Godde's soul," quoth he, "that will not I,
For I will speak, or elles go my way!"
Our Host answer'd; "Tell on a devil way;
Thou art a fool; thy wit is overcome."
"Now hearken," quoth the Miller, "all and some:
But first I make a protestatioun.
That I am drunk, I know it by my soun':
And therefore if that I misspeak or say,
Wite it the ale of Southwark, I you pray:
For I will tell a legend and a life
Both of a carpenter and of his wife,
How that a clerk hath set the wrighte's cap."
The Reeve answer'd and saide, "Stint thy clap,
Let be thy lewed drunken harlotry.
It is a sin, and eke a great folly
To apeiren any man, or him defame,
And eke to bringe wives in evil name.
Thou may'st enough of other thinges sayn."
This drunken Miller spake full soon again,
And saide, "Leve brother Osewold,
Who hath no wife, he is no cuckold.
But I say not therefore that thou art one;
There be full goode wives many one.
Why art thou angry with my tale now?
I have a wife, pardie, as well as thou,
Yet n'old I, for the oxen in my plough,
Taken upon me more than enough,

To deemen of myself that I am one;
 I will believe well that I am none.
 An husband should not be inquisitive
 Of Godde's privity, nor of his wife.
 So he may finde Godde's foison there,
 Of the remnant needeth not to enquire."
 What should I more say, but that this Millere
 He would his wordes for no man forbear,
 But told his churlish tale in his mannere;
 Me thinketh, that I shall rehearse it here.
 And therefore every gentle wight I pray,
 For Godde's love to deem not that I say
 Of evil intent, but that I must rehearse
 Their tales all, be they better or worse,
 Or elles falsen some of my mattere.
 And therefore whoso list it not to hear,
 Turn o'er the leaf, and choose another tale;
 For he shall find enough, both great and smale,
 Of storial thing that toucheth gentiless,
 And eke morality and holiness.
 Blame not me, if that ye choose amiss.
 The Miller is a churl, ye know well this,
 So was the Reeve, with many other mo',
 And harlotry they tolde bothe two.
 Advise you now, and put me out of blame;
 And eke men should not make earnest of game.

THE TALE

Whilom there was dwelling in Oxenford
 A riche gnof, that guestes held to board,
 And of his craft he was a carpenter.
 With him there was dwelling a poor scholer,
 Had learned art, but all his fantasy
 Was turned for to learn astrology.
 He coude a certain of conclusions
 To deeme by interrogations,
 If that men asked him in certain hours,
 When that men should have drought or elles show'rs:
 Or if men asked him what shoulde fall
 Of everything, I may not reckon all.
 This clerk was called Hendy Nicholas;
 Of derne love he knew and of solace;
 And therewith he was sly and full privy,

And like a maiden meek for to see.
A chamber had he in that hostelry
Alone, withouten any company,
Full fetisly y-dight with herbes swoot,
And he himself was sweet as is the root
Of liquorice, or any setewall.
His Almagest, and bookes great and small,
His astrolabe, belonging to his art,
His augrim stones, layed fair apart
On shelves couched at his bedde's head,
His press y-cover'd with a falding red.
And all above there lay a gay psalt'ry
On which he made at nightes melody,
So sweetely, that all the chamber rang:
And Angelus ad virginem he sang.
And after that he sung the kinge's note;
Full often blessed was his merry throat.
And thus this sweete clerk his time spent
After his friendes finding and his rent.

This carpenter had wedded new a wife,
Which that he loved more than his life:
Of eighteen year, I guess, she was of age.
Jealous he was, and held her narr'w in cage,
For she was wild and young, and he was old,
And deemed himself belike a cuckold.
He knew not Cato, for his wit was rude,
That bade a man wed his similitude.
Men shoulde wedden after their estate,
For youth and eld are often at debate.
But since that he was fallen in the snare,
He must endure (as other folk) his care.
Fair was this younge wife, and therewithal
As any weasel her body gent and small.
A seint she weared, barred all of silk,
A barm-cloth eke as white as morning milk
Upon her lendes, full of many a gore.
White was her smock, and broider'd all before,
And eke behind, on her collar about
Of coal-black silk, within and eke without.
The tapes of her white volupere
Were of the same suit of her collere;
Her fillet broad of silk, and set full high:

And sickerly she had a likerous eye.
Full small y-pulled were her browes two,
And they were bent, and black as any sloe.
She was well more blissful on to see
Than is the newe perjenete tree;
And softer than the wool is of a wether.
And by her girdle hung a purse of leather,
Tassel'd with silk, and pearled with latoun.
In all this world to seeken up and down
There is no man so wise, that coude thenche
So gay a popelot, or such a wench.
Full brighter was the shining of her hue,
Than in the Tower the noble forged new.
But of her song, it was as loud and yern,
As any swallow chittering on a bern.
Thereto she coulde skip, and make a game
As any kid or calf following his dame.
Her mouth was sweet as braket, or as methe
Or hoard of apples, laid in hay or heath.
Wincing she was as is a jolly colt,
Long as a mast, and upright as a bolt.
A brooch she bare upon her low collere,
As broad as is the boss of a bucklere.
Her shoon were laced on her legges high;
She was a primerole, a piggesnie,
For any lord t' have ligging in his bed,
Or yet for any good yeoman to wed.
Now, sir, and eft sir, so befell the case,
That on a day this Hendy Nicholas
Fell with this younge wife to rage and play,
While that her husband was at Oseney,
As clerkes be full subtle and full quaint.
And privily he caught her by the queint,
And said; "Y-wis, but if I have my will,
For derne love of thee, leman, I spill."
And helde her fast by the haunche bones,
And saide "Leman, love me well at once,
Or I will dien, all so God me save."
And she sprang as a colt doth in the trave
And with her head she writhed fast away,
And said; "I will not kiss thee, by my fay.
Why let be," quoth she, "let be, Nicholas,
Or I will cry out harow and alas!

Do away your handes, for your courtesy.”
This Nicholas gan mercy for to cry,
And spake so fair, and proffer’d him so fast,
That she her love him granted at the last,
And swore her oath by Saint Thomas of Kent,
That she would be at his commandement,
When that she may her leisure well espy.
“My husband is so full of jealousy,
That but ye waite well, and be privy,
I wot right well I am but dead,” quoth she.
“Ye muste be full derne as in this case.”
“Nay, thereof care thee nought,” quoth Nicholas:
“A clerk had litherly beset his while,
But if he could a carpenter beguile.”
And thus they were accorded and y-sworn
To wait a time, as I have said befor.
When Nicholas had done thus every deal,
And thwacked her about the lendes well,
He kiss’d her sweet, and taketh his psalt’ry
And playeth fast, and maketh melody.

Then fell it thus, that to the parish church,
Of Christe’s owen workes for to wirch,
This good wife went upon a holy day;
Her forehead shone as bright as any day,
So was it washen, when she left her werk.
Now was there of that church a parish clerk,
The which that was y-cleped Absolon.
Curl’d was his hair, and as the gold it shone,
And strutted as a fanne large and broad;
Full straight and even lay his jolly shode.
His rode was red, his eyen grey as goose,
With Paule’s windows carven on his shoes
In hosen red he went full fetisly.
Y-clad he was full small and properly,
All in a kirtle of a light waget;
Full fair and thicke be the pointes set,
And thereupon he had a gay surplice,
As white as is the blossom on the rise.
A merry child he was, so God me save;
Well could he letten blood, and clip, and shave,
And make a charter of land, and a quittance.
In twenty manners could he trip and dance,

After the school of Oxenforde tho,
And with his legges caste to and fro;
And playen songes on a small ribible;
Thereto he sung sometimes a loud quible
And as well could he play on a gitern.
In all the town was brewhouse nor tavern,
That he not visited with his solas,
There as that any garnard tapstere was.
But sooth to say he was somedeal squaimous
Of farting, and of speeche dangerous.
This Absolon, that jolly was and gay,
Went with a censer on the holy day,
Censing the wives of the parish fast;
And many a lovely look he on them cast,
And namely on this carpenter's wife:
To look on her him thought a merry life.
She was so proper, and sweet, and likerous.
I dare well say, if she had been a mouse,
And he a cat, he would her hent anon.
This parish clerk, this jolly Absolon,
Hath in his hearte such a love-longing!
That of no wife took he none offering;
For courtesy he said he woulde none.
The moon at night full clear and brighte shone,
And Absolon his gitern hath y-taken,
For paramours he thoughte for to waken,
And forth he went, jolif and amorous,
Till he came to the carpentere's house,
A little after the cock had y-crow,
And dressed him under a shot window,
That was upon the carpentere's wall.
He singeth in his voice gentle and small;
"Now, dear lady, if thy will be,
I pray that ye will rue on me;"
Full well accordant to his giterning.
This carpenter awoke, and heard him sing,
And spake unto his wife, and said anon,
What Alison, hear'st thou not Absolon,
That chanteth thus under our bower wall?"
And she answer'd her husband therewithal;
"Yes, God wot, John, I hear him every deal."
This passeth forth; what will ye bet than well?
From day to day this jolly Absolon

So wooeth her, that him is woebegone.
He waketh all the night, and all the day,
To comb his lockes broad, and make him gay.
He wooeth her by means and by brocage,
And swore he woulde be her owen page.
He singeth brokking as a nightingale.
He sent her piment mead, and spiced ale,
And wafers piping hot out of the glede:
And, for she was of town, he proffer'd meed.
For some folk will be wonnen for richness,
And some for strokes, and some with gentiless.
Sometimes, to show his lightness and mast'ry,
He playeth Herod on a scaffold high.
But what availeth him as in this case?
So loveth she the Hendy Nicholas,
That Absolon may blow the bucke's horn:
He had for all his labour but a scorn.
And thus she maketh Absolon her ape,
And all his earnest turneth to a jape.
Full sooth is this proverb, it is no lie;
Men say right thus alway; the nighe sly
Maketh oft time the far lief to be loth.
For though that Absolon be wood or wroth
Because that he far was from her sight,
This nigh Nicholas stood still in his light.
Now bear thee well, thou Hendy Nicholas,
For Absolon may wail and sing "Alas!"
And so befell, that on a Saturday
This carpenter was gone to Oseney,
And Hendy Nicholas and Alison
Accorded were to this conclusion,
That Nicholas shall shape him a wile
The silly jealous husband to beguile;
And if so were the game went aright,
She shoulde sleepen in his arms all night;
For this was her desire and his also.
And right anon, withoute wordes mo',
This Nicholas no longer would he tarry,
But doth full soft unto his chamber carry
Both meat and drinke for a day or tway.
And to her husband bade her for to say,
If that he asked after Nicholas,
She shoulde say, "She wist not where he was;

Of all the day she saw him not with eye;
She trowed he was in some malady,
For no cry that her maiden could him call
He would answer, for nought that might befall.”
Thus passed forth all thilke Saturday,
That Nicholas still in his chamber lay,
And ate, and slept, and didde what him list
Till Sunday, that the sunne went to rest.
This silly carpenter had great marvaill
Of Nicholas, or what thing might him ail,
And said; “I am adrad, by Saint Thomas!
It standeth not aright with Nicholas:
God shielde that he died suddenly.
This world is now full fickle sickerly.
I saw to-day a corpse y-borne to chirch,
That now on Monday last I saw him wirch.
“Go up,” quod he unto his knave, “anon;
Clepe at his door, or knocke with a stone:
Look how it is, and tell me boldely.”
This knave went him up full sturdily,
And, at the chamber door while that he stood,
He cried and knocked as that he were wood:
“What how? what do ye, Master Nicholay?
How may ye sleepen all the longe day?”
But all for nought, he hearde not a word.
An hole he found full low upon the board,
Where as the cat was wont in for to creep,
And at that hole he looked in full deep,
And at the last he had of him a sight.
This Nicholas sat ever gaping upright,
As he had kyked on the newe moon.
Adown he went, and told his master soon,
In what array he saw this ilke man.
This carpenter to blissen him began,
And said: “Now help us, Sainte Frideswide.
A man wot little what shall him betide.
This man is fall’n with his astronomy
Into some woodness or some agony.
I thought aye well how that it shoulde be.
Men should know nought of Godde’s privity.
Yea, blessed be alway a lewed man,
That nought but only his believe can.
So far’d another clerk with astronomy:

He walked in the fieldes for to pry
Upon the starres, what there should befall,
Till he was in a marle pit y-fall.
He saw not that. But yet, by Saint Thomas!
Me rueth sore of Hendy Nicholas:
He shall be rated of his studying,
If that I may, by Jesus, heaven's king!
Get me a staff, that I may underspore
While that thou, Robin, hevest off the door:
He shall out of his studying, as I guess."
And to the chamber door he gan him dress
His knave was a strong carl for the nonce,
And by the hasp he heav'd it off at once;
Into the floor the door fell down anon.
This Nicholas sat aye as still as stone,
And ever he gap'd upward into the air.
The carpenter ween'd he were in despair,
And hent him by the shoulders mightily,
And shook him hard, and cried spitously;
"What, Nicholas? what how, man? look adown:
Awake, and think on Christe's passioun.
I crouche thee from elves, and from wights.
Therewith the night-spell said he anon rights,
On the four halves of the house about,
And on the threshold of the door without.
"Lord Jesus Christ, and Sainte Benedight,
Blesse this house from every wicked wight,
From the night mare, the white Pater-noster;
Where wonnest thou now, Sainte Peter's sister?"
And at the last this Hendy Nicholas
Gan for to sigh full sore, and said; "Alas!
Shall all time world be lost eftsoones now?"
This carpenter answer'd; "What sayest thou?
What? think on God, as we do, men that swink."
This Nicholas answer'd; "Fetch me a drink;
And after will I speak in privy
Of certain thing that toucheth thee and me:
I will tell it no other man certain."
This carpenter went down, and came again,
And brought of mighty ale a large quart;
And when that each of them had drunk his part,
This Nicholas his chamber door fast shet,
And down the carpenter by him he set,

And saide; "John, mine host full lief and dear,
Thou shalt upon thy truthe swear me here,
That to no wight thou shalt my counsel wray:
For it is Christes counsel that I say,
And if thou tell it man, thou art forlore:
For this vengeance thou shalt have therefor,
That if thou wraye me, thou shalt be wood."
"Nay, Christ forbid it for his holy blood!"
Quoth then this silly man; "I am no blab,
Nor, though I say it, am I lief to gab.
Say what thou wilt, I shall it never tell
To child or wife, by him that harried Hell."
"Now, John," quoth Nicholas, "I will not lie,
I have y-found in my astrology,
As I have looked in the moone bright,
That now on Monday next, at quarter night,
Shall fall a rain, and that so wild and wood, mad
That never half so great was Noe's flood.
This world," he said, "in less than half an hour
Shall all be dreint, so hideous is the shower:
Thus shall mankinde drench, and lose their life."
This carpenter answer'd; "Alas, my wife!
And shall she drench? alas, mine Alisoun!"
For sorrow of this he fell almost adown,
And said; "Is there no remedy in this case?"
"Why, yes, for God," quoth Hendy Nicholas;
"If thou wilt worken after lore and rede;
Thou may'st not worken after thine own head.
For thus saith Solomon, that was full true:
Work all by counsel, and thou shalt not rue.
And if thou worke wilt by good counsel,
I undertake, withoute mast or sail,
Yet shall I save her, and thee, and me.
Hast thou not heard how saved was Noe,
When that our Lord had warned him befor,
That all the world with water should be lorn?"
"Yes," quoth this carpenter, "full yore ago."
"Hast thou not heard," quoth Nicholas, "also
The sorrow of Noe, with his fellowship,
That he had ere he got his wife to ship?
Him had been lever, I dare well undertake,
At thilke time, than all his wethers black,
That she had had a ship herself alone.

And therefore know'st thou what is best to be done?
This asketh haste, and of an hasty thing
Men may not preach or make tarrying.
Anon go get us fast into this inn
A kneading trough, or else a kemelin,
For each of us; but look that they be large,
In whiche we may swim as in a barge:
And have therein vitaille suffisant
But for one day; fie on the remenant;
The water shall aslake and go away
Aboute prime upon the nexte day.
But Robin may not know of this, thy knave,
Nor eke thy maiden Gill I may not save:
Ask me not why: for though thou aske me
I will not telle Godde's privity.
Sufficeth thee, but if thy wit be mad,
To have as great a grace as Noe had;
Thy wife shall I well saven out of doubt.
Go now thy way, and speed thee hereabout.
But when thou hast for her, and thee, and me,
Y-gotten us these kneading tubbes three,
Then shalt thou hang them in the roof full high,
So that no man our purveyance espy:
And when thou hast done thus as I have said,
And hast our vitaille fair in them y-laid,
And eke an axe to smite the cord in two
When that the water comes, that we may go,
And break an hole on high upon the gable
Into the garden-ward, over the stable,
That we may freely passe forth our way,
When that the greate shower is gone away.
Then shalt thou swim as merry, I undertake,
As doth the white duck after her drake:
Then will I clepe, 'How, Alison? How, John?
Be merry: for the flood will pass anon.'
And thou wilt say, 'Hail, Master Nicholay,
Good-morrow, I see thee well, for it is day.'
And then shall we be lordes all our life
Of all the world, as Noe and his wife.
But of one thing I warne thee full right,
Be well advised, on that ilke night,
When we be enter'd into shippe's board,
That none of us not speak a single word,

Nor clepe nor cry, but be in his prayere,
For that is Godde's owen heste dear.
Thy wife and thou must hangen far atween,
For that betwixte you shall be no sin,
No more in looking than there shall in deed.
This ordinance is said: go, God thee speed
To-morrow night, when men be all asleep,
Into our kneading tubbes will we creep,
And sitte there, abiding Godde's grace.
Go now thy way, I have no longer space
To make of this no longer sermoning:
Men say thus: Send the wise, and say nothing:
Thou art so wise, it needeth thee nought teach.
Go, save our lives, and that I thee beseech."
This silly carpenter went forth his way,
Full oft he said, "Alas! and Well-a-day!"
And to his wife he told his privy,
And she was ware, and better knew than he
What all this quainte cast was for to say.
But natheless she fear'd as she would dey,
And said: "Alas! go forth thy way anon.
Help us to scape, or we be dead each one.
I am thy true and very wedded wife;
Go, deare spouse, and help to save our life."
Lo, what a great thing is affection!
Men may die of imagination,
So deeply may impression be take.
This silly carpenter begins to quake:
He thinketh verily that he may see
This newe flood come weltering as the sea
To drenchen Alison, his honey dear.
He weepeth, wailleth, maketh sorry cheer;
He sigheth, with full many a sorry sough.
He go'th, and getteth him a kneading trough,
And after that a tub, and a kemelin,
And privily he sent them to his inn:
And hung them in the roof full privily.
With his own hand then made he ladders three,
To climbe by the ranges and the stalks
Unto the tubbes hanging in the balks;
And victualed them, kemelin, trough, and tub,
With bread and cheese, and good ale in a jub,
Sufficing right enough as for a day.

But ere that he had made all this array,
He sent his knave, and eke his wench also,
Upon his need to London for to go.
And on the Monday, when it drew to night,
He shut his door withoute candle light,
And dressed every thing as it should be.
And shortly up they climbed all the three.
They satte stille well a furlong way.
“Now, Pater noster, clum,” said Nicholay,
And “clum,” quoth John; and “clum,” said Alison:
This carpenter said his devotion,
And still he sat and bided his prayere,
Awaking on the rain, if he it hear.
The deade sleep, for weary business,
Fell on this carpenter, right as I guess,
About the curfew-time, or little more,
For travail of his ghost he groaned sore,
And eft he routed, for his head mislay.
Adown the ladder stalked Nicholay;
And Alison full soft adown she sped.
Withoute wordes more they went to bed,
There as the carpenter was wont to lie:
There was the revel, and the melody.
And thus lay Alison and Nicholas,
In business of mirth and in solace,
Until the bell of laudes gan to ring,
And friars in the chancel went to sing.
This parish clerk, this amorous Absolon,
That is for love alway so woebegone,
Upon the Monday was at Oseney
With company, him to disport and play;
And asked upon cas a cloisterer
Full privily after John the carpenter;
And he drew him apart out of the church,
And said, “I n’ot; I saw him not here wirch
Since Saturday; I trow that he be went
For timber, where our abbot hath him sent.
And dwellen at the Grange a day or two:
For he is wont for timber for to go,
Or else he is at his own house certain.
Where that he be, I cannot soothly sayn.”
This Absolon full jolly was and light,
And thought, “Now is the time to wake all night,

For sickerly I saw him not stirring
About his door, since day began to spring.
So may I thrive, but I shall at cock crow
Full privily go knock at his window,
That stands full low upon his bower wall:
To Alison then will I tellen all
My love-longing; for I shall not miss
That at the leaste way I shall her kiss.
Some manner comfort shall I have, parfay,
My mouth hath itched all this livelong day:
That is a sign of kissing at the least.
All night I mette eke I was at a feast.
Therefore I will go sleep an hour or tway,
And all the night then will I wake and play.”
When that the first cock crowed had, anon
Up rose this jolly lover Absolon,
And him arrayed gay, at point devise.
But first he chewed grains and liquorice,
To smelle sweet, ere he had combed his hair.
Under his tongue a true love he bare,
For thereby thought he to be gracious.
Then came he to the carpentere’s house,
And still he stood under the shot window;
Unto his breast it raught, it was so low;
And soft he coughed with a semisoun’.
“What do ye, honeycomb, sweet Alisoun?
My faire bird, my sweet cinamome,
Awaken, leman mine, and speak to me.
Full little thinke ye upon my woe,
That for your love I sweat there as I go.
No wonder is that I do swelt and sweat.
I mourn as doth a lamb after the teat
Y-wis, leman, I have such love-longing,
That like a turtle true is my mourning.
I may not eat, no more than a maid.”
“Go from the window, thou jack fool,” she said:
“As help me God, it will not be, ‘come ba me.’
I love another, else I were to blame”,
Well better than thee, by Jesus, Absolon.
Go forth thy way, or I will cast a stone;
And let me sleep; a twenty devil way.
“Alas!” quoth Absolon, “and well away!
That true love ever was so ill beset:

Then kiss me, since that it may be no bet,
For Jesus' love, and for the love of me."
"Wilt thou then go thy way therewith?" quoth she.
"Yea, certes, leman," quoth this Absolon.
"Then make thee ready," quoth she, "I come anon."
[And unto Nicholas she said full still:
"Now peace, and thou shalt laugh anon thy fill."]
This Absolon down set him on his knees,
And said; "I am a lord at all degrees:
For after this I hope there cometh more;
Leman, thy grace, and, sweete bird, thine ore."
The window she undid, and that in haste.
"Have done," quoth she, "come off, and speed thee fast,
Lest that our neighebours should thee espy."
Then Absolon gan wipe his mouth full dry.
Dark was the night as pitch or as the coal,
And at the window she put out her hole,
And Absolon him fell ne bet ne wese,
But with his mouth he kiss'd her naked erse
Full savourly. When he was ware of this,
Aback he start, and thought it was amiss;
For well he wist a woman hath no beard.
He felt a thing all rough, and long y-hair'd,
And saide; "Fy, alas! what have I do?"
"Te he!" quoth she, and clapt the window to;
And Absolon went forth at sorry pace.
"A beard, a beard," said Hendy Nicholas;
"By God's corpus, this game went fair and well."
This silly Absolon heard every deal,
And on his lip he gan for anger bite;
And to himself he said, "I shall thee quite.
Who rubbeth now, who frotteth now his lips
With dust, with sand, with straw, with cloth, with chips,
But Absolon? that saith full oft, "Alas!
My soul betake I unto Sathanas,
But me were lever than all this town," quoth he
I this despite awroken for to be.
Alas! alas! that I have been y-blent."
His hote love is cold, and all y-quent.
For from that time that he had kiss'd her erse,
Of paramours he sette not a kers,
For he was healed of his malady;
Full often paramours he gan defy,

And weep as doth a child that hath been beat.
A softe pace he went over the street
Unto a smith, men callen Dan Gerveis,
That in his forge smithed plough-harness;
He sharped share and culter busily.
This Absolon knocked all easily,
And said; "Undo, Gerveis, and that anon."
"What, who art thou?" "It is I, Absolon."
"What? Absolon, what? Christe's sweete tree,
Why rise so rath? hey! Benedicite,
What aileth you? some gay girl, God it wote,
Hath brought you thus upon the viretote:
By Saint Neot, ye wot well what I mean."
This Absolon he raughte not a bean
Of all his play; no word again he gaf,
For he had more tow on his distaff
Than Gerveis knew, and saide; "Friend so dear,
That hote culter in the chimney here
Lend it to me, I have therewith to don:
I will it bring again to thee full soon."
Gerveis answered; "Certes, were it gold,
Or in a poke nobles all untold,
Thou shouldst it have, as I am a true smith.
Hey! Christe's foot, what will ye do therewith?"
"Thereof," quoth Absolon, "be as be may;
I shall well tell it thee another day:"
And caught the culter by the colde stele.
Full soft out at the door he gan to steal,
And went unto the carpentere's wall
He coughed first, and knocked therewithal
Upon the window, light as he did ere.
This Alison answered; "Who is there
That knocketh so? I warrant him a thief."
"Nay, nay," quoth he, "God wot, my sweete lefe,
I am thine Absolon, my own darling.
Of gold," quoth he, "I have thee brought a ring,
My mother gave it me, so God me save!
Full fine it is, and thereto well y-grave:
This will I give to thee, if thou me kiss."
Now Nicholas was risen up to piss,
And thought he would amenden all the jape;
He shoulde kiss his erse ere that he scape:
And up the window did he hastily,

And out his erse he put full privily
Over the buttock, to the haunche bone.
And therewith spake this clerk, this Absolon,
“Speak, sweete bird, I know not where thou art.”
This Nicholas anon let fly a fart,
As great as it had been a thunder dent;
That with the stroke he was well nigh y-blent;
But he was ready with his iron hot,
And Nicholas amid the erse he smote.
Off went the skin an handbreadth all about.
The hote culter burned so his tout,
That for the smart he weened he would die;
As he were wood, for woe he gan to cry,
“Help! water, water, help for Godde’s heart!”
This carpenter out of his slumber start,
And heard one cry “Water,” as he were wood,
And thought, “Alas! now cometh Noe’s flood.”
He sat him up withoute wordes mo’
And with his axe he smote the cord in two;
And down went all; he found neither to sell
Nor bread nor ale, till he came to the sell,
Upon the floor, and there in swoon he lay.
Up started Alison and Nicholay,
And cried out an “harow!” in the street.
The neighbours alle, bothe small and great
In ranne, for to gauren on this man,
That yet in swoone lay, both pale and wan:
For with the fall he broken had his arm.
But stand he must unto his owen harm,
For when he spake, he was anon borne down
With Hendy Nicholas and Alisoun.
They told to every man that he was wood;
He was aghaste so of Noe’s flood,
Through phantasy, that of his vanity
He had y-bought him kneading-tubbes three,
And had them hanged in the roof above;
And that he prayed them for Godde’s love
To sitten in the roof for company.
The folk gan laughen at his phantasy.
Into the roof they kyken and they gape,
And turned all his harm into a jape.
For whatsoe’er this carpenter answer’d,
It was for nought, no man his reason heard.

With oathes great he was so sworn adown,
 That he was holden wood in all the town.
 For every clerk anon right held with other;
 They said, "The man was wood, my leve brother;"
 And every wight gan laughen at his strife.
 Thus swived was the carpentere's wife,
 For all his keeping and his jealousy;
 And Absolon hath kiss'd her nether eye;
 And Nicholas is scalded in the tout.
 This tale is done, and God save all the rout.

The Wife of Bath's Tale

THE PROLOGUE

Experience, though none authority
 Were in this world, is right enough for me
 To speak of woe that is in marriage:
 For, lordings, since I twelve year was of age,
 (Thanked be God that is etern on live),
 Husbands at the church door have I had five,
 For I so often have y-wedded be,
 And all were worthy men in their degree.
 But me was told, not longe time gone is
 That sithen Christe went never but ones since
 To wedding, in the Cane of Galilee,
 That by that ilk example taught he me,
 That I not wedded shoulde be but once.
 Lo, hearken eke a sharp word for the nonce,
 Beside a welle Jesus, God and man,
 Spake in reproof of the Samaritan:
 "Thou hast y-had five husbandes," said he;
 "And thilke man, that now hath wedded thee,
 Is not thine husband:" thus said he certain;
 What that he meant thereby, I cannot sayn.
 But that I aske, why the fifthe man
 Was not husband to the Samaritan?
 How many might she have in marriage?
 Yet heard I never tellen in mine age in my life
 Upon this number definitioun.
 Men may divine, and glosen up and down;
 But well I wot, express without a lie,
 God bade us for to wax and multiply;
 That gentle text can I well understand.
 Eke well I wot, he said, that mine husband

Should leave father and mother, and take to me;
But of no number mention made he,
Of bigamy or of octogamy;
Why then should men speak of it villainy?
Lo here, the wise king Dan Solomon,
I trow that he had wives more than one;
As would to God it lawful were to me
To be refreshed half so oft as he!
What gift of God had he for all his wives?
No man hath such, that in this world alive is.
God wot, this noble king, as to my wit,
The first night had many a merry fit
With each of them, so well was him on live.
Blessed be God that I have wedded five!
Welcome the sixth whenever that he shall.
For since I will not keep me chaste in all,
When mine husband is from the world y-gone,
Some Christian man shall wedde me anon.
For then th' apostle saith that I am free
To wed, a' God's half, where it liketh me.
He saith, that to be wedded is no sin;
Better is to be wedded than to brin. burn
What recketh me though folk say villainy
Of shrewed Lamech, and his bigamy?
I wot well Abraham was a holy man,
And Jacob eke, as far as ev'r I can.
And each of them had wives more than two;
And many another holy man also.
Where can ye see, in any manner age,
That highe God defended marriage
By word express? I pray you tell it me;
Or where commanded he virginity?
I wot as well as you, it is no dread,
Th' apostle, when he spake of maidenhead,
He said, that precept thereof had he none:
Men may counsel a woman to be one,
But counseling is no commandement;
He put it in our owen judgement.
For, hadde God commanded maidenhead,
Then had he damned wedding out of dread;
And certes, if there were no seed y-sow,
Virginity then whereof should it grow?
Paul durste not commanden, at the least,

A thing of which his Master gave no hest.
The dart is set up for virginity;
Catch whoso may, who runneth best let see.
But this word is not ta'en of every wight,
But there as God will give it of his might.
I wot well that th' apostle was a maid,
But natheless, although he wrote and said,
He would that every wight were such as he,
All is but counsel to virginity.
And, since to be a wife he gave me leave
Of indulgence, so is it no repreve
To wedde me, if that my make should die,
Without exception of bigamy;
All were it good no woman for to touch
(He meant as in his bed or in his couch),
For peril is both fire and tow t'assemble
Ye know what this example may resemble.
This is all and some, he held virginity
More profit than wedding in frailty:
(Frailty clepe I, but if that he and she frailty,
Would lead their lives all in chastity),
I grant it well, I have of none envy
Who maidenhead prefer to bigamy;
It liketh them t' be clean in body and ghost;
Of mine estate I will not make a boast.
For, well ye know, a lord in his household
Hath not every vessel all of gold;
Some are of tree, and do their lord service.
God calleth folk to him in sundry wise,
And each one hath of God a proper gift,
Some this, some that, as liketh him to shift.
Virginity is great perfection,
And continence eke with devotion:
But Christ, that of perfection is the well,
Bade not every wight he should go sell
All that he had, and give it to the poor,
And in such wise follow him and his lore:
He spake to them that would live perfectly, —
And, lordings, by your leave, that am not I;
I will bestow the flower of mine age
In th' acts and in the fruits of marriage.
Tell me also, to what conclusion
Were members made of generation,

And of so perfect wise a wight y-wrought?
Trust me right well, they were not made for nought.
Glose whoso will, and say both up and down,
That they were made for the purgatioun
Of urine, and of other thinges smale,
And eke to know a female from a male:
And for none other cause? say ye no?
Experience wot well it is not so.
So that the clerkes be not with me wroth,
I say this, that they were made for both,
That is to say, for office, and for ease
Of engendrure, there we God not displease.
Why should men elles in their bookes set,
That man shall yield unto his wife her debt?
Now wherewith should he make his payement,
If he us'd not his silly instrument?
Then were they made upon a creature
To purge urine, and eke for engendrure.
But I say not that every wight is hold,
That hath such harness as I to you told,
To go and use them in engendrure;
Then should men take of chastity no cure.
Christ was a maid, and shapen as a man,
And many a saint, since that this world began,
Yet ever liv'd in perfect chastity.
I will not vie with no virginity.
Let them with bread of pured wheat be fed,
And let us wives eat our barley bread.
And yet with barley bread, Mark tell us can,
Our Lord Jesus refreshed many a man.
In such estate as God hath cleped us,
I'll persevere, I am not precious,
In wifhood I will use mine instrument
As freely as my Maker hath it sent.
If I be dangerous God give me sorrow;
Mine husband shall it have, both eve and morrow,
When that him list come forth and pay his debt.
A husband will I have, I will no let,
Which shall be both my debtor and my thrall,
And have his tribulation withal
Upon his flesh, while that I am his wife.
I have the power during all my life
Upon his proper body, and not he;

Right thus th' apostle told it unto me,
And bade our husbands for to love us well;
All this sentence me liketh every deal.
Up start the Pardoner, and that anon;
"Now, Dame," quoth he, "by God and by Saint John,
Ye are a noble preacher in this case.
I was about to wed a wife, alas!
What? should I bie it on my flesh so dear?
Yet had I lever wed no wife this year."
"Abide," quoth she; "my tale is not begun
Nay, thou shalt drincken of another tun
Ere that I go, shall savour worse than ale.
And when that I have told thee forth my tale
Of tribulation in marriage,
Of which I am expert in all mine age,
(This is to say, myself hath been the whip),
Then mayest thou choose whether thou wilt sip
Of thilke tunne, that I now shall broach.
Beware of it, ere thou too nigh approach,
For I shall tell examples more than ten:
Whoso will not beware by other men,
By him shall other men corrected be:
These same wordes writeth Ptolemy;
Read in his Almagest, and take it there."
"Dame, I would pray you, if your will it were,"
Saide this Pardoner, "as ye began,
Tell forth your tale, and spare for no man,
And teach us younge men of your practique."
"Gladly," quoth she, "since that it may you like.
But that I pray to all this company,
If that I speak after my fantasy,
To take nought agrief what I may say;
For mine intent is only for to play.
Now, Sirs, then will I tell you forth my tale.
As ever may I drinke wine or ale
I shall say sooth; the husbands that I had
Three of them were good, and two were bad
The three were goode men, and rich, and old
Unnethes mighte they the statute hold
In which that they were bounden unto me.
Yet wot well what I mean of this, pardie.
As God me help, I laugh when that I think
How piteously at night I made them swink,

But, by my fay, I told of it no store:
They had me giv'n their land and their treasure,
Me needed not do longer diligence
To win their love, or do them reverence.
They loved me so well, by God above,
That I tolde no dainty of their love.
A wise woman will busy her ever-in-one
To get their love, where that she hath none.
But, since I had them wholly in my hand,
And that they had me given all their land,
Why should I take keep them for to please,
But it were for my profit, or mine ease?
I set them so a-worke, by my fay,
That many a night they sange, well-away!
The bacon was not fetched for them, I trow,
That some men have in Essex at Dunmow.
I govern'd them so well after my law,
That each of them full blissful was and fawe
To bringe me gay thinges from the fair.
They were full glad when that I spake them fair,
For, God it wot, I chid them spiteously.
Now hearken how I bare me properly.
Ye wise wives, that can understand,
Thus should ye speak, and bear them wrong on hand,
For half so boldely can there no man
Swearen and lien as a woman can.
(I say not this by wives that be wise,
But if it be when they them misadvise.)
A wise wife, if that she can her good,
Shall beare them on hand the cow is wood,
And take witness of her owen maid
Of their assent: but hearken how I said.
"Sir olde kaynard, is this thine array?
Why is my neigheboure's wife so gay?
She is honour'd over all where she go'th,
I sit at home, I have no thrifty cloth.
What dost thou at my neigheboure's house?
Is she so fair? art thou so amorous?
What rown'st thou with our maid? benedicite,
Sir olde lechour, let thy japes be.
And if I have a gossip, or a friend
(Withoute guilt), thou chidest as a fiend,
If that I walk or play unto his house.

Thou comest home as drunken as a mouse,
And preachest on thy bench, with evil prefe:
Thou say'st to me, it is a great mischief
To wed a poore woman, for costage:
And if that she be rich, of high parage;
Then say'st thou, that it is a tormentry
To suffer her pride and melancholy.
And if that she be fair, thou very knave,
Thou say'st that every holour will her have;
She may no while in chastity abide,
That is assailed upon every side.
Thou say'st some folk desire us for richness,
Some for our shape, and some for our fairness,
And some, for she can either sing or dance,
And some for gentiless and dalliance,
Some for her handes and her armes smale:
Thus goes all to the devil, by thy tale;
Thou say'st, men may not keep a castle wall
That may be so assailed over all.
And if that she be foul, thou say'st that she
Coveteth every man that she may see;
For as a spaniel she will on him leap,
Till she may finde some man her to cheap;
And none so grey goose goes there in the lake,
(So say'st thou) that will be without a make.
And say'st, it is a hard thing for to weld wield,
A thing that no man will, his thankes, held.
Thus say'st thou, lorel, when thou go'st to bed,
And that no wise man needeth for to wed,
Nor no man that intendeth unto heaven.
With wilde thunder dint and fiery leven
Mote thy wicked necke be to-broke.
Thou say'st, that dropping houses, and eke smoke,
And chiding wives, make men to flee
Out of their owne house; ah! ben'dicite,
What aileth such an old man for to chide?
Thou say'st, we wives will our vices hide,
Till we be fast, and then we will them shew.
Well may that be a proverb of a shrew.
Thou say'st, that oxen, asses, horses, hounds,
They be assayed at diverse stounds,
Basons and lavers, ere that men them buy,
Spoones, stooles, and all such husbandry,

And so be pots, and clothes, and array,
But folk of wives make none assay,
Till they be wedded, — olde dotard shrew! —
And then, say'st thou, we will our vices shew.
Thou say'st also, that it displeaseth me,
But if that thou wilt praise my beauty,
And but thou pore alway upon my face,
And call me faire dame in every place;
And but thou make a feast on thilke day
That I was born, and make me fresh and gay;
And but thou do to my norice honour,
And to my chamberere within my bow'r,
And to my father's folk, and mine allies;
Thus sayest thou, old barrel full of lies.
And yet also of our prentice Jenkin,
For his crisp hair, shining as gold so fine,
And for he squireth me both up and down,
Yet hast thou caught a false suspicioun:
I will him not, though thou wert dead to-morrow.
But tell me this, why hidest thou, with sorrow,
The keyes of thy chest away from me?
It is my good as well as thine, pardie.
What, think'st to make an idiot of our dame?
Now, by that lord that called is Saint Jame,
Thou shalt not both, although that thou wert wood,
Be master of my body, and my good,
The one thou shalt forego, maugre thine eyen.
What helpeth it of me t'inquire and spyen?
I trow thou wouldest lock me in thy chest.
Thou shouldest say, 'Fair wife, go where thee lest;
Take your disport; I will believe no tales;
I know you for a true wife, Dame Ales.' Alice
We love no man, that taketh keep or charge care
Where that we go; we will be at our large.
Of alle men most blessed may he be,
The wise astrologer Dan Ptolemy,
That saith this proverb in his Almagest:
'Of alle men his wisdom is highest,
That recketh not who hath the world in hand.
By this proverb thou shalt well understand,
Have thou enough, what thar thee reck or care
How merrily that other folkes fare?
For certes, olde dotard, by your leave,

Ye shall have [pleasure] right enough at eve.
 He is too great a niggard that will werne
 A man to light a candle at his lantern;
 He shall have never the less light, pardie.
 Have thou enough, thee thar not plaine thee
 Thou say'st also, if that we make us gay
 With clothing and with precious array,
 That it is peril of our chastity.
 And yet, — with sorrow! — thou enforcest thee,
 And say'st these words in the apostle's name:
 'In habit made with chastity and shame
 Ye women shall apparel you,' quoth he
 'And not in tressed hair and gay perrie,
 As pearles, nor with gold, nor clothes rich.'
 After thy text nor after thy rubrich
 I will not work as muchel as a gnat.
 Thou say'st also, I walk out like a cat;
 For whoso woulde singe the catte's skin
 Then will the catte well dwell in her inn;
 And if the catte's skin be sleek and gay,
 She will not dwell in house half a day,
 But forth she will, ere any day be daw'd,
 To shew her skin, and go a caterwaw'd.
 This is to say, if I be gay, sir shrew,
 I will run out, my borel for to shew.
 Sir olde fool, what helpeth thee to spyen?
 Though thou pray Argus with his hundred eyen
 To be my wardecorps, as he can best
 In faith he shall not keep me, but me lest:
 Yet could I make his beard, so may I the.
 "Thou sayest eke, that there be thinges three,
 Which thinges greatly trouble all this earth,
 And that no wighte may endure the ferth:
 O lefe sir shrew, may Jesus short thy life.
 Yet preaches thou, and say'st, a hateful wife
 Y-reckon'd is for one of these mischances.
 Be there none other manner resemblances
 That ye may liken your parables unto,
 But if a silly wife be one of tho?
 Thou likenest a woman's love to hell;
 To barren land where water may not dwell.
 Thou likenest it also to wild fire;
 The more it burns, the more it hath desire

To consume every thing that burnt will be.
Thou sayest, right as wormes shend a tree,
Right so a wife destroyeth her husband;
This know they well that be to wives bond.”
Lordings, right thus, as ye have understand,
Bare I stiffly mine old husbands on hand,
That thus they saiden in their drunkenness;
And all was false, but that I took witness
On Jenkin, and upon my niece also.
O Lord! the pain I did them, and the woe,
‘Full guilteless, by Godde’s sweete pine;
For as a horse I coulde bite and whine;
I coulde plain, an’ I was in the guilt,
Or elles oftentime I had been spilt
Whoso first cometh to the nill, first grint;
I plained first, so was our war y-stint.
They were full glad to excuse them full blive
Of things that they never aguilt their live.
Of wenches would I beare them on hand,
When that for sickness scarcely might they stand,
Yet tickled I his hearte for that he
Ween’d that I had of him so great cherte:
I swore that all my walking out by night
Was for to espy wenches that he dight:
Under that colour had I many a mirth.
For all such wit is given us at birth;
Deceit, weeping, and spinning, God doth give
To women kindly, while that they may live.
And thus of one thing I may vaunte me,
At th’ end I had the better in each degree,
By sleight, or force, or by some manner thing,
As by continual murmur or grudging, complaining
Namely a-bed, there hadde they mischance,
There would I chide, and do them no pleasance:
I would no longer in the bed abide,
If that I felt his arm over my side,
Till he had made his ransom unto me,
Then would I suffer him do his nicety.
And therefore every man this tale I tell,
Win whoso may, for all is for to sell;
With empty hand men may no hawkes lure;
For winning would I all his will endure,
And make me a feigned appetite,

And yet in bacon had I never delight:
That made me that I ever would them chide.
For, though the Pope had sitten them beside,
I would not spare them at their owen board,
For, by my troth, I quit them word for word
As help me very God omnipotent,
Though I right now should make my testament
I owe them not a word, that is not quit
I brought it so aboute by my wit,
That they must give it up, as for the best
Or elles had we never been in rest.
For, though he looked as a wood lion,
Yet should he fail of his conclusion.
Then would I say, "Now, goode lefe tak keep
How meekly looketh Wilken oure sheep!
Come near, my spouse, and let me ba thy cheek
Ye shoulde be all patient and meek,
And have a sweet y-spiced conscience,
Since ye so preach of Jobe's patience.
Suffer alway, since ye so well can preach,
And but ye do, certain we shall you teach
That it is fair to have a wife in peace.
One of us two must bowe doubtless:
And since a man is more reasonable
Than woman is, ye must be suffrable.
What aileth you to grudge thus and groan?
Is it for ye would have my [love] alone?
Why, take it all: lo, have it every deal, whit
Peter! shrew you but ye love it
For if I woulde sell my belle chose,
I coulde walk as fresh as is a rose,
But I will keep it for your owen tooth.
Ye be to blame, by God, I say you sooth."
Such manner wordes hadde we on hand.
Now will I speaken of my fourth husband.
My fourthe husband was a revellour;
This is to say, he had a paramour,
And I was young and full of ragerie,
Stubborn and strong, and jolly as a pie.
Then could I dance to a harpe smale,
And sing, y-wis, as any nightingale,
When I had drunk a draught of sweete wine.
Metellius, the foule churl, the swine,

That with a staff bereft his wife of life
For she drank wine, though I had been his wife,
Never should he have daunted me from drink:
And, after wine, of Venus most I think.
For all so sure as cold engenders hail,
A liquorish mouth must have a liquorish tail.
In woman vinolent is no defence,
This knowe lechours by experience.
But, lord Christ, when that it rememb'reth me
Upon my youth, and on my jollity,
It tickleth me about mine hearte-root;
Unto this day it doth mine hearte boot,
That I have had my world as in my time.
But age, alas! that all will envenime,
Hath me bereft my beauty and my pith:
Let go; farewell; the devil go therewith.
The flour is gon, there is no more to tell,
The bran, as I best may, now must I sell.
But yet to be right merry will I fand.
Now forth to tell you of my fourth husband,
I say, I in my heart had great despite,
That he of any other had delight;
But he was quit, by God and by Saint Joce:
I made for him of the same wood a cross;
Not of my body in no foul mannere,
But certainly I made folk such cheer,
That in his owen grease I made him fry
For anger, and for very jealousy.
By God, in earth I was his purgatory,
For which I hope his soul may be in glory.
For, God it wot, he sat full oft and sung,
When that his shoe full bitterly him wrung.
There was no wight, save God and he, that wist
In many wise how sore I did him twist.
He died when I came from Jerusalem,
And lies in grave under the roode beam:
Although his tomb is not so curious
As was the sepulchre of Darius,
Which that Apelles wrought so subtly.
It is but waste to bury them preciously.
Let him fare well, God give his soule rest,
He is now in his grave and in his chest.
Now of my fifthe husband will I tell:

God let his soul never come into hell.
And yet was he to me the moste shrew;
That feel I on my ribbes all by rew,
And ever shall, until mine ending day.
But in our bed he was so fresh and gay,
And therewithal so well he could me glose,
When that he woulde have my belle chose,
Though he had beaten me on every bone,
Yet could he win again my love anon.
I trow, I lov'd him better, for that he
Was of his love so dangerous to me.
We women have, if that I shall not lie,
In this matter a quaint fantasy.
Whatever thing we may not lightly have,
Thereafter will we cry all day and crave.
Forbid us thing, and that desire we;
Press on us fast, and thenne will we flee.
With danger utter we all our chaffare;
Great press at market maketh deare ware,
And too great cheap is held at little price;
This knoweth every woman that is wise.
My fifthe husband, God his soule bless,
Which that I took for love and no richness,
He some time was a clerk of Oxenford,
And had left school, and went at home to board
With my gossip, dwelling in oure town:
God have her soul, her name was Alisoun.
She knew my heart, and all my privity,
Bet than our parish priest, so may I the.
To her betrayed I my counsel all;
For had my husband pissed on a wall,
Or done a thing that should have cost his life,
To her, and to another worthy wife,
And to my niece, which that I loved well,
I would have told his counsel every deal.
And so I did full often, God it wot,
That made his face full often red and hot
For very shame, and blam'd himself, for he
Had told to me so great a privity.
And so befell that ones in a Lent
(So oftentimes I to my gossip went,
For ever yet I loved to be gay,
And for to walk in March, April, and May

From house to house, to heare sundry tales),
That Jenkin clerk, and my gossip, Dame Ales,
And I myself, into the fieldes went.
Mine husband was at London all that Lent;
I had the better leisure for to play,
And for to see, and eke for to be sey
Of lusty folk; what wist I where my grace
Was shapen for to be, or in what place?
Therefore made I my visitations
To vigilies, and to processions,
To preachings eke, and to these pilgrimages,
To plays of miracles, and marriages,
And weared upon me gay scarlet gites.
These wormes, nor these mothes, nor these mites
On my apparel frett them never a deal
And know'st thou why? for they were used well.

Now will I telle forth what happen'd me:
I say, that in the fieldes walked we,
Till truely we had such dalliance,
This clerk and I, that of my purveyance
I spake to him, and told him how that he,
If I were widow, shoulde wedde me.
For certainly, I say for no bobance,
Yet was I never without purveyance
Of marriage, nor of other thinges eke:
I hold a mouse's wit not worth a leek,
That hath but one hole for to starte to,
And if that faile, then is all y-do.
[I bare him on hand he had enchanted me
(My dame taughte me that subtilty);
And eke I said, I mette of him all night,
He would have slain me, as I lay upright,
And all my bed was full of very blood;
But yet I hop'd that he should do me good;
For blood betoken'd gold, as me was taught.
And all was false, I dream'd of him right naught,
But as I follow'd aye my dame's lore,
As well of that as of other things more.]
But now, sir, let me see, what shall I sayn?
Aha! by God, I have my tale again.
When that my fourthe husband was on bier,
I wept algate and made a sorry cheer,

As wives must, for it is the usage;
 And with my kerchief covered my visage;
 But, for I was provided with a make,
 I wept but little, that I undertake
 To church was mine husband borne a-morrow
 With neighbours that for him made sorrow,
 And Jenkin, our clerk, was one of tho:
 As help me God, when that I saw him go
 After the bier, methought he had a pair
 Of legges and of feet so clean and fair,
 That all my heart I gave unto his hold.
 He was, I trow, a twenty winter old,
 And I was forty, if I shall say sooth,
 But yet I had always a colt's tooth.
 Gat-toothed I was, and that became me well,
 I had the print of Sainte Venus' seal.
 [As help me God, I was a lusty one,
 And fair, and rich, and young, and well begone:
 For certes I am all venerian
 In feeling, and my heart is martian;
 Venus me gave my lust and liquorishness,
 And Mars gave me my sturdy hardiness
 Mine ascendant was Taure, and Mars therein:
 Alas, alas, that ever love was sin!
 I follow'd aye mine inclination
 By virtue of my constellation:
 That made me that I could not withdraw
 My chamber of Venus from a good fellow.
 [Yet have I Marte's mark upon my face,
 And also in another privy place.
 For God so wisely be my salvation,
 I loved never by discretion,
 But ever follow'd mine own appetite,
 All were he short, or long, or black, or white,
 I took no keep, so that he liked me,
 How poor he was, neither of what degree.]

What should I say? but that at the month's end
 This jolly clerk Jenkin, that was so hend,
 Had wedded me with great solemnity,
 And to him gave I all the land and fee
 That ever was me given therebefore:
 But afterward repented me full sore.

He woulde suffer nothing of my list.
By God, he smote me ones with his fist,
For that I rent out of his book a leaf,
That of the stroke mine eare wax'd all deaf.
Stubborn I was, as is a lioness,
And of my tongue a very jangleress,
And walk I would, as I had done beforne,
From house to house, although he had it sworn:
For which he oftentimes woulde preach
And me of olde Roman gestes teach
How that Sulpitius Gallus left his wife
And her forsook for term of all his lif
For nought but open-headed he her say
Looking out at his door upon a day.

Another Roman told he me by name,
That, for his wife was at a summer game
Without his knowing, he forsook her eke.
And then would he upon his Bible seek
That ilke proverb of Ecclesiast,
Where he commandeth, and forbiddeth fast,
Man shall not suffer his wife go roll about.
Then would he say right thus withoute doubt:
“Whoso that buildeth his house all of sallows,
And pricketh his blind horse over the fallows,
And suff'reth his wife to go seeke hallows,
Is worthy to be hanged on the gallows.”
But all for nought; I sette not a haw
Of his proverbs, nor of his olde saw;
Nor would I not of him corrected be.
I hate them that my vices telle me,
And so do more of us (God wot) than I.
This made him wood with me all utterly;
I woulde not forbear him in no case.

Now will I say you sooth, by Saint Thomas,
Why that I rent out of his book a leaf,
For which he smote me, so that I was deaf.
He had a book, that gladly night and day
For his disport he would it read away;
He call'd it Valerie, and Theophrast,
And with that book he laugh'd alway full fast.
And eke there was a clerk sometime at Rome,

A cardinal, that highte Saint Jerome,
That made a book against Jovinian,
Which book was there; and eke Tertullian,
Chrysippus, Trotula, and Heloise,
That was an abbess not far from Paris;
And eke the Parables of Solomon,
Ovide's Art, and bourdes many one;
And alle these were bound in one volume.
And every night and day was his custume
(When he had leisure and vacation
From other worldly occupation)
To readen in this book of wicked wives.
He knew of them more legends and more lives
Than be of goodde wives in the Bible.
For, trust me well, it is an impossible
That any clerk will speake good of wives,
(But if it be of holy saintes' lives)
Nor of none other woman never the mo'.
Who painted the lion, tell it me, who?
By God, if women haddde written stories,
As clerkes have within their oratories,
They would have writ of men more wickedness
Than all the mark of Adam may redress
The children of Mercury and of Venus,
Be in their working full contrarious.
Mercury loveth wisdom and science,
And Venus loveth riot and dispence.
And for their diverse disposition,
Each falls in other's exaltation.
As thus, God wot, Mercury is desolate
In Pisces, where Venus is exaltate,
And Venus falls where Mercury is raised.
Therefore no woman by no clerk is praised.
The clerk, when he is old, and may not do
Of Venus' works not worth his olde shoe,
Then sits he down, and writes in his dotage,
That women cannot keep their marriage.
But now to purpose, why I tolde thee
That I was beaten for a book, pardie.
Upon a night Jenkin, that was our sire,
Read on his book, as he sat by the fire,
Of Eva first, that for her wickedness
Was all mankind brought into wretchedness,

For which that Jesus Christ himself was slain,
That bought us with his heart-blood again.
Lo here express of women may ye find
That woman was the loss of all mankind.
Then read he me how Samson lost his hairs
Sleeping, his leman cut them with her shears,
Through whiche treason lost he both his eyen.
Then read he me, if that I shall not lien,
Of Hercules, and of his Dejanire,
That caused him to set himself on fire.
Nothing forgot he of the care and woe
That Socrates had with his wives two;
How Xantippe cast piss upon his head.
This silly man sat still, as he were dead,
He wip'd his head, and no more durst he sayn,
But, "Ere the thunder stint there cometh rain."
Of Phasiphae, that was queen of Crete,
For shrewedness he thought the tale sweet.
Fy, speak no more, it is a grisly thing,
Of her horrible lust and her liking.
Of Clytemnestra, for her lechery
That falsely made her husband for to die,
He read it with full good devotion.
He told me eke, for what occasion
Amphiorax at Thebes lost his life:
My husband had a legend of his wife
Eryphile, that for an ouche of gold
Had privily unto the Greekes told,
Where that her husband hid him in a place,
For which he had at Thebes sorry grace.
Of Luna told he me, and of Lucie;
They bothe made their husbands for to die,
That one for love, that other was for hate.
Luna her husband on an ev'ning late
Empoison'd had, for that she was his foe:
Lucia liquorish lov'd her husband so,
That, for he should always upon her think,
She gave him such a manner love-drink,
That he was dead before it were the morrow:
And thus algates husbands hadde sorrow.
Then told he me how one Latumeus
Complained to his fellow Arius
That in his garden growed such a tree,

On which he said how that his wives three
Hanged themselves for heart despiteous.
“O leve brother,” quoth this Arius,
“Give me a plant of thilke blessed tree,
And in my garden planted shall it be.”
Of later date of wives hath he read,
That some have slain their husbands in their bed,
And let their lechour dight them all the night,
While that the corpse lay on the floor upright:
And some have driven nails into their brain,
While that they slept, and thus they have them slain:
Some have them given poison in their drink:
He spake more harm than hearte may bethink.
And therewithal he knew of more proverbs,
Than in this world there groweth grass or herbs.
“Better (quoth he) thine habitation
Be with a lion, or a foul dragon,
Than with a woman using for to chide.
Better (quoth he) high in the roof abide,
Than with an angry woman in the house,
They be so wicked and contrarious:
They hate that their husbands loven aye.”
He said, “A woman cast her shame away
When she cast off her smock;” and farthermo’,
“A fair woman, but she be chaste also,
Is like a gold ring in a sowe’s nose.
Who coulde ween, or who coulde suppose
The woe that in mine heart was, and the pine?

And when I saw that he would never fine
To readen on this cursed book all night,
All suddenly three leaves have I plight
Out of his book, right as he read, and eke
I with my fist so took him on the cheek,
That in our fire he backward fell adown.
And he up start, as doth a wood lion,
And with his fist he smote me on the head,
That on the floor I lay as I were dead.
And when he saw how still that there I lay,
He was aghast, and would have fled away,
Till at the last out of my swoon I braid,
“Oh, hast thou slain me, thou false thief?” I said
“And for my land thus hast thou murder’d me?

Ere I be dead, yet will I kisse thee.”
And near he came, and kneeled fair adown,
And saide”, “Deare sister Alisoun,
As help me God, I shall thee never smite:
That I have done it is thyself to wite,
Forgive it me, and that I thee beseek.”
And yet eftsoons I hit him on the cheek,
And saidde, “Thief, thus much am I awak.
Now will I die, I may no longer speak.”
But at the last, with much care and woe
We fell accorded by ourselves two:
He gave me all the bridle in mine hand
To have the governance of house and land,
And of his tongue, and of his hand also.
I made him burn his book anon right tho.
And when that I had gotten unto me
By mast’ry all the sovereignty,
And that he said, “Mine owen true wife,
Do as thee list, the term of all thy life,
Keep thine honour, and eke keep mine estate;
After that day we never had debate.
God help me so, I was to him as kind
As any wife from Denmark unto Ind,
And also true, and so was he to me:
I pray to God that sits in majesty
So bless his soule, for his mercy dear.
Now will I say my tale, if ye will hear. —
The Friar laugh’d when he had heard all this:
“Now, Dame,” quoth he, “so have I joy and bliss,
This is a long preamble of a tale.”
And when the Sompnour heard the Friar gale,
“Lo,” quoth this Sompnour, “Godde’s armes two,
A friar will intermete him evermo’:
Lo, goode men, a fly and eke a frere
Will fall in ev’ry dish and eke mattere.
What speak’st thou of perambulation?
What? amble or trot; or peace, or go sit down:
Thou lettest our disport in this mattere.”
“Yea, wilt thou so, Sir Sompnour?” quoth the Frere;
“Now by my faith I shall, ere that I go,
Tell of a Sompnour such a tale or two,
That all the folk shall laughen in this place.”
“Now do, else, Friar, I beshrew thy face,”

Quoth this Sompnour; “and I beshrewe me,
 But if I telle tales two or three
 Of friars, ere I come to Sittingbourne,
 That I shall make thine hearte for to mourn:
 For well I wot thy patience is gone.”
 Our Hoste cried, “Peace, and that anon;”
 And saide, “Let the woman tell her tale.
 Ye fare as folk that drunken be of ale.
 Do, Dame, tell forth your tale, and that is best.”
 “All ready, sir,” quoth she, “right as you lest,
 If I have licence of this worthy Frere.”
 “Yes, Dame,” quoth he, “tell forth, and I will hear.”

THE TALE

In olde dayes of the king Arthour,
 Of which that Britons speake great honour,
 All was this land full fill'd of faerie;
 The Elf-queen, with her jolly company,
 Danced full oft in many a green mead
 This was the old opinion, as I read;
 I speak of many hundred years ago;
 But now can no man see none elves mo',
 For now the great charity and prayeres
 Of limitours, and other holy freres,
 That search every land and ev'ry stream
 As thick as motes in the sunne-beam,
 Blessing halls, chambers, kitchenes, and bowers,
 Cities and burghes, castles high and towers,
 Thorpes and barnes, shepens and dairies,
 This makes that there be now no faeries:
 For there as wont to walke was an elf,
 There walketh now the limitour himself,
 In undermeles and in morrowings,
 And saith his matins and his holy things,
 As he goes in his limitatioun.
 Women may now go safely up and down,
 In every bush, and under every tree;
 There is none other incubus but he;
 And he will do to them no dishonour.
 And so befell it, that this king Arthour
 Had in his house a lusty bachelor,
 That on a day came riding from river:
 And happen'd, that, alone as she was born,

He saw a maiden walking him befor,
Of which maiden anon, maugre her head,
By very force he reft her maidenhead:
For which oppression was such clamour,
And such pursuit unto the king Arthour,
That damned was this knight for to be dead
By course of law, and should have lost his head;
(Paraventure such was the statute tho),
But that the queen and other ladies mo'
So long they prayed the king of his grace,
Till he his life him granted in the place,
And gave him to the queen, all at her will
To choose whether she would him save or spill
The queen thanked the king with all her might;
And, after this, thus spake she to the knight,
When that she saw her time upon a day.
"Thou standest yet," quoth she, "in such array,
That of thy life yet hast thou no surety;
I grant thee life, if thou canst tell to me
What thing is it that women most desiren:
Beware, and keep thy neck-bone from the iron
And if thou canst not tell it me anon,
Yet will I give thee leave for to gon
A twelvemonth and a day, to seek and lear
An answer suffisant in this mattere.
And surety will I have, ere that thou pace,
Thy body for to yelden in this place."
Woe was the knight, and sorrowfully siked;
But what? he might not do all as him liked.
And at the last he chose him for to wend,
And come again, right at the yeare's end,
With such answer as God would him purvey:
And took his leave, and wended forth his way.
He sought in ev'ry house and ev'ry place,
Where as he hoped for to finde grace,
To learne what thing women love the most:
But he could not arrive in any coast,
Where as he mighte find in this mattere
Two creatures according in fere.
Some said that women loved best richness,
Some said honour, and some said jolliness,
Some rich array, and some said lust a-bed,
And oft time to be widow and be wed.

Some said, that we are in our heart most eased
When that we are y-flatter'd and y-praised.
He went full nigh the sooth, I will not lie;
A man shall win us best with flattery;
And with attendance, and with business
Be we y-limed, bothe more and less.
And some men said that we do love the best
For to be free, and do right as us lest,
And that no man reprove us of our vice,
But say that we are wise, and nothing nice,
For truly there is none among us all,
If any wight will claw us on the gall,
That will not kick, for that he saith us sooth:
Assay, and he shall find it, that so do'th.
For be we never so vicious within,
We will be held both wise and clean of sin.
And some men said, that great delight have we
For to be held stable and eke secre,
And in one purpose steadfastly to dwell,
And not bewray a thing that men us tell.
But that tale is not worth a rake-stele.
Pardie, we women canne nothing hele,
Witness on Midas; will ye hear the tale?
Ovid, amonges other thinges smale
Saith, Midas had, under his longe hairs,
Growing upon his head two ass's ears;
The whiche vice he hid, as best he might,
Full subtly from every man's sight,
That, save his wife, there knew of it no mo';
He lov'd her most, and trusted her also;
He prayed her, that to no creature
She woulde tellen of his disfigure.
She swore him, nay, for all the world to win,
She would not do that villainy or sin,
To make her husband have so foul a name:
She would not tell it for her owen shame.
But natheless her thoughte that she died,
That she so longe should a counsel hide;
Her thought it swell'd so sore about her heart
That needes must some word from her astart
And, since she durst not tell it unto man
Down to a marish fast thereby she ran,
Till she came there, her heart was all afire:

And, as a bittern bumbles in the mire,
She laid her mouth unto the water down
“Bewray me not, thou water, with thy soun”
Quoth she, “to thee I tell it, and no mo’,
Mine husband hath long ass’s eares two!
Now is mine heart all whole; now is it out;
I might no longer keep it, out of doubt.”
Here may ye see, though we a time abide,
Yet out it must, we can no counsel hide.
The remnant of the tale, if ye will hear,
Read in Ovid, and there ye may it lear.
This knight, of whom my tale is specially,
When that he saw he might not come thereby,
That is to say, what women love the most,
Within his breast full sorrowful was his ghost.
But home he went, for he might not sojourn,
The day was come, that homeward he must turn.
And in his way it happen’d him to ride,
In all his care, under a forest side,
Where as he saw upon a dance go
Of ladies four-and-twenty, and yet mo’,
Toward this ilke dance he drew full yern,
The hope that he some wisdom there should learn;
But certainly, ere he came fully there,
Y-vanish’d was this dance, he knew not where;
No creature saw he that bare life,
Save on the green he sitting saw a wife,
A fouler wight there may no man devise.
Against this knight this old wife gan to rise,
And said, “Sir Knight, hereforth lieth no way.
Tell me what ye are seeking, by your fay.
Paraventure it may the better be:
These olde folk know mucche thing,” quoth she.
My leve mother,” quoth this knight, “certain,
I am but dead, but if that I can sayn
What thing it is that women most desire:
Could ye me wiss, I would well quite your hire.”
“Plight me thy troth here in mine hand,” quoth she,
“The nexte thing that I require of thee
Thou shalt it do, if it be in thy might,
And I will tell it thee ere it be night.”
“Have here my trothe,” quoth the knight; “I graunte.”
“Thenne,” quoth she, “I dare me well avaunt,

Thy life is safe, for I will stand thereby,
Upon my life the queen will say as I:
Let see, which is the proudest of them all,
That wears either a kerchief or a caul,
That dare say nay to that I shall you teach.
Let us go forth withoute longer speech
Then rownd she a pistel in his ear,
And bade him to be glad, and have no fear.
When they were come unto the court, this knight
Said, he had held his day, as he had hight,
And ready was his answer, as he said.
Full many a noble wife, and many a maid,
And many a widow, for that they be wise, —
The queen herself sitting as a justice, —
Assembled be, his answer for to hear,
And afterward this knight was bid appear.
To every wight commanded was silence,
And that the knight should tell in audience,
What thing that worldly women love the best.
This knight he stood not still, as doth a beast,
But to this question anon answer'd
With manly voice, that all the court it heard,
“My liege lady, generally,” quoth he,
“Women desire to have the sovereignty
As well over their husband as their love
And for to be in mast’ry him above.
This is your most desire, though ye me kill,
Do as you list, I am here at your will.”
In all the court there was no wife nor maid
Nor widow, that contraried what he said,
But said, he worthy was to have his life.
And with that word up start that olde wife
Which that the knight saw sitting on the green.
“Mercy,” quoth she, “my sovereign lady queen,
Ere that your court departe, do me right.
I taughte this answer unto this knight,
For which he plighted me his trothe there,
The firste thing I would of him requere,
He would it do, if it lay in his might.
Before this court then pray I thee, Sir Knight,”
Quoth she, “that thou me take unto thy wife,
For well thou know’st that I have kept thy life.
If I say false, say nay, upon thy fay.”

This knight answer'd, "Alas, and well-away!
I know right well that such was my behest.
For Godde's love choose a new request
Take all my good, and let my body go."
"Nay, then," quoth she, "I shrew us bothe two,
For though that I be old, and foul, and poor,
I n'ould for all the metal nor the ore,
That under earth is grave, or lies above
But if thy wife I were and eke thy love."
"My love?" quoth he, "nay, my damnation,
Alas! that any of my nation
Should ever so foul disparaged be.
But all for nought; the end is this, that he
Constrained was, that needs he muste wed,
And take this olde wife, and go to bed.
Now woulde some men say paraventure
That for my negligence I do no cure
To tell you all the joy and all th' array
That at the feast was made that ilke day.
To which thing shortly answeren I shall:
I say there was no joy nor feast at all,
There was but heaviness and mucche sorrow:
For privily he wed her on the morrow;
And all day after hid him as an owl,
So woe was him, his wife look'd so foul
Great was the woe the knight had in his thought
When he was with his wife to bed y-brought;
He wallow'd, and he turned to and fro.
This olde wife lay smiling evermo',
And said, "Dear husband, benedicite,
Fares every knight thus with his wife as ye?
Is this the law of king Arthoures house?
Is every knight of his thus dangerous?
I am your owen love, and eke your wife
I am she, which that saved hath your life
And certes yet did I you ne'er unright.
Why fare ye thus with me this firste night?
Ye fare like a man had lost his wit.
What is my guilt? for God's love tell me it,
And it shall be amended, if I may."
"Amended!" quoth this knight; "alas, nay, nay,
It will not be amended, never mo';
Thou art so loathly, and so old also,

And thereto comest of so low a kind,
That little wonder though I wallow and wind;
So woulde God, mine hearte woulde brest!"
"Is this," quoth she, "the cause of your unrest?"
"Yea, certainly," quoth he; "no wonder is."
"Now, Sir," quoth she, "I could amend all this,
If that me list, ere it were dayes three,
So well ye mighte bear you unto me.
But, for ye speaken of such gentleness
As is descended out of old richness,
That therefore shalle ye be gentlemen;
Such arrogancy is not worth a hen.
Look who that is most virtuous alway,
Prive and apert, and most intendeth aye
To do the gentle deedes that he can;
And take him for the greatest gentleman.
Christ will, we claim of him our gentleness,
Not of our elders for their old richness.
For though they gave us all their heritage,
For which we claim to be of high parage,
Yet may they not bequeathe, for no thing,
To none of us, their virtuous living
That made them gentlemen called to be,
And bade us follow them in such degree.
Well can the wise poet of Florence,
That highte Dante, speak of this sentence:
Lo, in such manner rhyme is Dante's tale.
'Full seld' upriseth by his branches smale
Prowess of man, for God of his goodness
Wills that we claim of him our gentleness;
For of our elders may we nothing claim
But temp'ral things that man may hurt and maim.
Eke every wight knows this as well as I,
If gentleness were planted naturally
Unto a certain lineage down the line,
Prive and apert, then would they never fine
To do of gentleness the fair office
Then might they do no villainy nor vice.
Take fire, and bear it to the darkest house
Betwixt this and the mount of Caucasus,
And let men shut the doores, and go thenne,
Yet will the fire as fair and lighte brenne
As twenty thousand men might it behold;

Its office natural aye will it hold,
On peril of my life, till that it die. natural duty
Here may ye see well how that gentery
Is not annexed to possession,
Since folk do not their operation
Always, as doth the fire, lo, in its kind
For, God it wot, men may full often find
A lorde's son do shame and villainy.
And he that will have price of his gent'ry,
For he was boren of a gentle house,
And had his elders noble and virtuous,
And will himselfe do no gentle deedes,
Nor follow his gentle ancestry, that dead is,
He is not gentle, be he duke or earl;
For villain sinful deedes make a churl.
For gentleness is but the renomee
Of thine ancestors, for their high bounte,
Which is a strange thing to thy person:
Thy gentleness cometh from God alone.
Then comes our very gentleness of grace;
It was no thing bequeath'd us with our place.
Think how noble, as saith Valerius,
Was thilke Tullius Hostilius,
That out of povert' rose to high
Read in Senec, and read eke in Boece,
There shall ye see express, that it no drede is,
That he is gentle that doth gentle deedes.
And therefore, leve husband, I conclude,
Albeit that mine ancestors were rude,
Yet may the highe God, — and so hope I, —
Grant me His grace to live virtuously:
Then am I gentle when that I begin
To live virtuously, and waive sin.
“And whereas ye of povert' me repreve,
The highe God, on whom that we believe,
In wilful povert' chose to lead his life:
And certes, every man, maiden, or wife
May understand that Jesus, heaven's king,
Ne would not choose a virtuous living.
Glad povert' is an honest thing, certain;
This will Senec and other clerkes sayn
Whoso that holds him paid of his povert',
I hold him rich though he hath not a shirt.

He that coveteth is a poore wight
For he would have what is not in his might
But he that nought hath, nor coveteth to have,
Is rich, although ye hold him but a knave.
Very povert' is sinne, properly.
Juvenal saith of povert' merrily:
The poore man, when he goes by the way
Before the thieves he may sing and play
Povert' is hateful good, and, as I guess,
A full great bringer out of business;
A great amender eke of sapience
To him that taketh it in patience.
Povert' is this, although it seem elenge
Possession that no wight will challenge
Povert' full often, when a man is low,
Makes him his God and eke himself to know
Povert' a spectacle is, as thinketh me
Through which he may his very friendes see.
And, therefore, Sir, since that I you not grieve,
Of my povert' no more me repreve.
"Now, Sir, of elde ye repreve me:
And certes, Sir, though none authority
Were in no book, ye gentles of honour
Say, that men should an olde wight honour,
And call him father, for your gentleness;
And authors shall I finden, as I guess.
Now there ye say that I am foul and old,
Then dread ye not to be a cokewold.
For filth, and elde, all so may I the,
Be greate wardens upon chastity.
But natheless, since I know your delight,
I shall fulfil your wordly appetite.
Choose now," quoth she, "one of these thinges tway,
To have me foul and old till that I dey,
And be to you a true humble wife,
And never you displease in all my life:
Or elles will ye have me young and fair,
And take your aventure of the repair
That shall be to your house because of me, —
Or in some other place, it may well be?
Now choose yourselfe whether that you liketh.
This knight adviseth him and sore he siketh,
But at the last he said in this mannere;

“My lady and my love, and wife so dear,
 I put me in your wise governance,
 Choose for yourself which may be most pleasance
 And most honour to you and me also;
 I do no force the whether of the two:
 For as you liketh, it sufficeth me.”
 “Then have I got the mastery,” quoth she,
 “Since I may choose and govern as me lest.”
 “Yea, certes wife,” quoth he, “I hold it best.”
 “Kiss me,” quoth she, “we are no longer wroth,
 For by my troth I will be to you both;
 This is to say, yea, bothe fair and good.
 I pray to God that I may sterve wood,
 But I to you be all so good and true,
 As ever was wife since the world was new;
 And but I be to-morrow as fair to seen,
 As any lady, emperess or queen,
 That is betwixt the East and eke the West
 Do with my life and death right as you lest.
 Cast up the curtain, and look how it is.”
 And when the knight saw verily all this,
 That she so fair was, and so young thereto,
 For joy he hent her in his armes two:
 His hearte bathed in a bath of bliss,
 A thousand times on row he gan her kiss:
 And she obeyed him in every thing
 That mighte do him pleasance or liking.
 And thus they live unto their lives’ end
 In perfect joy; and Jesus Christ us send
 Husbandes meek and young, and fresh in bed,
 And grace to overlive them that we wed.
 And eke I pray Jesus to short their lives,
 That will not be governed by their wives.
 And old and angry niggards of dispence,
 God send them soon a very pestilence!

The Franklin’s Tale

THE PROLOGUE

“IN faith, Squier, thou hast thee well acquit,
 And gentilly; I praise well thy wit,”
 Quoth the Franklin; “considering thy youthe
 So feelingly thou speak’st, Sir, I aloue thee,
 As to my doom, there is none that is here

Of eloquence that shall be thy peer,
If that thou live; God give thee goode chance,
And in virtue send thee continuance,
For of thy speaking I have great dainty.
I have a son, and, by the Trinity;
It were me lever than twenty pound worth land,
Though it right now were fallen in my hand,
He were a man of such discretion
As that ye be: fy on possession,
But if a man be virtuous withal.
I have my sone snibbed and yet shall,
For he to virtue listeth not t'intend,
But for to play at dice, and to dispend,
And lose all that he hath, is his usage;
And he had lever talke with a page,
Than to commune with any gentle wight,
There he might learen gentilless aright."
Straw for your gentillesse!" quoth our Host.
"What? Frankelin, pardie, Sir, well thou wost
That each of you must tellen at the least
A tale or two, or breake his behest."
"That know I well, Sir," quoth the Frankelin;
"I pray you have me not in disdain,
Though I to this man speak a word or two."
"Tell on thy tale, withoute wordes mo'."
"Gladly, Sir Host," quoth he, "I will obey
Unto your will; now hearken what I say;
I will you not contrary in no wise,
As far as that my wittes may suffice.
I pray to God that it may please you,
Then wot I well that it is good enow.
"These olde gentle Bretons, in their days,
Of divers adventures made lays,
Rhymeden in their firste Breton tongue;
Which layes with their instruments they sung,
Or elles reade them for their pleasance;
And one of them have I in remembrance,
Which I shall say with good will as I can.
But, Sirs, because I am a borel man,
At my beginning first I you beseech
Have me excused of my rude speech.
I learned never rhetoric, certain;
Thing that I speak, it must be bare and plain.

I slept never on the mount of Parnasso,
 Nor learned Marcus Tullius Cicero.
 Coloures know I none, withoute dread,
 But such colours as growen in the mead,
 Or elles such as men dye with or paint;
 Colours of rhetoric be to me quaint;
 My spirit feeleth not of such mattere.
 But, if you list, my tale shall ye hear.”

THE TALE

In Armoric', that called is Bretagne,
 There was a knight, that lov'd and did his pain,
 To serve a lady in his beste wise;
 And many a labour, many a great emprise,
 He for his lady wrought, ere she were won:
 For she was one the fairest under sun,
 And eke thereto come of so high kindred,
 That well unnethes durst this knight for dread,
 Tell her his woe, his pain, and his distress
 But, at the last, she for his worthiness,
 And namely for his meek obeisance,
 Hath such a pity caught of his penance,
 That privily she fell of his accord
 To take him for her husband and her lord
 (Of such lordship as men have o'er their wives);
 And, for to lead the more in bliss their lives,
 Of his free will he swore her as a knight,
 That never in all his life he day nor night
 Should take upon himself no mastery
 Against her will, nor kithe her jealousy,
 But her obey, and follow her will in all,
 As any lover to his lady shall;
 Save that the name of sovereignty
 That would he have, for shame of his degree.
 She thanked him, and with full great humbless
 She saide; “Sir, since of your gentleness
 Ye proffer me to have so large a reign,
 Ne woulde God never betwixt us twain,
 As in my guilt, were either war or strife:
 Sir, I will be your humble true wife,
 Have here my troth, till that my hearte brest.”
 Thus be they both in quiet and in rest.
 For one thing, Sires, safely dare I say,

That friends ever each other must obey,
If they will longe hold in company.
Love will not be constrain'd by mastery.
When mast'ry comes, the god of love anon
Beateth his wings, and, farewell, he is gone.
Love is a thing as any spirit free.
Women of kind desire liberty,
And not to be constrained as a thrall,
And so do men, if soothly I say shall.
Look who that is most patient in love,
He is at his advantage all above.
Patience is a high virtue certain,
For it vanquisheth, as these clerkes sayn,
Things that rigour never should attain.
For every word men may not chide or plain.
Learne to suffer, or, so may I go,
Ye shall it learn whether ye will or no.
For in this world certain no wight there is,
That he not doth or saith sometimes amiss.
Ire, or sickness, or constellation,
Wine, woe, or changing of complexion,
Causeth full oft to do amiss or speaken:
On every wrong a man may not be wreaken.
After the time must be temperance
To every wight that can of governance.
And therefore hath this worthy wise knight
(To live in ease) sufferance her behight;
And she to him full wisly gan to swear
That never should there be default in her.
Here may men see a humble wife accord;
Thus hath she ta'en her servant and her lord,
Servant in love, and lord in marriage.
Then was he both in lordship and servage?
Servage? nay, but in lordship all above,
Since he had both his lady and his love:
His lady certes, and his wife also,
The which that law of love accordeth to.
And when he was in this prosperrity,
Home with his wife he went to his country,
Not far from Penmark, where his dwelling was,
And there he liv'd in bliss and in solace.
Who coulde tell, but he had wedded be,
The joy, the ease, and the prosperity,

That is betwixt a husband and his wife?
A year and more lasted this blissful life,
Till that this knight, of whom I spake thus,
That of Cairrud was call'd Arviragus,
Shope him to go and dwell a year or twain
In Engleland, that call'd was eke Britain,
To seek in armes worship and honour
(For all his lust he set in such labour);
And dwelled there two years; the book saith thus.
Now will I stint of this Arviragus,
And speak I will of Dorigen his wife,
That lov'd her husband as her hearte's life.
For his absence weepeth she and siketh,
As do these noble wives when them liketh;
She mourneth, waketh, waileth, fasteth, plaineth;
Desire of his presence her so distraineth,
That all this wide world she set at nought.
Her friendes, which that knew her heavy thought,
Comforte her in all that ever they may;
They preache her, they tell her night and day,
That causeless she slays herself, alas!
And every comfort possible in this case
They do to her, with all their business,
And all to make her leave her heaviness.
By process, as ye knowen every one,
Men may so longe graven in a stone,
Till some figure therein imprinted be:
So long have they comforted her, till she
Received hath, by hope and by reason,
Th' imprinting of their consolation,
Through which her greate sorrow gan assuage;
She may not always duren in such rage.
And eke Arviragus, in all this care,
Hath sent his letters home of his welfare,
And that he will come hastily again,
Or elles had this sorrow her hearty-slain.
Her friendes saw her sorrow gin to slake,
And prayed her on knees for Godde's sake
To come and roamen in their company,
Away to drive her darke fantasy;
And finally she granted that request,
For well she saw that it was for the best.
Now stood her castle faste by the sea,

And often with her friendes walked she,
Her to disport upon the bank on high,
There as many a ship and barge sigh,
Sailing their courses, where them list to go.
But then was that a parcel of her woe,
For to herself full oft, "Alas!" said she,
Is there no ship, of so many as I see,
Will bringe home my lord? then were my heart
All warish'd of this bitter paine's smart."
Another time would she sit and think,
And cast her eyen downward from the brink;
But when she saw the grisly rockes blake,
For very fear so would her hearte quake,
That on her feet she might her not sustene
Then would she sit adown upon the green,
And piteously into the sea behold,
And say right thus, with careful sikes cold:
"Eternal God! that through thy purveyance
Leadest this world by certain governance,
In idle, as men say, ye nothing make;
But, Lord, these grisly fiendly rockes blake,
That seem rather a foul confusion
Of work, than any fair creation
Of such a perfect wise God and stable,
Why have ye wrought this work unreasonable?
For by this work, north, south, or west, or east,
There is not foster'd man, nor bird, nor beast:
It doth no good, to my wit, but annoyeth.
See ye not, Lord, how mankind it destroyeth?
A hundred thousand bodies of mankind
Have rockes slain, all be they not in mind;
Which mankind is so fair part of thy work,
Thou madest it like to thine owen mark.
Then seemed it ye had a great cherte
Toward mankind; but how then may it be
That ye such meanes make it to destroy?
Which meanes do no good, but ever annoy.
I wot well, clerkes will say as them lest,
By arguments, that all is for the best,
Although I can the causes not y-know;
But thilke God that made the wind to blow,
As keep my lord, this is my conclusion:
To clerks leave I all disputation:

But would to God that all these rockes blake
Were sunken into helle for his sake
These rockes slay mine hearte for the fear.”
Thus would she say, with many a piteous tear.
Her friendes saw that it was no disport
To roame by the sea, but discomfort,
And shope them for to playe somewhere else.
They leade her by rivers and by wells,
And eke in other places delectables;
They dancen, and they play at chess and tables.
So on a day, right in the morning-tide,
Unto a garden that was there beside,
In which that they had made their ordinance
Of victual, and of other purveyance,
They go and play them all the longe day:
And this was on the sixth morrow of May,
Which May had painted with his softe showers
This garden full of leaves and of flowers:
And craft of manne’s hand so curiously
Arrayed had this garden truely,
That never was there garden of such price,
But if it were the very Paradise.
Th’odour of flowers, and the freshe sight,
Would have maked any hearte light
That e’er was born, but if too great sickness
Or too great sorrow held it in distress;
So full it was of beauty and pleasance.
And after dinner they began to dance
And sing also, save Dorigen alone
Who made alway her complaint and her moan,
For she saw not him on the dance go
That was her husband, and her love also;
But natheless she must a time abide
And with good hope let her sorrow slide.
Upon this dance, amonge other men,
Danced a squier before Dorigen
That fresher was, and jollier of array
As to my doom, than is the month of May.
He sang and danced, passing any man,
That is or was since that the world began;
Therewith he was, if men should him describe,
One of the beste faring men alive,
Young, strong, and virtuous, and rich, and wise,

And well beloved, and holden in great price.
And, shortly if the sooth I telle shall,
Unweeting of this Dorigen at all,
This lusty squier, servant to Venus,
Which that y-called was Aurelius,
Had lov'd her best of any creature
Two year and more, as was his aventure;
But never durst he tell her his grievance;
Withoute cup he drank all his penance.
He was despaired, nothing durst he say,
Save in his songes somewhat would he wray
His woe, as in a general complaining;
He said, he lov'd, and was belov'd nothing.
Of suche matter made he many lays,
Songes, complaintes, roundels, virelays
How that he durste not his sorrow tell,
But languished, as doth a Fury in hell;
And die he must, he said, as did Echo
For Narcissus, that durst not tell her woe.
In other manner than ye hear me say,
He durste not to her his woe bewray,
Save that paraventure sometimes at dances,
Where younge folke keep their observances,
It may well be he looked on her face
In such a wise, as man that asketh grace,
But nothing wiste she of his intent.
Nath'less it happen'd, ere they thennes went,
Because that he was her neighebour,
And was a man of worship and honour,
And she had knowen him of time yore,
They fell in speech, and forth aye more and more
Unto his purpose drew Aurelius;
And when he saw his time, he saide thus:
Madam," quoth he, "by God that this world made,
So that I wist it might your hearte glade,
I would, that day that your Arviragus
Went over sea, that I, Aurelius,
Had gone where I should never come again;
For well I wot my service is in vain.
My guerdon is but bursting of mine heart.
Madame, rue upon my paine's smart,
For with a word ye may me slay or save.
Here at your feet God would that I were grave.

I have now no leisure more to say:
Have mercy, sweet, or you will do me dey.”
She gan to look upon Aurelius;
“Is this your will,” quoth she, “and say ye thus?
Ne’er erst,” quoth she, “I wiste what ye meant:
But now, Aurelius, I know your intent.
By thilke God that gave me soul and life,
Never shall I be an untrue wife
In word nor work, as far as I have wit;
I will be his to whom that I am knit;
Take this for final answer as of me.”
But after that in play thus saide she.
“Aurelius,” quoth she, “by high God above,
Yet will I grante you to be your love
(Since I you see so piteously complain);
Looke, what day that endelong Bretagne
Ye remove all the rockes, stone by stone,
That they not lette ship nor boat to gon,
I say, when ye have made this coast so clean
Of rockes, that there is no stone seen,
Then will I love you best of any man;
Have here my troth, in all that ever I can;
For well I wot that it shall ne’er betide.
Let such folly out of your hearte glide.
What dainty should a man have in his life
For to go love another manne’s wife,
That hath her body when that ever him liketh?”
Aurelius full often sore siketh; sigheth
Is there none other grace in you?” quoth he,
“No, by that Lord,” quoth she, “that maked me.
Woe was Aurelius when that he this heard,
And with a sorrowful heart he thus answer’d.
“Madame, quoth he, “this were an impossible.
Then must I die of sudden death horrible.”
And with that word he turned him anon.
Then came her other friends many a one,
And in the alleys roamed up and down,
And nothing wist of this conclusion,
But suddenly began to revel new,
Till that the brighte sun had lost his hue,
For th’ horizon had reft the sun his light
(This is as much to say as it was night);
And home they go in mirth and in solace;

Save only wretch'd Aurelius, alas
He to his house is gone with sorrowful heart.
He said, he may not from his death astart.
Him seemed, that he felt his heart cold.
Up to the heav'n his handes gan he hold,
And on his knees bare he set him down.
And in his raving said his orisoun.
For very woe out of his wit he braid;
He wist not what he spake, but thus he said;
With piteous heart his plaint hath he begun
Unto the gods, and first unto the Sun.
He said; "Apollo God and governour
Of every plante, herbe, tree, and flower,
That giv'st, after thy declination,
To each of them his time and his season,
As thine herberow changeth low and high;
Lord Phoebus: cast thy merciable eye
On wretched Aurelius, which that am but lorn.
Lo, lord, my lady hath my death y-sworn,
Withoute guilt, but thy benignity
Upon my deadly heart have some pity.
For well I wot, Lord Phoebus, if you lest,
Ye may me helpe, save my lady, best.
Now vouchsafe, that I may you devise
How that I may be holp, and in what wise.
Your blissful sister, Lucina the sheen,
That of the sea is chief goddess and queen, —
Though Neptunus have deity in the sea,
Yet emperess above him is she; —
Ye know well, lord, that, right as her desire
Is to be quick'd and lighted of your fire,
For which she followeth you full busily,
Right so the sea desireth naturally
To follow her, as she that is goddess
Both in the sea and rivers more and less.
Wherefore, Lord Phoebus, this is my request,
Do this miracle, or do mine hearte brest;
That flow, next at this opposition,
Which in the sign shall be of the Lion,
As praye her so great a flood to bring,
That five fathom at least it overspring
The highest rock in Armoric Bretagne,
And let this flood endure yeares twain:

Then certes to my lady may I say,
“Holde your hest,” the rockes be away.
Lord Phoebus, this miracle do for me,
Pray her she go no faster course than ye;
I say this, pray your sister that she go
No faster course than ye these yeares two:
Then shall she be even at full alway,
And spring-flood laste bothe night and day.
And but she vouchesafe in such mannere
To grante me my sov’ reign lady dear,
Pray her to sink every rock adown
Into her owen darke regioun
Under the ground, where Pluto dwelleth in
Or nevermore shall I my lady win.
Thy temple in Delphos will I barefoot seek.
Lord Phoebus! see the teares on my cheek
And on my pain have some compassioun.”
And with that word in sorrow he fell down,
And longe time he lay forth in a trance.
His brother, which that knew of his penance,
Up caught him, and to bed he hath him brought,
Despaired in this torment and this thought
Let I this woeful creature lie;
Choose he for me whe’er he will live or die.
Arviragus with health and great honour
(As he that was of chivalry the flow’r)
Is come home, and other worthy men.
Oh, blissful art thou now, thou Dorigen!
Thou hast thy lusty husband in thine arms,
The freshe knight, the worthy man of arms,
That loveth thee as his own hearte’s life:
Nothing list him to be imaginatif
If any wight had spoke, while he was out,
To her of love; he had of that no doubt;
He not intended to no such mattere,
But danced, jousted, and made merry cheer.
And thus in joy and bliss I let them dwell,
And of the sick Aurelius will I tell
In languor and in torment furious
Two year and more lay wretch’d Aurelius,
Ere any foot on earth he mighte gon;
Nor comfort in this time had he none,
Save of his brother, which that was a clerk.

He knew of all this woe and all this work;
For to none other creature certain
Of this matter he durst no worde sayn;
Under his breast he bare it more secree
Than e'er did Pamphilus for Galatee.
His breast was whole withoute for to seen,
But in his heart aye was the arrow keen,
And well ye know that of a sursanure
In surgery is perilous the cure,
But men might touch the arrow or come thereby.
His brother wept and wailed privily,
Till at the last him fell in remembrance,
That while he was at Orleans in France, —
As younge clerkes, that be likerous —
To readen artes that be curious,
Seeken in every halk and every hern
Particular sciences for to learn,—
He him remember'd, that upon a day
At Orleans in study a book he say saw
Of magic natural, which his fellow,
That was that time a bachelor of law
All were he there to learn another craft,
Had privily upon his desk y-laft;
Which book spake much of operations
Touching the eight and-twenty mansions
That longe to the Moon, and such folly
As in our dayes is not worth a fly;
For holy church's faith, in our believe,
Us suff'reth none illusion to grieve.
And when this book was in his remembrance
Anon for joy his heart began to dance,
And to himself he saide privily;
“My brother shall be warish'd hastily
For I am sicker that there be sciences,
By which men make divers apparences,
Such as these subtle tregetoures play.
For oft at feaste's have I well heard say,
That tregetours, within a halle large,
Have made come in a water and a barge,
And in the halle rowen up and down.
Sometimes hath seemed come a grim lioun,
And sometimes flowers spring as in a mead;
Sometimes a vine, and grapes white and red;

Sometimes a castle all of lime and stone;
And, when them liked, voided it anon:
Thus seemed it to every manne's sight.
Now then conclude I thus; if that I might
At Orleans some olde fellow find,
That hath these Moone's mansions in mind,
Or other magic natural above.
He should well make my brother have his love.
For with an appearance a clerk may make,
To manne's sight, that all the rockes blake
Of Bretagne were voided every one,
And shippes by the brinke come and gon,
And in such form endure a day or two;
Then were my brother warish'd of his woe,
Then must she needes holde her behest,
Or elles he shall shame her at the least."
Why should I make a longer tale of this?
Unto his brother's bed he comen is,
And such comfort he gave him, for to gon
To Orleans, that he upstart anon,
And on his way forth-ward then is he fare,
In hope for to be lissed of his care.
When they were come almost to that city,
But if it were a two furlong or three,
A young clerk roaming by himself they met,
Which that in Latin thriftily them gret.
And after that he said a wondrous thing;
I know," quoth he, "the cause of your coming;"
Aud ere they farther any foote went,
He told them all that was in their intent.
The Breton clerk him asked of fellows
The which he hadde known in olde daws,
And he answer'd him that they deade were,
For which he wept full often many a tear.
Down off his horse Aurelius light anon,
And forth with this magician is be gone
Home to his house, and made him well at ease;
Them lacked no vitail that might them please.
So well-array'd a house as there was one,
Aurelius in his life saw never none.
He shewed him, ere they went to suppere,
Forestes, parkes, full of wilde deer.
There saw he hartes with their hornes high,

The greatest that were ever seen with eye.
He saw of them an hundred slain with hounds,
And some with arrows bleed of bitter wounds.
He saw, when voided were the wilde deer,
These falconers upon a fair rivere,
That with their hawkes have the heron slain.
Then saw he knightes jousting in a plain.
And after this he did him such pleasance,
That he him shew'd his lady on a dance,
In which himselfe danced, as him thought.
And when this master, that this magic wrought,
Saw it was time, he clapp'd his handes two,
And farewell, all the revel is y-go.
And yet remov'd they never out of the house,
While they saw all the sightes marvellous;
But in his study, where his bookes be,
They satte still, and no wight but they three.
To him this master called his squier,
And said him thus, "May we go to supper?
Almost an hour it is, I undertake,
Since I you bade our supper for to make,
When that these worthy men wente with me
Into my study, where my bookes be."
"Sir," quoth this squier, "when it liketh you.
It is all ready, though ye will right now."
"Go we then sup," quoth he, "as for the best;
These amorous folk some time must have rest."
At after supper fell they in treaty
What summe should this master's guerdon be,
To remove all the rockes of Bretagne,
And eke from Gironde to the mouth of Seine.
He made it strange, and swore, so God him save,
Less than a thousand pound he would not have,
Nor gladly for that sum he would not gon.
Aurelius with blissful heart anon
Answered thus; "Fie on a thousand pound!
This wide world, which that men say is round,
I would it give, if I were lord of it.
This bargain is full-driv'n, for we be knit;
Ye shall be payed truly by my troth.
But looke, for no negligence or sloth,
Ye tarry us here no longer than to-morrow."
"Nay," quoth the clerk, "have here my faith to borrow."

To bed is gone Aurelius when him lest,
And well-nigh all that night he had his rest,
What for his labour, and his hope of bliss,
His woeful heart of penance had a liss.
Upon the morrow, when that it was day,
Unto Bretagne they took the righte way,
Aurelius and this magician beside,
And be descended where they would abide:
And this was, as the bookes me remember,
The colde frosty season of December.
Phoebus wax'd old, and hued like latoun,
That in his hote declinatioun
Shone as the burned gold, with streames bright;
But now in Capricorn adown he light,
Where as he shone full pale, I dare well sayn.
The bitter frostes, with the sleet and rain,
Destroyed have the green in every yard.
Janus sits by the fire with double beard,
And drinketh of his bugle horn the wine:
Before him stands the brawn of tusked swine
And "nowel" crieth every lusty man
Aurelius, in all that ev'r he can,
Did to his master cheer and reverence,
And prayed him to do his diligence
To bringe him out of his paines smart,
Or with a sword that he would slit his heart.
This subtle clerk such ruth had on this man,
That night and day he sped him, that he can,
To wait a time of his conclusion;
This is to say, to make illusion,
By such an appearance of jugglery
(I know no termes of astrology),
That she and every wight should ween and say,
That of Bretagne the rockes were away,
Or else they were sunken under ground.
So at the last he hath a time found
To make his japes and his wretchedness
Of such a superstitious cursedness.
His tables Toletanes forth he brought,
Full well corrected, that there lacked nought,
Neither his collect, nor his expanse years,
Neither his rootes, nor his other gears,
As be his centres, and his arguments,

And his proportional convenient
For his equations in everything.
And by his eighte spheres in his working,
He knew full well how far Alnath was shove
From the head of that fix'd Aries above,
That in the ninthe sphere consider'd is.
Full subtilly he calcul'd all this.
When he had found his firste mansion,
He knew the remnant by proportion;
And knew the rising of his moone well,
And in whose face, and term, and every deal;
And knew full well the moone's mansion
Accordant to his operation;
And knew also his other observances,
For such illusions and such meschances,
As heathen folk used in thilke days.
For which no longer made he delays;
But through his magic, for a day or tway,
It seemed all the rockes were away.
Aurelius, which yet despaired is
Whe'er he shall have his love, or fare amiss,
Awaited night and day on this miracle:
And when he knew that there was none obstacle,
That voided were these rockes every one,
Down at his master's feet he fell anon,
And said; "I, woeful wretch'd Aurelius,
Thank you, my Lord, and lady mine Venus,
That me have holpen from my cares cold."
And to the temple his way forth hath he hold,
Where as he knew he should his lady see.
And when he saw his time, anon right he
With dreadful heart and with full humble cheer
Saluteth hath his sovereign lady dear.
"My rightful Lady," quoth this woeful man,
"Whom I most dread, and love as I best can,
And lothest were of all this world displease,
Were't not that I for you have such disease,
That I must die here at your foot anon,
Nought would I tell how me is woebegone.
But certes either must I die or plain;
Ye slay me guilteless for very pain.
But of my death though that ye have no ruth,
Advise you, ere that ye break your truth:

Repente you, for thilke God above,
Ere ye me slay because that I you love.
For, Madame, well ye wot what ye have hight;
Not that I challenge anything of right
Of you, my sovereign lady, but of grace:
But in a garden yond', in such a place,
Ye wot right well what ye behighte me,
And in mine hand your trothe plighted ye,
To love me best; God wot ye saide so,
Albeit that I unworthy am thereto;
Madame, I speak it for th' honour of you,
More than to save my hearte's life right now;
I have done so as ye commanded me,
And if ye vouchesafe, ye may go see.
Do as you list, have your behest in mind,
For, quick or dead, right there ye shall me find;
In you hes all to do me live or dey;
But well I wot the rockes be away."
He took his leave, and she astonish'd stood;
In all her face was not one drop of blood:
She never ween'd t'have come in such a trap.
"Alas!" quoth she, "that ever this should hap!
For ween'd I ne'er, by possibility,
That such a monster or marvail might be;
It is against the process of nature."
And home she went a sorrowful creature;
For very fear unnethes may she go.
She weeped, wailed, all a day or two,
And swooned, that it ruthe was to see:
But why it was, to no wight tolde she,
For out of town was gone Arviragus.
But to herself she spake, and saide thus,
With face pale, and full sorrowful cheer,
In her complaint, as ye shall after hear.
"Alas!" quoth she, "on thee, Fortune, I plain,
That unaware hast me wrapped in thy chain,
From which to scape, wot I no succour,
Save only death, or elles dishonour;
One of these two behoveth me to choose.
But natheless, yet had I lever lose
My life, than of my body have shame,
Or know myselfe false, or lose my name;
And with my death I may be quit y-wis.

Hath there not many a noble wife, ere this,
And many a maiden, slain herself, alas!
Rather than with her body do trespass?
Yes, certes; lo, these stories bear witness.
When thirty tyrants full of cursedness
Had slain Phidon in Athens at the feast,
They commanded his daughters to arrest,
And bringe them before them, in despite,
All naked, to fulfil their foul delight;
And in their father's blood they made them dance
Upon the pavement, — God give them mischance.
For which these woeful maidens, full of dread,
Rather than they would lose their maidenhead,
They privily be start into a well,
And drowned themselves, as the bookes tell.
They of Messene let inquire and seek
Of Lacedaemon fifty maidens eke,
On which they woulde do their lechery:
But there was none of all that company
That was not slain, and with a glad intent
Chose rather for to die, than to assent
To be oppressed of her maidenhead.
Why should I then to dien be in dread?
Lo, eke the tyrant Aristoclides,
That lov'd a maiden hight Stimphalides,
When that her father slain was on a night,
Unto Diana's temple went she right,
And hent the image in her handes two,
From which image she woulde never go;
No wight her handes might off it arace,
Till she was slain right in the selfe place.
Now since that maidens hadde such despite
To be defouled with man's foul delight,
Well ought a wife rather herself to sle,
Than be defouled, as it thinketh me.
What shall I say of Hasdrubale's wife,
That at Carthage bereft herself of life?
For, when she saw the Romans win the town,
She took her children all, and skipt adown
Into the fire, and rather chose to die,
Than any Roman did her villainy.
Hath not Lucretia slain herself, alas!
At Rome, when that she oppressed was

Of Tarquin? for her thought it was a shame
 To live, when she hadde lost her name.
 The seven maidens of Milesie also
 Have slain themselves for very dread and woe,
 Rather than folk of Gaul them should oppress.
 More than a thousand stories, as I guess,
 Could I now tell as touching this mattere.
 When Abradate was slain, his wife so dear
 Herselfe slew, and let her blood to glide
 In Abradate's woundes, deep and wide,
 And said, 'My body at the leaste way
 There shall no wight defoul, if that I may.'
 Why should I more examples hereof sayn?
 Since that so many have themselves slain,
 Well rather than they would defouled be,
 I will conclude that it is bet for me
 To slay myself, than be defouled thus.
 I will be true unto Arviragus,
 Or elles slay myself in some mannere,
 As did Demotione's daughter dear,
 Because she woulde not defouled be.
 O Sedasus, it is full great pity
 To reade how thy daughters died, alas!
 That slew themselves for suche manner cas.
 As great a pity was it, or well more,
 The Theban maiden, that for Nicanor
 Herselfe slew, right for such manner woe.
 Another Theban maiden did right so;
 For one of Macedon had her oppress'd,
 She with her death her maidenhead redress'd.
 What shall I say of Niceratus' wife,
 That for such case bereft herself her life?
 How true was eke to Alcibiades
 His love, that for to dien rather chese,
 Than for to suffer his body unburied be?
 Lo, what a wife was Alceste?" quoth she.
 "What saith Homer of good Penelope?
 All Greece knoweth of her chastity.
 Pardie, of Laedamia is written thus,
 That when at Troy was slain Protesilaus,
 No longer would she live after his day.
 The same of noble Porcia tell I may;
 Withoute Brutus coulde she not live,

To whom she did all whole her hearte give.
The perfect wifehood of Artemisie
Honoured is throughout all Barbarie.
O Teuta queen, thy wifely chastity
To alle wives may a mirror be.”
Thus plained Dorigen a day or tway,
Purposing ever that she woulde dey; die
But natheless upon the thirde night
Home came Arviragus, the worthy knight,
And asked her why that she wept so sore.
And she gan weepen ever longer more.
“Alas,” quoth she, “that ever I was born!
Thus have I said,” quoth she; “thus have I sworn.”
And told him all, as ye have heard before:
It needeth not rehearse it you no more.
This husband with glad cheer, in friendly wise,
Answer’d and said, as I shall you devise.
“Is there aught elles, Dorigen, but this?”
“Nay, nay,” quoth she, “God help me so as wis,
This is too much, an it were Godde’s will.”
“Yea, wife,” quoth he, “let sleepe what is still,
It may be well par’veventure yet to-day.
Ye shall your trothe holde, by my fay.
For, God so wisly have mercy on me,
I had well lever sticked for to be,
For very love which I to you have,
But if ye should your trothe keep and save.
Truth is the highest thing that man may keep.”
But with that word he burst anon to weep,
And said; “I you forbid, on pain of death,
That never, while you lasteth life or breath,
To no wight tell ye this misaventure;
As I may best, I will my woe endure,
Nor make no countenance of heaviness,
That folk of you may deeme harm, or guess.”
And forth he call’d a squier and a maid.
“Go forth anon with Dorigen,” he said,
“And bringe her to such a place anon.”
They take their leave, and on their way they gon:
But they not wiste why she thither went;
He would to no wight telle his intent.
This squier, which that hight Aurelius,
On Dorigen that was so amorous,

Of aventure happen'd her to meet
Amid the town, right in the quickest street,
As she was bound to go the way forthright
Toward the garden, there as she had hight.
And he was to the garden-ward also;
For well he spied when she woulde go
Out of her house, to any manner place;
But thus they met, of aventure or grace,
And he saluted her with glad intent,
And asked of her whitherward she went.
And she answered, half as she were mad,
"Unto the garden, as my husband bade,
My trothe for to hold, alas! alas!"
Aurelius gan to wonder on this case,
And in his heart had great compassion
Of her, and of her lamentation,
And of Arviragus, the worthy knight,
That bade her hold all that she hadde hight;
So loth him was his wife should break her truth
And in his heart he caught of it great ruth,
Considering the best on every side,
That from his lust yet were him lever abide,
Than do so high a churlish wretchedness
Against franchise, and alle gentleness;
For which in fewe words he saide thus;
"Madame, say to your lord Arviragus,
That since I see the greate gentleness
Of him, and eke I see well your distress,
That him were lever have shame (and that were ruth)
Than ye to me should breake thus your truth,
I had well lever aye to suffer woe,
Than to depart the love betwixt you two.
I you release, Madame, into your hond,
Quit ev'ry surement and ev'ry bond,
That ye have made to me as herebeforn,
Since thilke time that ye were born.
Have here my truth, I shall you ne'er reprove
Of no behest; and here I take my leave,
As of the truest and the beste wife
That ever yet I knew in all my life.
But every wife beware of her behest;
On Dorigen remember at the least.
Thus can a squier do a gentle deed,

As well as can a knight, without drede.”
She thanked him upon her knees bare,
And home unto her husband is she fare,
And told him all, as ye have hearde said;
And, truste me, he was so well apaid,
That it were impossible me to write.
Why should I longer of this case indite?
Arviragus and Dorigen his wife
In sov’reign blisse ledde forth their life;
Ne’er after was there anger them between;
He cherish’d her as though she were a queen,
And she was to him true for evermore;
Of these two folk ye get of me no more.
Aurelius, that his cost had all forlorn,
Cursed the time that ever he was born.
“Alas!” quoth he, “alas that I behight
Of pured gold a thousand pound of weight
To this philosopher! how shall I do?
I see no more, but that I am fordo.
Mine heritage must I needes sell,
And be a beggar; here I will not dwell,
And shamen all my kindred in this place,
But I of him may gette better grace.
But natheless I will of him assay
At certain dayes year by year to pay,
And thank him of his greate courtesy.
My trothe will I keep, I will not he.”
With hearte sore he went unto his coffer,
And broughte gold unto this philosopher,
The value of five hundred pound, I guess,
And him beseeched, of his gentleness,
To grant him dayes of the remenant;
And said; “Master, I dare well make avaunt,
I failed never of my truth as yet.
For sickerly my debte shall be quit
Towardes you how so that e’er I fare
To go a-begging in my kirtle bare:
But would ye vouchesafe, upon surety,
Two year, or three, for to respite me,
Then were I well, for elles must I sell
Mine heritage; there is no more to tell.”
This philosopher soberly answer’d,
And saide thus, when he these wordes heard;

“Have I not holden covenant to thee?”
 “Yes, certes, well and truly,” quoth he.
 “Hast thou not had thy lady as thee liked?”
 “No, no,” quoth he, and sorrowfully siked.
 “What was the cause? tell me if thou can.”
 Aurelius his tale anon began,
 And told him all as ye have heard before,
 It needeth not to you rehearse it more.
 He said, “Arviragus of gentleness
 Had lever die in sorrow and distress,
 Than that his wife were of her trothe false.”
 The sorrow of Dorigen he told him als’,
 How loth her was to be a wicked wife,
 And that she lever had lost that day her life;
 And that her troth she swore through innocence;
 She ne’er erst had heard speak of apparence
 That made me have of her so great pity,
 And right as freely as he sent her to me,
 As freely sent I her to him again:
 This is all and some, there is no more to sayn.”
 The philosopher answer’d; “Leve brother,
 Evereach of you did gently to the other;
 Thou art a squier, and he is a knight,
 But God forbidde, for his blissful might,
 But if a clerk could do a gentle deed
 As well as any of you, it is no drede
 Sir, I release thee thy thousand pound,
 As thou right now were crept out of the ground,
 Nor ever ere now haddest knowen me.
 For, Sir, I will not take a penny of thee
 For all my craft, nor naught for my travail;
 Thou hast y-paid well for my vitaille;
 It is enough; and farewell, have good day.”
 And took his horse, and forth he went his way.
 Lordings, this question would I aske now,
 Which was the moste free, as thinketh you?
 Now telle me, ere that ye farther wend.
 I can no more, my tale is at an end.

The Pardoner’s Tale

THE PROLOGUE

OUR Hoste gan to swear as he were wood;
 “Harow!” quoth he, “by nailes and by blood,

This was a cursed thief, a false justice.
 As shameful death as hearte can devise
 Come to these judges and their advoca's.
 Algate this sely maid is slain, alas!
 Alas! too deare bought she her beauty.
 Wherefore I say, that all day man may see
 That giftes of fortune and of nature
 Be cause of death to many a creature.
 Her beauty was her death, I dare well sayn;
 Alas! so piteously as she was slain.
 Of bothe giftes, that I speak of now
 Men have full often more harm than prow,
 But truely, mine owen master dear,
 This was a piteous tale for to hear;
 But natheless, pass over; 'tis no force.
 I pray to God to save thy gentle corse,
 And eke thine urinalls, and thy jordans,
 Thine Hippocras, and eke thy Galliens,
 And every boist full of thy lectuary,
 God bless them, and our lady Sainte Mary.
 So may I the', thou art a proper man,
 And like a prelate, by Saint Ronian;
 Said I not well? Can I not speak in term?
 But well I wot thou dost mine heart to erme,
 That I have almost caught a cardiacle:
 By corpus Domini, but I have triacle,
 Or else a draught of moist and corny ale,
 Or but I hear anon a merry tale,
 Mine heart is brost for pity of this maid.
 Thou bel ami, thou Pardoner," he said,
 "Tell us some mirth of japes right anon."
 "It shall be done," quoth he, "by Saint Ronion.
 But first," quoth he, "here at this ale-stake
 I will both drink, and biten on a cake."
 But right anon the gentles gan to cry,
 "Nay, let him tell us of no ribaldry.
 Tell us some moral thing, that we may lear
 Some wit, and thenne will we gladly hear."
 "I grant y-wis," quoth he; "but I must think
 Upon some honest thing while that I drink."

THE TALE

Lordings (quoth he), in churche when I preach,
 I paine me to have an hautein speech,

And ring it out, as round as doth a bell,
For I know all by rote that I tell.
My theme is always one, and ever was;
Radix malorum est cupiditas.
First I pronounce whence that I come,
And then my bulles shew I all and some;
Our liege lorde's seal on my patent,
That shew I first, my body to warrent,
That no man be so hardy, priest nor clerk,
Me to disturb of Christe's holy werk.
And after that then tell I forth my tales.
Bulles of popes, and of cardinales,
Of patriarchs, and of bishops I shew,
And in Latin I speak a wordes few,
To savour with my predication,
And for to stir men to devotion
Then show I forth my longe crystal stones,
Y-crammed fall of cloutes and of bones;
Relics they be, as weene they each one.
Then have I in latoun a shoulder-bone
Which that was of a holy Jewe's sheep.
"Good men," say I, "take of my wordes keep;
If that this bone be wash'd in any well,
If cow, or calf, or sheep, or oxe swell,
That any worm hath eat, or worm y-stung,
Take water of that well, and wash his tongue,
And it is whole anon; and farthermore
Of pockes, and of scab, and every sore
Shall every sheep be whole, that of this well
Drinketh a draught; take keep of that I tell.
"If that the goodman, that the beastes oweth,
Will every week, ere that the cock him croweth,
Fasting, y-drinken of this well a draught,
As thilke holy Jew our elders taught,
His beastes and his store shall multiply.
And, Sirs, also it healeth jealousy;
For though a man be fall'n in jealous rage,
Let make with this water his pottage,
And never shall he more his wife mistrust,
Though he the sooth of her defaulte wist;
All had she taken priestes two or three.
Here is a mittain eke, that ye may see;
He that his hand will put in this mittain,

He shall have multiplying of his grain,
When he hath sowed, be it wheat or oats,
So that he offer pence, or elles groats.
And, men and women, one thing warn I you;
If any wight be in this church now
That hath done sin horrible, so that he
Dare not for shame of it y-shriven be;
Or any woman, be she young or old,
That hath y-made her husband cokewold,
Such folk shall have no power nor no grace
To offer to my relics in this place.
And whoso findeth him out of such blame,
He will come up and offer in God's name;
And I assoil him by the authority
Which that by bull y-granted was to me."
By this gaud have I wonne year by year
A hundred marks, since I was pardonere.
I stande like a clerk in my pulpit,
And when the lewed people down is set,
I preache so as ye have heard before,
And telle them a hundred japes more.
Then pain I me to stretche forth my neck,
And east and west upon the people I beck,
As doth a dove, sitting on a bern;
My handes and my tongue go so yern,
That it is joy to see my business.
Of avarice and of such cursedness
Is all my preaching, for to make them free
To give their pence, and namely unto me.
For mine intent is not but for to win,
And nothing for correction of sin.
I recke never, when that they be buried,
Though that their soules go a blackburied.
For certes many a predication
Cometh oft-time of evil intention;
Some for pleasance of folk, and flattery,
To be advanced by hypocrisy;
And some for vainglory, and some for hate.
For, when I dare not otherwise debate,
Then will I sting him with my tongue smart
In preaching, so that he shall not astart
To be defamed falsely, if that he
Hath trespass'd to my brethren or to me.

For, though I telle not his proper name,
Men shall well knowe that it is the same
By signes, and by other circumstances.
Thus quite I folk that do us displeasances:
Thus spit I out my venom, under hue
Of holiness, to seem holy and true.
But, shortly mine intent I will devise,
I preach of nothing but of covetise.
Therefore my theme is yet, and ever was, —
Radix malorum est cupiditas.
Thus can I preach against the same vice
Which that I use, and that is avarice.
But though myself be guilty in that sin,
Yet can I maken other folk to twin
From avarice, and sore them repent.
But that is not my principal intent;
I preache nothing but for covetise.
Of this mattere it ought enough suffice.
Then tell I them examples many a one,
Of olde stories longe time gone;
For lewed people love tales old;
Such thinges can they well report and hold.
What? trowe ye, that whiles I may preach
And winne gold and silver for I teach,
That I will live in povert' wilfully?
Nay, nay, I thought it never truely.
For I will preach and beg in sundry lands;
I will not do no labour with mine hands,
Nor make baskets for to live thereby,
Because I will not beggen idley.
I will none of the apostles counterfeit;
I will have money, wool, and cheese, and wheat,
All were it given of the poorest page,
Or of the pooreste widow in a village:
All should her children sterve for famine.
Nay, I will drink the liquor of the vine,
And have a jolly wench in every town.
But hearken, lordings, in conclusioun;
Your liking is, that I shall tell a tale
Now I have drunk a draught of corny ale,
By God, I hope I shall you tell a thing
That shall by reason be to your liking;
For though myself be a full vicious man,

A moral tale yet I you telle can,
Which I am wont to preache, for to win.
Now hold your peace, my tale I will begin.
In Flanders whilom was a company
Of younge folkes, that haunted folly,
As riot, hazard, stewes, and taverns;
Where as with lutes, harpes, and giterns,
They dance and play at dice both day and night,
And eat also, and drink over their might;
Through which they do the devil sacrifice
Within the devil's temple, in cursed wise,
By superfluity abominable.
Their oathes be so great and so damnable,
That it is grisly for to hear them swear.
Our blissful Lorde's body they to-tear;
Them thought the Jewes rent him not enough,
And each of them at other's sinne lough.
And right anon in come tombesteres
Fetis and small, and younge fruitesteres.
Singers with harpes, baudes, waferers,
Which be the very devil's officers,
To kindle and blow the fire of lechery,
That is annexed unto gluttony.
The Holy Writ take I to my witness,
That luxury is in wine and drunkenness.
Lo, how that drunken Lot unkindely
Lay by his daughters two unwittingly,
So drunk he was he knew not what he wrought.
Herodes, who so well the stories sought,
When he of wine replete was at his feast,
Right at his owen table gave his hest
To slay the Baptist John full guileless.
Seneca saith a good word, doubteless:
He saith he can no difference find
Betwixt a man that is out of his mind,
And a man whiche that is drunkelew:
But that woodness, y-fallen in a shrew,
Persevereth longer than drunkenness.
O gluttony, full of all cursedness;
O cause first of our confusion,
Original of our damnation,
Till Christ had bought us with his blood again!
Looke, how deare, shortly for to sayn,

Abought was first this cursed villainy:
Corrupt was all this world for gluttony.
Adam our father, and his wife also,
From Paradise, to labour and to woe,
Were driven for that vice, it is no dread.
For while that Adam fasted, as I read,
He was in Paradise; and when that he
Ate of the fruit defended of the tree,
Anon he was cast out to woe and pain.
O gluttony! well ought us on thee plain.
Oh! wist a man how many maladies
Follow of excess and of gluttonies,
He woulde be the more measurable
Of his diete, sitting at his table.
Alas! the shorte throat, the tender mouth,
Maketh that east and west, and north and south,
In earth, in air, in water, men do swink
To get a glutton dainty meat and drink.
Of this matter, O Paul! well canst thou treat
Meat unto womb, and womb eke unto meat,
Shall God destroye both, as Paulus saith.
Alas! a foul thing is it, by my faith,
To say this word, and fouler is the deed,
When man so drinketh of the white and red,
That of his throat he maketh his privy
Through thilke cursed superfluity
The apostle saith, weeping full piteously,
There walk many, of which you told have I, —
I say it now weeping with piteous voice, —
That they be enemies of Christe's crois;
Of which the end is death; womb is their God.
O womb, O belly, stinking is thy cod,
Full fill'd of dung and of corruptioun;
At either end of thee foul is the soun.
How great labour and cost is thee to find!
These cookes how they stamp, and strain, and grind,
And turne substance into accident,
To fulfill all thy likerous talent!
Out of the harde bones knocke they
The marrow, for they caste naught away
That may go through the gullet soft and swoot
Of spicery and leaves, of bark and root,
Shall be his sauce y-maked by delight,

To make him have a newer appetite.
But, certes, he that haunteth such delices
Is dead while that he liveth in those vices.
A lecherous thing is wine, and drunkenness
Is full of striving and of wretchedness.
O drunken man! disfigur'd is thy face,
Sour is thy breath, foul art thou to embrace:
And through thy drunken nose sowneth the soun',
As though thou saidest aye, Samsoun! Samsoun!
And yet, God wot, Samson drank never wine.
Thou fallest as it were a sticked swine;
Thy tongue is lost, and all thine honest cure;
For drunkenness is very sepulture
Of manne's wit and his discretion.
In whom that drink hath domination,
He can no counsel keep, it is no dread.
Now keep you from the white and from the red,
And namely from the white wine of Lepe,
That is to sell in Fish Street and in Cheap.
This wine of Spaine creepeth subtilly —
In other wines growing faste by,
Of which there riseth such fumosity,
That when a man hath drunken draughtes three,
And weeneth that he be at home in Cheap,
He is in Spain, right at the town of Lepe,
Not at the Rochelle, nor at Bourdeaux town;
And thenne will he say, Samsoun! Samsoun!
But hearken, lordings, one word, I you pray,
That all the sovreign actes, dare I say,
Of victories in the Old Testament,
Through very God that is omnipotent,
Were done in abstinence and in prayere:
Look in the Bible, and there ye may it lear.
Look, Attila, the greate conqueror,
Died in his sleep, with shame and dishonour,
Bleeding aye at his nose in drunkenness:
A captain should aye live in soberness
And o'er all this, advise you right well
What was commanded unto Lemuel;
Not Samuel, but Lemuel, say I.
Reade the Bible, and find it expressly
Of wine giving to them that have justice.
No more of this, for it may well suffice.

And, now that I have spoke of gluttony,
Now will I you defende hazardry.
Hazard is very mother of leasings,
And of deceit, and cursed forswearings:
Blasphem' of Christ, manslaughter, and waste also
Of chattel and of time; and furthermo'
It is reprove, and contrar' of honour,
For to be held a common hazardour.
And ever the higher he is of estate,
The more he is holden desolate.
If that a prince use hazardry,
In alle governance and policy
He is, as by common opinion,
Y-hold the less in reputation.
Chilon, that was a wise ambassador,
Was sent to Corinth with full great honor
From Lacedemon, to make alliance;
And when he came, it happen'd him, by chance,
That all the greatest that were of that land,
Y-playing atte hazard he them fand.
For which, as soon as that it mighte be,
He stole him home again to his country
And saide there, "I will not lose my name,
Nor will I take on me so great diffame,
You to ally unto no hazardors.
Sende some other wise ambassadors,
For, by my troth, me were lever die,
Than I should you to hazardors ally.
For ye, that be so glorious in honours,
Shall not ally you to no hazardours,
As by my will, nor as by my treaty."
This wise philosopher thus said he.
Look eke how to the King Demetrius
The King of Parthes, as the book saith us,
Sent him a pair of dice of gold in scorn,
For he had used hazard therebeforn:
For which he held his glory and renown
At no value or reputatioun.
Lordes may finden other manner play
Honest enough to drive the day away.
Now will I speak of oathes false and great
A word or two, as olde bookes treat.
Great swearing is a thing abominable,

And false swearing is more reprovablen.
The highe God forbade swearing at all;
Witness on Matthew: but in special
Of swearing saith the holy Jeremie,
Thou thalt swear sooth thine oathes, and not lie:
And swear in doom and eke in righteousness;
But idle swearing is a cursedness.
Behold and see, there in the firste table
Of highe Godde's hestes honourable,
How that the second best of him is this,
Take not my name in idle or amiss.
Lo, rather he forbiddeth such swearing,
Than homicide, or many a cursed thing;
I say that as by order thus it standeth;
This knoweth he that his hests understandeth,
How that the second hest of God is that.
And farthermore, I will thee tell all plat,
That vengeance shall not parte from his house,
That of his oathes is outrageous.
"By Godde's precious heart, and by his nails,
And by the blood of Christ, that is in Hailes,
Seven is my chance, and thine is cinque and trey:
By Godde's armes, if thou falsely play,
This dagger shall throughout thine hearte go."
This fruit comes of the bicched bones two,
Forswearing, ire, falseness, and homicide.
Now, for the love of Christ that for us died,
Leave your oathes, bothe great and smale.
But, Sirs, now will I ell you forth my tale.
These riotoures three, of which I tell,
Long erst than prime rang of any bell,
Were set them in a tavern for to drink;
And as they sat, they heard a belle clink
Before a corpse, was carried to the grave.
That one of them gan calle to his knave,
"Go bet," quoth he, "and aske readily
What corpse is this, that passeth here forth by;
And look that thou report his name well."
"Sir," quoth the boy, "it needeth never a deal;
It was me told ere ye came here two hours;
He was, pardie, an old fellow of yours,
And suddenly he was y-slain to-night;
Fordrunk as he sat on his bench upright,

There came a privy thief, men clepe Death,
That in this country all the people slay'th,
And with his spear he smote his heart in two,
And went his way withoute wordes mo'.
He hath a thousand slain this pestilence;
And, master, ere you come in his presence,
Me thinketh that it were full necessary
For to beware of such an adversary;
Be ready for to meet him evermore.
Thus taughte me my dame; I say no more."
"By Sainte Mary," said the tavernere,
"The child saith sooth, for he hath slain this year,
Hence ov'r a mile, within a great village,
Both man and woman, child, and hind, and page;
I trow his habitation be there;
To be advised great wisdom it were,
Ere that he did a man a dishonour."
"Yea, Godde's armes," quoth this riotour,
"Is it such peril with him for to meet?
I shall him seek, by stile and eke by street.
I make a vow, by Godde's digne bones."
Hearken, fellows, we three be alle ones:
Let each of us hold up his hand to other,
And each of us become the other's brother,
And we will slay this false traitor Death;
He shall be slain, he that so many slay'th,
By Godde's dignity, ere it be night."
Together have these three their trothe plight
To live and die each one of them for other
As though he were his owen sworn brother.
And up they start, all drunken, in this rage,
And forth they go towardses that village
Of which the taverner had spoke beforne,
And many a grisly oathe have they sworn,
And Christe's blessed body they to-rent;
"Death shall be dead, if that we may him hent."
When they had gone not fully half a mile,
Right as they would have trodden o'er a stile,
An old man and a poore with them met.
This olde man full meekely them gret,
And saide thus; "Now, lordes, God you see!"
The proudest of these riotoures three
Answer'd again; "What? churl, with sorry grace,

Why art thou all forwrapped save thy face?
Why livest thou so long in so great age?"
This olde man gan look on his visage,
And saide thus; "For that I cannot find
A man, though that I walked unto Ind,
Neither in city, nor in no village,
That woulde change his youthe for mine age;
And therefore must I have mine age still
As longe time as it is Godde's will.
And Death, alas! he will not have my life.
Thus walk I like a resteless caitife,
And on the ground, which is my mother's gate,
I knocke with my staff, early and late,
And say to her, 'Leve mother, let me in.
Lo, how I wane, flesh, and blood, and skin;
Alas! when shall my bones be at rest?
Mother, with you I woulde change my chest,
That in my chamber longe time hath be,
Yea, for an hairy clout to wrap in me.'
But yet to me she will not do that grace,
For which fall pale and welked is my face.
But, Sirs, to you it is no courtesy
To speak unto an old man villainy,
But he trespass in word or else in deed.
In Holy Writ ye may yourselves read;
'Against an old man, hoar upon his head,
Ye should arise:' therefore I you rede,
Ne do unto an old man no harm now,
No more than ye would a man did you
In age, if that ye may so long abide.
And God be with you, whether ye go or ride
I must go thither as I have to go."
"Nay, olde churl, by God thou shalt not so,"
Saide this other hazardor anon;
"Thou partest not so lightly, by Saint John.
Thou spakest right now of that traitor Death,
That in this country all our friendes slay'th;
Have here my troth, as thou art his espy;
Tell where he is, or thou shalt it abie,
By God and by the holy sacrament;
For soothly thou art one of his assent
To slay us younge folk, thou false thief."
"Now, Sirs," quoth he, "if it be you so lief

To finde Death, turn up this crooked way,
For in that grove I left him, by my fay,
Under a tree, and there he will abide;
Nor for your boast he will him nothing hide.
See ye that oak? right there ye shall him find.
God save you, that bought again mankind,
And you amend!" Thus said this olde man;
And evereach of these riotoures ran,
Till they came to the tree, and there they found
Of florins fine, of gold y-coined round,
Well nigh a seven bushels, as them thought.
No longer as then after Death they sought;
But each of them so glad was of the sight,
For that the florins were so fair and bright,
That down they sat them by the precious hoard.
The youngest of them spake the firste word:
"Brethren," quoth he, "take keep what I shall say;
My wit is great, though that I bourde and play
This treasure hath Fortune unto us given
In mirth and jollity our life to liven;
And lightly as it comes, so will we spend.
Hey! Godde's precious dignity! who wend
Today that we should have so fair a grace?
But might this gold he carried from this place
Home to my house, or elles unto yours
(For well I wot that all this gold is ours),
Then were we in high felicity.
But truely by day it may not be;
Men woulde say that we were thieves strong,
And for our owen treasure do us hong.
This treasure muste carried be by night,
As wisely and as slily as it might.
Wherefore I rede, that cut among us all
We draw, and let see where the cut will fall:
And he that hath the cut, with hearte blithe
Shall run unto the town, and that full swithe,
And bring us bread and wine full privily:
And two of us shall keepe subtilly
This treasure well: and if he will not tarry,
When it is night, we will this treasure carry,
By one assent, where as us thinketh best."
Then one of them the cut brought in his fist,
And bade them draw, and look where it would fall;

And it fell on the youngest of them all;
And forth toward the town he went anon.
And all so soon as that he was y-gone,
The one of them spake thus unto the other;
“Thou knowest well that thou art my sworn brother,
Thy profit will I tell thee right anon.
Thou knowest well that our fellow is gone,
And here is gold, and that full great plenty,
That shall departed he among us three.
But natheless, if I could shape it so
That it departed were among us two,
Had I not done a friende’s turn to thee?”
Th’ other answer’d, “I n’ot how that may be;
He knows well that the gold is with us tway.
What shall we do? what shall we to him say?”
“Shall it be counsel?” said the firste shrew;
“And I shall tell to thee in wordes few
What we shall do, and bring it well about.”
“I grante,” quoth the other, “out of doubt,
That by my truth I will thee not bewray.”
“Now,” quoth the first, “thou know’st well we be tway,
And two of us shall stronger be than one.
Look; when that he is set, thou right anon
Arise, as though thou wouldest with him play;
And I shall rive him through the sides tway,
While that thou strugglest with him as in game;
And with thy dagger look thou do the same.
And then shall all this gold departed be,
My deare friend, betwixte thee and me:
Then may we both our lustes all fulfil,
And play at dice right at our owen will.”
And thus accorded be these shrewes tway
To slay the third, as ye have heard me say.
The youngest, which that wente to the town,
Full oft in heart he rolled up and down
The beauty of these florins new and bright.
“O Lord!” quoth he, “if so were that I might
Have all this treasure to myself alone,
There is no man that lives under the throne
Of God, that shoulde have so merry as I.”
And at the last the fiend our enemy
Put in his thought, that he should poison buy,
With which he mighte slay his fellows twy.

For why, the fiend found him in such living,
That he had leave to sorrow him to bring.
For this was utterly his full intent
To slay them both, and never to repent.
And forth he went, no longer would he tarry,
Into the town to an apothecary,
And prayed him that he him woulde sell
Some poison, that he might his rattes quell,
And eke there was a polecat in his haw,
That, as he said, his eapons had y-slaw:
And fain he would him wreak, if that he might,
Of vermin that destroyed him by night.
Th'apothecary answer'd, "Thou shalt have
A thing, as wisly God my soule save,
In all this world there is no creature
That eat or drank hath of this confecture,
Not but the mountance of a corn of wheat,
That he shall not his life anon forlete;
Yea, sterve he shall, and that in lesse while
Than thou wilt go apace nought but a mile:
This poison is so strong and violent."
This cursed man hath in his hand y-hent
This poison in a box, and swift he ran
Into the nexte street, unto a man,
And borrow'd of him large bottles three;
And in the two the poison poured he;
The third he kepte clean for his own drink,
For all the night he shope him for to swink
In carrying off the gold out of that place.
And when this riotour, with sorry grace,
Had fill'd with wine his greate bottles three,
To his fellows again repaired he.
What needeth it thereof to sermon more?
For, right as they had cast his death before,
Right so they have him slain, and that anon.
And when that this was done, thus spake the one;
"Now let us sit and drink, and make us merry,
And afterward we will his body bury."
And with that word it happen'd him par cas
To take the bottle where the poison was,
And drank, and gave his fellow drink also,
For which anon they sterved both the two.
But certes I suppose that Avicen

Wrote never in no canon, nor no fen,
More wondrous signes of empoisoning,
Than had these wretches two ere their ending.
Thus ended be these homicides two,
And eke the false empoisoner also.
O cursed sin, full of all cursedness!
O trait'rous homicide! O wickedness!
O glutt'ny, luxury, and hazardry!
Thou blasphemmer of Christ with villany,
And oathes great, of usage and of pride!
Alas! mankinde, how may it betide,
That to thy Creator, which that thee wrought,
And with his precious hearte-blood thee bought,
Thou art so false and so unkind, alas!
Now, good men, God forgive you your trespass,
And ware you from the sin of avarice.
Mine holy pardon may you all warice,
So that ye offer nobles or sterlings,
Or elles silver brooches, spoons, or rings.
Bowe your head under this holy bull.
Come up, ye wives, and offer of your will;
Your names I enter in my roll anon;
Into the bliss of heaven shall ye gon;
I you assoil by mine high powere,
You that will offer, as clean and eke as clear
As ye were born. Lo, Sires, thus I preach;
And Jesus Christ, that is our soules' leech,
So grante you his pardon to receive;
For that is best, I will not deceive.
But, Sirs, one word forgot I in my tale;
I have relics and pardon in my mail,
As fair as any man in Engleland,
Which were me given by the Pope's hand.
If any of you will of devotion
Offer, and have mine absolution,
Come forth anon, and kneele here adown
And meekely receive my pardoun.
Or elles take pardon, as ye wend,
All new and fresh at every towne's end,
So that ye offer, always new and new,
Nobles or pence which that be good and true.
'Tis an honour to evereach that is here,
That ye have a suffisant pardonere

T'assoile you in country as ye ride,
 For adventures which that may betide.
 Paraventure there may fall one or two
 Down of his horse, and break his neck in two.
 Look, what a surety is it to you all,
 That I am in your fellowship y-fall,
 That may assoil you bothe more and lass,
 When that the soul shall from the body pass.
 I rede that our Hoste shall begin,
 For he is most enveloped in sin.
 Come forth, Sir Host, and offer first anon,
 And thou shalt kiss; the relics every one,
 Yea, for a groat; unbuckle anon thy purse.
 "Nay, nay," quoth he, "then have I Christe's curse!
 Let be," quoth he, "it shall not be, so the'ch.
 Thou wouldest make me kiss thine olde breech,
 And swear it were a relic of a saint,
 Though it were with thy fundament depaint'.
 But, by the cross which that Saint Helen fand,
 I would I had thy coilons in mine hand,
 Instead of relics, or of sanctuary.
 Let cut them off, I will thee help them carry;
 They shall be shrined in a hogge's turd."
 The Pardoner answered not one word;
 So wroth he was, no worde would he say.
 "Now," quoth our Host, "I will no longer play
 With thee, nor with none other angry man."
 But right anon the worthy Knight began
 (When that he saw that all the people lough),
 "No more of this, for it is right enough.
 Sir Pardoner, be merry and glad of cheer;
 And ye, Sir Host, that be to me so dear,
 I pray you that ye kiss the Pardoner;
 And, Pardoner, I pray thee draw thee ner,
 And as we didde, let us laugh and play."
 Anon they kiss'd, and rode forth their way.

Prayer of Chaucer

Now pray I to you all that hear this little treatise or read it, that if there be anything in it that likes them, that thereof they thank our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom proceedeth all wit and all goodness; and if there be anything that displeaseth them, I pray them also that they arette [impute] it to the default of mine unconning [unskilfulness], and not to my will, that would fain have said better if I had had

conning; for the book saith, all that is written for our doctrine is written. Wherefore I beseech you meekly for the mercy of God that ye pray for me, that God have mercy on me and forgive me my guilts, and namely [specially] my translations and of inditing in worldly vanities, which I revoke in my Retractions, as is the Book of Troilus, the Book also of Fame, the Book of Twenty-five Ladies, the Book of the Duchess, the Book of Saint Valentine's Day and of the Parliament of Birds, the Tales of Canterbury, all those that sounen unto sin [are sinful, tend towards sin], the Book of the Lion, and many other books, if they were in my mind or remembrance, and many a song and many a lecherous lay, of the which Christ for his great mercy forgive me the sins. But of the translation of Boece de Consolacione, and other books of consolation and of legend of lives of saints, and homilies, and moralities, and devotion, that thank I our Lord Jesus Christ, and his mother, and all the saints in heaven, beseeching them that they from henceforth unto my life's end send me grace to bewail my guilts, and to study to the salvation of my soul, and grant me grace and space of very repentance, penitence, confession, and satisfaction, to do in this present life, through the benign grace of Him that is King of kings and Priest of all priests, that bought us with his precious blood of his heart, so that I may be one of them at the day of doom that shall be saved: Qui cum Patre et Spiritu Sancto vivis et regnas Deus per omnia secula. Amen.

1.13.4 Reading and Review Questions

1. In *Parlement of Fowles*, how does Chaucer address courtly love? What do you think about the resolution of the story (in particular, Nature's judgment)?
2. In both *Parlement of Fowles* and the *General Prologue* to the *Canterbury Tales*, how does Chaucer present the various social classes? What kind of commentary does he appear to be offering about social class?
3. In the *Canterbury Tales*, how does the frame (the *General Prologue*, the pilgrims' self-descriptions and commentary between tales) affect the way that we read the individual tales?
4. In the *General Prologue* to the *Canterbury Tales*, the narrator withholds direct judgment of the other pilgrims, but gives the reader enough evidence to make their own judgments. How would you rank the pilgrims on a scale from Good to Evil? Be sure to use categories that allow for a range of answers (such as Ok, Neutral, or even Iffy—be inventive).
5. Chaucer uses humor very deliberately: not just to entertain, but also as a form of commentary. What are some examples of humor being used to comment on an issue, a behavior, or a character?

1.14 SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT

Author unknown

Late fourteenth century

Like *Beowulf*, *Judith*, and others, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* survives in only one manuscript, which contains three additional poems: *Pearl*, *Patience*, and *Purity*. We know almost nothing about the anonymous author. The remarkably-detailed account of the hunt found in *Gawain* has led some scholars to believe that the author might have been attached in some way to a nobleman's household. The poet's fascination with courtly behavior in *Gawain* goes hand-in-hand with the religious imagery, such as the portrait of the Virgin Mary painted on the inside of Gawain's shield. It is possible that he was some kind of secular cleric, perhaps in some kind of secretarial or administrative job.¹ One of the few details that we know with certainty about the author is that his dialect comes from the Midlands of England, right along the northern border with Wales. Since Gawain finds both Sir Bertilak's castle and the nearby Green Chapel in that exact area, it is reasonable to think that the author was from there.

The poem is organized into four parts, or fitts, which explore the tensions among the three main duties of Sir Gawain as a knight: loyalty to his lord (in this case, also his kin), proper courtly behavior (especially to women), and devotion to God. As with many medieval stories, anachronisms abound; Gawain wears the best Norman armor to be had in the fourteenth century, although the story is set much earlier, and the castle furnishings are up-to-date, complete with tapestries from Turkistan (line 858). The *Gawain* poem contains remarkable imagery (the change of seasons at the beginning of Part Two, or Fitt Two, is a good example) and a parallel plot in Part Three that is constructed perfectly (with a literal hunt outside and a figurative hunt inside).

The poem begins and ends with a reference to the fall of Troy; the first stanza follows the westward journey of certain Trojans, first to Rome and finally to Britain, with a reference to King Arthur's court. Considering the amount of parallelism in the rest of the poem, it sets up a pattern: Troy falls because of corruption from within (the poem mentions the "traitor" in line 3); Rome falls because of corruption from within; and as the original audience already knew, Arthur's court falls because of corruption from within. Considering that the story takes place when Arthur is still

¹ In *An Introduction to the Gawain-Poet*, Ad Putter speculates at length about the possible careers of the poet, noting that "the voice of the poet seems to come from the inside of an aristocratic household" and doubts that he was a priest (17). He also notes that the poet's obvious comfort with Latin is not an indication that he was a member of the ordained clergy, since both Geoffrey Chaucer and John Gower (among others) were fluent in Latin. In 1925, in their edition of the story, J.R.R. Tolkien and E.V. Gordon concluded that the poet "had an interest in theology, and some knowledge of it, though an amateur knowledge perhaps, rather than a professional" (Introduction to the 1st edition, xv). In the 2nd edition, they cite the poet's "detailed, even technical knowledge of hunting, of castle architecture, and of the armour and gear of a knight" (xxiv) in their speculation about his origin.



Image 1.12 | Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

Artist | Unknown

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stanza. The description of the Green Knight is reminiscent of the Celtic Green Man stories; the holly branch is Christmas-related, but also another Celtic reference (holly was sacred to the Druids); the ax he carries at the feast is reminiscent of a Saxon battle ax (the battle of Hastings came down to Saxons with battle axes versus Norman cavalry). Near the end of the poem, there is an extended reference to Morgan le Fay, Arthur's half-sister, whom the Green Knight calls "Morgan the Goddess" (line 2454), linking her to the Celtic goddess Morrigan.

The pro-Saxon/Celtic angle (which certainly fits the author's location) becomes even more likely when examining Arthur's court. Richard II was criticized for a variety of issues, including financial excesses and giving titles to flatterers and sycophants. When Gawain has left to search out the Green Knight, the court says that if he had not foolishly stepped forward, he would in time have been dubbed a duke, rather than beheaded because he was arrogant (lines 674-683). In other words, they belittle his "arrogance" at stepping forward to save the king, which they certainly would not have done, since inaction and cowardice evidently lead to promotion. Gawain's bravery and nobility appear to be lost on the court. Their reactions at the end of the story are questionable as well, since they turn a reminder of Gawain's one small flaw (which must be annoying to people who have many) into a meaningless fashion statement.

The fact that it is Gawain, and not Lancelot, who is the greatest knight of Arthur's court is also a throwback to earlier Welsh traditions. Lancelot is mentioned only

young, the emphasis on its future fall is surprising, and it reminds the reader to look for the cracks in the foundation that already exist. As described in the story, Arthur's court bears more than a passing resemblance to the Norman royal court; considering that Richard II was deposed not long after this poem was written, the poem could be both a warning and somewhat prophetic.

The style and themes of the poem do nothing to contradict this hypothesis. The author uses unrhymed alliteration in the style of earlier Anglo-Saxon literature (which was considered old-fashioned by this point, and certainly was not in style in the Norman court), along with a five-line rhymed "bob and wheel" section at the end of each

once, in the middle of a list of knights, but he is there—a reminder to the original audience that Lancelot and Guinevere are the reason that Arthur’s court will fall. (The fact that Morgan was exiled from the court by Guinevere for adultery makes Morgan’s message to the queen potentially a threat, since Gawain tells a story of how he resists adultery, while Guinevere does not.) Historically, Gawain was one of Arthur’s best warriors going back to the earliest stories. Chrétien de Troyes added Lancelot as the queen’s lover (and the greatest knight) in the eleventh century, and as Lancelot’s fame grew, Gawain’s star (and reputation) had declined. By making Gawain once again the center of the court, the author is reasserting a Celtic/British tradition over the recent French alterations.

1.14.1 Suggested Reading

Armitage, Simon, translator. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Norton, 2007.

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Howes. Norton Critical Edition. Norton, 2010.

Putter, Ad. *An Introduction to the Gawain-Poet*. Longman, 1996.

Tolkien, J.R.R., and E.V. Gordon, editors. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. 2nd edition edited by Norman Davis. Middle English version. Oxford UP, 1967.

1.14.2 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

I.

Siþen þe sege & þe assaut watz sesed at Troye,
 Þe borȝ brittened & brent to brondeȝ & askez,
 Þe tulk þat þe trammes of tresoun þer wroȝt,
 Watz tried for his tricherie, þe trewest on erthe;
 Hit watz Ennias þe athel, & his highe kynde,
 Þat siþen depreced prouinces, & patrounes bicomē
 Welneȝe of al þe wele in þe west iles,
 Fro riche Romulus to Rome ricchis hym swyþe,
 With gret bobbaunce þat burȝe he biges vpon fyrst,
 & neuenes hit his aune nome, as hit now hat;
 Ticius to Tuskan [turnes,] & teldes bigynnes;
 Langaberde in Lumbardie lyftes vp homes;
 & fer ouer þe French flod Felix Brutus
 On mony bonkkes ful brode Bretayn he settez,
 wyth wynne;
 Where werre, & wrake, & wonder,
 Bi syþez hatz wont þer-inne,
 & oft boþe blysse & blunder
 Ful skete hatz skyfted synne.

II.

Ande quen þis Bretayn watz bigged bi þis burn rych,
 Bolde bredden þerinne, baret þat lofden,
 In mony turned tyme tene þat wroʒten;
 Mo ferlyes on þis folde han fallen here oft
 Þen in any oþer þat I wot, syn þat ilk tyme.
 Of all Britain's kings Arthur was the noblest.
 Bot of alle þat here bult of Bretaygne kynges
 Ay watz Arthur þe hendest; as I haf herde telle;
 Forþi an aunter in erde I attle to schawe,
 Þat a selly in siʒt summe men hit holden,
 & an outrage awenture of Arthurez wonderez;
 If ʒe wyl lysten þis laye bot on littel quile,
 I schal telle hit, as-tit, as I in toun herde,
 with tonge;
 As hit is stad & stoken,
 In stori stif & stronge,
 With lel letteres loken,
 In londe so hatz ben longe.

III.

Þis kyng lay at Camylot vpon kryst-masse,
 With mony luflych lorde, ledez of þe best,
 with all the knights of the Round Table,
 Rekenly of þe rounde table alle þo rich breþer,
 With rych reuel oryʒt, & rechles merþes;
 Þer tournayed tulkes bitymez ful mony,
 Iusted ful Iolilé þise gentyle kniʒtes,
 Syþen kayred to þe court, caroles to make.
 For þer þe fest watz ilyche ful fiften dayes,
 With alle þe mete & þe mirþe þat men couþe a-vyse;
 Such glaumande gle glorious to here,
 Dere dyn vp-on day, daunsyng on nyʒtes,
 Al watz hap vpon heʒe in hallez & chambrez,
 With lordez & ladies, as leuest him þoʒt;
 With all þe wele of þe worlde þay woned þer samen,
 Þe most kyd knyʒtez vnder kryste seluen,
 & þe louelokkest ladies þat euer lif haden,
 & he þe comlokest kyng þat þe court haldes;
 For al watz þis fayre folk in her first age,
 on sille;
 Þe hapnest vnder heuen,

Kyng hygeest mon of wylle,
 Hit were now gret nye to neuen
 So hardy a here on hille.

IV.

Wyle nw 3er watz so 3ep þat hit watz nwe cummen,
 Þat day double on þe dece watz þe douth serued,
 Fro þe kyng watz cummen *with knyghtes in* to þe halle,
 Þe chauntre of þe chapel cheued to an ende;
 Loude crye watz þer kest of clerkez & oþer,
 Nowel nayted o-newe, neuened ful ofte;
 & syþen riche forth runnen to reche honde-selle,
 3e3ed 3eres 3iftes on hi3, 3elde hem bi hond,
 Debated busyly aboute þo giftes;
 Ladies la3ed ful loude, þo3 þay lost haden,
 & he þat wan watz not wrothe, þat may 3e wel trawe.
 Alle þis mirþe þay maden to þe mete tyme;
 When þay had waschen, worþyly þay wenten to sete,
 Þe best burne ay abof, as hit best semed;
 Whene Guenore ful gay, grayþed in þe myddes.
 Dressed on þe dere des, dubbed al aboute,
 Smal sendal bisides, a selure hir ouer
 Of tryed Tolouse, of Tars tapites *in-noghe*,
 Þat were enbrawdred & beten wyth þe best gemmes,
 Þat mygt be preued of prys wyth penyes to bye,
 in daye;
 Þe comlokest to discrye,
 Þer glent *with y3en gray*,
 A semloker þat euer he sy3e,
 Soth mo3t no mon say.

V.

Bot Arthure wolde not ete til al were serued,
 He watz so Ioly of his Ioyfnes, & sum-quat child gered,
 His lif liked hym ly3t, he louied þe lasse
 Auþer to lenge lye, or to longe sitte,
 So bi-sied him his 3onge blod & his brayn wylde;
 & also anoþer maner meued him eke,
 Þat he þur3 nobelay had nomen, ho wolde neuer ete
 Vpon such a dere day, er hym deuised were
 Of *sum auenturus þyng* an vncouþe tale,
 Of *sum mayn meruayle*, þat he mygt trawe,

Of alderes, of armes, of oþer auenturus,
 Oþer sum segg hym bi-soȝt of sum siker knyȝt,
 To Ioyne wyth hym in iustyng in Iopardé to lay,
 Lede lif for lyf, leue vchon oþer,
 As fortune wolde fulsun hom þe fayrer to haue.
 Pis watz [þe] kynges countenaunce where he in court were,
 At vch farand fest among his fre meny,
 in halle;
 Þerfore of face so fere.
 He stiztlez stif in stalle,
 Ful ȝep in þat nw ȝere,
 Much mirthe he mas with alle.

VI.

Thus þer stondes in stale þe stif kyng his-seluen,
 Talkkande bifore þe hyȝe table of trifles ful hende
 There gode Gawan watz grayþed, Gwenore bisyde
 & Agrauayn a la dure mayn on þat oþer syde sittes
 Boþe þe kynges sister sunes, & ful siker kniȝtes;
 Bisshop Bawdewyn abof biginez þe table,
 & Ywan, Vryn son, ette wit hym-seluen;
 Þise were diȝt on þe des, & derworþly serued,
 & siþen mony siker segge at þe sidbordez.
 Þen þe first cors come with crakkyng of trumpes,
 Wyth mony baner ful bryȝt, þat þer-bi henced,
 Nwe nakryn noyse with þe noble pipes,
 Wylde werbles & wyȝt wakned lote,
 Þat mony hert ful hiȝe hef at her towches;
 Dayntes dryuen þer-wyth of ful dere metes,
 Foyssoun of þe fresche, & on so fele disches,
 Þat pine to fynde þe place þe peple bi-forne
 For to sette þe syluener, þat sere sewes halden,
 on clothe;
 Iche lede as he loued hym-selue
 Þer laght with-outen loþe,
 Ay two had disches twelue,
 Good ber, & bryȝt wyn boþe.

VII.

Now wyl I of hor seruise say yow no more,
 For veh wyȝe may wel wit no wont þat þer were;
 An oþer noyse ful newe neȝed biliue,

Þat þe lude myȝt haf leue lif-lode to cach.
 For vneþe watz þe noyce not a whyle sesed,
 & þe fyrst cource in þe court kyndely serued,
 Þer hales in at þe halle dor an aghlich mayster,
 On þe most on þe molde on mesure hyghe;
 Fro þe swyre to þe swange so sware & so þik,
 & his lynes & his lymes so longe & so grete,
 Half etayn in erde I hope þat he were.
 Bot mon most I algate mynn hym to bene,
 & þat þe myriest in his muckel þat myȝt ride;
 For of bak & of brest al were his bodi sturne,
 Bot his wombe & his wast were worthily smale,
 & alle his fetures folgande, in forme þat he hade,
 ful clene;
 For wonder of his hwe men hade,
 Set in his semblaunt sene;
 He ferde as freke were fade,
 & oueral enker grene.

VIII.

Ande al grayþed in grene þis gome & his wedes,
 A strayt cote ful streȝt, þat stek on his sides,
 A mere mantile abof, mensked *with-inne*,
 With pelure pured apert þe pane ful clene,
 With blyþe blaunner ful bryȝt, & his hod boþe,
 Þat watz laȝt fro his lokkeȝ, & layde on his schulderes
 Heme wel haled, hose of þat same grene,
 Þat spenet on his sparlyr, & clene spures vnder,
 Of bryȝt golde, vpon silk bordes, barred ful ryche
 & scholes vnder schankes, þere þe schalk rides;
 & alle his vesture uerayly watz clene *verdure*,
 Boþe þe barres of his belt & oþer blyþe stones,
 Þat were richely rayled in his aray clene,
 Aboutte hymself & his sadel, vpon silk werkez,
 Þat were to tor for to telle of tryfles þe halue,
 Þat were enbrauded abof, wyth bryddes & flyȝes,
 With gay gaudi of grene, þe golde ay in myddes;
 Þe pendauntes of his payttrure, þe proude cropure
 His molaynes, & alle þe metail anamayld was þenne
 Þe steropes þat he stod on, stayned of þe same,
 & his arsounz al after, & his apel sturtes,
 Þat euer glemereð¹ & glent al of grene stones.
 Þe fole þat he ferkkes on, fyn of þat ilke, sertayn;

A grene hors gret & þikke,
 A stede ful stif to strayne,
 In brawden brydel quik,
 To þe gome he watz ful gayn.

IX.

Wel gay watz þis gome gered in grene,
 & þe here of his hed of his hors swete;
 Fayre fannand fax vmbe-foldes his schulderes;
 His great beard, like a bush, hung on his breast.
 A much berd as a busk ouer his brest henges,
 Þat wyth his higlich here, þat of his hed reches,
 Watz euesed al vmbetorne, abof his elbowes,
 Þat half his armes þer vnder were halched in þe wyse
 Of a kyngez capados, þat closes his swyre.
 The horse's mane was decked with golden threads.
 Þe mane of þat mayn hors much to hit lyke
 Wel cresped & cemmed wyth knottes ful mony,
 Folden in wyth fildore aboute þe fayre grene,
 Ay a herle of þe here, an oþer of golde;
 Its tail was bound with a green band.
 Þe tayl & his toppyng twynnen of a sute,
 & bounden boþe wyth a bande of a bryzt grene,
 Dubbed wyth ful dere stonez, as þe dok lasted,
 Syþen þrawen wyth a þwong a þwarle knot alofte,
 Þer mony bellez ful bryzt of brende golde rungen.
 Such a fole vpon folde, ne freke þat hym rydes,
 Watz neuer sene in þat sale wyth syzt er þat tyme,
 with yze;
 He loket as layt so lyzt,
 So sayd al þat hym syze,
 It seemed that no man might endure his dints.
 Hit semed as no mon myzt,
 Vnder his dynttez dryze.

X.

Wheþer hade he no helme ne hawb[e]rgh nauþer,
 Ne no pysan, ne no plate þat pented to armes,
 Ne no schafte, ne no schelde, to schwne ne to smyte,
 Bot in his on honde he hade a holyn bobbe,
 Þat is grattest in grene, when greuez ar bare,
 & an ax in his oþer, a hoge & vn-mete,

A spetos sparþe to expoun *in spelle* quo-so my3t;
 Þe hede of an eln3erde þe large lenkþe hade,
 Þe grayn al of grene stele & of golde hewen,
 Þe bit burnyst bry3t, *with* a brod egge,
 As wel schapen to schere as scharp rasores;
 Þe stele of a stif staf þe sturne hit bi-grypte,
 Þat watz wounden wyth yrn to þe wandez ende,
 & al bigrauen *with* grene, *in gracios* werkes;
 A lace lapped aboute, þat louked at þe hede,
 & so after þe halme halched ful ofte,
 Wyth tryed tasselez þerto tacched *in-noghe*,
 On botounz of þe bry3t grene brayden ful ryche.
 Þis habel heldez *hym in*, & þe halle entres,
 Driuande to þe he3e dece, dut he no woþe,
 Haylsed he neuer one, bot he3e he ouer loked.
 Þe fyrst word þat he warp, “wher is,” he sayd,
 “Þe *gouernour* of þis *gyng*? gladly I wolde
 Se þat segg *in sy3t*, & *with hym* self speke raysoun.”
 To kny3tez he kest his y3e,
 & reled *hym vp & down*,
 He stemmed & con studie,
 Quo walt þer most renoun.

XI.

Ther watz lokyng on lenþe, þe lude to be-holde,
 For vch mon had meruayle quat hit mene my3t,
 Þat a habel & a horse my3t such a hwe lach,
 As growe grene as þe gres & grener hit semed,
 Þen grene aumayl on golde lowande bry3ter;
 Al studied þat þer stod, & stalked *hym nerre*,
 Wyth al þe wonder of þe worlde, what he worch schulde.
 For fele sellyez had þay sen, bot such neuer are,
 For-þi for fantoum & fayry3e þe folk þere hit demed;
 Þefore to answare watz ar3e mony apel freke,
 & al stouned at his steuen, & stonstil seten,
 In a swoghe sylence þur3 þe sale riche
 As al were slypped vpon slepe so slaked hor lotez
in hy3e;
 I deme hit not al for doute,
 Bot *sum* for cortaysye,
 Bot let *hym* þat al schulde loute,
 Cast vnto þat wy3e.

XII.

Penn Arpou**r** bifore þe hiȝ dece þat auenture byholdez,
 & rekenly hym reuerenced, for rad was he neuer,
 & sayde, “wyȝe, welcum iwys to þis place,
 Þe hede of þis ostel Arthou**r** I hat,
 Liȝt luflych adoun, & lenge, I þe praye,
 & quat so þy wylle is, we schal wyt after.”
 “Nay, as help me,” quod þe habel, “he þat on hyȝe syttes,
 To wone any quyle in þis won, hit watz not myn ernde;
 Bot for þe los of þe lede is lyft vp so hyȝe,
 & þy burȝ & þy burnes best ar holden,
 Stifest vnder stel-gere on stedes to ryde,
 Þe wyȝtest & þe worþyest of þe worldes kynde,
 Preue for to play wyth in oþer pure laykez;
 & here is kydde cortaysye, as I haf herd carp,
 & þat hatz wayned me hider, Iwys, at þis tyme.
 ȝe may be seker bi þis braunch þat I bere here,
 Pat I passe as in pes, & no plyȝt seche;
 For had I founded in fere, in feȝtyng wyse,
 I haue a hauberghe at home & a helme boþe,
 A schelde, & a scharp spere, schinande bryȝt,
 Ande oþer weppenes to welde, I wene wel als,
 Bot for I wolde no were, my wedez ar softer.
 Bot if þou be so bold as alle burnez tellen,
 Þou wyl grant me godly þe gomen þat I ask,
 bi ryȝt.”
 Arthou**r** con onsware,
 & sayd, “sir cortays knyȝt,
 If þou craue batayl bare,
 Here faylez þou not to fyȝt.”

XIII.

“Nay, frayst I no fyȝt, in fayth I þe telle,
 Hit arn aboute on þis bench bot berdlez chylder;
 If I were hasped in armes on a heȝe stede,
 Here is no mon me to mach, for myȝtez so wayke.
 For-þy I craue in þis court a crystmas gomen,
 For hit is ȝol & nwe ȝer, & here ar ȝep mony;
 If any so hardy in þis hous holdez hymselfen,
 Be so bolde in his blod, brayn in hys hede,
 Pat dar stifly strike a strok for an oþer,
 I schal gif hym of my gyft þys giserne ryche,

Þis ax, þat is heué *in-nogh*, to hondele as *hym* lykes,
 & I schal bide þe fyrst bur, as bare as I sitte.
 If any freke be so felle to fonde þat I telle,
 Lepe ly3tly me to, & lach þis weppen,
 I quit clayme hit for euer, kepe hit as his auen,
 & I schal stonde *hym* a strok, stif on þis flet,
 Ellez þou wyl digt me þe dom to dele *hym* an oþer,
 barlay;
 & 3et gif *hym* respite,
 A twelmonyth & a day;—
 Now hy3e, & let se tite
 Dar any her-*inne* o3t say.”

XIV.

If he hem stowned vpon fyrst, stiller were þanne
 Alle þe hered-men *in halle*, þe hy3 & þe lo3e;
 Þe renk on his rounce *hym* ruced *in* his sadel,
 & runisch-ly his rede y3en he reled aboute,
 Bende his bresed bro3ez, blycande grene,
 Wayued his berde for to wayte quo-so wolde ryse.
 When non wolde kepe *hym* with carp he co3ed ful hy3e,
 Ande rimed *hym* ful richley, & ry3t *hym* to speke:
 “What, is þis Arþures hous,” *quod* þe haþel þenne,
 “Þat al þe rous rennes of, þur3 ryalmes so mony?
 Where is now *your sourquydrye* & *your conquestes*,
Your gry[n]del-layk, & *your greme*, & *your grete wordes*?
 Now is þe reuel & þe renoun of þe rounde table
 Ouer-walt wyth a worde of on wy3es speche;
 For al dares for drede, *with-oute* dynt schewed!”
 Wyth þis he lazes so loude, þat þe lorde greued;
 Þe blod schot for scham *in-to* his schyre face & lere;
 He wex as wroth as wynde,
 So did alle þat þer were
 Þe kyng as kene bi kynde,
 Þen stod þat stif mon nere.

XV.

Ande sayde, “haþel, by heuen þyn askyng is nys,
 & as þou foly hatz frayst, fynde þe be-houes;
 I know no gome þat is gast of þy grete wordes.
 Gif me now þy geserne, vpon godez halue,
 & I schal bayþen þy bone, þat þou boden habbes.”

Ly3tly lepez he *hym* to, & la3t at his honde;
 Pen feersly þat oþer freke vpon fote ly3tis.
 Now hatz Arthure his axe, & þe halme grypez,
 & sturnely sturez hit aboute, þat stryke wyth hit þo3t.
 Þe stif mon *hym* bifore stod vpon hy3t,
 Herre þen ani in þe hous by þe hede & more;
 Wyth sturne schere þer he stod, he stroked his berde,
 & wyth a countenaunce dry3e he dro3 doun his cote,
 No more mate ne dismayd for hys mayn dintez,
 Pen any burne vpon bench hade bro3t *hym* to drynk of wyne,
 Gawan, þat sate bi þe quene,
 To þe kyng he can enclyne,
 “I be-seche now *with* sa3ez sene,
 Pis melly mot be myne.”

XVI.

“Wolde 3e, worþilych lorde,” *quod* Gawan to þe kyng,
 “Bid me bo3e fro þis benche, & stonde by yow þere,
 Þat I wyth-oute vylanye my3t voyde þis table,
 & þat my legge lady lyked not ille,
 I wolde com to *your* counseyl, bifore *your* cort ryche.
 For me þink hit not semly, as hit is soþ knawen,
 Þer such an askyng is heuened so hy3e in *your* sale,
 Þa33e 3our-self be talenttyf to take hit to *your*-seluen,
 Whil mony so bolde yow aboute vpon bench sytten,
 Þat vnder heuen, I hope, non hager er of wylle,
 Ne better bodyes on bent, þer baret is rered;
 I am þe wakkest, I wot, and of wyt feblest,
 & lest lur of my lyf, quo laytes þe soþe,
 Bot for as much as 3e ar myn em, I am only to prayse,
 No bounté bot *your* blod I in my bodé knowe;
 & syþen þis note is so nys, þat no3t hit yow falles,
 & I haue frayned hit at yow fyrst, foldez hit to me,
 & if I carp not comlyly, let alle þis cort rych, bout blame.”
 Rych to-geder con roun,
 & syþen þay redder alle same,
 To ryd þe kyng wyth croun,
 & gif Gawan þe game.

XVII.

Pen comaunded þe kyng þe kny3t for to ryse;
 & he ful radly vp ros, & ruchched *hym* fayre,

Kneled doun bifore þe kyng, & cachez þat weppen;
 & he luflyly hit hym laft, & lyfte vp his honde,
 & gef hym goddez blessyng, & gladly hym bidde
 Þat his hert & his honde schulde hardi be boþe.
 “Kepe þe cosyn,” *quod* þe kyng, “þat þou on kyrf sette,
 & if þou redez hym ryȝt, redly I trowe,
 Þat þou schal byden þe bur þat he schal bede after.
 Gawan gotz to þe gome, *with* giserne *in* honde,
 & he baldly hym bydez, he bayst neuer þe helder
 Þen carppez to *sir* Gawan þe knyȝt *in* þe grene,
 “Refourme we oure for-wardes, er we fyrre passe.
 Fyrst I epe þe, haþel, how þat þou hattes,
 Þat þou me telle truly, as I tryst may?”
 “In god fayth,” *quod* þe goode knyȝt, “Gawan I hatte,
 Þat bede þe þis buffet, quatso bi-fallez after,
 & at þis tyme twelmonyth take at þe anoþer,
 Wyth what weppen so¹ þou wylt, & wyth no wyȝ elleȝ, on lyue.”
 Þat oþer on-swarez agayn,
 “Sir Gawan, so mot I þryue,
 As I am ferly fayn.
 Þis dint þat þou schal dryue.”

XVIII.

“Bigog,” *quod* þe grene knyȝt, “*sir* Gawan, melykes,
 Þat I schal fange at þy fust þat I haf frayst here;
 & þou hatz redily rehersed, bi resoun ful trwe,
 Clanly al þe couenaunt þat I þe kyng asked,
 Saf þat þou schal siker me, segge, bi þi trawþe,
 Þat þou schal seche me þi-self, whereso þou hopes
 I may be funde vpon folde, & foch þe such wages
 As þou deles me to day, bifore þis douþe ryche.”
 “Where schulde I wale þe,” *quod* Gauan, “where is þy place?
 I wot neuer where þou wonyes, bi hym þat me wroȝt,
 Ne I know not þe, knyȝt, þy cort, ne þi name.
 Bot teche me truly þer-to, & telle me howe þou hattes,
 & I schal ware alle my wyt to wynne me þeder,
 & þat I swere þe for soþe, & by my seker trawþe.”
 “Þat is in-nogh in nwe ȝer, hit nedes no more,”
Quod þe gome *in* þe grene to Gawan þe hende,
 “ȝif I þe telle trwly, quen I þe tape haue,
 & þou me smopely hatz smyten, smartly I þe teche
 Of my hous, & my home, & myn owen nome,
 Þen may þou frayst my fare, & forwardez holde,

& if I spende no speche, þenne spedeþ þou þe better,
 For þou may leng in þy londe, & layt no fyrre, bot slokes;
 Ta now þy grymme tole to þe,
 & let se how þou cnokez.”
 “Gladly *sir*, for soþe,”
Quod Gawan; his ax he strokes.

XIX.

The grene knyzt vpon grounde grayþely hym dresses,
 A littel lut with þe hede, þe lere he discouerez,
 His longe louelych lokkez he layd ouer his croun.
 Let þe naked nec to þe note schewe.
 Gauan gripped to his ax, & gederes hit on hyzt,
 Þe kay fot on þe folde he be-fore sette,
 Let hit doun lyztly lyzt on þe naked,
 Þat þe scharp of þe schalk schyndered þe bones,
 & schrank þurȝ þe schyire grece, & scade hit in twynne,
 Þat þe bit of þe broun stel bot on þe grounde.
 Þe fayre hede fro þe halce hit [felle] to þe erþe,
 Þat fele hit foyned wyth her fete, þere hit forth roled;
 Þe blod brayd fro þe body, þat blykked on þe grene;
 & nawþer faltered ne fel þe freke neuer þe helder,
 Bot styþly he start forth vpon styf schonkes,
 & ru[n]yschly he razt out, þere as renkkez stoden,
 Lazt to his lufly hed, & lyft hit vp sone;
 & syþen bogez to his blonk, þe brydel he cachchez,
 Steppez in to stel bawe & strydez alofte,
 & his hede by þe here in his honde haldez;
 & as sadly þe segge hym in his sadel sette,
 As non vnhap had hym ayled, þaȝ hedlez he we[re], in stedde;
 He brayde his bluk aboute,
 Þat vgly bodi þat bledde,
 Moni on of hym had doute,
 Bi þat his resounz were redde.

XX.

For þe hede in his honde he haldez vp euen,
 To-ward þe derrest on þe dece he dressez þe face,
 & hit lyfte vp þe yȝe-lyddez, & loked ful brode,
 & meled þus much with his muthe, as ȝe may now here.
 “Loke, Gawan, þou be grayþe to go as þou hettez,
 & layte as lelly til þou me, lude, fynde,

As þou hatz hette in þis halle, herande þise kny3tes;
 To þe grene chapel þou chose, I charge þe to fotte,
 Such a dunt as þou hat3z dalt disserued þou habbez,
 To be 3ederly 3olden on nw 3eres morn;
 Þe kny3t of þe grene chapel men knowen me mony;
 Forþi me forto fynde if þou fraystez, faylez þou neuer,
 come, or recreant be called.”
 Þer-fore com, oþer recreaunt be calde þe be-houeus.”
 With a runisch rout þe raynez he tornez,
 Halled out at þe hal-dor, his hed in his hande,
 Þat þe fyr of þe flynt flaze fro fole houes.
 To quat kyth he be-com, knwe non þere,
 Neuer more þen þay wyste fram queþen he watz wonnen; what þenne?
 Þe kyng & Gawen þare,
 At þat grene þay la3e & grenne,
 3et breued watz hit ful bare,
 A meruayl among þo menne.

XXI.

Þa3 Arþer þe hende kyng at hert hade wonder,
 He let no semblaunt be sene, bot sayde ful hy3e
 To þe comlych quene, wyth cortays speche,
 “Dere dame, to day demay yow neuer;
 Wel by-commes such craft vpon cristmasse,
 Laykyng of enterludez, to la3e & to syng.
 Among þise, kynde caroles of kny3tez & ladyez;
 Neuer þe lece to my mete I may me wel dres,
 For I haf sen a selly, I may not for-sake.”
 He glent vpon *sir* Gawen, & gaynly he sayde,
 “Now *sir*, heng vp þyn ax, þat hatz innogh hewen.”
 & hit watz don abof þe dece, on doser to henge,
 Þer alle men for meruayl my3t on hit loke,
 & bi trwe tytel þerof to telle þe wonder.
 Þenne þay bo3ed to a borde þise burnes to-geder,
 Þe kyng & þe gode kny3t, & kene men hem serued
 Of alle dayntyez double, as derrest my3t falle,
 Wyth alle maner of mete & mynstralcie boþe;
 Wyth wele walt þay þat day, til worþed an ende, in londe.
 Now þenk wel, *sir* Gawan,
 For woþe þat þou ne wonde,
 Þis auenture forto frayn,
 Þat þou hatz tan on honde.

FYFTE THE SECOND**I.**

This hanselle hatz Arthur of auenturus on fyrst,
 In 3onge 3er, for he 3erned 3elpyng to here,
 Tha3 hym wordez were wane, when þay to sete wenten;
 Now ar þay stoken of sturne werk staf-ful her hond.
 Gawan watz glad to begynne þose gomnez in halle,
 Bot þa3 þe ende be heuy, haf 3e no wonder;
 For þa3 men ben mery in mynde, quen þay han mayn drynk,
 A 3ere 3ernes ful 3erne, & 3eldez neuer lyke,
 Þe forme to þe fynishment foldez ful seldom.
 Forþi þis 3ol ouer-3ede, & þe 3ere after,
 & vche sesoun serlepes sued after oþer;
 After crystenmasse com þe crabbed lentoun,
 Þat fraystez flesch wyth þe fysche & fode more symple
 Bot þenne þe weder of þe worlde wyth wynter hit þrepez,
 Colde clengez adoun, cloudez vplyften,
 Schyre schedez þe rayn in schowrez ful warme,
 Fallez vpon fayre flat, flowrez þere schewen,
 Boþe groundez & þe greuez grene ar her wedez,
 Bryddez busken to bylde, & bremlych syngen,
 For solace of þe softe somer þat sues þer after, bi bonk;
 & blossomez bolne to blowe,
 Bi rawez rych & ronk,
 Þen notez noble inno3e,
 Ar herde in wod so wlonk.

II.

After þe sesoun of somer wyth þe soft wyndez,
 Quen Zeferus syflez hym-self on sedez & erbez,
 Wela wynne is þe wort þat woxes þer-oute.
 When þe donkande dewe dropez of þe leuez,
 To bide a blysfyl blusch of þe bry3t sunne.
 Bot þen hy3es heruest, & hardenes hym sone.
 Warnez hym for þe wynter to wax ful rype;
 He dryues wyth dro3t þe dust for to ryse.
 Fro þe face of þe folde to fly3e ful hy3e;
 Wroþe wynde of þe welkyn wrastelez with þe sunne,
 Þe leuez lancen fro þe lynde, & ly3ten on þe grounde,
 & al grayes þe gres, þat grene watz ere;
 Þenne al rypez & rotez þat ros vpon fyrst,
 & þus 3irnez þe 3ere in 3isterdayez mony,

& wynter wyndeȝ aȝayn, as þe worlde askez no sage.
 Til meȝel-mas mone,
 Watz cumen wyth wynter wage;
 Þen þenkkez Gawan ful sone,
 Of his anious uyage.

III.

ȝet quyl al-hal-day with Arþer he lenges,
 & he made a fare on þat fest, for þe frekez sake,
 With much reuel & ryche of þe rounde table;
 Knyȝtez ful cortays & comlych ladies,
 Al for luf of þat lede in longynge þay were,
 Bot neuer-þe-lece ne þe later þay neuened bot merþe,
 Mony ioylez for þat ientyle iapez þer maden.
 For aftter mete, with mournyng he melez to his eme,
 & spekeȝ of his passage, & pertly he sayde,
 “Now, lege lorde of my lyf, leue I yow ask;
 ȝe knowe þe cost of þis cace, kepe I no more
 To telle yow tenez þerof neuer bot trifel;
 Bot I am boun to þe bur barely to morne,
 To sech þe gome of þe grene, as god wyl me wysse.”
 Þenne þe best of þe burȝ boȝed to-geder,
 Aywan, & Errik, & oþer ful mony,
 Sir Doddinaual de Sauage, þe duk of Clarence,
 Launcelot, & Lyonel, & Lucan þe gode,
 Sir Boos, & sir Byduer, big men boþe,
 & mony oþer menskful, with Mador de la Port.
 Alle þis compayny of court com þe kyng nerre,
 For to counseyl þe knyȝt, with care at her hert;
 Þere watz much derue doel driuen in þe sale,
 Þat so worthe as Wawan schulde wende on þat ernde,
 To dryȝe a delful dynt, & dele no more
 wyth bronde.
 Þe knyȝt mad ay god chere,
 & sayde, “quat schuld I wonde,
 Of destines derf & dere,
 What may mon do bot fonde?”

IV.

He dowellez þer al þat day, and dressez on þe morn,
 Askez erly hys armez, & alle were þay broȝt
 Fyrst a tule tapit, tyȝt ouer þe flet,

& miche watz þe gyld gere þat glent þer alofte;
 Þe stif mon steppez þeron, & þe stel hondolez,
 Dubbed *in* a dublet of a dere tars,
 & syþen a crafty capados, closed aloft,
 Þat wyth a bryzt blaunner was bounden *withinne*;
 Penne set þay þe sabatounz vpon þe segge fotez,
 His legez lapped *in* stel *with* luflych greuez,
With polaynez piched þerto, policed ful clene,
 Aboute his knez knaged wyth knotez of golde;
 Queme quyssewes þen, þat coyntlych closed
 His thik þrawen þyzez *with* þwonges to tachched;
 & syþen þe brawdren bryne of bryzt stel rynges,
 Vmbe-weued þat wyz, vpon wlonk stuffe;
 & wel bornyst brace vpon his boþe armes,
With gode cowters & gay, & glouez of plate,
 & alle þe godlych gere þat *hym* gayn schulde
 Þat tyde;
 Wyth ryche cote armure,
 His gold sporez spend *with* pryde,
 Gurde wyth a bront ful sure,
With silk sayn vmbe his syde.

V.

When he watz hasped *in* armes, his harnays watz ryche;
 Þe lest lachet ou[þ]er loupe lemed of golde;
 So harnayst as he watZ he herkneZ his masse,
 Offred & honoured at þe heze auter;
 Syþen he comeZ to þe kyng & to his cort-ferez,
 Lachez lufly his leue at lordez & ladyez;
 & þay *hym* kyst & conueyed, bikende *hym* to kryst.
 Bi þat watz Gryngolet grayth, & gurde *with* a sadel,
 Þat glemed ful gayly *with* mony golde frenges,
 Ay quere naylet ful nwe for þat note ryched;
 Þe brydel barred aboute, *with* bryzt golde bounden;
 Þe apparayl of þe payttrure, & of þe proude skyrtez,
 Þe cropore, & þe couertor, acorded wyth þe arsounez;
 & al watz rayled on red ryche golde naylez,
 Þat al glytered & glent as glem of þe sunne.
 Penne hentes he þe holme, & hastily hit kysses,
 Þat watz stapled stifly, & stoffed wyth-inne:
 Hit watz hyze on his hede, hasped bihynde,
 Wyth a lyztli vrysoun ouer þe auentayle,
 Enbrawdren & bounden wyth þe best gemmez,

On brode sylkyn borde, & bryddeȝ on semez,
 As papiayez paynted pernyng bitwene,
 Tortors & trulofez entayled so þyk,
 As mony burde þer aboute had ben seuen wynter
 in toune;
 Þe cercle watz more o prys,
 Þat vmbe-clypped hys croun,
 Of diamauntez a deuys,
 Þat boþe were bryȝt & broun.

VI.

Then þay schewed hym þe schelde, þat was of schyr goulez,
 Wyth þe pentangel de-paynt of pure golde hwez;
 He braydez hit by þe baude-ryk, aboute þe hals kestes,
 Þat bisemed þe segge semlyly fayre.
 & quy þe pentangel apendez to þat prynce noble,
 I am in tent yow to telle, þof tary hyt me schulde;
 Hit is a syngne þat Salamon set sum-quyle,
 In bytoknyng of trawþe, bi tyle þat hit habbez,
 For hit is a figure þat haldez fyue poyntez,
 & vche lyne vmbe-lappeȝ & loukez in oþer,
 & ayquere hit is endelez, & Englych hit callen
 Oueral, as I here, þe endeles knot.
 Forþy hit acordez to þis knyȝt, & to his cler armez,
 For ay faythful in fyue & sere fyue syþez,
 Gawan watz for gode knawen, & as golde pured,
 Voyded of vche vylany, wyth vertuez ennourned in mote;
 Forþy þe pentangel nwe
 He ber in schelde & cote,
 As tulk of tale most trwe,
 & gentylest knyȝt of lote.

VII.

Fyrst he watz funden fautlez in his fyue wyttez,
 & efte fayled neuer þe freke in his fyue fyngres,
 & alle his afaunce vpon folde watz in þe fyue woundez
 Þat Cryst kaȝt on þe croys, as þe crede tellez;
 & quere-so-euer þys mon in melly watz stad,
 His þro þoȝt watȝ in þat, þurȝ alle oþer þyngeȝ,
 Þat alle his forsnes he fong at þe fyue ioyez,
 Þat þe hende heuen quene had of hir chylde;
 At þis cause þe knyȝt comlyche hade

In þe more half of his schelde hir ymage depaynted,
 Þat quen he blusched þerto, his belde neuer payred.
 Þe fyrst fyue þat I finde þat þe frek vsed,
 Wat3 fraunchyse, & fela3schyp for-be² al þyng;
 His clannes & his cortaysye croked were neuer,
 & pite, þat passez alle poyntez, þyse pure fyue
 Were harder happed on þat hapel þen on any oþer.
 Now alle þese fyue syþez, forsoþe, were fetled on þis kny3t,
 & vchone halched in oþer, þat non ende hade,
 & fyched vpon fyue poyntez, þat fayld neuer,
 Ne samned neuer in no syde, ne sundred nouþ[er],
 Withouten ende at any noke [a]i quere fynde,
 Whereeuer þe gomen bygan, or glod to an ende.
 Perfore on his schene schelde schapen watz þe knot,
 Þus alle wyth red golde vpon rede gowlez,
 Þat is þe pure pentaungel wyth þe peple called, with lore.
 Now grayþed is Gawan gay,
 & la3t his launce ry3t þore,
 & gef hem alle goud day,
 He wende for euer more.

VIII.

He sperred þe sted with þe spurez, & sprong on his way,
 So stif þat þe ston fyr stroke out þer-after;
 Al þat se3 þat semly syked in hert,
 & sayde sobly al same segges til oþer,
 Carande for þat comly, “bi Kryst, hit is scape,
 Þat þou, leude, schal be lost, þat art of lyf noble!
 To fynde hys fere vpon folde, in fayth is not eþe;
 Warloker to haf wro3t had more wyt bene,
 & haf dy3t 3onder dere a duk to haue worþed;
 A lowande leder of ledez in londe hym wel semez,
 & so had better haf ben þen britned to no3t,
 Hadet wyth an aluisch mon, for angardez pryde.
 Who knew euer any kyng such counsel to take,
 As kny3tez in cauelounz on crystmasse gomnez!”
 Wel much watz þe warme water þat waltered of y3en,
 When þat semly syre so3t fro þo wonez þat daye;
 He made non abode,
 Bot wy3tly went hys way,
 Mony wylsum way he rode,
 Þe bok as I herde say.

IX.

Now ridez þis renk þurȝ þe ryalme of Logres,
 Sir Gauan on Godez halue, þaȝ hym no gomen þoȝt;
 Oft, leudlez alone, he lengez on nyȝtez,
 Þer he fonde noȝt hym byfore þe fare þat he lyked;
 Hade he no fere bot his fole, bi frythez & dounez,
 Ne no gome bot God, bi gate wyth to karp,
 Til þat he neȝed ful noghe¹ in to þe Norþe Walez;
 Alle þe iles of Anglesay on lyft half he haldez,
 & fareȝ ouer þe fordez by þe forlondez,
 Ouer at þe Holy-Hede, til he hade eft bonk
 In þe wyldrenesse of Wyrle; wonde þer bot lyte
 Þat auþer God oþer gome wyth goud hert louied.
 & ay he frayned, as he ferde, at frekez þat he met,
 He enquires after the Green Knight of the Green Chapel,⁷⁰⁴
 If þay hade herde any karp of a knyȝt grene,
 In any grounde þer-about, of þe grene chapel;²
 & al nykked hym wyth nay, þat neuer in her lyue
 Þay seȝe neuer no segge þat watz of suche hwez
 of grene.
 Þe knyȝt tok gates straunge,
 In mony a bonk vnbene,
 His cher ful oft con chaunge,
 Þat chapel er he myȝt sene.

X.

Mony klyf he ouerclambe in contrayez straunge,
 Fer floten fro his frendez fremedly he rydez;
 At vche warþe oþer water þer þe wyȝe passed,
 He fonde a foo hym byfore, bot ferly hit were,
 & þat so foule & so felle, þat feȝt hym by-hode;
 So mony meruayl hi mount þer þe mon fyndez,
 Hit were to tore for to telle of þe tenþe dole.
 Sumwhyle wyth wormez he werrez, & with wolues als,
 Sumwhyle wyth wodwos, þat woned in þe knarrez,
 Boþe wyth bullez & berez, & borez oþerquyle,
 & etaynez, þat hym aneled, of þe heȝe felle;
 Nade he ben dugty & dryȝe, & dryȝtyn had serued,
 Douteles he hade ben ded, & dreped ful ofte.
 For werre wrathed hym not so much, þat wynter was wors,
 When þe colde cler water fro þe cloudez schadden,
 & fres er hit falle myȝt to þe fale erþe;

Ner slayn wyth þe slete he sleped in his yrnes,
 Mo ny3tez þen innoghe in naked rokkez,
 Þer as claterande fro þe crest þe colde borne rennez,
 & hinged he3e ouer his hede in hard ysse-ikkles.
 Þus in peryl, & payne, & plytes ful harde,
 Bi contray caryez þis kny3t, tyl kryst-masse euen, al one;
 Þe kny3t wel þat tyde,
 To Mary made his mone.
 Þat ho hym red to ryde,
 & wysse hym to sum wone.

XI.

Bi a mounte on þe morne meryly he rydes,
 Into a forest ful dep, þat ferly watz wylde,
 Hi3e hillez on vche a halue, & holtwodez vnder,
 Of hore okez fill hoge a hundreth togeder;
 Þe hasel & þe ha3þorne were harled al samen,
 With ro3e raged mosse rayled aywhere,
 With mony bryddez vnblyþe vpon bare twyges,
 Þat pitosly þer piped for pyne of þe colde.
 Þe gome vpon Gryngolet glydez hem vnder,
 Þur3 mony misy & myre, mon al hym one,
 Carande for his costes, lest he ne keuer schulde,
 To se þe seruy of þat syre, þat on þat self ny3t
 Of a burde watz borne, oure baret to quelle;
 & þerfore sykyng he sayde, "I be-seche þe, lorde,
 & Mary, þat is myldest moder so dere.
 Of sum herber, þer he3ly I my3t here masse.
 Ande þy matynez to-morne, mekely I ask,
 & þer-to prestly I pray my pater & aue,
 & crede."
 He rode in his prayere,
 & cryed for his mysdede,
 He sayned hym in syþes sere,
 & sayde "cros Kryst me spede!"

XII.

Nade he sayned hym-self, segge, bot þrye,
 Er he watz war in þe wod of a won in a mote.
 Abof a launde, on a lawe, loken vnder bo3ez,
 Of mony borelych bole, aboute bi þe diches;
 A castel þe comlokest þat euer kny3t a3te,

Pyched on a prayere, a park al aboute,
 With a pyked palays, pyned ful þik,
 Þat vmbe-tege mony tre mo þen two myle.
 Þat holde on þat on syde þe habel auysed,
 As hit schemered & schon þurȝ þe schyre okez;
 Penne hatz he hendly of his helme, & heȝly he þonkez
 Iesus & say[nt] Gilyan, þat gentyle ar boþe,
 Þat cortaysly hade hym kydde, & his cry herkened.
 “Now bone hostel,” coþe þe burne, “I beseche yow ȝette!”
 Penne gerdez he to Gryngolet with þe gilt helez,
 & he ful chauncely hatz chosen to þe chef gate,
 Þat broȝt bremly þe burne to þe bryge ende,
 in haste;
 Þe bryge watz breme vp-brayde,
 Þe ȝateȝ wer stoken faste,
 Þe walleȝ were wel arayed,
 Hit dut no wyndez blaste.

XIII.

Þe burne bode on bonk, þat on blonk houed,
 Of þe depe double dich þat drof to þe place,
 Þe walle wod in þe water wonderly depe,
 Ande eft a ful huge heȝt hit haled vpon lofte,
 Of harde hewen ston vp to þe tableȝ,
 Enbaned vnder þe abataylment, in þe best lawe;
 & syþen ȝarytez ful ȝaye ȝered bitwene,
 Wyth mony lufflych loupe, þat louked ful clene;
 A better barbican þat burne blusched vpon neuȝer;
 & innermore he be-helde þat halle ful hyȝe,
 Towre telded bytwene trochet ful þik,
 Fayre fylyoleȝ þat fyȝed, & ferlyly long,
 With coruon coprounes, craftyly sleȝe;
 Chalk whyt chymnees þer ches he in-noȝe,
 Vpon bastel rouez, þat blenked ful quyte;
 So mony pynakle payntet watz poudred ay quere,
 Among þe castel carnelez, clambred so þik,
 Þat pared out of papure purely hit semed.
 Þe fre freke on þe fole hit fayr inn[o]ghe þoȝt,
 If he myȝt keuȝer to com þe cloyster wythinne,
 To herber in þat hostel, whyl halyday lested
 auinant;
 He calde, & sone þer com
 A porter pure plesaunt,

On þe wal his ernd he nome,
& haylsed þe knyzt erraunt.

XIV.

“Gode sir,” *quod* Gawan, “woldez þou go myn ernde,
To þe he3 lorde of þis hous, herber to craue?”
“3e, Peter,” *quod* þe porter, “& purely I trowe,
“You are welcome to dwell here as long as you like,” replied the porter.
Pat 3e be, wy3e, *welcum* to won quyle yow lykez.”
Pen 3ede þat wy3e a3ayn awyþe,
& folke frely hym wyth, to fonge þe knyzt;
Pay let doun þe grete dra3t, & derely out 3eden,
& kneled doun on her knes vpon þe colde erþe,
To *welcum* þis ilk wy3, as worþy hom þo3t;
and the gate is opened wide to receive him.⁸²⁰
Pay 3olden hym þe brode 3ate, 3arked vp wyde,
& he hem raysed rekenly, & rod ouer þe brygge;
Sere seggez hym sesed by sadel, quel² he lyzt,
& syþen stabeled his stede stif men in-no3e.
Knyztez & swyerez comen doun þenne,
For to bryng þis burne wyth blys into halle;
Quen he hef vp his helme, þer hized innoghe
For to hent hit at his honde, þe hende to seruen,
His bronde & his blasoun boþe þay token.
Pen haylsed he ful hendly þo haþelez vch one,
& mony proud mon þer presed, þat prynce to honour;
Alle hasped in his he3 wede to halle þay hym wonnen,
Per fayre fyre vpon flet fersly brenned.
Þenne þe lorde of þe lede loutez fro his chambre,
For to mete wyth menske þe mon on þe flor;
He sayde, “3e ar *welcum* to welde as yow lykez,
Pat here is, al is yowre awen, to haue at yowre wylle
& welde.”
“Graunt mercy,” *quod* Gawayn,
“Per Kryst hit yow for-3elde,”
As frekez þat semed fayn,
Ayþer oþer in armez con felde.

XV.

Gawayn glyzt on þe gome þat godly hym gret,
& þu3t hit a bolde burne þat þe bur3 a3te,
A hoge haþel for þe nonez, & of hyghe elde;

Brode bryȝt watz his berde, & al beuer hwed,
 Sturne stif on þe stryþþe on stalworth schonkez,
 Felle face as þe fyre, & fre of hys speche;
 & wel hym semed for soþe, as þe segge þuȝt,
 To lede a lortschyp in lee of leudez ful gode.
 Þe lorde hym charred to a chambre, & chefly cumaundez
 To delyuer hym a leude, hym loȝly to serue;
 & þere were boun at his bode burnez innoȝe,
 Þat broȝt hym to a bryȝt boure, þer beddyng watȝ noble,
 Of cortynes of clene sylk, wyth cler golde hemmez,
 & couertorez ful curious, with comlych panez,
 Of bryȝt blaunnier a-boue enbrawdred bisydez,
 Rudelez rennande on ropez, red golde rynges,
 Tapytez tyȝt to þe woȝe, of tuly & tars,
 & vnder fete, on þe flet, of folȝande sute.
 Þer he watz dispoyled, wyth spechez of myerþe,
 Þe burn of his bruny, & of his bryȝt wedez;
 Ryche robes ful rad renkkez hem broȝten,
 For to charge, & to chaunge, & chose of þe best.
 Sone as he on hent, & happed þerinne,
 Þat sete on hym semly, wyth saylande skyrtez,
 Þe ver by his uisage verayly hit semed
 Wel neȝ to vche habel alle on hwes,
 Lowande & lufly, alle his lymmez vnder,
 Þat a comloker knyȝt neuer Kryst made,
 hem þoȝt;
 Wheþen in worlde he were,
 Hit semed as he myȝt
 Be prynce with-outen pere,
 In felde þer felle men fyȝt.

XVI.

A cheyer by-fore þe chemné, þer charcole brenned,
 Watz grayþed for sir Gawan, grayþely with cloþez,
 Whyssynes vpon queldepoyntes, þa[t] koynt wer boþe;
 & þenne a mere mantyle watz on þat mon cast,
 Of a broun bleeaunt, enbrawdred ful ryche,
 & fayre furred wythinne with fellez of þe best,
 Alle of ermyn in erde, his hode of þe same;
 & he sete in þat settel semlych ryche,
 & achaufed hym chefly, & þenne his cher mended.
 Sone watz telded vp a tapit, on trestez ful fayre,
 Clad wyth a clene cloþe, þat cler quyt schewed,

Sanap, & salure, & syluer-in spones;
 Þe wy3e wesche at his wylle, & went to his mete
 Seggez hym serued semly in-no3e,
 Wyth sere sewes & sete,² sesounde of þe best,
 Double felde, as hit fallez, & fele kyn fischez;
 Summe baken in bred, summe brad on þe gledez,
 Summe soþen, summe in sewe, sauered with spyces,
 & ay sawes so sle3e3, þat þe segge lyked.
 Þe freke calde hit a fest ful frely & ofte,
 Ful hendely, quen alle þe hapeles re-hayted hym at onez as hende;
 “Þis penaunce now 3e take,
 & eft hit schal amende;”
 Þat mon much merþe con make.
 For wyn in his hed þat wende.

XVII.

Penne watz spyed & spured vpon spare wyse.
 Bi preue poyntez of þat prynce, put to hymselfen,
 Þat he be-knew cortaysly of þe court þat he were,
 Þat apþel Arthure þe hende haldez hym one,
 Þat is þe ryche ryal kyng of þe rounde table;
 & hit watz Wawen hymself þat in þat won syttez,
 Comen to þat krystmasse, as case hym þen lymped.
 When þe lorde hade lerned þat he þe leude hade,
 Loude la3ed he þerat, so lef hit hym þo3t,
 & alle þe men in þat mote maden much joye,
 To apere in his presense prestly þat tyme,
 Þat alle prys, & prowes, & pured þewes
 Apendes to hys persoun, & praysed is euer,
 By-fore alle men vpon molde, his mensk is þe most.
 Vch segge ful softly sayde to his fere,
 “Now schal we semlych se sle3tez of þewez,
 & þe teccheles termes of talkyng noble,
 Wich spede is in speche, vnspurd may we lerne,
 Syn we haf fonged þat fyne fader of nurture;
 God hatz geuen *vus* his grace godly for soþe,
 Þat such a gest as Gawan grauntez *vus* to haue,
 When burnez blyþe of his burþe schal sitte & synge.
 In menyng of manerez mere,
 Þis burne now schal *vus* bryng,
 I hope þat may hym here,
 Schal lerne of luf-talkyng.”

XVIII.

Bi þat þe diner watz done, & þe dere vp,
 Hit watz ne3 at þe niy3t ne3ed þe tyme;
 Chaplaynez to þe chapeles chosen þe gate,
 Rungen ful rychely, ry3t as þay schulden,
 To þe hersum euensong of þe hy3e tyde.
 Þe lorde loutes þerto, & þe lady als,
 Into a comly closet coyntly ho entrez;
 Gawan glydez ful gay, & gos þeder sone;
 Þe lorde laches hym by þe lappe, & ledez hym to sytte,
 & couply hym knowez, & callez hym his nome,
 & sayde he watz þe welcomest wy3e of þe worlde;
 & he hym þonkked þroly, & ayþer halched oþer.
 & seten soberly samen þe seruise quyle;
 Þenne lyst þe lady to loke on þe kny3t.
 Þenne com ho of hir closet, *with* mony cler burdez,
 Ho watz þe fayrest *in* felle, of flesche & of lyre,
 & of compas, & colour, & costes of alle oþer,
 & wener þen Wenore, as þe wy3e þo3t.
 He ches þur3 þe chaunsel, to cheryche þat hende;
 An oþer lady hir lad bi þe lyft honde,
 Þat watz alder þen ho, an auncian hit semed,
 & he3ly honowred *with* hapelez aboute.
 Bot yn-lyke on to loke þo ladyes were,
 For if þe 3onge watz 3ep, 3ol3e watz þat oþer;
 Riche red on þat on rayled ay quere,
 Rugh ronkled chekez þat oþer on rolled;
 Kerhofes of þat on wyth mony cler perlez
 Hir brest & hir bry3t þrote bare displayed,
 Schon schyrer þen snawe, þat schedez on hillez;
 Þat oþer wyth a gorger watz gered ouer þe swyre,
 Chymbled ouer hir blake chyn *with* mylkquyte vayles,
 Hir frount folden *in* sylk, enfoubled ay quere,
 Toret & treieted *with* tryflez aboute,
 Þat no3t watz bare of þat burde bot þe blake bro3es.
 Þe tweyne y3en, & þe nase, þe naked lyppez,
 & þose were soure to se, & sellyly blered;
 A mensk lady on molde mon may hir calle, for gode;
 Hir body watz schort & þik.
 Hir buttokez bay & brode,
 More lykker-wys on to lyk,
 Watz þat scho hade on lode.

XIX.

When Gawayn glyzt on þat gay, þat graciously loked,
 Wyth leue lazt of þe lorde he went hem a3aynes;
 Þe alder he haylses, heldande ful lowe,
 Þe loueloker he lappez a lyttel in armez,
 He kysses hir comlyly, & knyztly he melez;
 Þay kallen hym of a quoyntaunce, & he hit quyk askez
 To be her seruauunt sothly, if hem-self lyked.
 Þay tan hym bytwene hem, wyth talkyng hym leden
 To chambre, to chemné, & chefly þay asken
 Spycez, þat vnsparely men speded hom to bryng,
 & þe wynnelych wyne þerwith vche tyme.
 Þe lorde luflych aloft lepez ful ofte,
 Mynned merthe to be made vpon mony sybez.
 Hent he3ly of his hode, & on a spere henged,
 & wayned hom to wynne þe worchip þerof,
 Þat most myrþe myzt mene þat crystenmas whyle;
 “& i schal fonde, bi my fayth, to fylter wyth þe best,
 Er me wont þe wede3, with help of my frendez.”
 Þus wyth lazande lotez þe lorde hit tayt makez,
 For to glade sir Gawayn with gomnez in halle þat nyzt;
 Til þat hit watz tyme,
 Þe kyng comaundet lyzt,
 Sir Gawen his leue con nyme,
 & to his bed hym digt.

XX.

On þe morne, as vch mon mynez þat tyme,
 [Þ]at dryztyn for oure destyné to de3e watz borne,
 Wele waxez in vche a won in worlde, for his sake;
 So did hit þere on þat day, þur3 dayntes mony;
 Boþe at mes & at mele, messes ful quaynt
 Derf men vpon dece drest of þe best.
 Þe olde auncian wyf he3est ho syttez;
 Þe lorde lufly her by lent, as I trowe;
 Gawan & þe gay burde to-geder þay seten,
 Euen inmyddez, as þe messe metely come;
 & syþen þur3 al þe sale, as hem best semed,
 Bi vche grome at his degre grayþely wat3z serued.
 Þer watz mete, þer watz myrþe, þer watz much ioye,
 Þat for to telle þerof hit me tene were,
 & to poynte hit 3et I pyned me parauenture;

Bot 3et I wot þat Wawen & þe wale burde
 Such comfort of her compaynye ca3ten togeder,
 Þur3 her dere dalyaunce of her derne wordez,
 Wyth clene cortays carp, closed fro fylþe;
 & hor play watz passande vche prynce gomen,
 in vayres;
 Trumpez & nakerys,
 Much pypyng þer repayres,
 Vche mon tented hys,
 & þay two tented þayres.

XXI.

Much dut watz þer dryuen þat day & þat oþer,
 & þe þryd as þro þronge in þerafter;
 Þe ioye of sayn Ionez day watz gentyle to here,
 & watz þe last of þe layk, leudez þer þo3ten.
 Þer wer gestes to go vpon þe gray morne,
 Forþy wonderly þay woke, & þe wyn dronken,
 Daunsed ful dregly wyth dere carolez;
 At þe last, when hit watz late, þay lachen her leue,
 Vchon to wende on his way, þat watz wy3e stronge.
 Gawan gef hym god day, þe godmon hym lachchez,
 Ledes hym to his awen chambre, þ[e] chymné bysyde,
 & þere he dragez hym on dry3e, & derely hym þonkkez,
 Of þe wynne worschip & he hym wayned hade,
 As to honour his hous on þat hy3e tyde,
 & enbelyse his bur3 with his bele chere.
 “Iwysse *sir*, quyl I leue, me worþez þe better,
 Þat Gawayn hatz ben my gest, at Goddez awen fest.”
 “*Grant merci sir*,” *quod* Gawayn, “in god fayth hit is yowrez,
 Al þe honour is *your* awen, þe he3e kyng yow zelde;
 & I am wy3e at *your* wylle, to worch *your* hest,
 As I am halden þerto, in hy3e & in lo3e, bi rigt.”
 Þe lorde fast can hym payne,
 To holde lenger þe kny3t,
 To hym answrez Gawayn,
 Bi non way þat he my3t.

XXII.

Then frayned þe freke ful fayre at him-seluen,
 Quat derne dede had hym dryuen, at þat dere tyme,
 So kenly fro þe kyngez kourt to kayre al his one,

Er þe halidayez holly were halet out of toun?
 “For soþe *sir*,” *quod* þe segge, “3e sayn bot þe trawþe
 A heze ernde & a hasty me hade fro þo wonez,
 For I am sumned my selfe to sech to a place,
 I wot *in* worlde wheder warde to wende, hit to fynde;
 I nolde, bot if I hit negh my3t on nw3eres morne,
 For alle þe londe *in*-wyth Logres, so me oure lorde help!
 Forþy, *sir*, þis enquest I require yow here,
 Þat 3e me telle *with* trawþe, if euer 3e tale herde
 Of þe grene chapel, quere hit on grounde stondez,
 & of þe kny3t þat hit kepes, of colour of grene?
 Þer watz stabled bi statut a steuen *vus* by-twene,
 To mete þat mon at þat mere, 3if I my3t last;
 & of þat ilk nw3ere hot naked now wontez,
 & I wolde loke on þat lede, if God me let wolde,
 Gladloker, bi Goddez sun, þen any god welde!
 Forþi, Iwysse, bi 3owre wylle, wende me bihoues,
 Naf I now to busy bot bare þre dayez,
 & me als fayn to falle feye as fayly of myyn ernde.”
 Þenne la3ande *quod* þe lorde, “now leng þe by-houes,
 For I schal teche yow to þa[t] terme bi þe tymeze ende,
 Þe grene chapayle vpon grounde, greue yow no more;
 Bot 3e schal be *in* yowre bed, burne, at þyn ese,
 Quyle forth dayej, & ferk on pe fyrst of pe 3ere,
 & cum to þat merk at mydmorn, to make quat yow likez in spenne;
 Dowellez whyle new 3eres daye,
 & rys, & raykez þenne,
 Mon schal yow sette *in* waye,
 Hit is not two myle henne.”

XXIII.

Þenne watz Gawan ful glad, & gomenly he lazed,—
 “Now I þonk yow þryuandely þur3 alle oþer þynge,
 Now acheued is my chaunce, I schal at *your* wylle
 Dowelle, & ellez do quat 3e demen.”
 Þenne sesed hym þe syre, & set hym bysyde,
 Let þe ladies be fette, to lyke hem þe better;
 Þer watz seme solace by hemsself stille;
 Þe lorde let for luf lotez so myry,
 As wy3 þat wolde of his wyte, ne wyst quat he my3t.
 Þenne he carped to þe kny3t, criande loude,
 “3e han demed to do þe dede þat I bidde;
 Wyl 3e halde þis hes here at þys onez?”

“3e *sir*, forsoþe,” sayd þe segge trwe,
 “Whyl I byde *in yowre bor3e*, be bayn to 3ow[r]e hest.”
 “For 3e haf trauayled,” *quod* þe tulk, “towen fro ferre,
 & syþen waked me wyth, 3e arn not wel waryst,
 Nauþer of sostnaunce ne of slepe, soþly I knowe;
 3e schal lenge *in your* lofte, & ly3e *in your* ese,
 To-morn quyle þe messequyle, & to mete wende,
 When 3e wyl, wyth my wyf, þat wyth yow schal sitte,
 & comfort yow *with* compayny, til I to cort torne,
 3e lende;
 & I schal erly ryse,
 On huntyng wyl I wende.”
 Gauayn grantez alle þyse,
 Hym heldande, as þe hende.

XXIV.

“3et firre,” *quod* þe freke, “a forwarde we make;
 Quat-so-euer I wynne *in þe wod*, hit worþez to *yourez*,
 & quat chek so 3e acheue, chaunge me þerforne;
 Swete, swap we so, sware *with* trawþe,
 Queþer, leude, so lymþ lere oþer better.”
 “Bi God,” *quod* Gawayn þe gode, “I *grant* þertylle,
 & þat yow lyst forto layke, lef hit me þynkes.
 “Who bringez *vus* þis beuerage, þis bargayn is maked:”
 So sayde þe lorde of þat lede; þay lazed vchone,
 Þay dronken, & daylyeden, & dalten vnty3tel,
 Þise lordez & ladyez, quyle þat hem lyked;
 & syþen *with* frenkysch fare & fele fayre lotez
 Þay stoden, & stemed, & stylly speken,
 Kysten ful comlyly, & ka3ten her leue.
With mony leude ful ly3t, & lemande torches,
 Vche burne to his bed watz bro3t at þe laste,
 ful softe;
 To bed 3et er þay 3ede,
 Recorded couenauntez ofte;
 Þe olde lorde of þat leude,
 Cowþe wel halde layk a-lofte.

FYTTE THE THIRD

I.

Ful erly bifore þe day þe folk vp-rysen,
 Gestes þat go wolde, hor gromez þay calden,

& þay busken vp bilyue, blonkkez to sadel,
 Tyffen he[r] takles, trussen her males,
 Richen hem þe rychest, to ryde alle arayde,
 Lepen vp ly3tly, lachen her brydeles,
 Vche wy3e on his way, þer hym wel lyked.
 Þe leue lorde of þe londe watz not þe last,
 Arayed for þe rydyng, *with* renkkez ful mony;
 Ete a sop hastyly, when he hade herde masse,
With bugle to bent felde he buskez bylyue;
 By þat þat any dayly3t lemed vpon erþe,
 He *with* his hapeles on hy3e horsse weren.
 Þenne þise cacheres þat couþe, cowpled hor houndez,
 Vnclosed þe kenel dore, & calde hem þeroute,
 Blwe bygly *in* bugle þre bare mote;
 Braches bayed þerfore, & breme noyse maked,
 & þay chastysed, & charred, on chasyng þat went;
 A hundreth of hunteres, as I haf herde telle, of þe best;
 To trystors vewters 3od,
 Couples hunttes of kest,
 Þer ros for blastez gode,
 Gret rurd *in* þat forest.

II.

At þe fyrst quethe of þe quest quaked þe wylde;
 Der drof *in* þe dale, doted for drede,
 Hized to þe hy3e, bot heterly þay were
 Restayed *with* þe stablye, þat stoutly ascryed;
 Þay let þe herttez haf þe gate, *with* þe hy3e hedes,
 Þe breme bukkez also, *with* hor brode paumez;
 For þe fre lorde hade defende *in* fermysoun tyme,
 Þat þer schulde no mon mene to þe male dere.
 Þe hindez were halden *in*, *with* hay & war,
 Þe does dryuen *with* gret dyn to þe depe sladez;
 Þer my3t mon se, as þay slypte, slentyng of arwes,
 At vche [þat] wende vnder wande wapped a flone,
 Þat bigly bote on þe broun, *with* ful brode hedez,
 What! þay brayen, & bleden, bi bonkkez þay de3en.
 & ay rachches *in* a res radly hem fol3es,
 Huntterez wyth hy3e horne hasted hem after,
 Wyth such a crakkande kry, as klyffes haden brusten;
 What wylde so at-waped wy3es þat schotten,
 Watz al to-raced & rent, at þe resayt.
 Bi þay were tened at þe hy3e, & taysed to þe wattrez,

Þe ledez were so lerned at þe lo3e trysteres,
 & þe grehoundez so grete, þat geten hem bylyue,
 & hem to fylched, as fast as frekez my3t loke, þer-ry3t.
 Þe lorde for blys abloy
 Ful oft con launce & ly3t,
 & drof þat day wyth Ioy
 Thus to þe derk ny3t.

III.

Þus laykez þis lorde by lynde wodez euez,
 & Gawayn þe god mon, in gay bed lygez,
 Lurkkez quyl þe dayly3t lemed on þe wowes,
 Vnder couertour ful clere, cortyned aboute;
 & as in slomeryng he slode, sle3ly he herde
 A littel dyn at his dor, & derfly vpon;
 & he heuez vp his hed out of þe cloþes,
 A corner of þe cortyn he ca3t vp a lyttel,
 & waytez warly þiderwarde, quat hit be my3t.
 Hit watz þe ladi, loflyest to beholde,
 Þat dro3 þe dor after hir ful dernly & styлле,
 & bo3ed towarde þe bed; & þe burne schamed.
 & layde hym down lystyly, & let as he slepte.
 & ho stepped stilly & stel to his bedde,
 Kest vp þe cortyn, & creped withinne,
 & set hir ful softly on þe bed-syde,
 & lenged þere selly longe, to loke quen he wakened.
 Þe lede lay lurked a ful longe quyle,
 Compast in his concience to quat þat cace my3t
 Mene oþer amount--to meruayle hym þo3t;
 Bot 3et he sayde in hymself, "more semly hit were
 To aspye wyth my spelle [in] space quat ho wolde."
 þen he wakenede, & wroth, & to hir warde torned,
 & vnlouked his y3e-lyddez, & let as hym wondered,
 & sayned hym, as bi his sa3e þe sauer to worthe, with hande.
 Wyth chynne & cheke ful swete,
 Boþe quit & red in-blande,
 Ful lufly con ho lete,
 Wyth lyppez smal la3ande.

IV.

"God moroun, sir Gawayn," sayde þat fayr lady,
 "3e ar a sleper vnsly3e, þat mon may slyde hider;

Now ar 3e tan astyt, bot true *vus* may schape,
 I schal bynde yow in *your* bedde, þat be 3e trayst:"
 Al lazande þe lady lanced þo bourdez.
 "Goud moroun g[aye],"¹ *quod* Gawayn þe blyþe,
 "Me schal worþe at *your* wille, & þat me wel lykez,
 For I zelde me zederly, & 3e3e after *grace*,
 & þat is þe best, be my dome, for me byhouez nede;"
 & þus he bourded a3ayn *with* mony a blyþe la3ter.
 "Bot wolde 3e, lady louely, þen leue me grante,
 & deprece *your* prysoun, & pray hym to ryse,
 I wolde bo3e of þis bed, & busk me better,
 I schulde keuer þe more comfort to karp yow wyth."
 "Nay, for soþe, beau *sir*," sayd þat swete,
 "3e schal not rise of *your* bedde, I rych yow better,
 I schal happe yow here þat oþer half als,
 & syþen karp wyth my kny3t þat I ka3t haue;
 For I wene wel, Iwysse, *sir* Wawen 3e are,
 Þat alle þe worlde worchipez, quere-so 3e ride;
Your honour, *your* hendelayk is hendely prayed
With lordez, wyth ladyes, *with* alle þat lyf bere.
 & now 3e ar here, iwysse, & we bot oure one;
 "My lorde & his ledez ar on lenþe faren,
 Oþer burnez in her bedde, & my burdez als,
 Þe dor drawen, & dit *with* a derf haspe;
 & syþen I haue in þis hous hym þat al lykez,
 I schal ware my whyle wel, quyl hit lastez, *with* tale;
 3e ar welcum to my cors,
 Yowre awen won to wale,
 Me behouez of fyne force,
Your seruaunt be & schale."

V.

"In god fayth," *quod* Gawayn, "gayn hit me þynkkez,
 Þa3 I be not now he þat 3e of speken;
 To reche to such reuerence as 3e reherce here
 I am wy3e vn-worþy, I wot wel my-seluen;
 Bi God, I were glad, & yow god þo3t,
 At sa3e oþer at seruyce þat I sette my3t
 To þe plesaunce of *your* prys--hit were a pure ioye."
 "In god fayth, *sir* Gawayn," *quod* þe gay lady,
 "Þe prys & þe prowes þat plesez al oþer,
 If I hit lakked, oþer set at ly3t, hit were littel daynté;
 Bot hit ar ladyes inno3e, þat leuer wer nowþe

Haf þe hende *in* hor holde, as I þe habbe here,
 To daly witt derely *your* daynté wordez,
 Keuer hem comfort, & colen her carez,
 Þen much of þe garysourn oþer golde þat þay hauen;
 Bot I louue þat ilk lorde þat þe lyfte haldez,
 I haf hit holly *in* my honde þat al desyres, þurze grace.”
 Scho made hym so gret chere,
 Þat watz so fayr of face,
 Þe knyzt *with* speches skere,
 A[n]swared to vche a cace.

VI.

“Madame,” *quod* þe myry mon, “Mary yow zelde,
 For I haf founden, *in* god fayth, yowre fraunchis nobele,
 & oþer ful much of oþer folk fongen hor dedez;
 Bot þe daynté þat þay delen for my disert nysen,
 Hit is þe worchyp of *yourzself*, þat nozt hot wel *connez*.”
 “Bi Mary,” *quod* þe menskful, “me þynk hit anoþer;
 For were I worth al þe wone of wymmen alyue,
 & al þe wele of þe worlde were *in* my honde,
 & I schulde chepen & chose, to cheue me a lorde,
 For þe costes þat I haf knowen vpun þe knyzt here,
 Of bewté, & debonerté, & blyþe semblaunt,
 & þat I haf er herkkened, & halde hit here trwee,
 Þer schulde no freke vpon folde bifore yow be chosen.”
 “Iwysse, worþy,” *quod* þe wyze, “ze haf waled wel better,
 Bot I am proude of þe prys þat ze put on me,
 & soberly *your* seruaunt my souerayn I holde yow,
 & yowre knyzt I becom, & Kryst yow forzelde.”
 Þus þay meled of muchquat, til mydmorn paste,
 & ay þe lady let lyk, a hym loued mych;
 Þe freke ferde *with* defence, & feted ful fayre.
 Þa3 I were burde bryztest, þe burde *in* mynde hade,
 Þe lasse luf *in* his lode, for lur þat he sozt, boutte hone;
 Þe dunte þat schulde hym deue,
 & nedez hit most be done;
 Þe lady þenn spek of leue.
 He granted hir ful sone.

VII.

Penne ho gef hym god day, & wyth a glent lazed.
 & as ho stod, ho stonyed hym wyth ful stor wordez:

“Now he þat spedez vche spech, þis disport zelde yow!
 Bot þat 3e be Gawan, hit gotz *in mynde*.”
 “Querfore?” *quod* þe freke, & freschly he askez,
 Ferde lest he hade fayled *in fourme* of his castes;
 Bot þe burde hym blessed, & bi þis skyl sayde,
 “So god as Gawayn gaynly is halden,
 & cortaysye is closed so clene *in hym-seluen*,
 Couth not ly3tly haf lenged so long wyth a lady,
 Bot he had craued a cosse, bi his *courtaysye*,
 Bi *sum* towch of *summe* tryfle, at *sum* talez ende.”
 Þen *quod* Wowen, “I-wysse, worþe as yow lykez,
 I schal kysse at *your* comaundement, as a kny3t fallez,
 & fire lest he displese yow, so plede hit no more.”
 Ho comes nerre *with* þat, & cachez *hym in armez*,
 Loutez luflych adoun, & þe leude kyssez;
 Þay comly bykennen to Kryst ayþer oþer;
 Ho dos hir forth at þe dore, *withouten* dyn more.
 & he ryches *hym* to ryse, & rapes *hym* sone,
 Clepes to his chamberlayn, choses his wede,
 Bo3ez forth, quen he watz boun, blyþely to masse,
 & þenne he meued to his mete þat *menskly* *hym* keped,
 & made myry al day til þe mone rysed,
with game;
 Watz neuer freke fayrer fonge,
 Bitwene two so dyngne dame,
 Þe alder & þe 3onge,
 Much solace set þay same.

VIII.

And ay þe lorde of þe londe is lent on his gamnez,
 To hunt *in holtez* & heþe, at hyndez barayne,
 Such a sowme he þer slowe bi þat þe sunne heldet,
 Of dos & of oþer dere, to deme were wonder.
 Þenne fersly þay flokked *in* folk at þe laste,
 & quykly of þe quelled dere a querré þay maked;
 Þe best bo3ed þerto, *with* burnez innoghe,
 Gedered þe grattest of gres þat þer were,
 & didden hem derely vndo, as þe dede askez;
 Serched hem at þe asay, *summe* þat þer were,
 Two fyngeres þay fonde of þe fowlest of alle;
 Syþen þay slyt þe slot, sesed þe erber,
 Schaued wyth a scharp knyf, & þe schyre knitten;
 Syþen rytte þay þe foure lymmes, & rent of þe hyde,

Þen brek þay þe bale, þe bowelez out token,
 Lystily forlancyng, & bere of þe knot;
 Þay gryped to þe gargulun, & grayþely departed
 Þe wesaut fro þe wynt-hole, & walt out þe guttez;
 Þen scher þay out þe schulderez *with* her scharp knyuez,
 Haled hem by a lyttel hole, to haue hole sydes;
 Siþen britned þay þe brest, & brayden hit *in* twynne,
 & eft at þe gargulun bigynez on þenne,
 Ryuez hit vp radly, ryzt to þe byzt,
 Voydez out þe auanters, & *verayly* þerafter
 Alle þe rymez by þe rybbez radly þay lance;
 So ryde þay of by resoun bi þe rygge bonez,
 Euenden to þe haunche, þat henced alle samen,
 & heuen hit vp al hole, & hwen hit of þere,
 & þat þayneme for þe noumbles, bi nome as I trowe,
 bi kynde;
 Bi þe byzt al of þe þyges,
 Þe lappez þay lance bihynde,
 To hewe hit *in* two þay hyges,
 Bi þe bakbon to vnbynde.

IX.

Boþe þe hede & þe hals þay hwen of þenne,
 & syþen sunder þay þe sydez swyft fro þe chyne,
 & þe corbeles fee þay kest *in* a greue;
 Þenn þurled þay ayþer þik side þurzt, bi þe rybbe,
 & henced þenne a[y]þer bi hozgez of þe fourchez,
 Vche freke for his fee, as fallez forto haue.
 Vpon a felle of þe fayre best, fede þay þayr houndes,
 W
 Wyth þe lyuer & þe lyztez, þe leþer of þe paunchez,
 & bred baped *in* blod, blende þeramongez;
 Baldely þay blw prys, bayed þayr rachchez,
 Syþen fonge þay her flesche folden to home,
 Strakande ful stoutly mony stif motez.
 Bi þat þe daylyzt watz done, þe douthe watz al wonen
 Into þe comly castel, þer þe knyzt bidez
 ful stille;
 Wyth blys & bryzt fyr bette,
 Þe lord is comen þer-tylle,
 When Gawayn wyth *hym* mette,
 Þer watz bot wele at wylle.

X.

Thenne comaunded þe lorde in þat sale to samen alle þe meny,
 Boþe þe ladyes on loghe to lyȝt with her burdes,
 Bifore alle þe folk on þe flette, frekez he beddez
 Verayly his venysoun to fech hym byforne;
 & al godly in gomen Gaway[n] he called,
 Techez hym to þe tayles of ful tayt bestes,
 Schewez hym þe schyree grece schorne vpon rybbes.
 “How payez yow þis play? haf I prys wonnen?
 Haue I þryuandely þonk þurȝ my craft serued?”
 “ȝe Iwysse,” quod þat oþer wyȝe, “here is wayth fayrest
 Þat I seȝ þis seuen ȝere in sesoun of wynter.”
 “& al I gif yow, Gawayn,” quod þe gome þenne,
 “For by acorde of couenaunt ȝe craue hit as *your* awen.”
 “Þis is soth,” quod þe segge, “I say yow þatilke,
 & I haf worthyly þis wonez wyth-inne,
 Iwysse with as god wylle hit worþez to ȝourez.”
 He haspez his fayre hals his armez wythinne,
 & kysses hym as comlyly as he couþe awyse:
 “Tas yow þere my cheuicaunce, I cheued no more,
 I wowche hit saf fynly, þaȝ feler hit were.”
 “Hit is god,” quod þe god mon, “grant mercy þerfore,
 Hit may be such, hit is þe better, & ȝe me breue wolde
 Where ȝe wan þis ilk wele, bi wytte of yorseluen.”
 “Þat watz not forward,” quod he, “frayst me no more,
 For ȝe haftan þat yow tydez, trawe non oþer
 ȝe mowe.”
 Þay laged, & made hem blyþe,
 Wyth lotez þat were to lowe,
 To soper þay ȝede as-swyþe,
 Wyth dayntes nwe innowe.

XI.

And syþen by þe chymné in chamber þay seten.
 Wyȝez þe walle wyn weȝed to hem oft,
 & efte in her bourdyng þay bayþen in þe morn,
 To fylle þe same forwardez þat þay byfore maden,
 Þat chaunce so bytydez hor cheuysaunce to chaunge,
 What nwez so þay nome, at naȝt quen þay metten
 Þay acorded of þe couenauntez byfore þe court alle;
 Þe beuerage watz broȝt forth in bourde at þat tyme;
 Þenne þay louelych leȝten leue at þe last,

Vche burne to his bedde busked bylyue.
 Scarce had the cock cackled thrice when the lord was up.
 Bi þat þe coke hade crowez & cakled bot þryse,
 Þe lorde watz lopen of his bedde, þe leudez vchone,
 So þat þe mete & þe masse watz metely delyuered;
 Þe douthe dressed to þe wod, er any day sprenged,
 to chace;
 He3 *with* hunte & hornez,
 Þur3 playnez þay passe *in* space,
 Vncoupled among þo þornez,
 Rachez þat ran on race.

XII.

Sone þay calle of a quest *in* aker syde,
 Þe hunt rehayted þe houndez, þat hit fyrst mynged,
 Wylde wordez hym warp wyth a wrast noyce;
 Þe howndez þat hit herde, hastid þider swyþe,
 & fellen as fast to þe fuyt, fourty at ones;
 Þenne such a glauerande glam of gedered rachchez
 Ros, þat þe rocherez rungen aboute;
 Hunterez hem hardened *with* horne & wyth muthe.
 Þen al *in* a semblé sweyed togeder,
 Bitwene a flosche *in* þat fryth, & a foo cragge;
 In a knot, bi a clyffe, at þe kerre syde,
 Þer as þe rogh rocher vnrydely watz fallen,
 Þay ferden to þe fyndyng, & frekez hem after;
 Þay vmbekesten þe knarre & þe knot boþe.
 Wy3ez, whyl þay wysten wel wyt *inne* hem hit were,
 Þe best þat þer breued watz wyth þe blod houndez.
 Þenne þay beten on þe buskez, & bede hym vp ryse,
 & he vnsoundyly out so3t seggez ouerþwert,
 On þe sellokest swyn swenged out þere,
 Long sythen for þe sounder þat wigt for-olde,
 For he watz b[este &] bor alþer-grattest,
 [And eue]re quen he gronyed, þenne greued mony,
 For [þre a]t þe fyrst þrast he þry3t to þe erþe,
 & [sped hym] forth good sped, boutte spyt more,
 [Ande þay] halowed hyghe ful hy3e & hay! hay! cryed
 Haden hornez to mouþe heterly rechated;
 Full quickly the hunters pursue him.
 Mony watz þe myry mouthe of men & of houndez,
 Þat buskkez after þis bor, *with* bost & wyth noyse,
 To quelle;

Ful oft he bydez þe baye,
 & maymez þe mute Inn melle,
 He hurtzez of þe houndez, & þay
 Ful 3omerly 3aule & 3elle.

XIII.

Schalkez to schote at *hym* schowen to þenne,
 Haled to hym of her arewez, hitten hym oft;
 Bot þe poyntez payred at þe pyth þat py3t in his scheldez,
 & þe barbez of his browe bite non wolde--
 Þa3 þe schauen schaft schyndered in pecez,
 Þe hede hypped a3ayn, were-so-euer hit hitte;
 Bot quon þe dyntez *hym* dered of her dry3e strokez,
 Þen, brayn-wod for bate, on burnez he rasez,
 Hurtez hem ful heterly þer he forth hy3ez,
 & mony ar3ed þerat, & onlyte dro3en.
 Bot þe lorde on a ly3t horce launces hym after,
 As burne bolde vpon bent his bugle he blowez,
 He rechated, & r[ode] þur3 ronez ful þyk,
 Suande þis wy[lde] swyn til þe sunne schafted.
 Þis day wyth þis ilk dede þay dryuen on þis wyse,
 Whyle oure luflych lede lys in his bedde,
 Gawayn grayþely at home, in gerez ful ryche
 of hewe;
 Þe lady no3t for3ate,
 Com to *hym* to salue,
 Ful erly ho watz *hym* ate,
 His mode forto remwe.

XIV.

Ho *commes* to þe cortyn, & at þe kny3t totes,
Sir Wawen her welcumed worþy on fyrst,
 & ho *hym* 3eldez a3ayn, ful 3erne of hir wordez,
 Settez hir soff[t]ly by his syde, & swyþely ho la3ez,
 & wyth a luflych loke ho layde¹ *hym* þyse wordez:
 “*Sir*, 3if 3e be Wawen, wonder me þynkkez,
 Wy3e þat is so wel wrast alway to god,
 & connez not of compaynye þe costez vndertake,
 & if mon kennes yow hom to knowe, 3e kest hom of *your* mynde;
 Þou hatz for3eten 3ederly þat 3isterday I ta3tte
 Bi alder-truest token of talk þat I cowþe.”
 “What is þat?” *quod* þe wyghe, “Iwysse I wot neuer,

If hit be sothe þat 3e breue, þe blame is myn awen.”
 “3et I kende yow of kyssyng,” *quod* þe clere þenne,
 “Quereso countenaunce is coupe, quikly to clayme,
 Pat bicumes vche a kny3t, þat cortaysy vses.”
 “Do way,” *quod* þat derf mon, “my dere, þat speche,
 For þat durst I not do, lest I denayed were,
 If I were werned, I were wrang Iwysse, 3if I profered.”
 “Ma fay,” *quod* þe mere wyf, “3e may not be werned,
 3e ar stif innoghe to constrayne wyth strenkþe, 3if yow lykez,
 3if any were so vilanous þat yow denaye wolde.”
 “3e, be God,” *quod* Gawayn, “good is your speche,
 Bot þrete is vnþryuande in þede þer I lende,
 & vche gift þat is geuen not *with* goud wylle;
 I am at your comaundement, to kysse quen yow lykez,
 3e may lach quen yow lyst, & leue quen yow þynkkez,
 in space.”
 Þe lady loutez adoun,
 & comlyly kysses his face,
 Much speche þay þer expoun,
 Of druryes greme & *grace*.

XV.

“I woled wyt at yow, wy3e,” þat worþy þer sayde,
 “& yow wrathed not þerwyth, what were þe skylle,
 Pat so 3ong & so 3epe, as 3e [ar] at þis tyme,
 So cortaysy, so kny3tyly, as 3e ar knowen oute,
 & of alle cheualry to chose, þe chef þyng alosed,
 Is þe lel layk of luf, þe lettrure of armes;
 F[or] to telle of þis tenelyng of þis trwe kny3tez,
 Hit is þe tytelet, token, & tyxt of her werkkez,
 How le[des] for her lele luf hor lyuez han auntered,
 Endured for her drury dulful stoundez,
 & *after* wenged *with* her walour & voyded her care,
 and so renowned a knight,
 & bro3t blysse into boure, *with* bountees hor awen.
 & 3e ar kny3t comlokest kyd of your elde,
 Your worde & your worchip walkez ayquere,
 & I haf seten by yourself here sere twyes,
 3et herde I neuer of your hed helde no wordez
 Pat euer longed to luf, lasse ne more;
 & 3e, þat ar so cortays & coynt of your hetes,
 Oghe to a 3onke þynk 3ern to schewe,
 & teche sum tokenez of trweluf craftes.

Why ar 3e lewed, þat alle þe los weldez,
 Oþer elles 3e demen me to dille, *your* dalyaunce to herken?
 for schame!
 I com hider sengel, & sitte,
 To lerne at yow *sum* game,
 Dos, techez me of *your* wytte,
 Whil my lorde is fro hame.”

XVI.

“In goud fayþe,” *quod* Gawayn, “God yow for3elde,
 Gret is þe gode gle, & gomen to me huge,
 Pat so worþy as 3e wolde wynne hidere,
 & pyne yow *with* so pouer a mon, as play wyth *your* kny3t,
 With anys kynnez countenaunce, hit keuerez me ese;
 Bot to take þe toruayle to my-self, to trwluf expoun,
 & towche þe temez of tyxt, & talez of armez,
 To yow þat, I wot wel, weldez more sly3t
 Of þat art, bi þe half, or a hundreth of seche
 As I am, oþer euer schal, in erde þer I leue,
 Hit were a fole fele-folde, my fre, by my trawþe.
 I wolde yowre wylnyng worche at my my3t,
 As I am hy3ly bihalden, & euermore wylle
 Be seruaunt to *yourseluen*, so saue me dry3tyn!”
 Þus hym frayned þat fre, & fondet hym ofte,
 For to haf wonnen hym to wo3e, what-so scho þo3t elles,
 Bot he de fended hym so fayr, þat no faut semed,
 Ne non euel on nawþer halue, nawþer þay wysten,
 bot blysse;
 Þay laged & layked longe,
 At þe last scho con hym kysse,
 Hir leue fayre con scho fonge,
 & went hir waye Iwysse.

XVII.

Then ruþes hym þe renk, & ryses to þe masse,
 & siþen hor diner watz dy3t & derely serued.
 Þe lede *with* þe ladyez layked alle day,
 Bot þe lorde ouer þe londez launced ful ofte,
 Swez his vncely swyn, þat swyngez bi þe bonkkez,
 & bote þe best of his brachez þe bakkez in sunder;
 Þer he bode in his bay, tel bawemen hit breken,
 & made hym, mawgref his bed, forto mwe vtter;

So felle flonez per flete, when þe folk gedered;
 Bot 3et þe styffest to start bi stoundez he made,
 Til at þe last he watz so mat, he my3t no more renne,
 Bot in þe hast þat he my3t, he to a hole wynnez,
 Of a rasse, bi a rokk, þer rennez þe boerne.
 He gete þe bonk at his bak, bigynez to scrape,
 Þe froþe femed at his mouth vnfayre bi þe wykez,
 Whettez his whyte tuschez; *with hym þen* irked
 Alle þe burnez so bolde, þat hym by stoden,
 To nye hym on-ferum, bot ne3e hym non durst
 for woþe;
 He hade hurt so mony byforne,
 Þat al þu3t þenne ful loþe,
 Be more wyth his tuschez torne,
 Þat breme watz [&] braynwod bothe.

XVIII.

Til þe kny3t com hymself, kachande his blonk,
 Sy3 hym byde at þe bay, his burnez bysyde,
 He ly3tes luflych adoun, leuez his corsour,
 Braydez out a bry3t bront, & bigly forth strydez,
 Foundez fast þur3 þe forth, þer þe felle bydez,
 Þe wylde watz war of þe wy3e *with weppen in honde*,
 Hef hy3ly þe here, so hetterly he fnast,
 Þat fele ferde for þe freke3, lest felle hym þe worre;
 Þe swyn settez hym out on þe segge euen,
 Þat þe burne & þe bor were boþe vpon hepez,
 In þe wy3test of þe water, þe worre hade þat oþer;
 For þe mon merkkez hym wel, as þay mette fyrst,
 Set sadly þe scharp in þe slot euen,
 Hit hym vp to þe hult, þat þe hert schyndered,
 & he 3arrande hym 3elde, & 3edoun þe water,
 ful tyt;
 A hundreth houndez hym hent,
 Þat bremely con hym bite,
 Burnez him bro3t to bent,
 & doggez to dethe endite.

XIX.

There watz blawyng of prys in mony breme home,
 He3e halowing on hi3e, *with hapelez þat my3t*;
 Brachetes bayed þat best, as bidden þe maysterez,

Of þat chargeaunt chace þat were chef huntres.
 Penne a wyȝe þat watz wys vpon wodcraftez,
 To vnlace þis bor lufly bigynnez.
 Fyrst he hewes of his hed, & on hiȝe settez,
 & syþen rendez him al roghe bi þe rygge after,
 Braydez out þe boweles, brennez hom on glede,
 With bred blent þerwith his braches rewardez;
 Syþen he britnez out þe brawen in bryȝt brode [s]cheldez,
 & hatz out þe hastlettez, as higtly bisemez;
 & ȝet hem halchez al hole þe haluez togeder,
 & syþen on a stif stange stoutly hem henges.
 Now with þis ilk swyn þay swengen to home;
 Þe bores hed watz borne bifore þe burnes seluen,
 Pat him forferde in þe forþe, þurȝ forse of his honde,
 so stronge;
 Til he seȝ *sir* Gawayne,
 In halle hym þoȝt ful longe,
 He calde, & he com gayn,
 His feez þer for to fonge.

XX.

Þe lorde ful lowde *with* lote, & laȝed myry,
 When he seȝe *sir* G: *with* solace he spekez;
 Þe goude ladyez were geten, & gedered þe meyny,
 He schewez hem þe scheldez, & schapes hem þe tale,
 Of þe largesse, & þe lenþe, þe liþernez else,
 Of þe were of þe wylde swyn, in wod þer he fled.
 Pat oþer knyȝt ful comly comended his dedez,
 & praysed hit as gret prys, þat he proued hade;
 For suche a brawne of a best, þe bolde burne sayde,
 Ne such sydes of a swyn, segh he neuer are.
 Þenne hondeled þay þe hoge hed, þe hende mon hit praysed,
 & let lodly þerat þe lorde forte here:
 “Now Gawayn,” *quod* þe god mon, “þis gomen is *your* awen,
 Bi fyn forwarde & faste, faythely ȝe knowe.”
 “Hit is sothe,” *quod* þe segge, “& as siker trwe;
 Alle my get I schal yow gif agayn, bi my trawþe.”
 He [hent] þe habel aboute þe halse, & hendely hym kysses,
 & eftersones of þe same he serued hym þere.
 “Now ar we euen,” *quod* þe habel, “in þis euentide,
 Of alle þe couenauntes þat we knyȝt, syþen I com hider,
 bi lawe;”
 Þe lorde sayde, “bi saynt Gile,

3e ar þe best þat I knowe,
 3e ben ryche in a whyle,
 Such chaffer & 3e drowe.”

XXI.

Penne þay teldet tablez [on] trestes alofte,
 Kesten cloþe3 vpon, clere ly3t þenne
 Wakned bi wo3ez, waxen torches
 Seggez sette, & serued in sale al aboute;
 Much glam & gle glent vp þer-inne,
 Aboute þe fyre vpon flet, & on fele wyse,
 At þe soper & after, mony apþel songez,
 As coundutes of krystmasse, & carolez newe,
 With alle þe manerly merþe þat mon may of telle.
 & euer oure luflych kny3t þe lady bi-syde;
 Such semblaunt to þat segge semly ho made,
 Wyth stille stollen countenaunce, þat stalworth to plese,
 Pat al forwondered watz þe wy3e, & wroth with hymselfen,
 Bot he nolde not for his nurture nurne hir a3ayne3,
 Bot dalt with hir al in daynte, how-se-euer þe dede turned
 to wrast;
 Quen þay hade played in halle,
 As longe as hor wylle hom last,
 To chambre he con hym calle,
 & to þe chemne þay past.

XXII.

Ande þer þay dronken, & dalten, & demed eft nwe,
 To norne on þe same note, on nwe3erez euen;
 Bot þe kny3t craued leue, to kayre on þe morn,
 For hit watz ne3 at þe terme, þat he to schulde.
 Þe lorde hym letted of þat, to lenge hym resteyed,
 & sayde, “as I am trwe segge, I siker my trawþe,
 Þou schal cheue to þe grene chapel, þy charres to make,
 Leude, on nw 3erez ly3t, longe bifore pryme:
 Forþy þow lye in þy loft, & lach þyn ese,
 & I schal hunt in þis holt, & halde þe towchez,
 Chaunge wyth þe cheuisaunce, bi þat I charre hider;
 For I haf fraysted þe twys, & faythful I fynde þe,
 Now þrid tyme þrowe best þenk on þe morne,
 Make we mery quyl we may, & mynne vpon Ioye,
 For þe lur may mon lach, when-so mon lykez.”

Þis watz grayþely graunted, & Gawayn is lenged,
 Bliþe broȝt watz hym drynk, & þay to bedde zeden,
 with liȝt;
 Sir Gawayn lis & slepes,
 Ful stille & softe al niȝt;
 Þe lorde þat his crafteȝ kepes,
 Ful erly he watz diȝt.

XXIII.

After messe a morsel he & his men token,
 Miry watz þe mornyng, his mounture he askes;
 Alle þe hapeles þat on horse schulde helden hym after,
 Were boun busked on hor blonkkeȝ, bifore þe halle ȝateȝ;
 Ferly fayre watz þe folde, for þe forst clenged,
 In rede rudede vpon rak rises þe sunne,
 & ful clere costez þe clowdes of þe welkyn.
 Hunteres vnhardeled bi a holt syde,
 Rocheres rounȝen bi rys, for rurde of her hornes;
 Summe fel in þe fute, þer þe fox bade,
 Traylez ofte a trayteres, bi traunt of her wyles;
 A kenet kryes þerof, þe hunt on hym calles,
 His felages fallen hym to, þat fnasted ful þike,
 Runnen forth in a rabel, in his ryȝt fare;
 & he fyskez hem byfore; þay founden hym sone,
 & quen þay seghe hym with syȝt, þay sued hym fast,
 Wreȝande h[ym] ful [w]eterly with a wroth noyse;
 & he trantes & tornayeez þurȝ mony tene greue;
 Hamlounez, & herkenez, bi heȝgez ful ofte;
 At þe last bi a littel dich he lepez ouer a spenné,
 Stelez out ful stilly bi a strothe rande,
 and by a rugged path seeks to get clear from the hounds.
 Went haf wylt of þe wode, with wylez fro þe houndes,
 Þenne watz he went, er he wyst, toȝ a wale tryster,
 Þer þre þro at a þrich þrat hym at ones, al graye;
 He blenched aȝayn bilyue,
 & stifly start onstray,
 With alle þe wo on lyue,
 To þe wod he went away.

XXIV.

Thenne watz hit lif vpon list to lyþen þe houndez,
 When alle þe mute hade hym met, menged toȝeder,

Suche a sorȝe at þat syȝt þay sette on his hede,
 As alle þe clamberande clyffes hade clatered on hepes;
 Here he watz halawed, when haþelez hym metten,
 Loude he watz ȝayned, *with ȝarande speche*;
 Þer he watz þreted, & ofte þef called,
 & ay þe titleres at his tayl, þat tary he ne myȝt;
 Ofte he watz runnen at, when he out rayked,
 & ofte reled *in aȝayn*, so reniarde watz wylé.
 & ȝe he lad hem bi lag, mon, þe lorde & his meyny;
 On þis maner bi þe mountes, quyle myd-ouer-vnder,
 Whyle þe hende knyȝt at home holsumly slepes,
 Withinne þe comly cortynes, on þe colde morne.
 Bot þe lady for luf let not to slepe,
 Ne þe purpose to payre, þat pyȝt *in hir hert*,
 Bot ros hir vp radly, rayked hir þeder,
 In a mery mantyle, mete to þe erþe,
 Þat watz furred ful fyne *with fellez*, wel pured,
 No hweȝ goud on hir hede, bot þe haȝer stones
 Trased aboute hir tressour, be twenty *in clusteres*;
 Hir þryuen face & hir þrote þrownen al naked,
 Hir brest bare bifore, & bihinde eke.
 Ho comez *withinne þe chambre dore*, & closes hit hir *after*,
 Waynez vp a wyndow, & on þe wyȝe callez,
 & radly þus rehayted hym, *with hir riche wordeȝ*,
 wit chere;
 “A! mon, how may þou slepe,
 Þis morning is so clere?”
 He watz *in drowping depe*,
 Bot þenne he con hir here.

XXV.

In dreȝ droupyng of dreme draueled þat noble,
 As mon þat watz in mornyng of mony þro þoȝtes,
 How þat destiné schulde þat day [dyȝt] his wyrde,
 At þe grene chapel, when he þe gome metes,
 & bihoues his buffet abide, withoute debate more;
 Bot quen þat comly he keuered his wyttes,
 Swenges out of þe sweuenes, & swarez *with hast*.
 Þe lady luflych com laȝande swete,
 Felle ouer his fayre face, & fetly him kyssed;
 He welcumez hir worþily, with a wale chere;
 He seȝ hir so glorious, & gayly atyred,
 So fautles of hir fetures, & of so fyne hewes,

Wiȝt wallande Ioye warmed his hert;
 With smoþe smylyng & smolt þay smeten into merþe,
 Þat al watz blis & bonchef, þat breke hem bitwene,
 & wynne,
 Þay lanced wordes gode,
 Much wele þen watz þerinne,
 Gret perile bitwene hem stod,
 Nif mare of hir knyȝt mynne.

XXVI.

For þat prynce of pris depressed hym so þikke.
 Nurned hym so neȝe þe þred, þat nede hym bihoued,
 Oþer lach þer hir luf, oþer lodly refuse;
 He cared for his cortaysye, lest crapaȝn he were,
 & more for his meschef, ȝif he schulde make synne,
 & be traytor to þat tolke, þat þat telde aȝt.
 “God schylde,” *quod* þe schalk, “þat schal not befalle!”
 With luf-laȝyng a lyt, he layd hym bysyde
 Alle þe spechez of specialté þat sprange of her mouthe.
Quod þat burde to þe burne, “blame ȝe disserue,
 ȝif ȝe luf not þat lyf þat ȝe lye nexte,
 Bifore alle þe wyȝez in þe worlde, wounded in hert,
 Bot if ȝe haf a lemman, a leuer, þat yow lykez better,
 & folden fayth to þat fre, festned so harde,
 Þat yow lausen ne lyst--& þat I leue nouþe;
 And þat ȝe telle me þat, now trwly I pray yow,
 For alle þe lufez vpon lyue, layne not þe soþe,
 for gile.”
 Þe knyȝt sayde, “be sayn Ion,”
 & smeþely con he smyle,
 “In fayth I welde riȝt non,
 Ne non wil welde þe quile.”

XXVII.

“Þat is a worde,” *quod* þat wyȝt, “þat worst is of alle,
 Bot I am swared for soþe, þat sore me þinkkez;
 Kysse me now coraly, & I schal cach heþen,
 I may bot mourne vpon molde, as may þat much louyes.”
 Sykande ho sweȝe doun, & semly hym kyssed,
 & siþen ho seueres hym fro, & says as ho stondes,
 “Now, dere, at þis departyng, do me þis ese,
 Gif me sumquat of þy gifte, þi gloue if hit were,

Pat I may mynne on þe mon, my mournyng to lassen.”
 “Now Iwysse,” *quod* þat wy3e, “I wolde I hade here
 Þe leuest þing for þy luf, þat I in londe welde,
 For 3e haf deserued, forsoþe, sellyly ofte
 More rewarde bi resoun, þen I reche my3t,
 Bot to dele yow for drurye, þat dawed bot naked;
 Hit is not *your honour* to haf at þis tyme
 A gloue for a garysoun, of Gawaynez giftez,
 & I am here [on] an erande *in* erdez vncoupe,
 & haue no men wyth no malez, *with* menskful þingez;
 Þat mislykez me, ladé, for luf at þis tyme,
 Iche tolke mon do as he is tan, tas to non ille,
 ne pine.”
 “Nay, hende of hy3e honours,”
Quod þat lufsum vnder lyne,
 “Þa3 I hade o3t of *yourez*,
 3et schulde 3e haue of myne.”

XXVIII.

Ho ragt hym a riche rynk of red golde werkez,
 Wyth a starande ston, stondande alofte,
 Pat bere blusschande bemez as þe bry3t sunne;
 Wyt 3e wel, hit watz worth wele ful hoge.
 Bot þe renk hit renayed, & redyly he sayde,
 “I wil no giftez for gode, my gay, at þis tyme;
 I haf none yow to norne, ne no3t wyl I take.”
 Ho bede hit hym ful bysily, & he hir bode wernes,
 & swere swyftel[y] his sothe, þat he hit sese nolde;
 & ho sore þat he forsoke, & sayde þerafter,
 “If 3e renay my rynk, to ryche for hit semez,
 3e wolde not so hy3ly halden be to me,
 I schal gif yow my girdel, þat gaynes yow lasse.”
 Ho la3t a lace ly3tly, þat leke vmbe hir sydez,
 Knit vpon hir kyrtel, vnder þe clere mantyle,
 Gered hit watz *with* grene sylke, & *with* golde schaped,
 No3t bot arounde brayden, beten *with* fyn grez;
 & þat ho bede to þe burne, & blyþely biso3t
 Þa3 hit vn-worþi were, þat he hit take wolde.
 & he nay þat he nolde neghe *in* no wyse,
 Nauþer golde ne garysoun, er God hym *grace* sende,
 To acheue to þe chaunce þat he hade chosen þere.
 “& þerfore, I pray yow, displese yow no3t,
 & lettez be *your* bisnesse, for I bayþe hit yow neuer

to graunte;
 I am derely to yow biholde,
 Bicause of *your* sembelaunt,
 & euer in hot & colde
 To be *your* trwe seruaunt.

XXIX.

“Now forsake 3e þis silke.” sayde þe burde þenne,
 “For hit is symple in hit-self. & so hit wel semez?
 Lo! so hit is littel, & lasse hit is worþy;
 Bot whoso knew þe costes þat knit ar þerinne,
 He wolde hit prayse at more prys, paraenture;
 For quat gome so is gorde with þis grene lace,
 While he hit hade hemely halched aboute,
 Þer is no hapel vnder heuen to-hewe hym þat myȝt;
 For he myȝt not he slayn, for slyȝt vpon erþe.”
 Þen kest þe knyȝt, & hit come to his hert,
 Hit were a Iuel for þe Iopardé, þat hym iugged were,
 When he acheued to þe chapel, his chek forto fech;
 Myȝt he haf slypped to þe vnslayn, þe sleȝt were noble.
 Þenne ho þulged with hir þrepe, & þoled hir to speke,
 & ho bere on hym þe belt, & bede hit hym swyþe,
 & he granted, & [ho] hym gafe with a goud wylle,
 & bisoȝt hym, for hir sake, disceuer hit neuer,
 Bot to lelly layne for hir lorde; þe leude hym acordez.
 Þat neuer wyȝe schulde hit wyt, Iwysse, bot þay twayne,
 for noȝte;
 He þonkked hir oft ful swyþe,
 Ful þro with hert & þoȝt.
 Bi þat on þrynne syþe,
 Ho hatz kyst þe knyȝt so toȝt.

XXX.

Thenne lachchez ho hir leue, & leuez hym þere,
 For more myrþe of þat mon moȝt ho not gete;
 When ho watz gon, *sir* Gawayn gerez hym sone,
 Rises, & riches hym in araye noble,
 Lays vp þe luf-lace, þe lady hym ragt,
 Hid hit ful holdely, þer he hit eft fonde;
 Syþen cheuely to þe chapel choses he þe waye,
 Preuely aproched to a prest, & prayed hym þere
 Þat he wolde lyfte his lyf, & lern hym better,

How his sawle schulde be saued, when he schuld seye heþen.
 Pere he schrof hym schyrly, & schewed his mysdedez,
 Of þe more & þe mynne, & merci besechez,
 & of absolucioun he on þe segge calles;
 & he asoyled hym surely, & sette hym so clene,
 As domezday schulde haf ben diȝt on þe morn.
 & syþen he mace hym as mery among þe fre ladyes,
 With comlych caroles, & alle kynnes ioie,
 As neuer he did bot þat daye, to þe derk nyȝt,
 with blys;
 Vche mon hade daynte þare,
 Of hym, & sayde Iwysse,
 Þus myry he watz neuer are,
 Syn he com hider, er þis.

XXXI.

Now hym lenge in þat lee, þer luf hym bityde;
 ȝet is þe lorde on þe launde, ledande his gomnes,
 He hatz forfaren þis fox, þat he folȝed longe;
 As he sprent ouer a spenné, to spye þe schrewe,
 Þer as he herd þe howndes, þat hasted hym swyþe,
 Renaud com richchande þurȝ a roȝe greue,
 & alle þe rabel in a res, ryȝt at his helez.
 Þe wyȝe watz war of þe wylde, & warly abides,
 & braydeȝ out þe bryȝt bronde, & at þe best casteȝ;
 & he schunt for þe scharp, & schulde haf arered,
 A rach rapes hym to, ryȝt er he myȝt,
 & ryȝt bifore þe hors fete þay fel on hym alle,
 & worried me þis wyly wyth a wroth noyse.
 Þe lorde lyȝtez bilyue, & cacheȝ by sone,
 Rased hym ful radly out of þe rach mouȝes,
 Haldez heȝe ouer his hede, haloweȝ faste,
 & þer bayen hym mony bray houndez;
 Huntes hyȝed hem þeder, with hornez ful mony,
 Ay rechatande aryȝt til þay þe renk seȝen;
 Bi þat watz comen his compeyny noble,
 Alle þat euer ber bugle blowed at ones,
 & alle þise oþer halowed, þat hade no hornes,
 Hit watz þe myriest mute þat euer men herde,
 Þe rich rurd þat þer watz raysed for renaude saule,
 with lote;
 Hor houndez þay þer rewarde,
 Her hedeȝ þay fawne & frote,

& syþen þay tan reynarde,
& tyrnen of his cote.

XXXII.

& þenne þay helden to home, for hit watz nieȝ nyȝt,
Strakande ful stoutly in hor store hornez;
þe lorde is lyȝt at þe laste at hys lef home,
Fyndeȝ fire vpon flet, þe freke þer by-side,
Sir Gawayn þe gode, þat glad watz with alle,
Among þe ladies for luf he ladde much ioȝe,
He were a bleaunt of blwe, þat bradde to þe erþe,
His surkot semed hym wel, þat softe watz forred,
& his hode of þat ilke hinged on his schulder,
Blande al of blaunner were boþe al aboute.
He metez me þis god mon inmyddeȝ þe flore,
& al with gomen he hym gret, & goudly he sayde,
“I schal fyllen vpon fyrst oure forwardez nouþe,
þat we spedly han spoken, þer spared watz no drynk;”
þen acoles he [þe] knyȝt, & kysses hym þryes,
As sauerly & sadly as he hem sette couþe.
“Bi Kryst,” quod þat oþer knyȝt, “ȝe cach much sele,
In cheuisaunce of þis chaffer, ȝif ȝe hade goud chepez.”

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“ȝe of þe chepe no charg,” quod chefly þat oþer,
“As is pertly payed þe chepez þat I aȝte.”
“Mary,” quod þat oþer mon, “myn is bihynde,
For I haf hunted al þis day, & noȝt haf I geten,
Bot þis foule fox felle, þe fende haf þe godeȝ,
& þat is ful pore, for to pay for suche prys þinges,
As ȝe haf þryȝt me here, þro suche þre cosses,
so gode.”
“Inoȝ,” quod sir Gawayn,
“I þonk yow, bi þe rode;”
& how þe fox watz slayn,
He tolde hym, as þay stode.

XXXIII.

With merþe & mynstralsye, wyth metez at hor wylle,
þay maden as mery as any men moȝten,
With laȝyng of ladies, with loteȝ of bordes;
Gawayn & þe gode mon so glad were þay boþe,
Bot if þe douthe had doted, oþer dronken ben oþer,

Boþe þe mon & þe meyny maden mony iapez,
 Til þe sesoun watz seþen, þat þay seuer moste;
 Burnez to hor bedde behoued at þe laste.
 Penne loþly his leue at þe lorde fyrst
 Fochchez þis fre mon, & fayre he hym þonkkez;
 “Of such a sellyly soiorne, as I haf hade here,
 Your honour, at þis hyþe fest, þe hyþe kyng yow ȝelde!
 I ȝef yow me for on of youre, if yowreself lykez,
 For I mot nedes, as ȝe wot, meue to morne;
 & ȝe me take sum tolke, to teche, as ȝe hyȝt,
 Þe gate to þe grene chapel, as god wyl me suffer
 To dele, on nw ȝerez day, þe dome of my wyrdes.”
 “In god fayþe,” quod þe god mon, “wyth a goud wylle;
 Al þat euer I yow hyȝt, halde schal I rede.”
 Þer asyngnes he a seruaunt, to sett hym in þe waye,
 & coundue hym by þe downez, þat he no drechch had,
 For to f[e]rk þurȝ þe fryth, & fare at þe gaynest,
 bi greue.
 Þe lorde Gawayn con þonk,
 Such worchip he wolde hym weue;
 Þen at þo ladyez wlonk.
 Þe knyȝt hatz tan his leue.

XXXIV.

With care & wyth kyssyng he carppez hem tille,
 & fele þryuande þonkkez he þrat hom to haue,
 & þay ȝelden hym aȝay[n] ȝeþly þat ilk;
 Þay bikende hym to Kryst, with ful colde sykynges.
 Syþen fro þe meyny he menskly departes;
 Vche mon þat he mette, he made hem a þonke,
 For his seruyse, & his solace, & his sere pyne,
 Þat þay wyth busynes had ben, aboute hym to serue;
 & vche segge as sore, to seuer with hym þere,
 As þay hade wonde worþyly with þat wlonk euer.
 Þen with ledes & lyȝt he watz ladde to his chambre,
 & blybely broȝt to his bedde, to be at his rest;
 ȝif he ne slepe soundly, say ne dar I,
 For he hade muche on þe morn to mynne, ȝif he wolde, in þoȝt;
 Let hym lyȝe þere stille,
 He hatz nere þat he soȝt,
 & ȝe wyl a whyle be styllle,
 I schal telle yow how þay wroȝt.

FYTTTE THE FOURTH.**I.**

Now negez þe nw 3ere, & þe ny3t passez,
 Þe day dryuez to þe derk, as dry3tyn biddez;
 Bot wylde wederez of þe worlde wakned þeroute,
 Clowdes kesten kenly þe colde to þe erþe,
 Wyth ny3e innoghe of þe norþe, þe naked to tene;
 Þe snawe snitered ful snart, þat snapped þe wylde;
 Þe werbelande wynde wapped fro þe hy3e,
 & drof vche dale ful of dryftes ful grete.
 Þe leude lystened ful wel, þat le3 in his bedde,
 Þa3 he lowkez his liddez, ful lyttel he slepes;
 Bi vch kok þat crue, he knwe wel þe steuen.
 Deliuerly he dressed vp, er þe day sprenged,
 For þere watz ly3t of a lau[m]pe, þat lemed in his chambre;
 He called to his chamberlayn, þat cofly hym swared,
 & bede hym bryng hym his bruny, & his blonk sadel;
 Þat oþer ferkez hym vp, & fechez hym his wedez,
 & grayþez me *sir* Gawayn vpon a grett wyse.
 Fyrst he clad hym in his cloþez, þe colde for to were;
 & syþen his oþer harnays, þat holdely watz keped,
 Boþe his paunce, & his platez, piked ful clene,
 Þe rynggez rokked of þe roust, of his riche bruny;
 & al watz fresch as vpon fyrst, & he watz fayn þenne
 to þonk;
 He hade vpon vche pece,
 Wypped ful wel & wlonk;
 Þe gayest in to Grece,
 Þe burne bede bryng his blonk.

II.

Whyle þe wlonkest wedes he warp on hym-seluen;
 His cote, wyth be conysaunce of þe clere werkez,
 Ennurned vpon veluet *vertuuus* stonez,
 Aboute beten, & bounden, enbrauded semez,
 & fayre furred *with-inne* wyth fayre pelures.
 3et laft he not þe lace, þe ladiez gifte,
 Þat for-gat not Gawayn, for gode of hym-seluen;
 Bi he hade belted þe bronde vpon his bal3e haunchez,
 Þenn dressed he his drurye double hym aboute;
 Swyþe swepled vmbe his swange swetely, þat kny3t,
 Þe gordel of þe grene silke, þat gay wel bisemed,

Vpon þat ryol red cloþe, þat ryche watz to schewe.
 Bot wered not þis ilk wyȝe for wele þis gordel,
 For pryde of þe pendauntez, þaȝ polyst þay were,
 & þaȝ þe glyterande golde glent vpon endez,
 Bot forto sauēn hymself, when suffer hym byhoued,
 To byde bale *with-oute* dabate, of bronde hym to were,
 oþer knyffe;
 Bi þat þe bolde mon boun,
 Wynnez þeroute bilyue,
 Alle þe meyny of renoun,
 He þonkkez ofte ful ryue.

III.

Thenne watz Gryngolet grayþe, þat gret watz & huge,
 & hade ben soiourned sauerly, & in a siker wyse,
 Hym lyst prik for poynt, þat proude hors þenne;
 Þe wyȝe wynnez hym to, & wytez on his lyre,
 & sayde soberly hymself, & by his soth swerez,
 “Here is a meyny in þis mote, þat on menske þenkkez,
 Þe mon hem maynteines, ioy mot þay haue;
 Þe leue lady, on lyue luf hir bityde;
 ȝif þay for charyté cherysen a gest,
 & halden honour in her honde, þe hāpel hem ȝelde,
 Þat haldez þe heuen vpon hyȝe, & also yow alle!
 & ȝif I myȝt lyf vpon londe lede any quyle,
 I schuld rech yow *sum* rewarde redyly, if I myȝt.”
 Þenn steppez he into stirop, & strydez alofte;
 His schalk schewed hym his schelde, on schulder he hit laȝt,
 Gordez to Gryngolet, *with* his gilt helez,
 & he startez on þe ston, stod he no lenger,
 to praunce;
 His hāpel on hors watz þenne,
 Þat bere his spere & launce.
 “Þis kastel to Kryst I kenne,
 He gef hit ay god chaunce!”

IV.

The brygge watz brayde doun, & þe brode ȝatez
 Vnbarred, & born open, vpon boþe halue;
 Þe burne blessed hym bilyue, & þe bredez passed;
 Praysez þe porter, bifore þe prynce kneled,
 Gef hym God & goud day, þat Gawayn he saue;

& went on his way, *with* his wyȝe one,
 Þat schulde teche hym to *tourne* to þat tene place,
 Þer þe ruful race he schulde re-sayue.
 Þay boȝen bi bonkkez, þer boȝeȝ ar bare,
 They climb by cliffs,
 Þay clomben bi clyffez, þer clengez þe colde;
 Þe heuen watz vphalt, bot vgly þer-vnder,
 Mist mugged on þe mor, malt on þe mountez,
 Vch hille hade a hatte, a myst-hakel huge;
 Brokez byled, & breke, bi bonkkez aboute,
 Schyre schaterande on schorez, þer þay doun schowued.
 Welawylle watz þe way, þer þay bi wod schulden,
 Til hit watz sone sesoun, þat þe sunne ryses,
 þat tyde;
 Þay were on a hille ful hyȝe,
 Þe quyte snaw lay bisyde;
 Þe burne þat rod hym by
 Bede his mayster abide.

V.

“For I haf wonnen yow hider, wyȝe, at þis tyme,
 & now nar ȝe not fer fro þat note place,
 Þat ȝe han spied & spuryed so specially after;
 Bot I schal say yow for soþe, syþen I yow knowe,
 & ȝe ar a lede vpon lyue, þat I wel louy,
 Wolde ȝe worch bi my wytte, ȝe worþed þe better.
 Þe place þat ȝe prece to, ful perelous is halden;
 Þer wonez a wyȝe in þat waste, þe worst vpon erþe;
 For he is stiffe, & sturne, & to strike louies,
 & more he is þen any mon vpon myddelerde,
 & his body bigger þen þe best fowre.
 Þat ar in Arþurez hous, Hestor oþer oþer.
 He cheuez þat chaunce at þe chapel grene;
 Þer passes non bi þat place, so proude in his armes,
 Þat he ne dynges hym to deþe, *with* dynt of his honde;
 For he is a mon methles, & mercy non vses,
 For he hit chorle, oþer chaplayn, þat bi þe chapel rydes,
 Monk, oþer masseprest, oþer any mon elles,
 Hym þynk as queme hym to quelle, as quyk go hym seluen.
 Forþy I say þe as soþe as ȝe in sadel sitte,
 Com ȝe þere, ȝe be kyllled, [I] may þe knyȝt rede,
 Trawe ȝe me þat trwely, þaȝ ȝe had twenty lyues
 to spende;

He hatz wonyd here ful 3ore,
 On bent much baret bende,
 A3ayn his dyntez sore,
 3e may not yow defende.”

VI.

“Forþy, goude *sir* Gawayn, let þe gome one,
 & gotz away sum oþer gate; vpon Goddez halue;
 Cayrez bi sum oþer kyth, þer Kryst mot yow spede;
 & I schal hy3 me hom a3ayn, & hete yow fyrre,
 þat I schal swere bi God, & alle his gode hal3ez,
 As help me God & þe halydam, & oþez innoghe,
 þat I schal lelly yow layne, & lance neuer tale,
 þat euer 3e fondet to fle, for freke þat I wyst.”
 “Grant merci;” *quod* Gawayn, & gruchyng he sayde,
 “Wel worth þe wy3e, þat woldez my gode,
 & þat lelly me layne, I leue wel þou woldez!
 Bot helde þou hit neuer so holde, & I here passed,
 Founded for ferde for to fle, *in fourme* þat þou tellez,
 I were a kny3t kowarde, I my3t not be excused.
 Bot I wy1 to þe chape1, for chaunce þat may falle,
 & talk wyth þat ilk tulk þe tale þat me lyste,
 Worþe hit wele, oþer wo, as þe wyrde lykez hit hafe;
 Þa3e he be a sturn knape,
 To stigtel, & stad *with* staue,
 “Full well can God devise his servants for to save.”
 Ful wel con dry3tyn schape,
 His seruauantez forto saue.”

VII.

“Mary!” *quod* þat oþer mon, “now þou so much spellez,
 þat þou wylt þyn awen nye nyme to þyseluen,
 & þe lyst lese þy lyf, þe lette I ne kepe;
 Haf here þi helme on þy hede, þi spere *in* þi honde,
 & ryde me down þis ilk rake, bi 3on rokke syde,
 till thou come to the bottom of the valley;
 Til þou be bro3t to þe boþem of þe brem valay;
 Þenne loke a littel on þe launde, on þi lyfte honde,
 & þou schal se *in* þat slade þe self chapel,
 & þe borelych burne on bent, þat hit kepez.
 Now farez wel on Godez half, Gawayn þe noble,
 For alle þe golde vpon grounde I nolde go with þe,

Ne bere þe felaschip þurȝ þis fryth on fote fyrre.”
 Bi þat þe wyȝe in þe wod wendez his brydel,
 Hit þe hors *with* þe helez, as harde as he myȝt,
 Lepez hym ouer þe launde, & leuez þe knyȝt þere, al one.
 “Bi Goddez self,” *quod* Gawayn,
 “I wyl nauþer grete ne grone,
 To Goddez wylle I am ful bayn,
 & to hym I haf me tone.”

VIII.

Thenne gyrdez he to Gryngolet, & gederez þe rake,
 Schouwuez in bi a schore, at a schage syde,
 Rideȝ þurȝ þe roȝe bonk, ryȝt to þe dale;
 & þenne he wayted hym aboute, & wylde hit hym þoȝt,
 & seȝe no syngne of resette, bisydez nowhere,
 Bot hyȝe bonkkeȝ & brent, vpon boþe halue,
 & ruȝe knokled knarrez, *with* knorned stoneȝ;
 Þe skwez of þe scowtes skayued hym þoȝt.
 Þenne he houed, & wythhylde his hors at þat tyde,
 & ofte chaunged his cher, þe chapel to seche;
 He seȝ non suche in no syde, & selly hym þoȝt,
 Sone a lyttel on a launde, a lawe as hit we[re];
 A balȝ berȝ, bi a bonke, þe brymme by-syde,
 Bi a forȝ of a flode, þat ferked þare;
 Þe borne blubred þer-inne, as hit boyled hade.
 Þe knyȝt kacheȝ his caple, & com to þe lawe,
 Ligtez doun luflyly, & at a lynde tacheȝ
 Þe rayne, & his riche, with a roȝe braunche;
 Þen[n]e he boȝez to þe berȝe, aboute hit he walkez,
 D[e]batande *with* hymself, quat hit be myȝt.
 Hit hade a hole on þe ende, & on ayþer syde,
 & ouergrown *with* gresse in glodes ay where,
 & al watz holȝ *in-with*, nobot an olde caue,
 Or a creuisse of an olde cragge, he coupe hit noȝt deme *with* spelle,
 “We, lorde,” *quod* þe gentyle knyȝt,
 “Wheþer þis be þe grene chapelle;
 He myȝt aboute myd-nyȝt,
 [Þ]e dele his matynnes telle!”

IX.

“Now iwysse,” *quod* Wowayn, “wysty is here;
 Þis oritore is vgly, *with* erbez ouergrown;

Wel bisemez þe wyȝe wruxled in grene
 Dele here his deuocioun, on þe deuelez wyse;
 Now I fele hit is þe fende, in my fyue wyttez,
 Þat hatz stoken me þis steuen, to strye me here;
 Þis is a chapel of meschaunce, þat chekke hit bytyde,
 Hit is þe corsesdest kyrk, þat euer i com inne!"
 With heȝe helme on his hede, his launce in his honde,
 He romez vp to þe rokke of þo roȝ wonez;
 Þene herde he of þat hyȝe hil, in a harde roche,
 Biȝonde þe broke, in a bonk, a wonder breme noyse,
 Quat! hit clatered in þe clyff, as hit cleue schulde,
 As one vpon a gryndelston hade grounden a syþe;
 What! hit wharred, & whette, as water at a mulne,
 What! hit rusched, & ronge, rawþe to here.
 Þenne "bi Godde," quod Gawayn, "þat gere as I trowe,
 Is ryched at þe reuerence, me renk to mete,
 bi rote;
 Let God worche we loo,
 Hit helppez me not a mote,
 My lif þaȝ I for-goo,
 Drede dotz me no lote."

X.

Thenne þe knyȝt con calle ful hyȝe,
 "Who stigtlez in þis sted, me steuen to holde?
 For now is gode Gawayn goande ryȝt here,
 If any wyȝe oȝt wyl wynne hider fast,
 Oþer now, oþer neuer, his nedez to spede."
 "Abyde," quod on on þe bonke, abouen ouer his hede,
 "& þou schal haf al in hast, þat I þe hyȝt ones."
 ȝet he rusched on þat rurde, rapely a þrowe,
 & wyth quettyng a-wharf, er he wolde lyȝt;
 & syþen he keuerez bi a cragge, & comez of a hole,
 Whyrlande out of a wro, wyth a felle weppen,
 A denez ax nwe dyȝt, þe dynt with [t]o ȝelde
 With a borelych bytte, bende by þe halme,
 Fyled in a fylor, fowre fote large,
 Hit watz no lasse, bi þat lace þat lemed ful bryȝt.
 & þe gome in þe erene gered as fyrst,
 Boþe þe lyre & þe leggez, lokkez, & berde,
 Saue þat fayre on his fote he foundȝ on þe erþe,
 Sette þe stele to þe stone, & stalked bysyde.
 When he wan to þe watter, þer he wade nolde,

He hypped ouer on hys ax, & orpedly strydez,
 Bremly broþe on a bent, þat brode watz aboute,
 on snawe.

Sir Gawayn þe kny3t con mete.

He ne lutte hym no þyng lowe,
 þat oþer sayde, “now, *sir* swete,
 Of steuen mon may þe trowe.”

XI.

“Gawayn,” *quod* þat grene gome, “God þe mot loke!
 Iwysse þou art welcom, wy3e, to my place,
 & þou hatz tymed þi trauayl as *true* mon schulde;
 & þou knowez þe couenauntez kest *vus* by-twene,
 At þis tyme twelmonyth þou toke þat þe falled,
 & I schulde at þis nwe 3ere 3eþly þe quyte.
 & we ar in þis valay, *verayly* oure one,
 Here ar no renkes vs to rydde, rele as *vus* likez;
 Haf þy helme of þy hede, & haf here þy pay;
 Busk no more debate þen I þe bede þenne,
 “When þou wypped of my hede at a wap one.”
 “Nay, bi God,” *quod* Gawayn, “þat me gost lante,
 I schal gruch þe no grwe, for grem þat fallez;
 Botsty3tel þe vpon on strok, & I schal stonde style,
 & warp þe no wernyng, to worch as þe lykez, no whare.”
 He lened *with* þe nek, & lutte,
 & schewed þat schyre al bare,
 & lette as he no3t dutte,
 For drede he wolde not dare.

XII.

Then þe gome in þe grene grayþed hym swyþe,
 Gederez yp hys grymme tole, Gawayn to smyte;
With alle þe bur in his body he ber hit on lofte,
 Munt as magtyly, as marre hym he wolde;
 Hade hit dryuen adoun, as dre3 as he atled,
 Þer hade ben ded of his dynt, þat do3ty watz euer.
 Bot Gawayn on þat giserne glyfte hym bysyde,
 As hit com glydande adoun, on glode hym to schende,
 & schranke a lytel *with* þe schulderes, for þe scharp yrne.
 þat oþer schalk wyth a schunt þe schene wythhaldez,
 & þenne repreued he þe prynce *with* mony prowde wordez:
 “þou art not Gawayn,” *quod* þe gome, “þat is so goud halden,

Þat neuer arȝed for no here, by hylle ne be vale,
 & now þou fles for ferde, er þou fele harmez;
 Such cowardise of þat knyȝt cowþe I neuer here.
 Nawþer fyked I, ne flaȝe, freke, quen þou myntest,
 Ne kest no kaulacion, in kynges hous Arthor,
 My hede flaȝ to my fote, & ȝet flaȝ I neuer;
 & þou, er any harme hent, arȝez in hert,
 Wherefore þe better burne me burde be called þerfore.”
Quod Gawayn, “I schunt onez,
 & so wyl I no more,
 Bot þaȝ my hede falle on þe stonez,
 I con not hit restore.

XIII.

Bot busk, burne, bi þi fayth, & bryng me to þe poynt,
 Dele to me my destiné, & do hit out of honde,
 For I schal stonde þe a strok, & start no more,
 Til þyn ax haue me hitte, haf here my trawþe.”
 “Haf at þe þenne,” *quod* þat oþer, & heuez hit alofte,
 & waytez as wroþely, as he wode were;
 He myntez at *hym* maȝtyly, bot not þe mon ryuez,
 Withhelde heterly h[i]s honde, er hit hurt myȝt.
 Gawayn grayþely hit bydez, & glent *with* no membre,
 Bot stode styll as þe ston, oþer a stubbe auþer,
 Þat rapeled is in roche grounde, *with* rotez a hundreth.
 Þen muryly efte con he mele, þe mon in þe grene,
 “So now þou hatz þi hert holle, hitte me bihou[e]s;
 Halde þe now þe hyȝe hode, þat Arþur þe raȝt,
 & kepe þy kanel at þis kest, ȝif hit keuer may.”
 Gawaym ful gryndelly *with* greme þenne sayde,
 “Wy þresch on, þou þro mon, þou þretez to longe,
 I hope þat þi hert arȝe wyth þyn awen seluen.”
 “For soþe,” *quod* þat oþer freke, “so felly þou spekez,
 I wyl no lenger on lyte lette þin ernde, riȝt now.”
 Þenne tas he *hym* stryþe to stryke,
 & frounses boþe lyppe & browe,
 No meruayle þaȝ *hym* myslyke,
 Þat hoped of no rescowe.

XIV.

He lyftes lyȝtly his lome, & let hit doun fayre,
With þe barbe of þe bitte bi þe bare nek

Þa3 he homered heterly, hurt hym no more,
 Bot snyrt hym on þat on syde, þat seuered þe hyde;
 Þe scharp schrank to þe flesche þur3 þe schyre grece,
 Þat þe schene blod *ouer* his schulderes schot to þe erþe.
 & quen þe burne se3 þe blode blenk on þe snawe,
 He sprit forth spenne fote more þen a spere lenþe,
 Hent heterly his helme, & on his hed cast,
 Schot *with* his schulderes his fayre schelde vnder,
 Braydez out a bry3t sworde, & bremely he spekez--
 Neuer syn þat he watz burne borne of his moder,
 Watz he neuer in þis worlde, wy3e half so blyþe:—
 “Blynne, burne, of þy bur, bede me no mo;
 I haf a stroke in þis sted *withoute* stryf hent,
 & if þow rechez me any mo, I redyly schal quyte,
 & zelde 3ederly a3ayn, & þer to 3e tryst,
 & foo;
 Bot on stroke here me fallez,
 Þe couenaunt schop ry3t so,
 [Sikered] in Arþurez hallez,
 & þer-fore, hende, now hoo!”

XV.

The hapel heldet hym fro, & on his ax rested,
 Sette þe schaft vpon schore, & to be scharp lened,
 & loked to þe leude, þat on þe launde 3ede,
 How þat dozty dredles deruely þer stondez,
 Armed ful a3lez; *in* hert hit hym lykez.
 þenn he melez muryly, wyth a much steuen,
 & wyth a r[a]ykande rurde he to þe renk sayde,
 “Bolde burne, on þis bent be not so gryndel;
 No mon here vn-manerly þe mysboden habbez,
 Ne kyd, bot as couenaunde, at kynges kort schaped;
 I hy3t þe a strok, & þou hit hatz, halde þe wel payed,
 I relece þe of þe remnaunt, of ry3tes alle oþer;
 3if I deliuer had bene, a boffet, paraunter,
 I couþe wroþeloker haf waret, [&] to þe haf wro3t anger.
 Fyrst I mansed þe muryly, *with* a mynt one,
 & roue þe wyth no rof, sore *with* ry3t I þe profered,
 For þe forwarde that we fest *in* þe fyrst ny3t,
 & þou trystyly þe trawþe & trwly me haldez,
 Al þe gayne þow me gef, as god mon schulde;
 Þat oþer munt for þe morne, mon, I þe profered,
 Þou kyssedes my clere wyf, þe cossez me ra3tez,

For boþe two here I þe bede bot two bare myntes,
 boute scape;
 Trwe mon trwe restore,
 Þenne þar mon drede no wape;
 At þe þrid þou fayled þore,
 & þerfor þat tappe ta þe.

XVI.

For hit is my wede þat þou werez, þat ilke wouen girdel,
 Myn owen wyf hit þe weued, I wot wel forsoþe;
 Now know I wel þy cosses, & þy costes als,
 & þe wowyng of my wyf, I wroȝt hit myseluen;
 I sende hir to asay þe, & sothly me þynkkez,
 On þe fautlest freke, þat euer on fote ȝede;
 As perle bi þe quite pese is of prys more,
 So is Gawayn, in god fayth, bi oþer gay knyȝtez.
 Bot here you lakked a lyttel, *sir*, & lewte yow wanted,
 Bot þat watz for no wylde werke, ne wowyng nauþer,
 Bot for ȝe lufed *your* lyf, þe lasse I yow blame.”
 Þat oþer stif mon in study stod a gret whyle;
 So agreued for greme he gryed *withinne*,
 Alle þe blode of his brest blende in his face,
 Þat al he schrank for schome, þat þe schalk talked.
 Þe forme worde vpon folde, þat þe freke meled,—
 “Corsed worth cowarddyse & couetyse boþe!
 In yow is vylany & vyse, þat *vertue* disstryez.”
 Þenne he kaȝt to þe knot, & þe kest lawsez,
 Brayde broþely þe belt to þe burne seluen:
 “Lo! þer þe falssyng, foule mot hit falle!
 For care of þy knokke cowardyse me taȝt
 To acorde me *with* couetyse, my kynde to forsake,
 Þat is larges & lewte, þat longez to knyȝtez.
 Now am I fawty, & falce, & ferde haf ben euer;
 Of trecherye & vn-trawþe boþe bityde sorȝe & care!
 I biknowe yow, knyȝt, here styлле,
 Al fawty is my fare,
 Letez me ouer-take *your* wylle,
 & efle I schal be ware.”

XVII.

Thenne loȝe þat oþer leude, & luflyly sayde,
 “I halde hit hardily hole, þe harme þat I hade;

Pou art confessed so clene, beknownen of þy mysses,
 & hatz þe penaunce apert, of þe poynt of myn egge,
 I halde þe polysed of þat plyzt, & pured as clene,
 As þou hadez neuer forfeled, syþen þou watz fyrst borne.
 & I gif þe, *sir*, þe gurdel þat is golde hemmed;
 For hit is grene as my goune, *sir* Gawayn, 3e maye
 Þenk vpon þis ilke þrepe, þer þou forth þryngez
 Among prynces of prys, & þis a pure token
 Of þe chaunce of þe grene chapel, at cheualrous knyghtez;
 & 3e schal in þis nwe 3er a3ayn to my wonez,
 & we schyn reuel þe remnaunt of þis ryche fest, ful bene.”
 Þer laped hym fast þe lorde,
 & sayde, “*with* my wyf, I wene,
 We schal yow wel acorde,
 Þat watz *your* enmy kene.”

XVIII.

“Nay, for soþe,” *quod* þe segge, & sesed hys helme,
 & hatz hit of hendely, & þe hapel þonkkez,
 “I haf soiornd sadly, sele yow bytyde,
 & he 3elde hit yow 3are, þat 3arkkez al menskes!
 & comaunde me to þat cortays, *your* comlych fere,
 Boþe þat on & þat oþer, myn honoured ladyez.
 Þat þus hor knyght wyth hor kest han koyntly bigyled.
 Bot hit is no ferly, þa3 a fole madde,
 & þur3 wyles of wymmen be wonen to sor3e;
 For so watz Adam in erde *with* one bygyled,
 & Salamon *with* fele sere, & Samson eft sonez,
 Dalyda dalt hym hys wyrde, & Dauyth þerafter
 Watz blended *with* Barsabe, þat much bale þoled.
 Now þese were wrathed wyth her wyles, hit were a wynne huge,
 To luf hom wel, & leue hem not, a leude þat coupe,
 For þes wer forne þe freest þat fol3ed alle þe sele,
 Exellently of alle þyse oþer, vnder heuenryche, þat mused;
 & alle þay were biwyled,
 With wymmen þat þay vsed,
 Þa3 I be now bigyled,
 Me þink me burde be excused.”

XIX.

“Bot *your* gordel,” *quod* Gawayn: “God yow for3elde!
 Þat wyl I welde wyth good wylle, not for þe wynne golde,

Ne þe saynt, ne þe sylk, ne þe syde pendaundes,
 For wele, ne for worchyp, ne for þe wlonk werkkez,
 Bot in syngne of my surfet I schal se hit ofte;
 When I ride in renoun, remorde to myseluen
 Þe faut & þe fayntyse of þe flesche crabbed,
 How tender hit is to entyse teches of fylþe;
 & þus, quen pryde schal me pryk, for prowes of armes,
 Þe loke to þis luf lace schal leþe my hert.
 Bot on I wolde yow pray, displeses yow neuer;
 Syn 3e be lorde of þe 3onde[r] londe, þer I haf lent inne,
 Wyth yow wyth worschyp,—þe wy3e hit yow 3elde
 Þat vphaldez þe heuen, & on hy3 sittez,—
 How norne 3e yowre ry3t nome, & þenne no more?”
 “Þat schal I telle þe trwly,” *quod þat oþer þenne*,
 “Bernlak de Hautdesert I hat in þis londe,
 Þur3 my3t of Morgne la Faye, þat in my hous lenges,
 & koyntyse of clergie, bi craftes wel lerned,
 Þe maystres of Merlyn, mony ho taken;
 For ho hatz dalt drwry ful dere sum tyme,
 With þat conable klerk, þat knowes alle *your* kny3tez
 at hame;
 Morgne þe goddes,
 Þerfore hit is hir name;
 Weldez non so hy3e hawtesse,
 Þat ho ne con make ful tame.

XX.

Ho wayned me vpon þis wyse to *your* wyne halle,
 For to assay þe surquidre, 3if hit soth were,
 Þat rennes of þe grete renoun of þe Rounde Table;
 Ho wayned me þis wonder, *your* wyttez to reue,
 For to haf greued Gaynour, & gart hir to dy3e.
 With gopnyng of þat ilke gomen, þat gostlych speked,
 With his hede in his honde, bifore þe hy3e table.
 Þat is ho þat is at home, þe auncian lady;
 Ho is euen þyn aunt, Arþurez half suster,
 Þe duches do3ter of Tyntagelle, þat dere Vter after
 Hade Arþur vpon, þat apþel is nowþe.
 Þerfore I eþe þe, hapel, to com to þy naunt,
 Make myry in my hous, my meny þe louies,
 & I wol þe as wel, wy3e, bi my faythe,
 As any gome vnder God, for þy grete traufþe.”
 & he nikked hym naye, he nolde bi no wayes;

Pay acolen & kyssen, [bikennen] ayþer oþer
 To þe prynce of paradise, & parten ry3t þere,
 on coolde;
 Gawayn on blonk ful bene,
 To þe kynges bur3 buskez bolde,
 & þe kny3t in þe enker grene,
 Whiderwarde-so-euer he wolde.

XXI.

Wylde waye3 in þe worlde Wowen now rydez,
 On Gryngolet, þat þe *grace* hade geten of his lyue;
 Ofte he herbered in house, & ofte al þeroute,
 & mony a-venture in vale, & venquyst ofte,
 Þat I ne ty3t, at þis tyme, in tale to remene.
 Þe hurt watz hole, þat he hade hent in his nek,
 & þe blykkande belt he bere þeraboute,
 A belef as a bauderyk, bounden bi his syde,
 Loken vnder his lyfte arme, þe lace, *with* a knot,
 In tokenyng he watz tane in tech of a faute;
 & þus he *commes* to þe court, kny3t al in sounde.
 Þer wakned wele in þat wone, when wyst þe grete,
 Þat gode Gawayn: watz *commen*, gayn hit hym þo3t;
 Þe kyng kyssez þe kny3t, & þe whene alce,
 & syþen mony syker kny3t, þat so3t hym to haylce,
 Of his fare þat hym frayned, & ferlyly he telles;
 Biknowoz alle þe costes of care þat he hade,—
 Þe chaunce of þe chapel, þe chere of þe kny3t,
 Þe luf of þe ladi, þe lace at þe last.
 Þe nirt in þe nek he naked hem schewed,
 Þat he la3t for his vnleute at þe leudes hondes,
 for blame;
 He tened quen he schulde telle,
 He gromed for gref & grame;
 Þe blod in his face con melle,
 When he hit schulde schewe, for schame.

XXII.

“Lo! lorde,” *quod* þe leude, & þe lace hondeled,
 “Þis is þe bende of þis blame I bere [in] my nek,
 Þis is þe laþe & þe losse, þat I la3t haue,
 Of couardise & couetyse, þat I haf ca3t þare,
 Þis is þe token of vn-trawþe, þat I am tan inne,

& I mot nedez hit were, wyle I may last;
 For non may hyden his harme, bot vnhap ne may hit,
 For þer hit onez is tachched, twynne wil hit neuer.”
 Þe kyng confortez þe knyzt, & alle þe court als,
 Laȝen loude þerat, & luflyly acorden,
 Þat lordes & ladis, þat longed to þe Table,
 Vche burne of þe broþerhede a bauderyk schulde haue,
 A bende, a belef hym aboute, of a bryzt grene,
 & þat, for sake of þat segge, in swete to were.
 For þat watz acorded þe renoun of þe Rounde Table,
 & he honoured þat hit hade, euermore after,
 As hit is breued in þe best boke of romaunce.
 Þus in Arthurus day þis aunter bitidde,
 Þe Brutus bokez þerof beres wyttensesse;
 Syþen Brutus, þe bolde burne, boȝed hider fyrst,
 After þe segge & þe asaute watz sesed at Troye,
 Iwysse;
 Mony aunterez here-biforne,
 Haf fallen suche er þis:
 Now þat bere þe croun of þorne,
 He bryng vus to his blysse! AMEN.
 HONY SOYT QUI MAL PENCE.

1.14.3 Reading and Review Questions

1. How does Gawain’s manner of speaking in court compare to his words to the Green Knight at the very end? What changes, if anything?
2. In Part Three (or Fitt Three), in what ways do the words and the actions of the lady directly parallel the hunt outside? How is each day different, and how does the level of danger inside correspond to the level of danger outside?
3. In what ways is Gawain the best knight of King Arthur’s court? Is he wise? Mature? Why or why not?
4. What effect does Gawain’s misogynistic outburst at the end have on our view of his previous actions? Does the Green Knight seem to agree or not? Considering the context, why does Gawain act that way?
5. What view or views of religion appear in the story? How do they explain (or complicate) the actions of the characters?

1.15 JULIAN OF NORWICH

(ca. 1342-ca. 1416)

Julian of Norwich was an English mystic and anchoress who had a series of visions during a serious illness, which were recorded as the *Revelations of Divine Love*. Anchorites took a vow to withdraw from the world, usually by staying in a small room—or “cell”—that was attached to a church. Anchorites could be monks or nuns, or they could be laypeople who had decided to devote the rest of their lives to religious contemplation. Julian may have taken her name from St. Julian’s Church, in Norwich, to which her cell was attached. Despite the isolation, anchorites were expected to act as advisors to those seeking religious guidance, since their activities gave them a certain status. Margery Kempe, who

wrote a book on her own religious visions, records visiting Julian to ask her advice. Julian’s sixteen visions occurred when she was, by her own account, thirty-and-a-half years old, in May of 1373, during a near-death experience. The shorter version, or Short Text, was probably written soon afterwards, and the Long Text appears to have been written about twenty years later, after she had contemplated the visions in depth. The revelations focus not only on Christ’s suffering, which was a common approach in her time, but also on God’s love in an optimistic way. According to the visions, sin is “behovely”—inevitable, necessary, or appropriate—since it leads to self-knowledge, which in turn leads the sinner to God. Perhaps the most famous section of the *Revelations* is when God is revealed as the mother, as well as the father, of humanity, with an emphasis on the actions that a mother takes to influence her child’s behavior. Julian’s text influenced later authors, such as T.S. Eliot, who quotes both the description of sin and her most famous lines in his poem “Little Gidding:” “Sin is behovely, but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well” (Eliot).



Image 1.13 | Statue of Julian of Norwich

Artist | David Holgate

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1.15.1 Bibliography

Eliot, T.S. “Little Gidding.” *Four Quartets*. New York, Harcourt, 1943.

1.15.2 Selections from *Revelations of Divine Love*

(also called *A Revelation of Love—in Sixteen Showings*)

Published in 1395

Chapter I “A Revelation of Love—in Sixteen Shewings”

This is a Revelation of Love that Jesus Christ, our endless bliss, made in Sixteen Shewings, or Revelations particular.

Of the which the First is of His precious crowning with thorns; and therewith was comprehended and specified the Trinity, with the Incarnation, and unity betwixt God and man’s soul; with many fair shewings of endless wisdom and teachings of love: in which all the Shewings that follow be grounded and oned.

The Second is the changing of colour of His fair face in token of His dearworthy Passion.

The Third is that our Lord God, Almighty Wisdom, All-Love, right as verily as He hath made everything that is, all-so verily He doeth and worketh all-thing that is done.

The Fourth is the scourging of His tender body, with plenteous shedding of His blood.

The Fifth is that the Fiend is overcome by the precious Passion of Christ.

The Sixth is the worshipful thanking by our Lord God in which He rewardeth His blessed servants in Heaven.

The Seventh is [our] often feeling of weal and woe; (the feeling of weal is gracious touching and lightening, with true assuredness of endless joy; the feeling of woe is temptation by heaviness and irksomeness of our fleshly living;) with ghostly understanding that we are kept all as securely in Love in woe as in weal, by the Goodness of God.

The Eighth is of the last pains of Christ, and His cruel dying.

The Ninth is of the pleasing which is in the Blissful Trinity by the hard Passion of Christ and His rueful dying: in which joy and pleasing He willeth that we be solaced



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and mirthed 4 with Him, till when we come to the fulness in Heaven.

The Tenth is, our Lord Jesus sheweth in love His blissful heart even cloven in two, rejoicing.

The Eleventh is an high ghostly Shewing of His dearworthy Mother.

The Twelfth is that our Lord is most worthy Being.

The Thirteenth is that our Lord God willeth we have great regard to all the deeds that He hath done: in the great nobleness of the making of all things; and the excellency of man's making, which is above all his works; and the precious Amends that He hath made for man's sin, turning all our blame into endless worship. In which Shewing also our Lord saith: *Behold and see! For by the same Might, Wisdom, and Goodness that I have done all this, by the same Might, Wisdom, and Goodness I shall make well all that is not well; and thou shalt see it.* And in this He willeth that we keep us in the Faith and truth of Holy Church, not desiring to see into His secret things now, save as it belongeth to us in this life.

The Fourteenth is that our Lord is the Ground of our Prayer. Herein were seen two properties: the one is rightful prayer, the other is steadfast trust; which He willeth should both be alike large; and thus our prayer pleaseth Him and He of His Goodness fulfilleth it.

The Fifteenth is that we shall suddenly be taken from all our pain and from all our woe, and of His Goodness we shall come up above, where we shall have our Lord Jesus for our meed and be fulfilled with joy and bliss in Heaven.

The Sixteenth is that the Blissful Trinity, our Maker, in Christ Jesus our Saviour, endlessly dwelleth in our soul, worshipfully ruling and protecting all things, us mightily and wisely saving and keeping, for love; and we shall not be overcome of our Enemy.

Chapter II "A simple creature unlettered.—Which creature afore desired three gifts of God"

These Revelations were shewed to a simple creature unlettered, the year of our Lord 1373, the Thirteenth day of May. Which creature [had] afore desired three gifts of God. The First was mind of His Passion; the Second was bodily sickness in youth, at thirty years 3 of age; the Third was to have of God's gift three wounds.

As to the First, methought I had some feeling in the Passion of Christ, but yet I desired more by the grace of God. Methought I would have been that time with Mary Magdalene, and with other that were Christ's lovers, and therefore I desired a bodily sight wherein I might have more knowledge of the bodily pains of our Saviour and of the compassion of our Lady and of all His true lovers that saw, that time, His pains. For I would be one of them and suffer with Him. Other sight nor shewing of God desired I never none, till the soul were departed from the body. The cause of this petition was that after the shewing I should have the more true mind in the Passion of Christ.

The Second came to my mind with contrition; [I] freely desiring that sickness [to be] so hard as to death, that I might in that sickness receive all my rites of Holy

Church, myself thinking that I should die, and that all creatures might suppose the same that saw me: for I would have no manner of comfort of earthly life. In this sickness I desired to have all manner of pains bodily and ghostly that I should have if I should die, (with all the dreads and tempests of the fiends) except the outpassing of the soul. And this I meant for [that] I would be purged, by the mercy of God, and afterward live more to the worship of God because of that sickness. And that for the more furthering in my death: for I desired to be soon with my God.

These two desires of the Passion and the sickness I desired with a condition, saying thus: Lord, Thou knowest what I would,—if it be Thy will that I have it—; and if it be not Thy will, good Lord, be not displeased: for I will nought but as Thou wilt.

For the Third [petition], by the grace of God and teaching of Holy Church I conceived a mighty desire to receive three wounds in my life: that is to say, the wound of very contrition, the wound of kind compassion,¹⁰ and the wound of steadfast longing toward God. And all this last petition I asked without any condition.

These two desires aforesaid passed from my mind, but the third dwelled with me continually.

Chapter III “I desired to suffer with Him”

And when I was thirty years old and a half, God sent me a bodily sickness, in which I lay three days and three nights; and on the fourth night I took all my rites of Holy Church, and weened not to have lived till day. And after this I languored forth two days and two nights, and on the third night I weened oftentimes to have passed; and so weened they that were with me.

And being in youth as yet, I thought it great sorrow to die;—but for nothing that was in earth that meliked to live for, nor for no pain that I had fear of: for I trusted in God of His mercy. But it was to have lived that I might have loved God better, and longer time, that I might have the more knowing and loving of God in bliss of Heaven. For methought all the time that I had lived here so little and so short in regard of that endless bliss,—I thought [it was as] nothing. Wherefore I thought: Good Lord, may my living no longer be to Thy worship! And I understood by my reason and by my feeling of my pains that I should die; and I assented fully with all the will of my heart to be at God’s will.

Thus I dured till day, and by then my body was dead from the middle downwards, as to my feeling. Then was I minded to be set upright, backward leaning, with help,—for to have more freedom of my heart to be at God’s will, and thinking on God while my life would last.

My Curate was sent for to be at my ending, and by that time when he came I had set my eyes, and might not speak. He set the Cross before my face and said: I have brought thee the Image of thy Master and Saviour: look thereupon and comfort thee therewith.

Methought I was well [as it was], for my eyes were set uprightward unto Heaven, where I trusted to come by the mercy of God; but nevertheless I assented

to set my eyes on the face of the Crucifix, if I might; and so I did. For methought I might longer dure to look evenforth than right up.

After this my sight began to fail, and it was all dark about me in the chamber, as if it had been night, save in the Image of the Cross whereon I beheld a common light; and I wist not how. All that was away from the Cross was of horror to me, as if it had been greatly occupied by the fiends.

After this the upper part of my body began to die, so far forth that scarcely I had any feeling;—with shortness of breath. And then I weened in sooth to have passed.

And in this [moment] suddenly all my pain was taken from me, and I was as whole (and specially in the upper part of my body) as ever I was afore.

I marvelled at this sudden change; for methought it was a privy working of God, and not of nature. And yet by the feeling of this ease I trusted never the more to live; nor was the feeling of this ease any full ease unto me: for methought I had liefer have been delivered from this world.

Then came suddenly to my mind that I should desire the second wound of our Lord's gracious gift: that my body might be fulfilled with mind and feeling of His blessed Passion. For I would that His pains were my pains, with compassion and afterward longing to God. But in this I desired never bodily sight nor shewing of God, but compassion such as a kind soul might have with our Lord Jesus, that for love would be a mortal man: and therefore I desired to suffer with Him.

1.15.2 Reading and Review Questions

1. Why does Julian ask God for “three wounds”? How are these requests fulfilled?
2. What ideas or images appear to surprise, disturb, or confuse Julian? How are those issues resolved?
3. Using examples from the text, what is Julian's view of love in the visions? What kind of love is it? How does it compare to other types of love?
4. How does Julian explain her vision of God as mother, as well as father, son, and holy ghost? What specifically does it mean in the vision for God to be our mother, as well?
5. Which ideas would the original audience have thought were particularly important, and why do you think so? Which ideas are the most emotional, and why?

1.16 THE SECOND SHEPHERDS' PLAY

Unknown date (possibly as early as the fourteenth century)

The Wakefield Master

The Second Shepherds' Play was written by an unidentified writer known as the Wakefield Master, whose plays are considered some of the finest work of the time.

He wrote at least five of the plays in the Wakefield mystery play cycle, in addition to revising and improving the rest. The plays were performed in the town of Wakefield, in West Yorkshire, and are also called the Towneley plays, since the only surviving manuscript was owned by the Towneley family for a long time. Mystery play cycles were based on the Bible (with some significant changes and additions) and were meant to be performed chronologically, usually at a certain time of year (such as during *Corpus Christi*). The four surviving mystery play cycles begin with the *Creation of Heaven* and end with the *Last Judgment*, with as few as twenty-five plays (in Chester) to as many as forty-eight plays (in York). The Wakefield cycle, with its thirty-two plays, may have been a compilation of other cycle plays, while the N-Town cycle of forty-two plays (sometimes called the Coventry cycle) may have been used by traveling actors (the “N” stands for the name of whichever town they performed in at that moment). In general, however, the cycle plays were performed not by professional actors, but by members of trade guilds or other organizations. In York, the shipwrights performed the roles in the *Noah* play, and the wagon that was their stage (which moved from location to location in the city) would be built to look like Noah’s ark. Cycle plays are mentioned regularly in medieval literature; in Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, the “Miller’s Tale” (found in this anthology) references both the *Herod* play, in which Absalom performs the role of Herod to get attention, and the *Noah* play, which provides one of the main jokes of the story.

As may be clear from the name, there were two different nativity plays involving shepherds in the Wakefield cycle; it is possible that only one of the plays would have



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been performed, although both were written by the Wakefield Master. Of all of his plays, *The Second Shepherds' Play* is undoubtedly the best. The play combines the serious story of the nativity with social commentary (from the perspective of the poorest members of society) and humor. The play is full of anachronisms: the shepherds reference the crucifixion, even though Jesus has only just been born; one of the gifts is a tennis ball; and the setting is clearly in the north of England (with a joke about Mak's strange southern accent). The farcical birth of Mak and Gill's "baby" (one of the highlights of the play) is a perfect contrast to the serious—and sweet—nativity scene at the end.

1.16.1 The Second Shepherds' Play

[The First Shepherd (Primus Pastor) enters.]

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Lord, but this weather is cold, and I am ill wrapped!
 Nigh dazed, were the truth told, so long have I napped;
 My legs under me fold; my fingers are chapped—
 With such like I don't hold, for I am all lapt
 In sorrow.
 In storms and tempest.
 Now in the east, now in the west,
 Woe is him has never rest
 Midday nor morrow!

But we seely shepherds that walk on the moor,
 In faith we're nigh at hand to be put out of door.
 No wonder, as it doth stand, if we be poor.
 For the tilth of our land lies fallow as the floor,
 As ye ken.
 We're so burdened and banned,
 Over-taxed and unmanned.
 We're made tame to the hand
 Of these gentry men.

Thus they rob us of our rest, our Lady them harry!
 These men bound to their lords' behest, they make the plough tarry,
 What men say is for the best, we find the contrary,—
 Thus are husbandmen oppressed, in point to miscarry,
 In life,
 Thus hold they us under
 And from comfort sunder.

It were great wonder,
If ever we should thrive.

For if a man may get an embroidered sleeve or a brooch now-a-days,
Woe is him that may him grieve, or a word in answer says!
No blame may he receive, whatever pride he displays;
And yet may no man believe one word that he says,
Not a letter.
His daily needs are gained
By boasts and bragging feigned.
And in all he's maintained
By men that are greater.

Proud shall come a swain as a peacock may go,
He must borrow my wain, my plough also.
Then I am full fain to grant it ere he go.
Thus live we in pain, anger, and woe
By night and day!
He must have it, if he choose.
Though I should it lose,
I were better hanged than refuse.
Or once say him nay!

It does me good as I walk thus alone
Of this world for to talk and to make my moan.
To my sheep will I stalk, and hearken anon,
There wait on a balk, or sit on a stone.
Full soon,
For I trow, pardie,
True men if they be,
We shall have company,
Ere it be noon.

[The First Shepherd goes out (or to one side). The Second Shepherd enters.]

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Ben'cite and Dominus! What may this mean?
Why fares the world thus! The like often we've seen!
Lord, but it is spiteful and grievous, this weather so keen!
And the frost so hideous—it waters mine een!
That's no lie!
Now in dry, now in wet,
Now in snow, now in sleet.

When my shoes freeze to my feet,
It's not all easy!

But so far as I ken, wherever I go,
We seely wedded men suffer mickle woe
We have sorrow once and again, it befalls oft so.
Seely Capel, our hen, both to and fro
She cackles.
But if she begins to croak.
To grumble or cluck,
Then woe be to our cock,
For he is in the shackles!

These men that are wed have not all their will;
When they're full hard bestead, they sigh mighty still;
God knows the life they are led is full hard and full ill,
Nor thereof in bower or bed may they speak their will,
This tide.
My share I have found,
Know my lesson all round,
Wo is him that is bound,
For he must it abide!

But now late in men's lives (such a marvel to me
That I think my heart rives such wonders to see,
How that destiny drives that it should so be!)
Some men will have two wives and some men three
In store.
Some are grieved that have any,
But I'll wager my penny
Woe is him that has many.
For he feels sore!

But young men as to wooing, for God's sake that you bought.
Beware well of wedding, and hold well in thought,
"Had I known" is a thing that serves you nought.
Much silent sorrowing has a wedding home brought,
And grief gives,
With many a sharp shower—
For thou mayest catch in an hour
What shall taste thee full sour
As long as one lives!

For—if ever read I epistle!—I have one by my fire,
 As sharp as a thistle, as rough as a briar,
 She has brows like a bristle and a sour face by her;
 If she had once wet her whistle, she might sing clearer
 and higher
 Her pater-noster;
 She is as big as a whale,
 She has a gallon of gall,—
 By him that died for us all,
 I wish I had run till I had lost her!

PRIMUS PASTOR.

“God look over the row!” like a deaf man ye stand.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Yea, sluggard, the devil thy maw burn with his brand!
 Didst see aught of Daw?

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Yea, on the pasture-land
 I heard him blow just before; he comes nigh at hand
 Below there.
 Stand still.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Why?

PRIMUS PASTOR.

For he comes, hope I.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

He'll catch us both with some lie
 Unless we beware.
 [The Third Shepherd enters, at first without seeing them.]

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Christ's cross me speed and St. Nicholas!
 Thereof in sooth I had need, it is worse than it was.
 Whoso hath knowledge, take heed, and let the world pass,
 You may never trust it, indeed,—it's as brittle as glass,
 As it rangeth.
 Never before fared this world so,
 With marvels that greater grow,
 Now in weal, now in woe,
 And everything changeth.

There was never since Noah's flood such floods seen,
 Winds and rains so rude and storms so keen;
 Some stammered, some stood in doubt, as I ween.—
 Now God turn all to good, I say as I mean!
 For ponder
 How these floods all drown
 Both in fields and in town,
 And bear all down.
 And that is a wonder!

We that walk of nights our cattle to keep,
 [Catches sight of the others.]
 We see startling sights when oilier men sleep.
 Yet my heart grows more light—I see shrews a-peep.
 Ye are two tall wights—I will give my sheep
 A turn, below.
 But my mood is ill-sent;
 As I walk on this bent,
 I may lightly repent,
 If I stub my toe.
 Ah, Sir, God you save and my master sweet!
 A drink I crave, and somewhat to eat.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Christ's curse, my knave, thou'rt a lazy cheat!

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Lo, the boy lists to rave! Wait till later for meat.
 We have eat it.
 Ill thrift on thy pate!
 Though the rogue came late.
 Yet is he in state
 To eat, could he get it.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

That such servants as I, that sweat and swink,
 Eat our bread full dry gives me reason to think.
 Wet and weary we sigh while our masters wink,
 Yet full late we come by our dinner and drink—
 But soon thereto
 Our dame and sire,
 When we've run in the mire,
 Take a nip from our hire.
 And pay slow as they care to.

But hear my oath, master, since you find fault this way,
 I shall do this hereafter—work to fit my pay;
 I'll do just so much, sir, and now and then play,
 For never yet supper in my stomach lay
 In the fields.
 But why dispute so?
 Off with staff I can go.
 “Easy bargain,” men say,
 “But a poor return yields.”

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Thou wert an ill lad for work to ride wooing
 From a man that had but little for spending.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Peace, boy, I bade! No more jangling.
 Or I'll make thee full sad, by the Heaven's King,
 With thy gauds!
 Where are our sheep, boy? Left lorn?

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Sir, this same day at morn,
 I them left in the corn
 When they rang Lauds.

They have pasture good, they cannot go wrong.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

That is right. By the Rood, these nights are long!
 Ere we go now, I would someone gave us a song.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

So I thought as I stood, to beguile us along.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

I agree.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

The tenor I'll try.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

And I the treble so high.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Then the mean shall be I.

How ye chant now, let's see!
 [They sing (the song is not given).]
 [Tunc entrat Mak, in clamide se super togam vestitus.]

MAK.

Now, Lord, by thy seven names' spell, that made both moon and stars on high,
 Full more than I can tell, by thy will for me. Lord, lack I.
 I am all at odds, nought goes well—that oft doth my temper try.
 Now would God I might in heaven dwell, for there no children cry.
 So still.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Who is that pipes so poor?

MAK.

Would God ye knew what I endure!

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Lo, a man that walks on the moor.
 And has not all his will!

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Mak, whither dost speed? What news do you bring!

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Is he come? Then take heed each one to his thing.
 [Et accipit clamiden ah ipso.]

MAK.

What! I am a yeoman—since there's need I should tell you—of the King,
 That self-same, indeed, messenger from a great lording,
 And the like thereby.
 Fie on you! Go hence
 Out of my presence!
 I must have reverence.
 And you ask “who am I!”

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Why dress ye it up so quaint? Mak, ye do ill!

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

But, Mak, listen, ye saint, I believe what ye will!

TERTIUS PASTOR.

I trow the knave can feint, by the neck the devil him kill!

MAK.

I shall make complaint, and you'll all get your fill,
At a word from me—
And tell your doings, forsooth

PRIMUS PASTOR.

But, Mak, is that truth?
Now take out that southern tooth
stick in a flea

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Mak, the devil be in your eye, verily! to a blow I'd fain treat you.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Mak, know you not me? By God, I could beat you!

MAK.

God keep you all three! Me thought I had seen you—I greet you.
Ye are a fair company!

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Oh, now you remember, you cheat, you!

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Shrew, jokes are cheap!
When thus late a man goes.
What will folk suppose?—
You've a bad name, God knows.
For stealing of sheep

MAK.

And true as steel am I, all men know and say,
But a sickness I feel, verily, that grips me hard, night and day.
My belly is all awry, it is out of play—

TERTIUS PASTOR.

“Seldom doth the Devil lie dead by the way—”

MAK.

Therefore
Full sore am I and ill,
Though I stand stone still;
I've not eat a needle
This month and more.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

How fares thy wife, by my hood, how fares she, ask I?

MAK.

Lies asprawl, by the Rood, lo, the fire close by,
 And a house-full of home-brewed she drinks full nigh—
 Ill may speed any good thing that she will try
 Else to do!—
 Eats as fast as may be,
 And each year there'll a day be
 She brings forth a baby.
 And some years two.

But were I now kinder, d'ye hear, and far richer in purse,
 Still were I eaten clear out of house and home, sirs.
 And she's a foul-favored dear, see her close, by God's curse!
 No one knows or may hear, I trow, of a worse,
 Not any!
 Now will ye see what I proffer?—
 To give all in my coffer,
 To-morrow next to offer
 Her head-mass penny.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Faith, so weary and worn is there none in this shire.
 I must sleep, were I shorn of a part of my hire.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

I'm naked, cold, and forlorn, and would fain have a
 fire.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

I'm clean spent, for, since morn, I've run in the mire.
 Watch thou, do!

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Nay, I'll lie down hereby.
 For I must sleep, truly.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

As good a man's son was I,
 As any of you!
 [They prepare to lie down.]
 But, Mak, come lie here in between, if you please.

MAK.

You'll be hindered, I fear, from talking at ease,
 Indeed!
 [He yields and lies down.]
 From my top to my toe,
Manus tuas commendo,
Poncio Pilato,
 Christ's cross me speed!
Tunc siirgit, pastorihus dormientibus, et dicit:
 Now 'twere time a man knew, that lacks what he'd fain hold,
 To steal privily through then into a fold,
 And then nimbly his work do—and be not too bold,
 For his bargain he'd me, if it were told
 At the ending
 Now 'twere time their wrath to tell!—
 But he needs good counsel
 That fain would fare well,
 And has but little for spending.

But about you a circle as round as a moon,
 [He draws the circle.]
 Till I have done what I will, till that it be noon.
 That ye lie stone still, until I have done;
 And I shall say thereto still, a few good words soon
 Of might:
 Over your heads my hand I lift.
 Out go your eyes! Blind be your sight!
 But I must make still better shift,
 If it's to be right.

Lord, how hard they sleep—that may ye all hear!
 I never herded sheep, but I'll learn now, that's clear.
 Though the flock be scared a heap, yet shall I slip near.
 [He captures a sheep.]
 Hey—hitherward creep! Now that betters our cheer
 From sorrow.
 A fat sheep, I dare say!
 A good fleece, swear I may!
 When I can, then I'll pay,
 But this I will borrow!
 [Mak goes to his house, and knocks at the door.]

MAK.

Ho, Gill, art thou in? Get us a light!

UXOR EIUS.

Who makes such a din at this time of night?
 I am set for to spin, I think not I might
 Rise a penny to win! Curses loud on them light
 Trouble cause!
 A busy house-wife all day
 To be called thus away!
 No work's done, I say,
 Because of such small chores!

MAK.

The door open, good Gill. See'st thou not what I bring?

UXOR.

Draw the latch, an thou will. Ah, come in, my sweeting!

MAK.

Yea, thou need'st not care didst thou kill me with such long standing!

UXOR.

By the naked neck still thou art likely to swing.

MAK.

Oh, get away!
 I am worthy of my meat,
 For at a pinch I can get
 More than they that swink and sweat
 All the long day.

Thus it fell to my lot, Gill! Such luck came my way!

UXOR.

It were a foul blot to be hanged for it some day.

MAK.

I have often escaped, Gillot, as risky a play.

UXOR.

But "though long goes the pot to the water," men say,
 "At last
 Comes it home broken."

MAK.

Well know I the token,
But let it never be spoken—
But come and help fast!

I would he were slain, I would like well to eat.
This twelvemonth was I not so fain to have some sheep's meat.

UXOR.

Should they come ere he's slain and hear the sheep bleat—

MAK.

Then might I be ta'en. That were a cold sweat!
The door—
Go close it!

UXOR.

Yes, Mak,—
For if they come at thy back—

MAK.

Then might I suffer from the whole pack
The devil, and more!

UXOR.

A good trick have I spied, since thou thinkest of none,
Here shall we him hide until they be gone—
In my cradle he'll bide — just you let me alone—
And I shall lie beside in childbed and groan.

MAK.

Well said!
And I shall say that this night
A boy child saw the light.

UXOR.

Now that day was bright
That saw me born and bred!

This is a good device and a far cast.
Ever a woman's advice gives help at the last!
I care not who spies! Now go thou back fast!

MAK.

Save I come ere they rise, there'll blow a cold blast!

[Mak goes back to the moor, and prepares to lie down.]

I will go sleep.
 Still sleeps all this company,
 And I shall slip in privily
 As it had never been I
 That carried off their sheep.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Resurrex a mortuis! Reach me a hand!
Judas carnas dominus! I can hardly stand!
 My foot's asleep, by Jesus, and my mouth's dry as sand.
 I thought we had laid us full nigh to England!

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Yea, verily!
 Lord, but I have slept well.
 As fresh as an eel,
 As light do I feel.
 As leaf on the tree.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Ben'cite be herein! So my body is quaking,
 My heart is out of my skin with the to-do it's making.
 Who's making all this din, so my head's set to aching.
 To the doer I'll win! Hark, you fellows, be waking!
 Four we were—
 See ye aught of Mak now?

PRIMUS PASTOR.

We were up ere thou.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Man, to God I vow.
 Not once did he stir.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Methought he was lapt in a wolf's skin.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

So many are happed now—namely within.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

When we had long napped, methought with a gin
 A fat sheep he trapped, but he made no din.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Be still!
Thy dream makes thee mad,
It's a nightmare you've had.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

God bring good out of bad,
If it be his will!

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Rise, Mak, for shame! Right long dost thou lie.

MAK.

Now Christ's Holy Name be with us for aye!
What's this, by Saint James, I can't move when I try.
I suppose I'm the same. Oo-o, my neck's lain awry
Enough, perdie—
Many thanks!—since yester even.
Now, by Saint Stephen,
I was plagued by a sweven,
Knocked the heart of me.

I thought Gill begun to croak and travail full sad,
Well-nigh at the first cock, with a young lad
To add to our flock. Of that I am never glad,
I have "tow on my rock more than ever I had."
Oh, my head!
A house full of young banes—
The devil knock out their brains!
Wo is him many gains.
And thereto little bread.
I must go home, by your leave, to Gill, as I
thought.
Prithee look in my sleeve that I steal naught.
I am loath you to grieve, or from you take aught.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Go forth—ill may'st thou thrive!
[Mak goes.]
Now I would that we sought
This morn,
That we had all our store.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

But I will go before.
Let us meet.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Where, Daw?

TERTIUS PASTOR.

At the crooked thorn.
[They go out. Mak enters and knocks at his door.]

MAK.

Undo the door, see who's here ! How long must I stand?

UXOR EIUS.

Who's making such gear? Now "walk in the wen-yand."

MAK.

Ah, Gill, what cheer? It is I, Mak, your husband.

UXOR.

Then may we see here the devil in a band,
Sir Guile!
Lo, he comes with a note
As he were held by the throat.
And I cannot devote
To my work any while.

MAK.

Will ye hear the pother she makes to get her a gloze—
Naught but pleasure she takes, and curls up her toes.

UXOR.

Why, who runs, who wakes, who comes, who goes,
Who brews, who bakes, what makes me hoarse, d'ye suppose!
And also,
It is ruth to behold.
Now in hot, now in cold,
Full woeful is the household
That no woman doth know!

But what end hast thou made with the shepherds, Mak?

MAK.

The last word that they said when I turned my back

Was they'd see that they had of their sheep all the pack.
 They'll not be pleased, I'm afraid, when they their sheep lack,
 Perdie.
 But how so the game go,
 They'll suspect me, whether or no,
 And raise a great bellow.
 And cry out upon me.

But thou must use thy sleight.

UXOR.

Yea, I think it not ill.
 I shall swaddle him alright in my cradle with skill.
 Were it yet a worse plight, yet a way I'd find still.
 [Gill meanwhile swaddles the sheep and places him in the cradle.]
 I will lie down forthright. Come tuck me up.

MAK.

That I will.

UXOR.

Behind!
 [Mak tucks her in at the hack.]
 If Coll come and his marrow,
 They will nip us full narrow.

MAK.

But I may cry out "Haro,"
 The sheep if they find.

UXOR.

Hearken close till they call—they will come anon.
 Come and make ready all, and sing thou alone—
 Sing lullaby, thou shalt, for I must groan
 And cry out by the wall on Mary and John
 Full sore.
 Sing lullaby on fast,
 When thou hear'st them at last,
 And, save I play a shrewd cast,
 Trust me no more.

[The Shepherds enter on the moor and meet.]

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Ah, Coll, good morn! Why sleepest thou not?

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Alas, that ever I was born! We have a foul blot.
A fat wether have we lorn.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Marry, God forbid, say it not!

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Who should do us that scorn? That were a foul spot.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Some shrew.
I have sought with my dogs
All Horbury Shrogs,
And of fifteen hogs
Found I all but one ewe.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Now trust me, if you will, by Saint Thomas of Kent,
Either Mak or Gill their aid thereto lent!

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Peace, man, be still! I saw when he went.
Thou dost slander him ill. Thou shouldest repent
At once, indeed!

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

So may I thrive, perdie,
Should I die here where I be,
I would say it was he
That did that same deed!

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Go we thither, quick sped, and run on our feet,
I shall never eat bread till I know all complete!

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Nor drink in my head till with him I meet.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

In no place will I bed until I him greet,
My brother!
One vow I will plight,
Till I see him in sight,
I will ne'er sleep one night

Where I do another!

[They go to Mak's house. Mak, hearing them coming, begins to sing lullaby at the top of his voice, while Gill groans in concert]

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Hark the row they make! List our sire there croon!

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Never heard I voice break so clear out of tune.
Call to him.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Mak, wake there! Undo your door soon!

MAK.

Who is that spake as if it were noon?
Aloft?
Who is that, I say?

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Good fellows, if it were day—

[MOCKING MAK.]

MAK.

As far as ye may,
Kindly, speak soft;

O'er a sick woman's head in such grievous throes!
I were liefer dead than she should suffer such woes.

UXOR.

Go elsewhere, well sped. Oh, how my pain grows—
Each footfall ye tread goes straight through my nose
So loud, woe's me!

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Tell us, Mak, if ye may,
How fare ye, I say?

MAK.

But are ye in this town to-day—
Now how fare ye?

Ye have run in the mire and are wet still a bit,
I will make you a fire, if ye will sit.

A nurse I would hire—can you help me in it?
 Well quit is my hire—my dream the truth hit—
 In season.
 I have bairns, if ye knew.
 Plenty more than will do,
 But we must drink as we brew.
 And that is but reason.

I would ye would eat ere ye go. Methinks that ye sweat.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Nay, no help could we know in what's drunken or eat.

MAK.

Why, sir, ails you aught but good, though?

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Yea, our sheep that we get
 Are stolen as they go; our loss is great.

MAK.

Sirs, drink!
 Had I been there.
 Some one had bought it sore, I swear.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Marry, some men trow that ye were,
 And that makes us think!

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Mak, one and another trows it should be ye.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Either ye or your spouse, so say we.

MAK.

Now if aught suspicion throws on Gill or me.
 Come and search our house, and then may ye see
 Who had her—
 If I any sheep got.
 Or cow or stot;
 And Gill, my wife, rose not.
 Here since we laid her.

As I am true and leal, to God, here I pray

That this is the first meal that I shall eat this day.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Mak, as may I have weal, advise thee, I say—
“He learned timely to steal that could not say nay.”

UXOR.

Me, my death you’ve dealt!
Out, ye thieves, nor come again,
Ye’ve come just to rob us, that’s plain.

MAK.

Hear ye not how she groans amain—
Your hearts should melt!

UXOR.

From my child, thieves, begone. Go nigh him not,—there’s the door!

MAK.

If ye knew all she’s borne, your hearts would be sore.
Ye do wrong, I you warn, thus to come in before
A woman that has borne—but I say no more.

UXOR.

Oh, my middle—I die!
I vow to God so mild,
If ever I you beguiled,
That I will eat this child
That doth in this cradle lie!

MAK.

Peace, woman, by God’s pain, and cry not so.
Thou dost hurt thy brain and fill me with woe.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

I trow our sheep is slain. What find ye two, though?
Our work’s all in vain. We may as well go.
Save clothes and such matters
I can find no flesh
Hard or nesh,
Salt nor fresh.
Except two empty platters.
Of any “cattle” but this, tame or wild, that we see,
None, as may I have bliss, smelled as loud as he.

UXOR.

No, so God joy and bliss of my child may give me!

PRIMUS PASTOR.

We have aimed amiss; deceived, I trow, were we.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Sir, wholly each, one.
Sir, Our Lady him save!
Is your child a knave?

MAK.

Any lord might him have,
This child, for his son.

When he wakes, so he grips, it's a pleasure to see.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Good luck to his hips, and blessing, say we!
But who were his gossips, now tell who they be?

MAK.

Blest be their lips—
[Hesitates, at a loss.]

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Hark a lie now, trust me! [Aside.]

MAK.

So may God them thank.
Parkin and Gibbon Waller, I say.
And gentle John Horn, in good fey—
He made all the fun and play—
With the great shank.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Mak, friends will we be, for we are at one.

MAK.

We!—nay, count not on me, for amends get I none.
Farewell, all three! Glad 'twill be when ye're gone!
[The Shepherds go.]

TERTIUS PASTOR.

“Fair words there may be, but love there is none
This year.”

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Gave ye the child anything?

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

I trow, not one farthing.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Fast back I will fling.

Await ye me here.

[DAW GOES BACK. THE OTHER SHEPHERDS TURN AND FOLLOW HIM
SLOWLY, ENTERING WHILE HE IS TALKING WITH MAK.]

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Mak, I trust thou'lt not grieve, if I go to thy child.

MAK.

Nay, great hurt I receive,—thou hast acted full wild.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Thy bairn 'twill not grieve, little day-star so mild,

Mak, by your leave, let me give your child

But six-pence.

[Daw goes to cradle, and starts to draw away the covering]

MAK.

Nay, stop it—he sleeps!

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Methinks he peeps—

MAK.

When he wakens, he weeps;

I pray you go hence!

[The other Shepherds return.]

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Give me leave him to kiss, and lift up the clout.

What the devil is this?—he has a long snout!

PRIMUS PASTOR.

He's birth-marked amiss. We waste time hereabout.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

“A weft that ill-spun is comes ever foul out.”

[He sees the sheep.]

Aye—so!
He is like to, our sheep!

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Ho, Gib, may I peep?

PRIMUS PASTOR.

I trow “Nature will creep
Where it may not go.”

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

This was a quaint gaud and a far cast.
It was a high fraud.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Yea, sirs, that was’t.
Let’s burn this bawd, and bind her fast.
“A false scold,” by the Lord, “will hang at the last!”
So shalt thou!
Will ye see how they swaddle
His four feet in the middle!
Saw I never in the cradle
A horned lad ere now!

MAK.

Peace, I say! Tell ye what, this to-do ye can spare!
[Pretending anger.]
It was I him begot and yon woman him bare.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

What the devil for name has he got? Mak?—
Lo, God, Mak’s heir!

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Come, joke with him not. Now, may God give him care,
I say!

UXOR.

A pretty child is he
As sits on a woman’s knee,
A dilly-down, perdie,
To make a man gay.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

I know him by the ear-mark—that is a good token.

MAK.

I tell you, sirs, hark, his nose was broken—
Then there told me a clerk he'd been mis-spoken.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Ye deal falsely and dark; I would fain be wroken.
Get a weapon,—go!

UXOR.

He was taken by an elf,
I saw it myself.
When the clock struck twelve.
Was he mis-shapen so.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Ye two are at one, that's plain, in all ye've done and said.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Since their theft they maintain, let us leave them dead!

MAK.

If I trespass again, strike off my head!
At your will I remain.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Sirs, take my counsel instead.
For this trespass
We'll neither curse nor wrangle in spite,
Chide nor fight.
But have done forthright,
And toss him in canvas.

[They toss Mak in one of Gill's canvas sheets till they are tired. He disappears
groaning into his house. The Shepherds pass over to the moor on the other
side of the stage.]

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Lord, lo! but I am sore, like to burst, in back and breast.
In faith, I may no more, therefore will I rest.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Like a sheep of seven score he weighed in my fist.
To sleep anywhere, therefore seemeth now best.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Now I you pray,
On this green let us lie.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

O'er those thieves yet chafe I.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Let your anger go by,—
Come do as I say.
[As they are about to lie down the Angel appears.]
Angelus cantat "Gloria in excelsis." Postea dicat: Angeliis.
Rise, herdsmen gentle, attend ye, for now is he born
From the fiend that shall rend what Adam had lorn.
That warlock to shend, this night is he born,
God is made your friend now on this morn.
Lo! thus doth he command—
Go to Bethlehem, see
Where he lieth so free,
In a manger full lowly
'Twixt where twain beasts stand.
[The Angel goes.]

PRIMUS PASTOR.

This was a fine voice, even as ever I heard.
It is a marvel, by St. Stephen, thus with dread to be
stirred.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

'Twas of God's Son from heaven he these tidings averred.
All the wood with a levin, methought at his word
Shone fair.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Of a Child did he tell.
In Bethlehem, mark ye well.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

That this star yonder doth spell—
Let us seek him there.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Say, what was his song—how it went, did ye hear?
Three breves to a long—

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Marry, yes, to my ear
There was no crotchet wrong, naught it lacked and full clear!

PRIMUS PASTOR.

To sing it here, us among, as he nicked it, full near,
I know how—

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Let's see how you croon!
Can you bark at the moon?

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Hold your tongues, have done!
Hark after me now! [They sing.]

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

To Bethlehem he bade that we should go.
I am sore adrad that we tarry too slow.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Be merry, and not sad—our song's of mirth not of woe,
To be forever glad as our meed may we know.
Without noise.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Hie we thither, then, speedily,
Though we be wet and weary,
To that Child and that Lady I—
We must not lose those joys!

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

We find by the prophecy—let be your din!—
David and Isaiah, and more that I mind me therein,
They prophesied by clergy, that in a virgin,
Should he alight and lie, to assuage our sin,
And slake it,
Our nature, from woe,
For it was Isaiah said so,
*"Ecce virgo
Concipiet"* a child that is naked.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Full glad may we be and await that day
That lovesome one to see, that all might's doth sway.

Lord, well it were with me, now and for aye,
 Might I kneel on my knee some word for to say
 To that child.
 But the angel said
 In a crib was he laid,
 He was poorly arrayed,
 Both gracious and mild.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Patriarchs that have been and prophets before,
 They desired to have seen this child that is born.
 They are gone full clean,—that have they lorn.
 We shall see him, I ween, ere it be morn,
 For token.
 When I see him and feel,
 I shall know full well.
 It is true as steel,
 What prophets have spoken,

To so poor as we are that he would appear.
 First find and declare by his messenger.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Go we now, let us fare, the place is us near.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

I am ready and eager to be there; let us together with cheer
 To that bright one go.
 Lord, if thy will it be.
 Untaught are we all three.
 Some kind of joy grant us, that we
 Thy creatures, comfort may know!
 [They enter the stable and adore the infant Saviour.]
 Primus Pastor,
 Hail, thou comely and clean one! Hail, young Child!
 Hail, Maker, as I mean, from a maiden so mild!
 Thou hast harried, I ween, the warlock so wild,—
 The false beguiler with his teen now goes beguiled.
 Lo, he merries,
 Lo, he laughs, my sweeting!
 A happy meeting!
 Here's my promised greeting,—
 Have a bob of cherries!

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Hail, sovereign Saviour, for thou hast us sought!
 Hail, noble nursling and flower, that all things hast wrought!
 Hail, thou, full of gracious power, that made all from nought!
 Hail, I kneel and I cower! A bird have I brought
 To my bairn from far.
 Hail, little tiny mop!
 Of our creed thou art the crop,
 I fain would drink in thy cup,
 Little day-star!

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Hail, darling dear one, full of Godhead indeed!
 I pray thee be near, when I have need.
 Hail, sweet is thy cheer! My heart would bleed
 To see thee sit here in so poor a weed,
 With no pennies.
 Hail, put forth thy dall,
 I bring thee but a ball.
 Keep it, and play with it withal,
 And go to the tennis.
 Maria.
 The Father of Heaven this night, God omnipotent.
 That setteth all things aright, his Son hath he sent.
 My name he named and did light on me ere that he went.
 I conceived him forthright through his might as he meant,
 And now he is born.
 May he keep you from woe!
 I shall pray him do so.
 Tell it, forth as ye go.
 And remember this morn.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Farewell, Lady, so fair to behold
 With thy child on thy knee!

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

But he lies full cold!
 Lord, 'tis well with me! Now we go, behold!

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Forsooth, already it seems to be told
 Full oft!

PRIMUS PASTOR.

What grace we have found!

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Now are we won safe and sound.

TERTIUS PASTOR.

Come forth, to sing are we bound.

Make it ring then aloft!

[They depart singing.]

Explicit pagina Pastorum

1.16.2 Reading and Review Questions

1. Find as many anachronisms as you can in the play. Which anachronisms seem most out of place in the story, and why? What role do the anachronisms play for the audience?
2. What complaints do the shepherds make about the social class system? Why begin a play about the birth of Jesus with social commentary?
3. How many songs are there in the play? Who sings them, and how do they contribute to the play? Do they add to the plot, change the mood, or something else?
4. Are the scenes with Mak and Gill only for comic relief, or do they serve some serious purpose? How does the parallelism of the two births contribute to our understanding of the play?
5. Why are the three shepherds chosen to visit the baby Jesus? What might their gifts to the baby symbolize? Why have the shepherds offer gifts, rather than the three kings in the Bible?

1.17 SIR THOMAS MALORY

(ca. 1415-1471)

Although there are three different men named Thomas Malory in the same general time period, scholars have (mostly) decided that Sir Thomas Malory of Newbold Revel in Warwickshire is the most probable author of *Le Morte d'Arthur*. If so, the author led a life that does not necessarily correspond to the knightly values espoused by his work, and the text itself was most likely composed while Malory was in prison. The value of Malory's work is in part that it is a compilation of every previous Arthurian text that the author could find, including French works that he translated; evidently, he was given access to books while in captivity, and

the “knight prisoner” includes requests to pray both for his soul and for his deliverance. In addition to the usual stories of King Arthur and the knights of the Round Table, stories that often were told separately—such as the love of Tristan and Isolde (here called Tristrem and La Beale Isoud), or the quest for the Holy Grail—are incorporated into one long narrative. Whether the author intended the work to be published in one massive volume (as its first publisher, William Caxton, did, subdivided into twenty-one sections, or “books”) or as eight separate volumes



Image 1.16 | Illustration from *Le Morte d'Arthur*

Artist | Aubrey Beardsley

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(as suggested by its structure in the Winchester manuscript), the stories interconnect and foreshadow future events in a carefully-constructed way. Malory puts his mark on the story in other ways as well. As a knight during the Wars of the Roses, which split England into factions, Malory takes a dim view of the future of knightly behavior; rather than follow a higher code, Arthur’s knights easily slip back into the warrior tradition of valuing blood over all other ties, regardless of guilt or of the consequences of their actions. Doing the right thing is no guarantee of safety. Even during the happiest moments in the story, Malory foreshadows that the end is coming, adding a sense of impending doom. His focus on Lancelot offers

additional clues about Malory’s priorities. Although the story begins with the conception and birth of Arthur, it ends not with Arthur’s death, but the death of Lancelot. When Lancelot becomes friends with Tristan, he sees for himself the disaster that follows when a knight falls in love with his lord’s wife, but does not learn the lesson. Lancelot is a worthy knight, but it is his son, Galahad, who will achieve the Holy Grail, since he has the spiritual purity that his father lacks. For all of his strength and nobility, Lancelot’s adultery with Queen Guinevere brings down Arthur’s kingdom. Lancelot’s flaws appear to fascinate Malory, since Malory places this tragic figure at the center of the story, rather than Arthur.

1.17.1 Selections from *Le Morte d'Arthur*

(also called *Le Morte DArthur*)

Published in 1485

Book VII

CHAPTER XVIII. How the knight yielded him, and how Beaumains made him to go unto King Arthur's court, and to cry Sir Launcelot mercy.

Then came there many earls, and barons, and noble knights, and prayed that knight to save his life, and take him to your prisoner. And all they fell upon their knees, and prayed him of mercy, and that he would save his life; and, Sir, they all said, it were fairer of him to take homage and fealty, and let him hold his lands of you than for to slay him; by his death ye shall have none advantage, and his misdeeds that be done may not be undone; and therefore he shall make amends to all parties, and we all will become your men and do you homage and fealty. Fair lords, said Beaumains, wit you well I am full loath to slay this knight, nevertheless he hath done passing ill and shamefully; but insomuch all that he did was at a lady's request I blame him the less; and so for your sake I will release him that he shall have his life upon this covenant, that he go within the castle, and yield him there to the lady, and if she will forgive and quit him, I will well; with this he make her amends of all the trespass he hath done against her and her lands. And also, when that is done, that ye go unto the court of King Arthur, and there that ye ask Sir Launcelot mercy, and Sir Gawaine, for the evil will ye have had against them. Sir, said the Red Knight of the Red Launds, all this will I do as ye command, and siker assurance and borrows ye shall have. And so then when the assurance was made, he made his homage and fealty, and all those earls and barons with him.

And then the maiden Linet came to Sir Beaumains, and unarmed him and searched his wounds, and stinted his blood, and in likewise she did to the Red Knight of the Red Launds. And there they sojourned ten days in their tents; and the Red Knight made his lords and servants to do all the pleasure that they might unto Sir Beaumains. And so within a while the Red Knight of the Red Launds yede unto the castle, and put him in her grace. And so she received him upon sufficient surety, so all her hurts were well restored of all that she could complain. And then he departed unto the court of King Arthur, and there openly the Red Knight of the Red Launds put him in the mercy of Sir Launcelot and Sir Gawaine, and there he told openly how he was overcome and by whom, and also he told all the battles from the beginning unto the ending. Jesu mercy, said King Arthur and Sir Gawaine, we marvel much of what blood he is come, for he is a noble knight. Have ye no marvel, said Sir Launcelot, for ye shall right well wit that he is come of a full noble blood; and as for his might and hardiness, there be but few now living that is so mighty as he is, and so noble of prowess. It seemeth by you, said King Arthur, that ye know his name, and from whence he is come, and of what blood he is. I suppose I do so,

said Launcelot, or else I would not have given him the order of knighthood; but he gave me such charge at that time that I should never discover him until he required me, or else it be known openly by some other.

CHAPTER XIX How Beaumains came to the lady, and when he came to the castle the gates were closed against him, and of the words that the lady said to him.

NOW turn we unto Sir Beaumains that desired of Linet that he might see her sister, his lady. Sir, she said, I would fain ye saw her. Then Sir Beaumains all armed him, and took his horse and his spear, and rode straight unto the castle. And when he came to the gate he found there many men armed, and pulled up the drawbridge and drew the port close.

Then marvelled he why they would not suffer him to enter. And then he looked up to the window; and there he saw the fair Lionesse that said on high: Go thy way, Sir Beaumains, for as yet thou shalt not have wholly my love, unto the time that thou be called one of the number of the worthy knights. And therefore go labour in worship this twelvemonth, and then thou shalt hear new tidings. Alas, fair lady, said Beaumains, I have not deserved that ye should show me this strangeness, and I had weened that I should have right good cheer with you, and unto my power I have deserved thank, and well I am sure I have bought your love with part of the best blood within my body. Fair courteous knight, said Dame Lionesse, be not displeased nor over-hasty; for wit you well your great travail nor good love shall not be lost, for I consider your great travail and labour, your bounty and your goodness as me ought to do. And therefore go on your way, and look that ye be of good comfort, for all shall be for your worship and for the best, and perdy a twelvemonth will soon be done, and trust me, fair knight, I shall be true to you, and never to betray you, but to my death I shall love you and none other. And therewithal she turned her from the window, and Sir Beaumains rode awayward from the castle, making great dole, and so he rode here and there and wist not where he rode, till it was dark night. And then it happened him to come to a poor man's house, and there he was harboured all that night.

But Sir Beaumains had no rest, but wallowed and writhed for the love of the lady of the castle. And so upon the morrow he took his horse and rode until underne, and then he came to a broad water, and thereby was a great lodge, and there he alighted to sleep and laid his head upon the shield, and betook his horse to the dwarf, and commanded him to watch all night.

Now turn we to the lady of the same castle, that thought much upon Beaumains, and then she called unto her Sir Gringamore her brother, and prayed him in all manner, as he loved her heartily, that he would ride after Sir Beaumains: And ever have ye wait upon him till ye may find him sleeping, for I am sure in his heaviness he will alight down in some place, and lie him down to sleep; and therefore have ye your wait upon him, and in the priviest manner ye can, take his dwarf, and go ye your way with him as fast as ever ye may or Sir Beaumains awake. For my sister

Linet telleth me that he can tell of what kindred he is come, and what is his right name. And the meanwhile I and my sister will ride unto your castle to await when ye bring with you the dwarf. And then when ye have brought him unto your castle, I will have him in examination myself. Unto the time that I know what is his right name, and of what kindred he is come, shall I never be merry at my heart. Sister, said Sir Gringamore, all this shall be done after your intent.

And so he rode all the other day and the night till that he found Sir Beaumains lying by a water, and his head upon his shield, for to sleep. And then when he saw Sir Beaumains fast asleep, he came stilly stalking behind the dwarf, and plucked him fast under his arm, and so he rode away with him as fast as ever he might unto his own castle. And this Sir Gringamore's arms were all black, and that to him longeth. But ever as he rode with the dwarf toward his castle, he cried unto his lord and prayed him of help. And therewith awoke Sir Beaumains, and up he leapt lightly, and saw where Sir Gringamore rode his way with the dwarf, and so Sir Gringamore rode out of his sight.

Book VIII

CHAPTER XX. How King Anguish of Ireland was summoned to come to King Arthur's court for treason.

Then it fell that Sir Bleoberis and Sir Blamore de Ganis, that were brethren, they had summoned the King Anguish of Ireland for to come to Arthur's court upon pain of forfeiture of King Arthur's good grace. And if the King of Ireland came not in, at the day assigned and set, the king should lose his lands. So it happened that at the day assigned, King Arthur neither Sir Launcelot might not be there for to give the judgment, for King Arthur was with Sir Launcelot at the Castle Joyous Garde. And so King Arthur assigned King Carados and the King of Scots to be there that day as judges. So when the kings were at Camelot King Anguish of Ireland was come to know his accusers. Then was there Sir Blamore de Ganis, and appealed the King of Ireland of treason, that he had slain a cousin of his in his court in Ireland by treason. The king was sore abashed of his accusation, for-why he was come at the summons of King Arthur, and or he came at Camelot he wist not wherefore he was sent after. And when the king heard Sir Blamore say his will, he understood well there was none other remedy but for to answer him knightly; for the custom was such in those days, that an any man were appealed of any treason or murder he should fight body for body, or else to find another knight for him. And all manner of murders in those days were called treason.

So when King Anguish understood his accusing he was passing heavy, for he knew Sir Blamore de Ganis that he was a noble knight, and of noble knights come. Then the King of Ireland was simply purveyed of his answer; therefore the judges gave him respite by the third day to give his answer. So the king departed unto his lodging. The meanwhile there came a lady by Sir Tristram's pavilion making great dole. What aileth you, said Sir Tristram, that ye make such dole? Ah, fair knight, said the lady, I am ashamed unless that some good knight help me; for a

great lady of worship sent by me a fair child and a rich, unto Sir Launcelot du Lake, and hereby there met with me a knight, and threw me down from my palfrey, and took away the child from me. Well, my lady, said Sir Tristram, and for my lord Sir Launcelot's sake I shall get you that child again, or else I shall be beaten for it. And so Sir Tristram took his horse, and asked the lady which way the knight rode; and then she told him. And he rode after him, and within a while he overtook that knight. And then Sir Tristram bade him turn and give again the child.

CHAPTER XXI. How Sir Tristram rescued a child from a knight, and how Gouvernail told him of King Anguish.

The knight turned his horse and made him ready to fight. And then Sir Tristram smote him with a sword such a buffet that he tumbled to the earth. And then he yielded him unto Sir Tristram. Then come thy way, said Sir Tristram, and bring the child to the lady again. So he took his horse meekly and rode with Sir Tristram; and then by the way Sir Tristram asked him his name. Then he said, My name is Breuse Saunce Pite. So when he had delivered that child to the lady, he said: Sir, as in this the child is well remedied. Then Sir Tristram let him go again that sore repented him after, for he was a great foe unto many good knights of King Arthur's court.

Then when Sir Tristram was in his pavilion Gouvernail, his man, came and told him how that King Anguish of Ireland was come thither, and he was put in great distress; and there Gouvernail told Sir Tristram how King Anguish was summoned and appealed of murder. So God me help, said Sir Tristram, these be the best tidings that ever came to me this seven years, for now shall the King of Ireland have need of my help; for I daresay there is no knight in this country that is not of Arthur's court dare do battle with Sir Blamore de Ganis; and for to win the love of the King of Ireland I will take the battle upon me; and therefore Gouvernail bring me, I charge thee, to the king.

Then Gouvernail went unto King Anguish of Ireland, and saluted him fair. The king welcomed him and asked him what he would. Sir, said Gouvernail, here is a knight near hand that desireth to speak with you: he bade me say he would do you service. What knight is he? said the king. Sir, said he, it is Sir Tristram de Liones, that for your good grace that ye showed him in your lands will reward you in this country. Come on, fellow, said the king, with me anon and show me unto Sir Tristram. So the king took a little hackney and but few fellowship with him, until he came unto Sir Tristram's pavilion. And when Sir Tristram saw the king he ran unto him and would have holden his stirrup. But the king leapt from his horse lightly, and either halsed other in their arms. My gracious lord, said Sir Tristram, gramercy of your great goodnesses showed unto me in your marches and lands: and at that time I promised you to do you service an ever it lay in my power. And, gentle knight, said the king unto Sir Tristram, now have I great need of you, never had I so great need of no knight's help. How so, my good lord? said Sir Tristram. I shall tell you, said the king: I am summoned and appealed from my country for the death of a knight that was kin unto the good knight Sir Launcelot; wherefore Sir Blamore

de Ganis, brother to Sir Bleoberis hath appealed me to fight with him, outhere to find a knight in my stead. And well I wot, said the king, these that are come of King Ban's blood, as Sir Launcelot and these other, are passing good knights, and hard men for to win in battle as any that I know now living. Sir, said Sir Tristram, for the good lordship ye showed me in Ireland, and for my lady your daughter's sake, La Beale Isoud, I will take the battle for you upon this condition that ye shall grant me two things: that one is that ye shall swear to me that ye are in the right, that ye were never consenting to the knight's death; Sir, then said Sir Tristram, when that I have done this battle, if God give me grace that I speed, that ye shall give me a reward, what thing reasonable that I will ask of you. So God me help, said the king, ye shall have whatsoever ye will ask. It is well said, said Sir Tristram.

1.17.2 Reading and Review Questions

1. Both love and duty play important roles in the story. Which one do the characters seem to value more, and why do you think so? Does the author seem to imply one is better than the other?
2. Which knight or knights appear to be loyal to the chivalric code, but not the Christian code? What happens to him/them?
3. Are any of the characters in the story positive role models for the original audience? Why or why not?
4. How does the tone of the story affect your reading of it? If the tone were different (either neutral or more positive), would it change your view of the story? Why or why not?
5. Does anything surprise you about the way that the characters are portrayed? Does anything seem out of place, and why?

1.18 EVERYMAN

Author unknown

Late fifteenth century

The Summoning of Everyman, or *Everyman*, is a Christian morality play. It is either a translation and adaptation of a Dutch play of the same time, *Elckerlyc*, or the Dutch play is a translation and adaptation of *Everyman*. Unlike cycle plays, which are written as a sequence of plays from events in the Bible, morality plays are written individually. In a little over 900 lines, *Everyman* presents what happens when Death (one of the many allegorical figures in the story) is sent to Everyman. Everyman then attempts to convince the other characters—Kin, Friendship, Strength, Beauty, Wisdom, and others—to accompany him on the journey. The play follows mainstream medieval Roman Catholic doctrine, including confession, penance, and extreme unction. The text is careful to condemn bad priests, who abuse the trust of the faithful, while assuring Everyman that good priests are

necessary for the salvation of the soul. Despite the grim topic, the play is quite funny at times, and the clever way that it presents its subject makes it one of the finest surviving morality plays.

1.18.1 *Everyman*

Here heginneþ a treatise how the High Father of Heaven sendeth Death to summon every creature to come and give an account of their lives in this world and is in manner of a moral play.

[The Messenger enters.]

MESSENGER.

I pray you all give your audience,
 And hear this matter with reverence,
 In form a moral play.
 The Summoning of Everyman it is called so,
 That of our lives and ending maketh show
 How transitory we be every day.
 This matter is wondrous precious,
 But the meaning of it is more gracious
 And sweet to bear away.
 The story saith: Man, in the beginning
 Watch well, and take good heed of the ending.
 Be you never so gay!
 Ye think sin in the beginning full sweet,
 Which, in the end, causeth the soul to weep,
 When the body lieth in clay.
 Here shall you see how Fellowship and Jollity,
 Both Strength, Pleasure, and Beauty,
 Will fade from thee as flower in May,
 For ye shall hear how our Heaven's King
 Calleth Everyman to a general reckoning.
 Give audience and hear what he doth say.
 [The Messenger goes.]

GOD SPEAKETH:

I perceive, here in my majesty.
 How that all creatures be to me unkind,
 Living, without fear, in worldly prosperity.
 In spiritual vision the people be so blind,
 Drowned in sin, they know me not for their God;
 In worldly riches is all their mind.

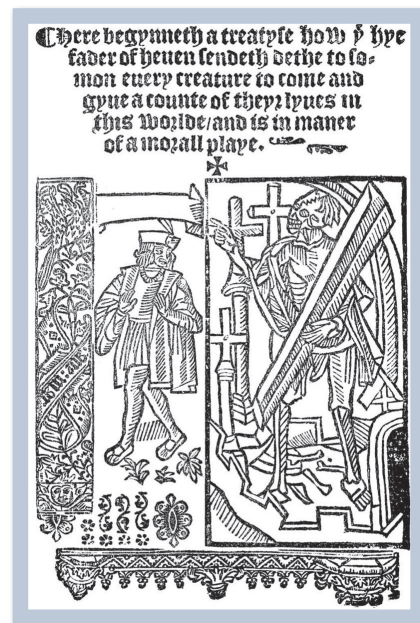


Image 1.17 | Frontispiece from *Everyman*

Artist | Unknown

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They fear not my righteousness, the sharp rod.
 My law that I disclosed, when I for them died,
 They clean forget, and shedding of my blood red.
 I hung between two it cannot be denied,
 To get them life I suffered to be dead,
 I healed their feet, with thorns was hurt my head.
 I could do no more than I did truly.
 And now I see the people do clean forsake me;
 They use the seven deadly sins damnable
 In such wise that pride, covetousness, wrath, and lechery.
 Now in this world be made commendable.
 And thus they leave of angels the heavenly company.
 Every man liveth so after his own pleasure,
 And yet of their lives they be nothing sure.
 The more I them forbear, I see
 The worse from year to year they be;
 All that live grow more evil apace;
 Therefore I will, in briefest space,

From every man in person have a reckoning shown.
 For, if I leave the people thus alone
 In their way of life and wicked passions to he,
 They will become much worse than beasts, verily.
 Now for envy would one eat up another, and tarry not,
 Charity is by all clean forgot.
 I hoped well that every man
 In my glory should make his mansion,
 And thereto I made them all elect.
 But now I see, like traitors abject,
 They thank me not for the pleasure that I for them meant.
 Nor yet for their being that I them have lent.
 I proffered the people great multitude of mercy.
 And few there be that ask it heartily.
 They be so cumbered with worldly riches, thereto
 I must needs upon them justice do, —
 On every man living without fear.
 Where art thou, Death, thou mighty messenger?
 [Death enters.]

DEATH.

Almighty God, I am here at your will,
 Your commandment to fulfil.

GOD.

Go thou to Everyman,
 And show him in my name
 A pilgrimage he must on him take,
 Which he in no wise may escape.
 And that he bring with him a sure reckoning
 Without delay or any tarrying.

DEATH.

Lord, I will in the world go run over all.
 And cruelly search out both great and small.
 Every man will I beset that liveth beastly
 Out of God's law, and doth not dread folly.
 He that loveth riches I will strike with my dart
 His sight to blind and him from heaven to part —
 Except if Alms be his good friend —
 In hell for to dwell, world without end.
 Lo, yonder I see Everyman walking.
 Full little he thinketh on my coming!
 His mind is on fleshly lusts and his treasure.
 And great pain it shall cause him to endure
 Before the Lord, of Heaven the King.
 Everyman, stand still ! Whither art thou going
 Thus gayly? Hast thou thy Maker forgot?
 [Everyman enters.]

EVERYMAN.

Why askest thou?
 Wouldest thou know? For what?

DEATH.

Yea, sir, I will show you now.
 In great haste I am sent to thee
 From God, out of his majesty.

EVERYMAN.

What, sent to me!

DEATH.

Yea, certainly.
 Though thou hast forgot him here.
 He thinketh on thee in the heavenly sphere,
 As, ere we part, thou shalt know.

EVERYMAN.

What desireth God of me?

DEATH.

That shall I show thee.
A reckoning he will needs have
Without any longer respite

EVERYMAN.

To give a reckoning longer leisure I crave.
This blind matter troubleth my wit.

DEATH.

Upon thee thou must take a long journey,
Therefore, do thou thine accounting-book with thee bring.
For turn again thou canst not by no way,
And look thou be sure in thy reckoning.
For before God thou shalt answer, and show true
Thy many bad deeds and good but a few,
How thou hast spent thy life and in what wise
Before the Chief Lord of Paradise.
Get thee prepared that we may be upon that journey,
For well thou knowest thou shalt make none for thee attorney.

EVERYMAN.

Full unready I am such reckoning to give.
I know thee not. What messenger art thou?

DEATH.

I am Death that no man fear,
For every man I arrest and no man spare,
For it is God's commandment
That all to me should be obedient.

EVERYMAN.

O Death, thou comest when I had thee least in mind!
In thy power it lieth to save me yet; —
Thereto of my goods will I give thee, if thou wilt be kind, —
Yea, a thousand pounds shalt thou get! —
And defer this matter till another day.

DEATH.

Everyman, it may not be in any way.
I set no store by gold, silver, riches, or such gear,
Nor by pope, emperor, king, prince, or peer.

For, if I would receive gifts great.
 All the world I might get,
 But my custom is clean the contrary way.
 I give thee no respite. Come hence, nor delay!

EVERYMAN.

Alas, shall I have no longer respite!
 I may say Death giveth no warning!
 To think on thee, it maketh my heart sick,
 For all unready is my book of reckoning.
 But if I might have twelve years of waiting,
 My accounting-book I would make so clear
 That my reckoning I should not need to fear.
 Wherefore, Death, I pray thee, for God's mercy.
 Spare me till I be provided with a remedy!

DEATH.

It availeth thee not to cry, weep, and pray,
 But haste thee lightly, that thou mayest be on thy journey.
 And make proof of thy friends, if thou can,
 For, know thou well, time waiteth for no man,
 And in the world each living creature
 Because of Adam's sin must die by nature.

EVERYMAN.

Death, if I should this pilgrimage take,
 And my reckoning duly make.
 Show me, for Saint Charity,
 Should I not come again shortly?

DEATH.

No, Everyman, if once thou art there,
 Thou mayest nevermore come here,
 Trust me, verily.

EVERYMAN.

O gracious God, in the high seat celestial,
 Have mercy on me in this utmost need!
 Shall I no company have from this vale terrestrial
 Of mine acquaintance that way me to lead?

DEATH.

Yea, if any he so hardy
 As to go with thee and bear thee company.
 Haste thee that thou mayest be gone to God's magnificence,

Thy reckoning to give before his presence,
 What, thinkest thou thy life is given thee,
 And thy worldly goods also?

EVERYMAN.

I had thought so, verily.

DEATH.

Nay, nay, it was but lent to thee,
 For, as soon as thou dost go,
 Another awhile shall have it and then even so.
 Go therefore as thou hast done.
 Everyman, thou art mad! Thou hast thy wits five,
 And here on earth will not amend thy life,
 For suddenly I do come!

EVERYMAN.

O wretched caitiff, whither shall I flee
 That I may escape this endless sorrow!
 Nay, gentle Death, spare me until to-morrow
 That I may amend me
 With good advisement!

DEATH.

Nay, thereto I will not consent,
 Nor no man respite, if I might,
 But to the heart suddenly I shall smite
 Without any "advisement."
 And now out of thy sight I will me hie,
 See that thou make thee ready speedily,
 For thou mayest say this is the day
 Wherefrom no man living may escape away.

EVERYMAN.

Alas, I may well weep with sighs deep!
 Now have I no manner of company
 To help me on my journey and me to keep,
 And also my writing is all unready.
 What can I do that may excuse me!
 I would to God I had never been begot!
 To my soul a full great profit it would be,
 For now I fear pains huge and great, God wot!
 The time passeth — help, Lord, that all things wrought!
 For, though I mourn, yet it availeth naught.

The day passeth and is almost through,
 I wot not well of aught that I may do.
 To whom were it best that I my plaint should make?
 What if to Fellowship I thereof spake,
 And what this sudden chance should mean disclosed?
 For surely in him is all my trust reposed —
 We have in the world so many a day
 Been good friends in sport and play.
 I see him yonder certainly —
 I trust that he will bear me company;
 Therefore to him will I speak to ease my sorrow.
 Well met, good Fellowship, and a good morrow!
 [Enter Fellowship]

FELLOWSHIP SPEAKETH:

I wish thee good morrow, Everyman, by this day!
 Sir, why lookest thou so piteously?
 If anything be amiss, prithee to me it say
 That I may help in remedy.

EVERYMAN.

Yea, good Fellowship, yea,
 I am in great jeopardy!

FELLOWSHIP.

My true friend, show to me your mind.
 I will not forsake thee to my live's end,
 In the way of good company.

EVERYMAN.

That was well spoken and lovingly.

FELLOWSHIP.

Sir, I must needs know your heaviness.
 I have pity to see you in any distress.
 If any have wronged you, revenged ye shall be.
 Though I upon the ground be slain for thee,
 Even should I know before that I should die.

EVERYMAN.

Verily, Fellowship, gramercy!

FELLOWSHIP.

Tush! By thy thanks I set not a straw.
 Show me your grief and say no more.

EVERYMAN.

If I my heart should to you unfold,
And you then were to turn your heart from me,
And no comfort would give when I had told,
Then should I ten times sorrier be.

FELLOWSHIP.

Sir, I say as I will do indeed!

EVERYMAN.

Then you be a good friend at need.
I have found you true heretofore.

FELLOWSHIP.

And so ye shall evermore,
For, in faith, if thou goest to hell,
I will not forsake thee by the way.

EVERYMAN.

Ye speak like a good friend — I believe you well.
I shall deserve it, if so I may!

FELLOWSHIP.

I speak of no deserving, by this day,
For he that will say, and nothing do.
Is not worthy with good company to go.
Therefore show me the grief of your mind,
As to your friend most loving and kind.

EVERYMAN.

I shall show you how it is:
Commaned I am to go a journey,
A long way hard and dangerous.
And give a strict account without delay
Before the High Judge, Adonai.
Wherefore, I pray you, bear me company,
As ye have promised, on this journey.

FELLOWSHIP.

That is matter, indeed! Promise is duty —
But if I should take such a voyage on me,
I know well it should be to my pain;
Afeard also it maketh me, for certain.
But let us take counsel here as well as we can,
For your words would dismay a strong man.

EVERYMAN.

Why, if I had need, ye said
Ye would never forsake me, quick nor dead,
Though it were to hell truly!

FELLOWSHIP.

So I said certainly,
But such pleasant things be set aside, the truth to say;
And also, if we took such a journey,
When should we come again?

EVERYMAN.

Nay, never again till the day of doom.

FELLOWSHIP.

In faith, then, will I not come there.
Who hath you these tidings brought?

EVERYMAN.

Indeed, Death was with me here.

FELLOWSHIP.

Now, by God that all hath bought,
If Death were the messenger,
For no man living here below
I will not that loathly journey go —
Not for the father that begat me!

EVERYMAN.

Ye promised otherwise, pardy!

FELLOWSHIP.

I know well I do say so, truly,
And still, if thou wilt eat and drink and make good cheer.
Or haunt of women the merry company,
I would not forsake you while the day is clear,
Trust me, verily.

EVERYMAN.

Yea, thereto ye would be ready!
To go to mirth, solace, and play.
Your mind would sooner persuaded be
Than to bear me company on my long journey.

FELLOWSHIP.

Now, in good sooth, I have no will that way —
 But if thou would'st murder, or any man kill,
 In that I will help thee with a good will.

EVERYMAN.

Oh, that is simple advice, indeed!
 Gentle Fellowship, help me in my necessity!
 We have loved long, and now I am in need!
 And now, gentle Fellowship, remember me!

FELLOWSHIP.

Whether ye have loved me or no.
 By Saint John, I will not with thee go!

EVERYMAN.

Yea, I pray thee, take this task on thee and do so
 much for me.
 As to bring me forward on my way for Saint
 Charity,
 And comfort me till I come without the town.

FELLOWSHIP.

Nay, if thou wouldest give me a new gown,
 I will not a foot with thee go.
 But, if thou hadst tarried, I would not have left thee so.
 And so now, God speed thee on thy journey,
 For from thee I will depart as fast as I may!

EVERYMAN.

Whither away, Fellowship? Will you forsake me?

FELLOWSHIP.

Yea, by my faith! I pray God take thee.

EVERYMAN.

Farewell, good Fellowship, — for thee my heart is sore.
 Adieu forever, I shall see thee no more!

FELLOWSHIP.

In faith, Everyman, farewell now at the ending.
 For you I will remember that parting is grieving.
 [Fellowship goes.]

EVERYMAN.

Alack! Shall we thus part indeed?
 Ah, Lady, help! Lo, vouchsafing no more comfort,
 Fellowship thus forsaketh me in my utmost need.
 For help in this world whither shall I resort?
 Fellowship heretofore with me would merry make,
 And now little heed of my sorrow doth he take.
 It is said in prosperity men friends may find
 Which in adversity be full unkind.
 Now whither for succor shall I flee.
 Since that Fellowship hath forsaken me?
 To my kinsmen will I truly.
 Praying them to help me in my necessity.
 I believe that they will do so
 For "Nature will creep where it may not go."
 [Kindred and Cousin enter.]
 I will go try, for yonder I see them go.
 Where be ye now, my friends and kinsmen, lo?

KINDRED.

Here we be now at your commandment.
 Cousin, I pray you show us your intent
 In any wise and do not spare.

COUSIN.

Yea, Everyman, and to us declare
 If ye be disposed to go any whither,
 For, wit you well, we will live and die together I

KINDRED.

In wealth and woe we will with you hold,
 For "with his own kin a man may be bold."

EVERYMAN.

Gramercy, my friends and kinsmen kind!
 Now shall I show you the grief of my mind.
 I was commanded by a messenger
 That is a High King's chief officer.
 He bade me go a pilgrimage to my pain,
 And I know well I shall never come again;
 And I must give a reckoning strait,
 For I have a great enemy that lieth for me in wait,
 Who intendeth me to hinder.

KINDRED.

What account is that which you must render? —
That would I know.

EVERYMAN.

Of all my works I must show
How I have lived and my days have spent,
Also of evil deeds to which I have been used
In my time, since life was to me lent.
And of all virtues that I have refused.
Therefore, I pray you, go thither with me
To help to make my account, for Saint Charity!

COUSIN.

What, to go thither? Is that the matter?
Nay, Everyman, I had liefer fast on bread and water
All this five year and more!

EVERYMAN.

Alas, that ever my mother me bore!
For now shall I never merry be,
If that you forsake me!

KINDRED.

Ah, sir, come! Ye be a merry man!
Pluck up heart and make no moan,
But one tiling I warn you, by Saint Anne,
As for me, ye shall go alone!

EVERYMAN.

My cousin, will you not with me go?

COUSIN.

No, by our Lady! I have the cramp in my toe.
Trust not to me, for, so God me speed,
I will deceive you in your utmost need.

KINDRED.

It availeth not us to coax and court.
Ye shall have my maid, with all my heart.
She loveth to go to feasts, there to make foolish sport
And to dance, and in antics to take part.
To help you on that journey I will give her leave willingly,
If so be that you and she may agree.

EVERYMAN.

Now show me the very truth within your mind —
Will you go with me or abide behind?

KINDRED.

Abide behind? Yea, that I will, if I may —
Therefore farewell till another day!

EVERYMAN.

How shall I be merry or glad? —
For fair promises men to me make,
But, when I have most need, they me forsake!
I am deceived — that maketh me sad!

COUSIN.

Cousin Everyman, farewell now, lo!
For, verily, I will not with thee go.
Also of mine own an unready reckoning,
I have to give account of, therefore I make tarrying.
Now God keep thee, for now I go!
[Kindred and Cousin go.]

EVERYMAN.

Ah, Jesus, is all to this come so?
Lo, “fair words make fools fain,”
They promise, and from deeds refrain.
My kinsmen promised me faithfully
For to abide by me stedfastly.
And now fast away do they flee.
Even so Fellowship promised me.
What friend were it best for me to provide?
I am losing my time longer here to abide.
Yet still in my mind a thing there is.
All my life I have loved riches.
If that my Goods now help me might,
He would make my heart full light.
To him will I speak in my sorrow this day.
My Goods and Riches, where art thou, pray?
[Goods is disclosed hemmed in by chests and bags.]

GOODS.

Who calleth me? Everyman? Why this haste thou hast?
I lie here in corners trussed and piled so high.
And in chests I am locked so fast,

Also sacked in bags, thou mayest see with thine eye,
 I cannot stir; in packs, full low I lie.
 What ye would have, lightly to me say.

EVERYMAN.

Come hither. Goods, with all the haste thou may.
 For counsel straightway I must ask of thee.

GOODS.

Sir, if ye in this world have sorrow or adversity,
 That can I help you to remedy shortly.

EVERYMAN.

It is another disease that grieveth me;
 In this world it is not, I tell thee so,
 I am sent for another way to go,
 To give a strict account general
 Before the highest Jupiter of all.
 And all my life I have had joy and pleasure in thee,
 Therefore I pray thee go with me,
 For, peradventure, thou mayest before God Almighty on high
 My reckoning help to clean and purify,
 For one may hear ever and anon
 "That money maketh all right that is wrong."

GOODS.

Nay, Everyman, I sing another song —
 I follow no mail on such voyages,
 For, if I went with thee,
 Thou shouldest fare much the worse for me.
 For, because on me thou didst set thy mind.
 Thy reckoning I have made blotted and blind.
 So that thine account thou canst not make truly —
 And that hast thou for the love of me.

EVERYMAN.

That would be to me grief full sore and sorrowing,
 When I should come that fearful answering.
 Up, let us go thither together!

GOODS.

Nay, not so! I am too brittle, I may not endure,
 I will follow no man one foot, be ye sure.

EVERYMAN.

Alas! I have thee loved, and had great pleasure
All the days of my life in goods and treasure.

GOODS.

That is to thy damnation, I tell thee a true thing,
For love of me is to the love everlasting contrary.
But if thou hadst the while loved me moderately,
In such wise as to give the poor a part of me,
Then would'st thou not in this dolor be.
Nor in this great sorrow and care.

EVERYMAN.

Lo, now was I deceived ere I was ware,
And all I may blame to misspending of time.

GOODS.

What, thinkest thou I am thine?

EVERYMAN.

I had thought so.

GOODS.

Nay, Everyman, I say no.
Just for a while I was lent to thee,
A season thou hast had me in prosperity.
My nature it is man's soul to kill,
If I save one, a thousand I do spill.
Thinkest thou that I will follow thee?
Nay, from this world not, verily!

EVERYMAN.

I had thought otherwise.

GOODS.

So it is to thy soul Goods is a thief.
For when thou art dead I straightway devise
Another to deceive in the same wise
As I have done thee, and all to his soul's grief.

EVERYMAN.

O false Goods, cursed may thou be!
Thou traitor to God that hast deceived me,
And caught me in thy snare.

GOODS.

Marry, thou broughtest thyself to this care, —
Whereof I am glad!
I must needs laugh, I cannot be sad!

EVERYMAN.

Ah, Goods, thou hast had long my hearty love.
I gave thee that which should be the Lord's above.
But wilt thou not go with me, indeed? —
I pray thee truth to say!

GOODS.

No, so God me speed!
Therefore farewell, and have good-day.
[Goods is hidden from view.]

EVERYMAN.

Oh, to whom shall I make my moan
For to go with me on that heavy journey!
First Fellowship, so he said, would have with me
gone,
His words were very pleasant and gay,
But afterwards he left me alone;
Then spake I to my kinsmen, all in despair,
And they also gave me words fair.
They lacked not fair speeches to spend,
But all forsook me in the end;
Then went I to my Goods that I loved best.
In hope to have comfort, but there had I least,
For my Goods sharply did me tell
That he bringeth many into hell.
Then of myself I was ashamed.
And so I am worthy to be blamed.
Thus may I well myself hate.
Of whom shall I now counsel take?
I think that I shall never speed

TILL I GO TO MY *GOOD DEEDS*.

But, alas! she is so weak,
That she can neither move nor speak.
Yet will I venture on her now.
My Good Deeds, where be you? [Good Deeds is shown]

GOOD DEEDS.

Here I lie, cold in the ground.
Thy sins surely have me bound
That I cannot stir.

EVERYMAN.

Good Deeds, I stand in fear!
I must pray you for counsel,
For help now would come right well!

GOOD DEEDS.

Everyman, I have understanding
That ye be summoned your account to make
Before Messias, of Jerusalem King.
If you do my counsel, that journey with you will I take.

EVERYMAN.

For that I come to you my moan to make.
I pray you that ye will go with me.

GOOD DEEDS.

I would full fain, but I cannot stand, verily.

EVERYMAN.

Why, is there something amiss that did you befall?

GOOD DEEDS.

Yea, Sir, I may thank you for all.
If in every wise ye had encouraged me.
Your book of account full ready would be.
Behold the books of your works and your deeds thereby.
Ah, see, how under foot they lie
Unto your soul's deep heaviness.

EVERYMAN.

Our Lord Jesus his help vouchsafe to me,
For one letter here I cannot see.

GOOD DEEDS.

There is a blind reckoning in time of distress!

EVERYMAN.

Good Deeds, I pray you help me in this need,
Or else I am forever damned indeed.
Therefore help me to make reckoning

Before him, that Redeemer is of everything,
That is, and was, and shall ever be. King of All.

GOOD DEEDS.

Everyman, I am sorry for your fall.
And fain would I help you, if I were able.

EVERYMAN.

Good Deeds, your counsel, I pray you, give me.

GOOD DEEDS.

That will I do, verily.
Though on my feet I may not go,
I have a sister that shall with you be, also.
Called Knowledge, who shall with you abide,
To help you to make that dire reckoning.
[Knowledge enters.]

KNOWLEDGE.

Everyman, I will go with thee and be thy guide,
In thy utmost need to go by thy side.

EVERYMAN.

In good condition I am now in everything.
And am wholly content with this good thing,
Thanks be to God, my creator!

GOOD DEEDS.

And when he hath brought thee there.
Where thou shalt heal thee of thy smart,
Then go with thy reckoning and thy good deeds together,
For to make thee joyful at heart
Before the Holy Trinity.

EVERYMAN.

My Good Deeds, gramercy!
I am well content, certainly,
With your words sweet.

KNOWLEDGE.

Now go we together lovingly
To Confession, that cleansing river fair.

EVERYMAN.

For joy I weep — I would we were there!

But, I pray you, give me cognition,
Where dwelleth that holy man, Confession?

KNOWLEDGE.

In the House of Salvation,
We shall find him in that place,
That shall us comfort by God's grace.
[Confession enters.]
Lo, this is Confession. Kneel down, and ask mercy,
For he is in good favor with God Almighty.

EVERYMAN.

O glorious fountain that all uncleanness doth clarify,
Wash from me the spots of vice unclean.
That on me no sin be seen!
I come with Knowledge for my redemption.
Redeemed with heartfelt and full contrition,
For I am commanded a pilgrimage to take,
And great accounts before God to make.
Now I pray you, Shrift, Mother of Salvation,
Help my good deeds because of my piteous exclamation!

CONFESSION.

I know your sorrow well, Everyman,
Because with Knowledge ye come to me.
I will you comfort as well as I can,
And a precious stone will I give thee.
Called penance, wise voider of adversity.
Therewith shall your body chastened be
Through abstinence and perseverance in God's service.
Here shall you receive that scourge of me
That is penance stronge, that ye must endure.
To remember thy Saviour was scourged for thee
With sharp scourges, and suffered it patiently —
So must thou ere thou escape from that painful pilgrimage.
Knowledge, do thou sustain him on this voyage.
And by that time Good Deeds will be with thee.
But in any case be sure of mercy.
For your time draweth on fast, if ye will saved be.
Ask God mercy, and he will grant it truly.
When with the scourge of penance man doth him bind,
The oil of forgiveness then shall he find.
[Confession goes.]

EVERYMAN.

Thanked be God for his gracious work,
 For now will I my penance begin.
 This hath rejoiced and lightened my heart,
 Though the knots be painful and hard within.

KNOWLEDGE.

Everyman, see that ye your penance fulfil.
 Whatever the pains ye abide full dear.
 And Knowledge shall give you counsel at will.
 How your account ye shall make full clear.

EVERYMAN.

O eternal God, O heavenly being,
 O way of righteousness, O goodly vision,
 Which descended down into a virgin pure
 Because he would for every man redeem
 That which Adam forfeited by his disobedience —
 O blessed God, elect and exalted in thy divinity,
 Forgive thou my grievous offence!
 Here I cry thee mercy in this presence.

O spiritual treasure, O ransom and redeemer,
 Of all the world the hope and the governor,
 Mirror of joy, founder of mercy.
 Who illumineth heaven and earth thereby.
 Hear my clamorous complaint, though late it be,
 Receive my prayers, unworthy in this heavy life!
 Though I be a sinner most abominable,
 Yet let my name be written in Moses' table.

Mary, pray to the Maker of everything
 To vouchsafe me help at my ending.
 And save me from the power of my enemy,
 For Death assaileth me strongly! —
 And, Lady, that I may, by means of thy prayer,
 In your Son's glory as partner share.
 Through the mediation of his passion I it crave.
 I beseech you, help my soul to save!

Knowledge, give me the scourge of penance;
 My flesh therewith shall give acquittance.
 I will now begin, if God give me grace.

KNOWLEDGE.

Everyman, God give you time and space!
 Thus I bequeath you into the hands of our Saviour,
 Now may you make your reckoning sure.

EVERYMAN.

In the name of the Holy Trinity,
 My body sorely punished shall be.
 Take this, body, for the sin of the flesh.
 As thou delightest to go gay and fresh.
 And in the way of damnation thou didst me bring,
 Therefore suffer now the strokes of punishing.
 Now of penance to wade the water clear I desire.
 To save me from purgatory, that sharp fire.

GOOD DEEDS.

I thank God now I can walk and go.
 And am delivered of my sickness and woe!
 Therefore with Everyman I will go and not spare;
 His good works I will help him to declare.

KNOWLEDGE.

Now, Everyman, be merry and glad.
 Your Good Deeds comet h now, ye may not be sad.
 Now is your Good Deeds whole and sound,
 Going upright upon the ground.
 [Good Deeds rises and walks to them,]

EVERYMAN.

My heart is light and shall be evermore.
 Now will I smite faster than I did before.

GOOD DEEDS.

Everyman, pilgrim, my special friend.
 Blessed be thou without end!
 For thee is prepared the eternal glory.
 Now thou hast made me whole and sound this tide,
 In every hour I will by thee abide.

EVERYMAN.

Welcome, my Good Deeds! Now I hear thy voice,
 I weep for sweetness of love.

KNOWLEDGE.

Be no more sad, but ever rejoice!

God seeth thy manner of life on his throne above.
 Put on this garment to thy behoof,
 Which wet with the tears of your weeping is,
 Or else in God's presence you may it miss,
 When ye to your journey's end come shall.

EVERYMAN.

Gentle Knowledge, what do you it call?

KNOWLEDGE.

A garment of sorrow it is by name,
 From pain it will you reclaim.
 Contrition it is,
 That getteth forgiveness,
 Passing well it doth God please.

GOOD DEEDS.

Everyman, will you wear it for your soul's ease?
 [Everyman puts on the robe of contrition.]

EVERYMAN.

Now blessed be Jesu, Mary's son.
 For now have I on true contrition!
 And let us go now without tarrying.
 Good Deeds, have we all clear our reckoning?

GOOD DEEDS.

Yea, indeed, I have them here.

EVERYMAN.

Then I trust we need not fear.
 Now, friends, let us not part in twain!

KNOWLEDGE.

Nay, Everyman, that will we not, for certain.

GOOD DEEDS.

Yet must thou lead with thee

EVERYMAN.

Who should they be?

GOOD DEEDS.

Discretion and Strength they hight.
 And thy Beauty may not abide behind.

KNOWLEDGE.

Also ye must call to mind
Your Five Wits as your counsellors beside.

GOOD DEEDS.

You must have them ready at every tide.

EVERYMAN.

How shall I get them hither?

KNOWLEDGE.

You must call them all together,
And they will hear you immediately.

EVERYMAN.

My friends, come hither and present be.
Discretion, Strength, my Five Wits, and Beauty.
[They enter.]

BEAUTY.

Here at your will be we all ready.
What will ye that we should do?

GOOD DEEDS.

That ye should with Everyman go,
And help him in his pilgrimage.
Advise you — will you with him or not, on that voyage?

STRENGTH.

We will all bring him thither,
To help him and comfort, believe ye me

DISCRETION.

So will we go with him all together.

EVERYMAN.

Almighty God, beloved mayest thou be!
I give thee praise that I have hither brought
Strength, Discretion, Beauty, Five Wits — lack I
nought —
And my Good Deeds, with Knowledge clear,
All be in my company at my will here.
I desire no more in this my anxiousness.

STRENGTH.

And I, Strength, will stand by you in your distress,

Though thou wouldest in battle fight on the ground.

FIVE WITS.

And though it were through the world round,
We will not leave you for sweet or sour.

BEAUTY.

No more will I unto Death's hour,
Whatsoever thereof befall.

DISCRETION.

Everyman, advise you first of all.
Go with a good advisement and deliberation.
We all give you virtuous monition
That all shall be well.

EVERYMAN.

My friends, hearken what I will tell.
I pray God reward you in his heavenly sphere.
Now hearken all that be here.
For I will make my testament
Here before you all present.
In alms, half my goods will I give with my hands
twain.
In the way of charity with good intent,
And the other half still shall remain
In bequest to return where it ought to be.
This I do in despite of the fiend of hell,
Out of his peril to quit me well
For ever after and this day.

KNOWLEDGE.

Everyman, hearken what I say.
Go to Priesthood, I, you advise,
And receive of him in any wise
The Holy Sacrament and Unction together,
Then see ye speedily turn again hither.
We will all await you here, verily.

FIVE WITS.

Yea, Everyman, haste thee that ye may ready be.
There is no emperor, king, duke, nor baron bold,
That from God such commission doth hold
As he doth to the least priest in this world consign,
For of the Blessed Sacraments, pure and benign,

He beareth the keys, and thereof hath the cure
 For man's redemption, it is ever sure.
 Which God as medicine for our souls' gain
 Gave us out of his heart with great pain,
 Here in this transitory life for thee and me.
 Of the Blessed Sacraments seven there be.
 Baptism, Confirmation, with Priesthood good.
 And the Sacrament of God's precious Flesh and Blood,
 Marriage, the Holy Extreme Unction, and Penance.
 These seven are good to have in remembrance,
 Gracious Sacraments of high divinity.

EVERYMAN.

Fain would I receive that holy body.
 And meekly to my spiritual father will I go.

FIVE WITS.

Everyman, that is best that ye can do.
 God will you to salvation bring,
 For Priesthood exceedeth every other thing.
 To us Holy Scripture they do teach,
 And convert men from sin, heaven to reach.
 God hath to them more power given
 Than to any angel that is in heaven.
 With five words he may consecrate
 God's body in flesh and blood to make,
 And handleth his Maker between his hands.
 The priest bindeth and unbindeth all bands
 Both in earth and heaven. —
 Thou dost administer all the Sacraments seven.
 Though we should kiss thy feet, yet thereof thou worthy wert.
 Thou art the surgeon that doth cure of mortal sin the hurt.
 Remedy under God we find none
 Except in Priesthood alone. —
 Everyman, God gave priests that dignity,
 And setteth them in his stead among us to be,
 Thus be they above angels in degree.

KNOWLEDGE.

If priests be good, it is so surely;
 But when Jesus hung on the cross with grievous smart,
 There he gave out of his blessed heart
 That same Sacrament in grievous torment. —
 He sold them not to us, that Lord omnipotent.

Therefore Saint Peter the apostle doth say
 That Jesus' curse have all they
 Which God their Saviour do buy or sell.
 Or if they for any money do "take or tell."
 Sinful priests give sinners bad example in deed and word,
 Their children sit by other men's fires, I have heard,
 And some haunt of women the company,
 With life unclean as through lustful acts of lechery—.
 These be with sin made blind.

FIVE WITS.

I trust to God no such may we find.
 Therefore let us do Priesthood honor,
 And follow their doctrines for our souls' succor.
 We be their sheep, and they shepherds be,
 By whom we all are kept in security.
 Peace! for yonder I see Everyman come.
 Who unto God hath made true satisfaction.

GOOD DEEDS.

Methinketh it is he indeed.

EVERYMAN.

Now may Jesus all of you comfort and speed!
 I have received the Sacrament for my redemption,
 And also mine extreme unction.
 Blessed be all they that counselled me to take it!
 And now, friends, let us go without longer respite.
 I thank God ye would so long waiting stand.
 Now set each of you on this rood your hand,
 And shortly follow me.
 I go before where I would be.
 God be our guide!

STRENGTH.

Everyman, we will not from you go,
 Till ye have gone this voyage long.

DISCRETION.

I, Discretion, will abide by you also.

KNOWLEDGE.

And though of this pilgrimage the hardships be
 never so strong,
 No turning backward in me shall you know.

Everyman, I will be as sure by thee,
As ever I was by Judas Maccabee.

EVERYMAN.

Alas! I am so faint I may not stand,
My limbs under me do fold.
Friends, let us not turn again to this land.
Not for all the world's gold.
For into this cave must I creep,
And turn to the earth, and there sleep.

BEAUTY.

What — into this grave! Alas! Woe is me!

EVERYMAN.

Yea, there shall ye consume utterly.

BEAUTY.

And what, — must I smother here?

EVERYMAN.

Yea, by my faith, and never more appear!
In this world we shall live no more at all,
But in heaven before the highest lord of all.

BEAUTY.

I cross out all this! Adieu, by Saint John I
I take “my cap in my lap” and am gone.

EVERYMAN.

What, Beauty! — whither go ye ?

BEAUTY.

Peace! I am deaf, I look not behind me.
Not if thou wouldst give me all the gold in thy chest.
[Beauty goes, followed by the others, as they speak in turn.]

EVERYMAN.

Alas! in whom may I trust?
Beauty fast away from me doth hie.
She promised with me to live and die.

STRENGTH.

Everyman, I will thee also forsake and deny,
Thy game liketh me not at all!

EVERYMAN.

Why, then ye will forsake me all!
Sweet Strength, tarry a little space.

STRENGTH.

Nay, Sir, by the rood of grace,
I haste me fast my way from thee to take,
Though thou weep till thy heart do break.

EVERYMAN.

Ye would ever abide by me, ye said.

STRENGTH.

Yea, I have you far enough conveyed.
Ye be old enough, I understand,
Your pilgrimage to take in hand.
I repent me that I thither came.

EVERYMAN.

Strength, for displeasing you I am to blame.
Will ye break “promise that is debt”?

STRENGTH.

In faith, I care not!
Thou art but a fool to complain.
You spend your speech and waste your brain.
Go, thrust thyself into the ground!

EVERYMAN.

I had thought more sure I should you have found,
But I see well, who trusteth in his Strength,
She him deceiveth at length.
Both Strength and Beauty have forsaken me,
Yet they promised me fair and lovingly.

DISCRETION.

Everyman, I will after Strength be gone —
As for me, I will leave you alone.

EVERYMAN.

Why, Discretion, will ye forsake me!

DISCRETION.

Yea, in faith, I will go from thee,
For when Strength goeth before

I follow after, evermore.

EVERYMAN.

Yet, I pray thee, for love of the Trinity
Look in my grave once in pity of me.

DISCRETION.

Nay, so nigh will I not come, trust me well!
Now I bid you each farewell.

EVERYMAN.

Oh, all things fail save God alone —
Beauty, Strength, and Discretion!
For when Death bloweth his blast,
They all run from me full fast.

FIVE WITS.

Everyman, my leave now of thee I take.
I will follow the others, for here I thee forsake.

EVERYMAN.

Alas! then may I wail and weep,
For I took you for my best friend.

FIVE WITS.

I will thee no longer keep.
Now farewell, and here's an end!

EVERYMAN.

Jesu, help! All have forsaken me.

GOOD DEEDS.

Nay, Everyman, I will abide by thee,
I will not forsake thee indeed!
Thou wilt find me a good friend at need.

EVERYMAN.

Gramercy, Good Deeds, now may I true friends see.
They have forsaken me everyone,
I loved them better than my Good Deeds alone.
Knowledge, will ye forsake me also?

KNOWLEDGE.

Yea, Everyman, when ye to death shall go,
But not yet, for no manner of danger.

EVERYMAN.

Gramercy, Knowledge, with all my heart!

KNOWLEDGE.

Nay, yet will I not from hence depart.
Till whereunto ye shall come, I shall see and know.

EVERYMAN.

Methinketh, alas! that I must now go
To make my reckoning, and my debts pay,
For I see my time is nigh spent away.
Take example, all ye that this do hear or see,
How they that I love best do forsake me,
Except my Good Deeds that abideth faithfully.

GOOD DEEDS.

All earthly things are but vanity.
Beauty, Strength and Discretion do man forsake,
Foolish friends and kinsmen that fair spake.
All flee away save Good Deeds, and that am I!

EVERYMAN.

Have mercy on me, God most mighty,
And stand by me, thou Mother and Maid, holy Mary!

GOOD DEEDS.

Fear not, I will speak for thee.

EVERYMAN.

Here I cry God mercy!

GOOD DEEDS.

Shorten our end and minish our pain,
Let us go and never come again.

EVERYMAN.

Into thy hands, Lord, my soul I commend —
Receive it, Lord, that it be not lost!
As thou didst me buy, so do thou me defend,
And save me from the fiend's boast
That I may appear with that blessed host
That shall be saved at the day of doom.
In manus tuas, of mights the most,
Forever commendo spiritum meum.
[Everyman goes into the grave.]

KNOWLEDGE.

Now that he hath suffered that we all shall endure,
 The Good Deeds shall make all sure;
 Now that he hath made ending,
 Methinketh that I hear angels sing.
 And make great joy and melody,
 Where Everyman's soul shall received be!
 [The Angel appears.]

THE ANGEL.

Come, excellent elect spouse to Jesu!
 Here above shalt thou go.
 Because of thy singular virtue.
 Now thy soul from thy body is taken, lo!
 Thy reckoning is crystal clear.
 Now shalt thou into the heavenly sphere,
 Unto which ye all shall come
 That live well before the day of doom.
 [The Angel goes and the Doctor enters.]

DOCTOR.

This moral men may have in mind, —
 Ye hearers, take it as of worth, both young and old,
 And forsake Pride, for he deceiveth you in the end, as ye will find,
 And remember Beauty, Five Wits, Strength, and Discretion, all told.
 They all at the last do Everyman forsake
 Save that his Good Deeds there doth he take.
 But beware, if they be small,
 Before God he hath no help at all,
 None excuse for Everyman may there then be there.
 Alas, how shall he then do and fare!
 For after death amends may no man make.
 For then Mercy and Pity do him forsake.
 If his reckoning be not clear when he doth come,
 God will say, *Ite, maledicti, in ignem ceternum.*
 And he that hath his account whole and sound,
 High in heaven he shall be crowned.
 Unto which place God bring us all thither
 That we may live, body and soul, together!
 Thereto their aid vouchsafe the Trinity —
 Amen, say ye, for holy Charity!
 FINIS.
Thus endeth this moral play of Everyman.

1.18.2 Reading and Review Questions

1. How is allegory used in the play? How many types of allegory can you find, and what purpose(s) do they serve?
2. What are the differences between Everyman's original group of friends and the group that gathers around him at the end? What are we meant to infer from those differences?
3. Why is Everyman's journey referred to as a pilgrimage? What kind of pilgrimage is it?
4. What kind of financial metaphors does the author use, and what is their purpose?
5. What does the play say about priests? How is this similar to and different from the various portrayals of the priesthood in the *Canterbury Tales*?

1.19 KEY TERMS

- Alliterative Verse
- *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*
- Anglo-Saxon Warrior Code
- Battle of Hastings
- Bob and Wheel
- Britons
- William Caxton
- Caesura
- Celts
- Chivalric Code
- Comitatus
- Common Brittonic
- Courtly Love
- Danelaw
- *Domesday Book*
- Dream Vision
- *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*
- Elegy
- Fitts
- Geoffrey of Monmouth
- *History of the Kings of Britain*
- Hypermetrical

- Kenning
- King Arthur
- Lays or Lais
- Lyric Poetry
- Morality Play
- Mystery Play Cycle
- Order of the Garter
- Social Satire
- Three Estates
- Wars of the Roses
- Wergild
- William the Conqueror

2

The Tudor Age (1485-1603)

2.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to:

- Describe the economic, monarchic, and religious characteristics of Tudor rule
- Describe the reasons for the Reformation in England
- Characterize the Golden Age in England under the rule of Elizabeth I
- Analyze the causes for the growth of literature in vernacular, or native, English
- Compare Chaucer's influence with that of Edmund Spenser's on the development of literature in vernacular, or native, English
- Analyze the influence of classical and Italian literature on the English sonnet
- Analyze the influence of classical literature on English drama

2.2 INTRODUCTION

By deposing Richard II, Henry IV precipitated the dynastic wars, known as The Wars of the Roses, fought by the Lancasters and the Yorks, descendants of two brothers, John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster (1340 -1399), and Edmund Langley, the Duke of York (1341-1402). These wars ended in 1485 with the Battle of Bosworth Field and the death of the last Plantagenet king, Richard III (b. 1452). The rule of the Tudors began when Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond was crowned as King Henry VII (1457-1509) and then united the houses of Lancaster and York by marrying Elizabeth of York (1486-1503).

The rule of Henry VII oversaw a shift from a Medieval landlord and serf agricultural model to a commercial model. With the Parliament, Henry VII enacted laws and statutes that fostered England's economic growth, including protectionist and bullionist statutes, and giving supremacy to England's wool trade and cloth industry. Along with this shift came an increase in city populations, particularly that of London which would, over the course of the Tudor era, become the largest city in Europe and a leading port of trade.

Henry VII also oversaw a centralization of court power and the development of the King's Council, or Star Chamber, by which the monarchy wielded increasing authority over the nobility. The social upheaval of the Medieval era, with its vacuum of offices after the Black Death and resistance of hierarchy embodied in Chaucer's *Miller*, shifted to a new hierarchy and authority under Henry VII. He encouraged "New Men" at court, that is, men from relatively humble origins who gained increasing opportunities. And he limited the nobility, particularly by binding them through debts and obligations, or recognisances.

Henry VII used money to cement his authority; he accrued wealth through taxes, loans, benevolences, Church grants, and even feudal obligations. One instance of the latter was his receiving 30,000 pounds for knighting his son Arthur (1486-1502)—two years after Arthur's death. By many of these same streams, he financed wars in France and suppression of rebellions at home. England lost its claims to French territory, retaining Calais during Henry VII's reign but losing it during Henry VIII's (1491-1547). Although conflict diminished on the Continent, it increased at home, particularly with Scotland.

After Henry VII's death, the crown passed peacefully to Henry VIII. He corrected some of his father's monetary abuses, executing Sir Richard Empson (c. 1450-1510) and Edmund Dudley (c. 1462-1510), themselves New Men who collected taxes for Henry VII. Wars with Scotland, Ireland, France, and Spain marked Henry VIII's reign, as did his marrying six women. Although Henry VIII's wars depleted the wealth he inherited, he recovered it with the dissolution of the monasteries and the lands he consequently appropriated. The Reformation he initiated in England stemmed from Henry VIII's concern for succession (fear of another dynastic war) and desire to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon (1485-1536), who had not provided a male heir. When the Pope rejected his annulment, Henry VIII broke from the Roman Catholic Church and made himself head of the Church of England, confirmed by the Act of Supremacy in 1534.

From his marriages, Henry VIII gained three heirs. Their successive rules led to a short rebellion, after Edward VI's (1442-1483) death, and the execution of hundreds of Protestants during a counter-reformation under Mary I (1516-1558). Elizabeth I (1533-1603) ushered England into a Golden Age. She resolved the religious discord by becoming head of the Protestant (Anglican) Church of England. She navigated foreign affairs by considering various possible husbands, from Spain, Sweden, Austria, and France. Yet she remained married to England. Her position was threatened by her cousin Mary, Queen of Scots (1542-1587), who plotted Elizabeth I's assassination in hopes of ascending the throne and returning England to Catholicism. Elizabeth I had Mary executed before facing a long-threatened assault by the Spanish Armada. The last years of Elizabeth I's reign saw Irish rebellion under Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone (1550-1616).

Before Henry VII ascended the throne, William Caxton (c.1422-1491) introduced the printing press to England. The consequent increase in number and decrease in cost of books incentivized reading and fostered literacy. Under Henry

VII, England shifted from what had been a bilingual nation, with French or Latin as the courtly language and English the vernacular. The Renaissance, a movement coinciding with the reign of all the Tudors, fostered vernacular literatures spurred by the recovery and study of classical texts. The stability that Henry VII brought to England and that his son protected—even at the expense of Catherine of Aragon, Roman Catholicism, and Anne Boleyn (c. 1501-1536)—expanded individual learning (mainly for men) and intellectual thought. Renaissance humanism, particularly the English version of it, emphasized education of the individual, be he courtier or gentleman. But for the English, that education was linked to Christianity. And the individual's role in Christian faith, worship, understanding, and expression, shaped the religious controversies that marked the Tudor era. Humanist thinking influenced Thomas More's (1478-1535) political and theological critiques in *Utopia*. His understanding of Christianity determined his refusal to accept Henry VIII as supreme head of the church—and his consequent execution.

More wrote *Utopia* in Latin, reflecting thereby the humanist interest in classical learning. The Reformation, the beginning of which he witnessed, led to close and individual scrutiny of ideologies and theologies, a scrutiny which itself shaped England's consciousness as a nation. And the subordination of individual understanding and expression to the classical models in Latin of Cicero (106-43 BCE), Virgil (70-19 BCE), Terence (185-159 BCE), Plautus (c. 254-185 BCE), Seneca (4 BCE-65 CE) and others that formal education relied on unsurprisingly was countered by the development of a national literature not in Latin but in English, and in a variety of genres.

The Tudor era saw great development in English poetry and drama, with such modes as pastoral and lyric, and such forms as epic and tragedy. Edmund Spenser followed Chaucer by shaping ideal poetic diction, meter, and rhyme in English; he fashioned English sonnets in his *Amoretti*, drawing on Wyatt and Surrey's introduction of the Italian sonnet to England. Spenser also wrote an English epic, the most ambitious and weighty of classical genres. He intended his epic *The Faerie Queene* to be a national poem, comparable to Virgil's *Aeneid* (c. 29-19 BCE). And he used the great national myth/hero of King Arthur as his epic's model for the ideal gentleman or noble person, the epitome of Christian virtues. Elizabeth I also appears in this epic in many female roles, particularly Gloriana, the Faerie Queene, Arthur's beloved. And, starting with Henry VII, who named his first-born son Arthur, all the Tudors claimed descent from King Arthur.

English drama developed in part from classical and neoclassical drama. William Shakespeare's comedies owe much to Plautus and Seneca; indeed, his *Comedy of Errors* (1594) takes its plot from Plautus's *The Menaechmi, or The Twins*. English drama also developed in part from the Medieval cycles and morality plays. Like *Everyman*, Christopher Marlowe's Dr. Faustus struggles between good and evil. Shakespeare's tragedies similarly trace the Tudor era's growth of personal religion, with his characters demonstrating the shift from Medieval Fortuna, fate, or destiny to reason and responsibility. His characters are free to make choices but are held

accountable for those choices, either by people or principles. And if a character/individual has to make decisions and act accordingly, they always face the possibility of making wrong decisions. Like Faustus, Shakespeare's Hamlet fears behaving wrongly and suffers from a divided self as he tries to align his own actions and choices with divinity. Almost more than any other author, Shakespeare realizes the power of the English language to promote (or draw upon) a sense of national identity. Indeed, his use of the English language shapes a sense of humanity itself.

2.3 RECOMMENDED READING

Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 1987.

John Guy, *Tudor England*, 1988.

David Javitch, *Poetry and Courtliness in Renaissance*, 1976.

James Nohrnberg, *The Analogy of "The Faerie Queene,"* 1976.

J. A. Sharpe, *Early Modern England: A Social History*, 1987.

Murry Schwartz and Coppelia Kahn, eds., *Representing Shakespeare: New Psychoanalytic Essays*, 1980.

E. M. W. Tillyard, *The Elizabeth World Picture*, 1943.

Kim Walker, *Women Writers of the English Renaissance*, 1996.

2.4 THOMAS MORE

(1478-1535)

A martyr, humanist, historian, dramatist, and satirist, Thomas More was grandson to a baker. His father John More (1451-1530) married Agnes Graunger, whose father was a wealthy merchant and Sheriff of London. John More was a successful lawyer, ultimately knighted and serving on the Court of King's Bench. Thomas More received a gentleman's education, studying at St. Anthony's School in London before entering the household of John Morton (1420-1500), who was at that time both Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Chancellor of England. Thomas More's learning, humanist scholarship, and writing defined his character, as did his statesmanship. He studied for two years at Oxford before he acceded to his father's



Image 2.1 | Sir Thomas More

Artist | Hans Holbein, the Younger

Source | Wikipedia

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wishes by entering New Inn to study law, being called to the Bar in 1502. His own wishes had a more spiritual bent, for the next year saw him living near a Carthusian monastery, following that order's discipline, praying, fasting, self-flagellating, and abasing the flesh by wearing a hair shirt. According to his friend, the Humanist Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466-1536), More considered joining the Franciscan order.

Instead, he entered Parliament, advocating government efficiency and denouncing heavy taxation. In 1505, he married Jane Colt; they had four children before she died in 1500. An exceptionally short thirty days later, he married Alice Harpur Middleton (1474-1546), a wealthy widow. Her daughter from her first marriage, along with More's daughters Margaret, Elizabeth, and Cicely received a classical education, with Margaret later gaining renown for her knowledge of Latin. More balanced a contented domestic life with an active public one. A successful barrister, he served as under-sherrif of the City of London, as Master of the Court of Requests, and as a Privy Counsellor. He traveled to Flanders as a delegate for Henry VIII and Cardinal Wolsey (1473-1530)—who recommended him as Speaker of the House of Commons—then became Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

He gained influence as Henry VIII's advisor, particularly through his condemnation of the Lutheran heresy (that is, the Reformation). Henry VIII granted More a pension, land, and sinecures. When Wolsey failed to obtain Henry VIII's annulment from Catherine of Aragon, Wolsey was removed as Lord Chancellor of England and expelled from court. Henry VIII then named More Wolsey's replacement as Lord Chancellor. In this position, More continued to support the Roman Catholic Church, possibly to the point of approving the torture and burning of Protestants. He certainly suppressed William Tyndale's English translation of the New Testament (1526), one that turned directly to the Hebrew and Greek, as challenging the power of the Roman Catholic Church in England. Tyndale's *The Obedience of a Christian Man, and how Christian rulers ought to govern* (1528) probably helped to encourage Henry VIII to become head of the Church in England, replacing the Pope, and breaking with the Roman Catholic Church. He then divorced Catherine of Aragon to marry Anne Boleyn and had several acts passed to secure the legitimacy of their issue. More resigned as Lord Chancellor and refused to take the Succession Oath. He was imprisoned then beheaded for high treason.

Seemingly far away from these political and religious controversies, More's *Utopia* ("No Place" or "Nowhere," in English) depicts a fictional good place located somewhere in the New World whose citizens practice a form of communism, welfare, and undenominational theism. To the classical model of Plato's *The Republic*, More added the contemporary contrast of New World and Old World cultures. In Utopia, some women could be priests, and all priests are chosen for their holiness. All citizens work, for a limited time on farms, and then in various trades, such as carpentry and masonry; they use their leisure time for learning. The ethical basis of their lives satirically critiques the corruption and immorality of

More's society. It's difficult to attribute any particular Utopian practice to More's own held beliefs, especially considering their religious tolerance and his actions against Protestants. Their ethical behavior seems superior to England's. But that may not be More's main point. His main critique may be wonder at a society that can do so much good—without Christian revelation. And condemnation of the pride that keeps his society from emulating such goodness—despite having that revelation.



Image 2.2 | Map of Utopia

Artist | Abraham Ortelius

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2.4.1 Utopia

(1516)

THE PREFACE

There is no way of writing so proper, for the refining and polishing a Language, as the translating of Books into it, if he that undertakes it, has a competent skill of the one Tongue, and is a Master of the other. When a Man writes his own Thoughts, the heat of his Fancy, and the quickness of his Mind, carry him so much after the Notions themselves, that for the most part he is too warm to judge of the aptness

of Words, and the justness of Figures; so that he either neglects these too much, or overdoes them: But when a Man translates, he has none of these Heats about him: and therefore the French took no ill Method, when they intended to reform and beautify their Language, in setting their best Writers on Work to translate the Greek and Latin Authors into it. There is so little praise got by Translations, that a Man cannot be engaged to it out of Vanity, for it has passed for a sign of a slow Mind, that can amuse it self with so mean an Entertainment; but we begin to grow wiser, and tho ordinary Translators must succeed ill in the esteem of the World, yet some have appeared of late that will, I hope, bring that way of writing in credit. The English Language has wrought it self out, both of the fulsome Pedantry under which it laboured long ago, and the trifling way of dark and unintelligible Wit that came after that, and out of the course extravagance of Canting that succeeded this: but as one Extream commonly produces another, so we were beginning to fly into a sublime pitch, of a strong but false Rhetorick, which had much corrupted, not only the Stage, but even the Pulpit; two places, that tho they ought not to be named together, much less to resemble one another; yet it cannot be denied, but the Rule and Measure of Speech is generally taken from them: but that florid strain is almost quite worn out, and is become now as ridiculous as it was once admired. So that without either the Expence or Labour that the French have undergone, our Language has, like a rich Wine, wrought out its Tartar, and [has] insensibly brought to a Purity that could not have been compassed without much labour, had it not been for the great advantage that we have of a Prince, who is so great a Judge, that his single approbation or dislike has almost as great an Authority over our Language, as his Prerogative gives him over our Coin. We are now so much refined, that how defective soever our Imaginations or Reasonings may be, yet our Language has fewer Faults, and is more natural and proper, than it was ever at any time before. When one compares the best Writers of the last Age, with these that excel in this, the difference is very discernable: even the great Sir Francis Bacon, that was the first that writ our Language correctly; as he is still our best Author, yet in some places has Figures so strong, that they could not pass now before a severe Judg. I will not provoke the present Masters of the Stage, by preferring the Authors of the last Age to them: for tho they all acknowledged that they come far short of B. Iohnson, Beaumont and Fletcher, yet I believe they are better pleased to say this themselves, than to have it observed by others. Their Language is now certainly properer, and more natural than it was formerly, chiefly since the correction that was given by the Rehearsal; and it is to be hoped, that the Essay on Poetry, which may be well matched with the best Pieces of its kind that even Augustus's Age produced, will have a more powerful Operation, if clear sense, joined with home but gentle Reproofs, can work more on our Writers, than that unmerciful exposing of them has done.

I have now much leisure, and want diversion, so I have bestowed some of my hours upon Translations, in which I have proposed no ill Patterns to my self: but the Reader will be best able to judge whether I have copied skilfully after such

Originals. This small Volume which I now publish, being writ by one of the greatest Men that this Island has produced, seemed to me to contain so many fine and well-digested Notions, that I thought it might be no unkind nor ill entertainment to the Nation, to put a Book in their Hands, to which they have so good a Title, and which has a very common fate upon it, to be more known and admired all the World over, than here at Home. It was once translated into English not long after it was written; and I was once apt to think it might have been done by Sir Thomas More himself: for as it is in the English of his Age, and not unlike his Stile; so the Translator has taken a liberty that seems too great for any but the Author himself, who is Master of his own Book, and so may leave out or alter his Original as he pleases: which is more than a Translator ought to do, I am sure it is more than I have presumed to do.

It was writ in the Year 1516, as appears by the Date of the Letter of Peter Giles's, in which he says, That it was sent him but a few days before from the Author, and that bears date the first of November that Year; but I cannot imagine how he comes to be called Sheriff of London in the Title of the Book, for in all our printed Catalogues of Sheriffs, his Name is not to be found. I do not think my self concerned in the Matter of his Book, no more than any other Translator is in his Author: nor do I think More himself went in heartily to that which is the chief Basis of his Utopia, the taking away of all Property, and the levelling the World; but that he only intended to set many Notions in his Reader's way; and that he might not seem too much in earnest, he went so far out of all Roads to do it the less suspected: the earnestness with which he recommends the precaution used in Marriages among the Utopians, makes one think that he had a misfortune in his own choice, and that therefore he was so cautious on that Head; for the strictness of his Life covers him from severe Censures: His setting out so barbarous a practice, as the hiring of Assassins to take off Enemies, is so wild and so immoral both, that it does not admit of any thing to soften or excuse it, much less to justify it; and the advising Men in some Cases to put an end to their Lives, notwithstanding all the Caution with which he guards it, is a piece of rough and fierce Philosophy. The tenderest part of the whole Work, was the representation he gives of Henry the Seventh's Court; and his Discourses upon it, towards the end of the first Book, in which his Disguise is so thin, that the Matter would not have been much plainer if he had named him: But when he ventured to write so freely of the Father in the Son's Reign, and to give such an Idea of Government under the haughtiest Prince, and the most impatient of uneasy Restraints that ever reigned in England, who yet was so far from being displeased with him for it, that as he made him long his particular Friend, so he employed him in all his Affairs afterwards, and raised him to be L. Chancellor, I thought I might venture to put it in more Modern English: for as the Translators of Plutarch's Hero's, or of Tullies Offices, are not concerned, either in the Maxims, or in the Actions that they relate; so I, who only tell, in the best English I can, what Sir Thomas More writ in very Elegant Latin, must leave his Thoughts and Notions to the Reader's censure, and do think my self liable for

nothing but the fidelity of the Translation, and the correctness of the English; and for that I can only say, that I have writ as carefully, and as well as I can.

THE AUTHOR'S EPISTLE TO PETER GILES

I Am almost ashamed, my dearest Peter Giles, to send you this Book of the Utopian Common-Wealth, after almost a Years delay; whereas no doubt you look'd for it within six Weeks: for as you know I had no occasion for using my Invention, or for taking pains to put things into any method, because I had nothing to do, but to repeat exactly those things that I heard Raphael relate in your presence; so neither was there any occasion given for a studied Eloquence: since as he delivered things to us of the sudden, and in a careless Stile; so he being, as you know, a greater Master of the Greek, than of the Latin; the plainer my words are, they will resemble his simplicity the more: and will be by consequence the nearer to the Truth, and that is all that I think lies on me: and it is indeed the only thing in which I thought my self concerned. I confess, I had very little left on me in this Matter, for otherwise the inventing and ordering of such a Scheme, would have put a Man of an ordinary pitch, either of Capacity, or of Learning, to some pains, and have cost him some time; but if it had been necessary that this Relation should have been made, not only truly, but eloquently, it could never have been performed by me, even after all the pains and time that I could have bestowed upon it. My part in it was so very small, that it could not give me much trouble, all that belonged to me being only to give a true and full account of the things that I had heard: but although this required so very little of my time; yet even that little was long denied me by my other Affairs, which press much upon me: for while in pleading, and hearing, and in judging or composing of Causes, in waiting on some Men upon Business, and on others out of Respect, the greatest part of the Day is spent on other Mens Affairs, the remainder of it must be given to my Family at home: So that I can reserve no part of it to my self, that is, to my Study: I must talk with my Wife, and chat with my Children, and I have somewhat to say to my Servants; for all these things I reckon as a part of Business, except a Man will resolve to be a Stranger at Home: and with whomsoever either Nature, Chance, or Choice has engaged a Man, in any Commerce, he must endeavour to make himself as acceptable to these about him, as he possibly can; using still such a temper in it, that he may not spoil them by an excessive gentleness, so that his Servants may not become his Masters. In such things as I have named to you, do Days, Months, and Years slip away; what is then left for Writing? and yet I have said nothing of that time that must go for Sleep, or for Meat: in which many do waste almost as much of their time, as in Sleep, which consumes very near the half of our Life; and indeed all the time which I can gain to my self, is that which I steal from my Sleep and my Meals; and because that is not much, I have made but a slow progress; yet because it is somewhat, I have at last got to an end of my Utopia, which I now send to you, and expect that after you have read it, you will let me know if you can put me in mind of any thing that has escaped me; for tho I would think my self very happy, if

I had but as much Invention and Learning as I know I have Memory, which makes me generally depend much upon it, yet I do not relie so entirely on it, as to think I can forget nothing.

My Servant John Clement has started some things that shake me: You know he was present with us, as I think he ought to be at every Conversation that may be of use to him, for I promise my self great Matters from the progress he has so early made in the Greek and Roman Learning. As far as my Memory serves me, the Bridg over Anider at Amaurot, was 500 paces broad, according to Raphael's account; but John assures me, he spoke only of 300 paces; therefore I pray you recollect what you can remember of this, for if you agree with him, I will believe that I have been mistaken; but if you remember nothing of it, I will not alter what I have written, because it is according to the best of my remembrance: for as I will take care that there may be nothing falsly set down; so if there is any thing doubtful, tho I may perhaps tell a lie, yet I am sure I will not make one; for I would rather pass for a good Man, than for a wise Man: but it will be easy to correct this Mistake, if you can either meet with Raphael himself, or know how to write to him.

I have another Difficulty that presses me more, and makes your writing to him the more necessary: I know not whom I ought to blame for it, whether Raphael, you, or my self; for as we did not think of asking it, so neither did he of telling us, in what part of the newfound World Utopia is situated; this was such an omission that I would gladly redeem it at any rate: I am ashamed, that after I have told so many things concerning this Island, I cannot let my Readers know in what Sea it lies. There are some among us that have a mighty desire to go thither, and in particular, one pious Divine is very earnest on it, not so much out of a vain curiosity of seeing unknown Countries, as that he may advance our Religion, which is so happily begun to be planted there; and that he may do this regularly, he intends to procure a Mission from the Pope, and to be sent thither as their Bishop. In such a case as this, he makes no scruple of aspiring to that Character, and thinks it is rather meritorious to be ambitious of it, when one desires it only for advancing the Christian Religion, and not for any Honour or Advantage that may be had by it, but is acted meerly by a pious Zeal. Therefore I earnestly beg it of you, if you can possibly meet with Raphael, or if you know how to write to him, that you will be pleased to inform your self of these things, that there may be no falshood left in my Book, nor any important Truth wanting. And perhaps it will not be unfit to let him see the Book it self: for as no Man can correct any Errors that may be in it, so well as he; so by reading it, he will be able to give a more perfect judgment of it than he can do upon any Discourse concerning it: and you will be likewise able to discover whether this Undertaking of mine is acceptable to him or not; for if he intends to write a Relation of his Travels, perhaps he will not be pleased that I should prevent him, in that part that belongs to the Utopian Common-Wealth; since if I should do so, his Book will not surprize the World with the pleasure which this new Discovery will give the Age. And I am so little fond of appearing in print upon this occasion, that if he dislikes it, I will lay it aside;

And even though he should approve of it, I am not positively determined as to the publishing of it. Mens tastes differ much; some are of so morose a Temper, so sour a Disposition, and make such absurd Iudgments of Things, that Men of chearful and lively Tempers, who indulge their Genius, seem much more happy, than those who waste their time and strength in order to the publishing some Book, that tho of it self it might be useful or pleasant, yet instead of being well received, will be sure to be either loathed at, or censured. Many know nothing of Learning, and others despise it: a Man that is accustomed to a course and harsh Sile, thinks every thing is rough that is not barbarous. Our trifling Pretenders to Learning, think all is slight that is not drest up in words that are worn out of use; some love only old things, and many like nothing but what is their own. Some are so sour, that they can allow no Jest, and others are so dull that they can endure nothing that is sharp; and some are as much afraid of any thing that is quick or lively, as a Man bit with a mad Dog is of Water; others are so light and unsettled, that their Thoughts change as quick as they do their Postures: and some, when they meet in Taverns, take upon them among their Cups to pass Censures very freely on all Writers; and with a supercilious liberty to condemn every thing that they do not like: in which they have the advantage that a bald Man has, who can catch hold of another by the Hair, while the other cannot return the like upon him. They are safe as it were of Gunshot, since there is nothing in them considerable enough to be taken hold of. And some are so unthankful, that even when they are well pleased with a Book, yet they think they owe nothing to the Author; and are like those rude Guests, who after they have been well entertained at a good Dinner, go away when they have glutted their Appetites, without so much as thanking him that treated them. But who would put himself to the charge of making a Feast for Men of such nice Palats, and so different Tastes; who are so forgetful of the Civilities that are done them? But do you once clear those Points with Raphael, and then it will be time enough to consider whether it be fit to publish it or not; for since I have been at the pains to write it, if he consents to the publishing it, I will follow my Friend's Advice, and chiefly yours. Farewel my dear Peter, commend me kindly to your good Wise, and love me still as you use to do, for I assure you I love you daily more and more.

THE DISCOURSES OF RAPHAEL HYTHLODAY, OF THE BEST STATE OF A COMMON-WEALTH

Written by Sir Thomas More, Citizen and Sheriff of London.

Henry the 8th, the unconquered King of England, a Prince adorned with all the Vertues that become a great Monarch; having some Differences of no small Consequence with Charles the most serene Prince of Castile, sent me into Flanders as his Ambassador, for treating and composing Matters between them. I was Colleague and Companion to that incomparable Man Cuthbert Tonsal, whom the King made lately Master of the Rolls, with such an Universal Applause; of whom I will say nothing, not because I fear that the Testimony of a Friend will be suspected, but rather because his Learning and Vertues are greater than that they can be set forth

with advantage by me, and they are so well known, that they need not my Commendations, unless I would, according to the Proverb, Shew the Sun with a Lanthorn. Those that were appointed by the Prince to treat with us, met us at Bruges, according to Agreement: they were all worthy Men. The Markgrave of Bruges was their Head, and the chief Man among them; but he that was esteemed the wisest, and that spoke for the rest, was George Temse the Provost of Casselsee; both Art and Nature had concurred to make him eloquent: He was very learned in the Law; and as he had a great Capacity, so by a long practice in Affairs, he was very dextrous at them. After we had met once and again, and could not come to an Agreement, they went to Brussels for some days to receive the Prince's Pleasure. And since our Business did admit of it, I went to Antwerp: While I was there, among many that visited me, there was one that was more acceptable to me than any other; Peter Giles born at Antwerp, who is a Man of great Honour, and of a good Rank in his Town; yet it is not such as he deserves: for I do not know if there be any where to be found a learned and a better bred young Man: for as he is both a very worthy Person, and a very knowing Man; so he is so civil to all Men, and yet so particularly kind to his Friends, and is so full of Candor and Affection, that there is not perhaps above one or two to be found any where, that is in all respects so perfect a Friend as he is: He is extraordinarily modest, there is no artifice in him; and yet no Man has more of a prudent simplicity than he has: His Conversation was so pleasant and so innocently chearful, that his Company did in a great measure lessen any longings to go back to my Country, and to my Wife and Children, which an absence of four months had quickned very much. One day as I was returning home from Mass at St. Maries, which is the chief Church, and the most frequented of any in Antwerp, I saw him by accident talking with a Stranger, that seemed past the flower of his Age; his Face was tanned, he had a long Beard, and his Cloak was hanging carelesly about him, so that by his Looks and Habit, I concluded he was a Seaman. As soon as Peter saw me, he came and saluted me; and as I was returning his Civility, he took me aside, and pointing to him with whom he had been discoursing, he said, Do you see that Man? I was just thinking to bring him to you. I answered, He should have been very welcome on your account: And on his own too, replied he, if you knew the Man; for there is none alive that can give you so copious an account of unknown Nations and Countries as he can do; which I know you very much desire. Then said I, I did not guess amiss, for at first sight I took him for a Seaman: But you are much mistaken, said he, for he has not sailed as a Seaman, but as a Traveller, or rather as a Philosopher; for this Raphael, who from his Family carries the Name of Hythloday, as he is not ignorant of the Latine Tongue, so he is eminently learned in the Greek, having applied himself more particularly to that than to the former, because he had given himself much to Philosophy, in which he knew that the Romans have left us nothing that is valuable, except what is to be found in Seneca and Cicero. He is a Portuguese by birth, and was so desirous of seeing the World, that he divided his Estate among his Brothers, and run Fortunes with Americus Vesputius, and bore a share in three

of his four Voyages, that are now published: only he did not return with him in his last, but obtained leave of him almost by force, that he might be one of those four and twenty who were left at the farthest place at which they touched, in their last Voyage to New Castile. The leaving him thus, did not a little gratify one that was more fond of travelling than of returning home, to be buried in his own Country: for he used often to say, That the way to Heaven was the same from all places; and he that had no Grave, had the Heavens still over him. Yet this disposition of Mind had cost him dear, if God had not been very gracious to him; for after he, with five Castilians, had travelled over many Countries, at last, by a strange good fortune, he got to Ceylon, and from thence to Calicut, and there he very happily found some Portuguese Ships; and so, beyond all Mens expectations, he came back to his own Country. When Peter had said this to me, I thanked him for his kindness, in intending to give me the acquaintance of a Man, whose Conversation he knew would be so acceptable to me; and upon that Raphael and I embraced one another: And after those Civilities were past, which are ordinary for Strangers upon their first meeting, We went all to my House, and entring into the Garden, sat down on a green Bank, and entertained one another in Discourse. He told us, that when Vesputius had sailed away, he and his Companions that staid behind in New-Castile, did by degrees insinuate themselves into the People of the Country, meeting often with them, and treating them gently: and at last they grew not only to live among them without danger, but to converse familiarly with them; and got so far into the Heart of a Prince, whose Name and Country I have forgot, that he both furnished them plentifully with all things necessary, and also with the conveniences of travelling; both Boats when they went by Water, and Wagons when they travelled over Land; and he sent with them a very faithful Guide, who was to introduce and recommend them to such other Princes as they had a mind to see: and after many days Journey, they came to Towns, and Cities, and to Common-Wealths, that were both happily governed, and well-peopled. Under the Aequator, and as far on both sides of it as the Sun moves, there lay vast Deserts that were parched with the perpetual heat of the Sun; the Soil was withered, all Things look'd dismally, and all Places were either quite uninhabited, or abounded with Wild Beasts and Serpents, and some few Men, that were neither less wild, nor less cruel than the Beasts themselves. But as they went farther, a new Scene opened, all things grew milder, the Air less burning, the Soil more verdant, and even the Beasts were less wild: And at last there are Nations, Towns, and Cities, that have not only mutual commerce among themselves, and with their Neighbours, but trade both by Sea and Land, to very remote Countries. There they found the Conveniencies of seeing many Countries on all Hands, for no Ship went any Voyage into which he and his Companions were not very welcome. The first Vessels that they saw were Flat-bottomed, their Sails were made of Reeds and Wicker woven close together, only some were made of Leather; but afterwards they found Ships made with round Keels, and Canvass Sails, and in all things like our Ships: and the Seamen understood both Astronomy and Navigation. He got wonderfully into their favour,

by shewing them the use of the Needle, of which till then they were utterly ignorant; and whereas they sailed before with great caution, and only in Summer-time, now they count all Seasons alike, trusting wholly to the Loadstone, in which they are perhaps more secure than safe; so that there is reason to fear, that this Discovery which was thought would prove so much to their Advantage, may by their imprudence become an occasion of much Mischief to them. But it were too long to dwell on all that he told us he had observed in every place, it would be too great a digression from our present purpose: and what-ever is necessary to be told, chiefly concerning the wise and prudent Institutions that he observed among civilized Nations, may perhaps be related by us on a more proper occasion. We ask'd him many questions concerning all these things, to which he answered very willingly; only we made no enquiries after Monsters, than which nothing is more common; for every where one may hear of ravenous Dogs and Wolves, and cruel Men-eaters; but it is not so easy to find States that are well and wisely governed.

But as he told us of many things that were amiss in those New-found Nations, so he reckoned up not a few things, from which Patterns might be taken for correcting the Errors of these Nations among whom we live; of which an account may be given, as I have already promised, at some other time; for at present I intend only to relate these Particulars that he told us of the Manners and Laws of the Utopians: but I will begin with the Occasion that led us to speak of that Common-Wealth. After Raphael had discoursed with great judgment of the Errors that were both among us and these Nations, of which there was no small number, and had treated of the wise Institutions both here and there, and had spoken as distinctly of the Customs and Government of every Nation through which he had past, as if he had spent his whole Life in it; Peter being struck with admiration, said, I wonder, Raphael, how it comes that you enter into no King's Service, for I am sure there are none to whom you would not be very acceptable: for your Learning and Knowledg, both of Men and Things, is such, that you would not only entertain them very pleasantly, but be of good use to them, by the Examples that you could set before them, and the Advices that you could give them; and by this means you would both serve your own Interest, and be of great use to all your Friends. As for my Friends, answered he, I need not be much concerned, having already done all that was incumbent on me toward them; for when I was not only in good Health, but fresh and young, I distributed that among my Kindred and Friends, which other People do not part with till they are old and sick; and then they unwillingly give among them, that which they can enjoy no longer themselves. I think my Friends ought to rest contented with this, and not to expect that for their sakes I should enslave my self to any King whatsoever. Soft and fair, said Peter, I do not mean that you should be a Slave to any King, but only that you should assist them, and be useful to them. The change of the Word, said he, does not alter the Matter. But term it as you will, replied Peter, I do not see any other way in which you can be so useful, both in private to your Friends, and to the Publick, and by which you can make your own Condition happier. Happier! answered Raphael, is that to

be compassed in a way so abhorrent to my Genius? Now I live as I will, to which I believe few Courtiers can pretend: and there are so very many that court the Favour of great Men, that there will be no great loss, if they are not troubled either with me, or with others of my temper. Upon this, I said, I perceive Raphael that you neither desire Wealth nor Greatness; and indeed I value and admire such a Man much more than I do any of the great Men in the World. Yet I think you would do a thing well-becoming so generous and so philosophical a Soul as yours is, if you would apply your Time and Thoughts to Publick Affairs, even though you may happen to find that a little uneasy to your self; and this you can never do with so much advantage, as by being taken into the Council of some great Prince, and by setting him on to noble and worthy Things, which I know you would do if you were in such a Post; for the Springs, both of Good and Evil, flow over a whole Nation, from the Prince, as from a lasting Fountain. So much Learning as you have, even without practice in Affairs; or so great a practice as you have had, without any other Learning, would render you a very fit Counsellor to any King whatsoever, You are doubly mistaken, said he, Mr. More, both in your Opinion of me, and in the Judgment that you make of things: for as I have not that Capacity that you fancy to be in me; so if I had it, the Publick would not be one jot the better, when I had sacrificed my quiet to it. For most Princes apply themselves more to warlike Matters, than to the useful Arts of Peace; and in these I neither have any knowledg, nor do I much desire it: They are generally more set on acquiring new Kingdoms, right or wrong, than on governing those well that they have: and among the Ministers of Princes, there are none that either are not so wise as not to need any assistance, or at least that do not think themselves so wise, that they imagine they need none; and if they do court any, it is only those for whom the Prince has much personal Favour, whom by their Faunings and Flatteries they endeavour to fix to their own Interests: and indeed Nature has so made us, that we all love to be flattered, and to please our selves with our own Notions. The old Crow loves his Young, and the Ape his Cubs. Now if in such a Court, made up of Persons that envy all others, and do only admire themselves, one should but propose any thing that he had either read in History, or observed in his Travels, the rest would think that the Reputation of their Wisdom would sink, and that their Interests would be much depressed, if they could not run it down: And if all other things failed, then they would fly to this, That such or such things pleased our Ancestors, and it were well for us if we could but match them. They would set up their Rest on such an Answer, as a sufficient confutation of all that could be said; as if this were a great Mischief, that any should be found wiser than his Ancestors: But tho they willingly let go all the good Things that were among those of former Ages; yet if better things are proposed, they cover themselves obstinately with this excuse, of reverence to past Times. I have met with these proud, morose, and absurd Judgments of Things in many places, particularly once in England. Was you ever there, said I? Yes, I was, answered he, and staid some months there, not long after the Rebellion in the West was suppressed, with a great slaughter of the poor People that were engaged in it.

I was then much obliged to that reverend Prelate Iohn Morton Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal, and Chancellor of England; a Man, said he, Peter (for Mr. More knows well what he was) that was not less venerable for his Wisdom and Vertues, than for the high Character he bore: He was of a middle stature, not broken with Age; his looks begot Reverence rather than Fear; his Conversation was easy, but serious and grave; he took pleasure sometimes to try the force of those that came as Suiters to him upon Business, by speaking sharply, tho decently to them, and by that he discovered their Spirit and presence of Mind; with which he was much delighted, when it did not grow up to an impudence, as bearing a great resemblance to his own temper; and he look'd on such Persons as the fittest Men for Affairs. He spoke both gracefully and weightily; he was eminently skilled in the Law, and had a vast Understanding, and a prodigious Memory: and those excellent Talents with which Nature had furnished him, were improved by Study and Experience. When I was in England, the King depended much on his Councils, and the Government seemed to be chiefly supported by him; for from his Youth up, he had been all along practised in Affairs; and having passed through many Traverses of Fortune, he had acquired to his great cost, a vast stock of Wisdom: which is not soon lost, when it is purchased so dear. One day when I was dining with him, there hapned to be at Table one of the English Lawyers, who took occasion to run out in a high commendation of the severe execution of Justice upon Thieves, who, as he said, were then hanged so fast, that there were sometimes 20 on one Gibbet; and upon that he said, he could not wonder enough how it came to pass, that since so few escaped, there were yet so many Thieves left who were still robbing in all places. Upon this, I who took the boldness to speak freely before the Cardinal, said, There was no reason to wonder at the Matter, since this way of punishing Thieves, was neither just in it Self, nor good for the Publick; for as the Severity was too great, so the Remedy was not effectual; simple Theft not being so great a Crime, that it ought to cost a Man his Life; and no Punishment how severe soever, being able to restrain those from robbing, who can find out no other way of livelihood; and in this, said I, not only you in England, but a great part of the World, imitate some ill Masters, that are readier to chastise their Scholars, than to teach them. There are dreadful Punishments enacted against Thieves, but it were much better to make such good Provisions, by which every Man might be put in a Method how to live, and so be preserved from the fatal necessity of stealing, and of dying for it. There has been care enough taken for that, said he, there are many Handycrafts, and there is Husbandry, by which they may make a shift to live, unless they have a greater mind to follow ill Courses. That will not serve your turn, said I, for many lose their Limbs in Civil or Forreign Wars, as lately in the Cornish Rebellion, and some time ago in your Wars with France, who being thus mutilated in the Service of their King and Country, can no more follow their old Trades, and are too old to learn new Ones: But since Wars are only accidental Things, and have Intervals, let us consider those Things that fall out every day. There is a great number of Noble Men among you, that live not only idle themselves as Drones, subsisting by other

Mens Labours, who are their Tenants, and whom they pare to the quick, and thereby raise their Revenues; this being the only instance of their Frugality, for in all other things they are Prodigal, even to the beggering of themselves: But besides this, they carry about with them a huge number of idle Fellows, who never learn'd any Art by which they may gain their Living; and these, as soon as either their Lord dies, or they themselves fall sick, are turned out of Doors; for your Lords are readier to feed idle People, than to take care of the sick; and often the Heir is not able to keep together so great a Family as his Predecessor did: Now when the Stomachs of those that are thus turned out of Doors, grow keen, they rob no less keenly; and what else can they do? for after that, by wandring about, they have worn out both their Health and their Cloaths, and are tattered, and look ghastly, Men of Quality will not entertain them, and poor Men dare not do it; knowing that one who has been bred up in Idleness and Pleasure, and who was used to walk about with his Sword and Buckler, despising all the Neighbourhood with an insolent Scorn, as far below him, is not fit for the Spade and Mattock: Nor will he serve a poor Man for so small a Hire, and in so low a Diet as he can afford. To this he answered, This sort of Men ought to be particularly cherished among us, for in them consists the Force of the Armies for which we may have occasion; since their Birth inspires them with a nobler sence of Honour, than is to be found among Tradesmen or Ploughmen. You may as well say, replied I, that you must cherish Thieves on the account of Wars, for you will never want the one, as long as you have the other; and as Robbers prove sometimes gallant Souldiers, so Souldiers prove often brave Robbers; so near an Alliance there is between those two sorts of Life. But this bad custom of keeping many Servants, that is so common among you, is not peculiar to this Nation. In France there is yet a more pestiferous sort of People, for the whole Country is full of Souldiers, that are still kept up in time of Peace; if such a state of a Nation can be called a Peace: and these are kept in Pay upon the same account that you plead for those Idle Retainers about Noble Men: this being a Maxim of those pretended Statesmen, That it is necessary for the Publick Safety, to have a good Body of Veteran Souldiers ever in readiness. They think raw Men are not to be depended on, and they sometimes seek Occasions for making War, that they may train up their Souldiers in the Art of cutting Throats, or as Salust observed, for keeping their Hands in use, that they may not grow dull by too long an intermission. But France has learn'd, to its cost, how dangerous it is to feed such Beasts. The Fate of the Romans, Carthaginians, and Syrians, and many other Nations, and Cities, which were both overturned, and quite ruined by those standing Armies, should make others wiser: and the folly of this Maxim of the French, appears plainly even from this, that their trained Souldiers find your raw Men prove often too hard for them; of which I will not say much, lest you may think I flatter the English Nation. Every day's Experience shews, that the Mechanicks in the Towns, or the Clowns in the Country, are not afraid of fighting with those idle Gentlemen, if they are not disabled by some Misfortune in their Body, or dispirited by extream Want. So that you need not fear, that those well-shaped and strong Men, (for it is only such that

Noblemen love to keep about them, till they spoil them) who now grow feeble with ease, and are softned with their effeminate manner of Life, would be less fit for Action if they were well bred and well employed. And it seems very unreasonable, that for the prospect of a War, which you need never have but when you please, you should maintain so many idle Men, as will always disturb you in time of Peace, which is ever to be more considered than War. But I do not think that this necessity of Stealing, arises only from hence, there is another Cause of it that is more peculiar to England. What is that? said the Cardinal: The encrease of Pasture, said I, by which your Sheep, that are naturally mild, and easily kept in order, may be said now to devour Men, and unpeople, not only Villages, but Towns: For where-ever it is found, that the Sheep of any Soil yield a softer and richer Wool than ordinary, there the Nobility and Gentry, and even those Holy Men the Abbots, not contented with the old Rents which their Farms yielded, nor thinking it enough that they living at their ease, do no good to the Publick, resolve to do it Hurt instead of Good. They stop the course of Agriculture, inclose Grounds, and destroy Houses and Towns, reserving only the Churches, that they may lodg their Sheep in them: And as if Forrests and Parks had swallowed up too little Soil, those worthy Country-Men turn the best inhabited Places into Solitudes; for when any unsatiabie Wretch, who is a Plague to this Country, resolves to inclose many thousand Acres of Ground, the Owners, as well as Tenants, are turned out of their Possessions, by Tricks, or by main Force, or being wearied out with ill Usage, they are forced to sell them. So those miserable People, both Men and Women, Married, Unmarried, Old and Young, with their Poor, but numerous Families, (since Country-Business requires many Hands) are all forced to change their Seats, not knowing whither to go; and they must sell for almost nothing, their Houshold-stuff, which could not bring them much Mony, even tho they might stay for a Buyer: when that little Mony is at an end, for it will be soon spent; what is left for them to do, but either to steal, and so to be hanged, (God knows how justly) or to go about and beg? And if they do this, they are put in Prison as idle Vagabonds; whereas they would willingly work, but can find none that will hire them; for there is no more occasion for Country Labour, to which they have been bred, when there is no Arable Ground left. One Shepherd can look after a Flock, which will stock an extent of Ground that would require many hands, if it were to be ploughed and reaped. This likewise raises the price of Corn in many places. The price of Wool is also so risen, that the poor People who were wont to make Cloth, are no more able to buy it; and this likewise makes many of them idle: For since the increase of Pasture, God has punished the Avarice of the Owners, by a Rot among the Sheep, which has destroyed vast numbers of them, but had been more justly laid upon the Owners themselves. But suppose the Sheep should encrease ever so much, their Price is not like to fall; since tho they cannot be called a Monopoly, because they are not engrossed by one Person, yet they are in so few hands, and these are so rich, that as they are not prest to sell them sooner than they have a mind to it, so they never do it till they have raised the Price as high as is possible. And on the same account it is, that the other

kinds of Cattel are so dear, and so much the more, because that many Villages being pulled down, and all Country-Labour being much neglected, there are none that look after the breeding of them. The Rich do not breed Cattel as they do Sheep, but buy them Lean, and at low Prices; and after they have fatned them on their Grounds, they sell them again at high rates. And I do not think that all the Inconveniencies that this will produce, are yet observed; for as they sell the Cattle dear, so if they are consumed faster then the breeding Countries from which they are brought, can afford them; then the stock most decrease, and this must needs end in a great Scarcity; and by these means this your Island, that seemed as to this particular, the happiest in the World, will suffer much by the cursed Avarice of a few Persons; besides that, the rising of Corn makes all People lessen their Families as much as they can; and what can those who are dismissed by them do, but either Beg or Rob? And to this last, a Man of a great Mind is much sooner drawn than to the former. Luxury likewise breaks in apace upon you, to set forward your Poverty and Misery; there is an excessive Vanity in Apparel, and great Cost in Diet; and that not only in Noblemens Families, but even among Tradesmen, and among the Farmers themselves, and among all Ranks of Persons. You have also many infamous Houses, and besides those that are known, the Taverns and Alehouses are no better; add to these, Dice, Cards, Tables, Football, Tennis, and Coits, in which Mony runs fast away; and those that are initiated into them, must in conclusion betake themselves to robbing for a supply. Banish those Plagues, and give order that these who have dispeopled so much Soil, may either rebuild the Villages that they have pulled down, or let out their Grounds to such as will do it: Restrain those engrossings of the Rich, that are as bad almost as Monopolies; leave fewer Occasions to Idleness; let Agriculture be set up again, and the Manufacture of the Wooll be regulated, that so there may be Work found for these Companies of Idle People, whom want Forces to be Thieves, or who now being idle Vagabonds, or useless Servants, will certainly grow Thieves at last. If you do not find a Remedy to these Evils, it is a vain thing to boast of your Severity of punishing Theft; which tho it may have the appearance of Justice, yet in it self it is neither just nor convenient: for if you suffer your People to be ill Educated, and their Manners to be corrupted from their Infancy, and then punish them for those Crimes to which their first Education disposed them, what else is to be concluded from this, but that you first make Thieves, and then punish them?

[Two missing pages] . . . allow of it; upon the same Grounds, Laws may be made to allow of Adultery and Perjury in some Cases: for God having taken from us the Right of disposing, either of our own, or of other Peoples Lives, if it is pretended that the mutual Consent of Men in making Laws, allowing of Manslaughter in Cases in which God has given us no Example, frees People from the Obligation of the Divine Law, and so makes Murder a lawful Action; What is this, but to give a preference to Humane Laws before the Divine? And if this is once admitted, by the same Rule Men may in all other things put what Restrictions they please upon the Laws of God. If by the Mosaical Law, tho it was rough and severe, as being a Yoke laid on an

obstinate and servile Nation, Men were only fined, and not put to death for Theft; we cannot imagine that in this new Law of Mercy, in which God treats us with the tenderness of a Father, he has given us a greater License to Cruelty, than he did to the Jews. Upon these Reasons it is, that I think the putting Thieves to death is not lawful; and it is plain and obvious that it is absurd, and of ill Consequence to the Common-Wealth, that a Thief and a Murderer should be equally punished: for if a Robber sees that his Danger is the same, if he is convicted of Theft, as if he were guilty of Murder, this will naturally set him on to kill the Person whom otherwise he would only have robbed, since if the Punishment is the same, there is more security, and less danger of discovery, when he that can best make it is put out of the way; so that the terrifying Thieves too much, provokes them to cruelty.

But as to the Question, What more convenient way of Punishment can be found? I think it is much easier to find out that, than to invent any thing that is worse; Why should we doubt but the way that was so long in use among the old Romans, who understood so well the Arts of Government, was very proper for their Punishment? they condemned such as they found guilty of great Crimes, to work their whole Lives in Quarries, or to dig in Mines with Chains about them. But the Method that I liked best, was that which I observed in my Travels in Persia, among the Polyerits, who are a considerable and well-governed People. They pay a yearly Tribute to the King of Persia; but in all other respects they are a free Nation, and governed by their own Laws. They lie far from the Sea, and are environed with Hills; and being contented with the Productions of their own Country, which is very fruitful, they have little commerce with any other Nation; and as they, according to the Genius of their Country, have no appetite of enlarging their Borders; so their Mountains, and the Pension that they pay to the Persian, secure them from all Invasions. Thus they have no Wars among them; they live rather conveniently than splendidly, and may be rather called a Happy Nation, than either Eminent or Famous; for I do not think that they are known so much as by Name to any but their next Neighbours. Those that are found guilty of Theft among them, are bound to make restitution to the Owner, and not as it is in other places, to the Prince, for they reckon that the Prince has no more right to the stollen Goods than the Thief; but if that which was stollen is no more in being, then the Goods of the Thieves are estimated, and Restitution being made out of them, the Remainder is given to their Wives, and Children: And they themselves are condemned to serve in the Publick Works, but are neither imprisoned, nor chained, unless there hapned to be some extraordinary Circumstances in their Crimes. They go about loose and free, working for the Publick: If they are Idle or backward to work, they are whipp'd; but if they work hard, they are well used and treated without any mark of Reproach, only the Lists of them are called always at Night, and then they are shut up, and they suffer no other uneasiness, but this of constant Labour; for as they work for the Publick, so they are well entertained out of the Publick Stock, which is done differently in different places: In some places, that which is bestowed on them, is raised by a charitable Contribution; and tho this way may seem uncertain, yet so

merciful are the Inclinations of that People, that they are plentifully supplied by it; but in other places Publick Revenues are set aside for them; or there is a constant Tax of a Poll-mony raised for their Maintenance. In some places they are set to no Publick Work, but every privat Man that has occasion to hire Workmen, goes to the Market-places and hires them of the Publick, a little lower than he would do a Free-man: If they go lazily about their Task, he may quicken them with the Whip. By this means there is always some piece of Work or other to be done by them; and beside their Livelyhood, they earn somewhat still to the Publick. They wear all a peculiar Habit, of one certain colour, and their Hair is cropt a little above their Ears, and a little of one of their Ears is cut off. Their Friends are allowed to give them either Meat, Drink, or Clothes, so they are of their proper Colour; but it is Death, both to the Giver and Taker, if they give them Mony; nor is it less penal for any Free-man to take Mony from them, upon any account whatsoever: And it is also Death for any of these Slaves (so they are called) to handle Arms. Those of every Division of the Country, are distinguished by a peculiar Mark: And it is capital to lay that aside, and so it is also to go out of their Bounds, or to talk with a Slave of another Jurisdiction; and the very attempt of an escape, is no less penal than an escape it self; it is Death for any other Slave to be accessary to it: If a Free-man engages in it, he is condemned to slavery: Those that discover it are rewarded; if Free-men, in Mony; and if Slaves, with Liberty, together with a Pardon for being accessary to it; that so they may find their Account, rather in repenting of their accession to such a design, than in persisting in it.

These are their Laws and Rules in this Matter; in which both the Gentleness and the Advantages of them are very obvious; since by these Means, as Vices are destroyed, so Men are preserved; but are so treated, that they see the necessity of being good: and by the rest of their Life they make reparation for the Mischief they had formerly done. Nor is there any hazard of their falling back to their old Customs: And so little do Travellers apprehend Mischief from them, that they generally make use of them for Guides, from one Jurisdiction to another; for there is nothing left them by which they can rob, or be the better for it, since as they are disarmed, so the very having of Mony is a sufficient Conviction: and as they are certainly punished if discovered, so they cannot hope to escape: for their Habit being in all the parts of it different from what is commonly worn, they cannot fly away, unless they should go naked, and even then their crop'd Ear would betray them. The only danger to be feared from them, is their conspiring against the Government: but those of one Division and Neighbourhood can do nothing to any purpose, unless a general Conspiracy were laid amongst all the Slaves of the several Jurisdictions, which cannot be done, since they cannot meet or talk together; nor will any venture on a Design where the Concealment would be so dangerous, and the Discovery so profitable: and none of them is quite hopeless of recovering his Freedom, since by their Obedience and Patience, and by giving grounds to believe that they will change their manner of Life for the future, they may expect at last to obtain their Liberty: and some are every Year restored to it, upon the good Character that is given of

them. When I had related all this, I added, That I did not see why such a Method might not be followed with more advantage, than could ever be expected from that severe Justice which the Counsellor magnified so much. To all this he answered, That it could never be so settled in England, without endangering the whole Nation by it; and as he said that, he shook his Head, and made some grimaces, and so held his peace; and all the Company seemed to be of his mind: only the Cardinal said, It is not easy to guess whether it would succeed well or ill, since no trial has been made of it: But if when the Sentence of Death were past upon a Thief, the Prince would relieve him for a while, and make the Experiment upon him, denying him the privilege of a Sanctuary; then if it had a good effect upon him, it might take place; and if it succeeded not, the worst would be, to execute the Sentence on the condemned Persons at last. And I do not see, said he, why it would be either unjust or inconvenient, or at all dangerous, to admit of such a delay: And I think the Vagabonds ought to be treated in the same manner, against whom tho we have made many Laws, yet we have not been able to gain our end by them all. When the Cardinal had said this, then they all fell to commend the Motion, tho they had despised it when it came from me; but they did more particularly commend that concerning the Vagabonds, because it had been added by him.

I do not know whether it be worth the while to tell what followed, for it was very ridiculous; but I shall venture at it, for as it is not forreign to this Matter, so some good use may be made of it. There was a Jester standing by, that counterfeited the Fool so naturally, that he seemed to be really one. The Jest at which he offered were so cold and dull, that we laughed more at him than at them; yet sometimes he said, as it were by chance, things that were not unpleasant; so as to justify the old Proverb, That he who throws the Dice often, will sometimes have a lucky Hit. When one of the Company had said, that I had taken care of the Thieves, and the Cardinal had taken care of the Vagabonds, so that there remained nothing but that some publick Provision might be made for the Poor, whom Sickness or Old Age had disabled from Labour: Leave that to me, said the Fool, and I shall take care of them; for there is no sort of People whose sight I abhor more, having been so often vexed with them, and with their sad Complaints; but as dolefully soeveras they have told their Tale to me, they could never prevail so far as to draw one Penny of Mony from me: for either I had no mind to give them any thing, or when I had a mind to it, I had nothing to give them: and they now know me so well, that they will not lose their labour on me, but let me pass without giving me any trouble, because they hope for nothing from me, no more in faith than if I were a Priest: But I would have a Law made, for sending all these Beggars to Monasteries, the Men to the Benedictines to be Lay-Brothers, and the Women to be Nuns. The Cardinal smiled, and approved of it in jest; but the rest liked it in earnest. There was a Divine present, who tho he was a grave morose Man, yet he was so pleased with this Reflection that was made on the Priests and the Monks, that he began to play with the Fool, and said to him, This will not deliver you from all Beggars, except you take care of us Friars. That is done already, answered the Fool, for the Cardinal

has provided for you, by what he proposed for the restraining Vagabonds, and setting them to work, for I know no Vagabonds like you. This was well entertained by the whole Company, who looking at the Cardinal, perceived that he was not ill pleased at it; only the Friar himself was so bit, as may be easily imagined, and fell out into such a passion, that he could not forbear railing at the Fool, and called him Knave, Slanderer, Backbiter, and Son of Perdition, and cited some dreadful Threatnings out of the Scriptures against him. Now the Jester thought he was in his Element, and laid about him freely: he said, Good Friar be not angry, for it is written, In patience possess your Soul. The Friar answered, (for I shall give you his own words) I am not angry, you Hangman; at least I do not sin in it, for the Psalmist says, Be ye angry, and sin not. Upon this the Cardinal admonished him gently, and wished him to govern his Passions. No, my Lord, said he, I speak not but from a good Zeal, which I ought to have; for Holy Men have had a good Zeal, as it is said, The Zeal of thy House hath eaten me up; and we sing in our Church, that those who mock'd Elisha as he went up to the House of God, felt the Effects of his Zeal; which that Mocker, that Rogue, that Scoundrel, will perhaps feel. You do this perhaps with a good intention, said the Cardinal; but in my Opinion, it were wiser in you, not to say better for you, not to engage in so ridiculous a Contest with a Fool. No, my Lord, answered he, that were not wisely done; for Solomon, the wisest of Men, said, Answer a Fool according to his folly; which I now do, and shew him the Ditch into which he will fall, if he is not aware of it; for if the many Mockers of Elisha, who was but one bald Man, felt the Effect of his Zeal, What will become of one Mocker of so many Friars, among whom there are so many bald Men? We have likewise a Bull, by which all that jeer us are excommunicated. When the Cardinal saw that there was no end of this Matter, he made a sign to the Fool to withdraw, and turned the Discourse another way; and soon after he rose from the Table, and dismissing us, he went to hear Causes.

Thus, Mr. More, I have run out into a tedious Story, of the length of which I had been ashamed, if, as you earnestly begged it of me, I had not observed you to hearken to it, as if you had no mind to lose any part of it: I might have contracted it, but I resolved to give it you at large, that you might observe how those that had despised what I had proposed, no sooner perceived that the Cardinal did not dislike it, but they presently approved of it, and fawned so on him, and flattered him to such a degree, that they in good earnest applauded those things that he only liked in jest. And from hence you may gather, how little Courtiers would value either me or my Counsels.

To this I answered, You have done me a great kindness in this Relation; for as every thing has been related by you, both wisely and pleasantly, so you have made me imagine, that I was in my own Country, and grown young again, by recalling that good Cardinal into my thoughts, in whose Family I was bred from my Childhood: And tho you are upon other accounts very dear to me, yet you are the dearer, because you honour his Memory so much: but after all this I cannot change my Opinion, for I still think that if you could overcome that aversion which you have to the Courts

of Princes, you might do a great deal of good to Mankind, by the Advices that you would give; and this is the chief Design that every good Man ought to propose to himself in living: for whereas your Friend Plato thinks that then Nations will be happy, when either Philosophers become Kings, or Kings become Philosophers. No wonder if we are so far from that Happiness, if Philosophers will not think it fit for them to assist Kings with their Councils. They are not so base minded, said he, but that they would willingly do it: many of them have already done it by their Books, if these that are in Power would hearken to their good Advices. But Plato judged right, that except Kings themselves became Philosophers, it could never be brought about, that they who from their Childhood are corrupted with false Notions, should fall in intirely with the Counsels of Philosophers, which he himself found to be true in the Person of Dionysius.

Do not you think, that if I were about any King, and were proposing good Laws to him, and endeavouring to root out of him all the cursed Seeds of Evil that I found in him, I should either be turned out of his Court, or at least be laughed at for my pains? For Instance, What could I signify if I were about the King of France, and were called into his Cabinet-Council, where several wise Men do in his hearing propose many Expedients; as by what Arts and Practices Milan may be kept; and Naples, that has so oft slip'd out of their hands, recovered; and how the Venetians, and after them the rest of Italy may be subdued; and then how Flanders, Brabant, and all Burgundy, and some other Kingdoms which he has swallowed already in his Designs, may be added to his Empire. One proposes a League with the Venetians, to be kept as long as he finds his account in it, and that he ought to communicate Councils with them, and give them some share of the Spoil, till his Success makes him need or fear them less, and then it will be easily taken out of their Hands. Another proposes the hiring the Germans, and the securing the Switzers by Pensions. Another proposes the gaining the Emperor by Money, which is Omnipotent with him. Another proposes a Peace with the King of Arragon, and in order to the cementing it, the yielding up the King of Navar's Pretensions. Another thinks the Prince of Castile is to be wrought on, by the hope of an Alliance; and that some of his Courtiers are to be gained to the French Faction by Pensions. The hardest Point of all is, what to do with England: a Treaty of Peace is to be set on foot, and if their Alliance is not to be depended on, yet it is to be made as firm as can be; and they are to be called Friends, but suspected as Enemies: Therefore the Scots are to be kept in readiness, to be let loose upon England on every occasion; and some banished Nobleman is to be supported underhand, (for by the League it cannot be done avowedly) who has a pretension to the Crown, by which means that suspected Prince may be kept in awe. Now when things are in so great a Fermentation, and so many gallant Men are joining Councils, how to carry on the War, if so mean a Man as I am should stand up, and wish them to change all their Councils, to let Italy alone, and stay at home, since the Kingdom of France was indeed greater than that it could be well governed by one Man; So that he ought not to think of adding others to it: And if after this, I should propose to them the

Resolutions of the Achorians, a People that lie over against the Isle of Utopia to the South-east, who having long ago engaged in a War, that they might gain another Kingdom to their King, who had a Pretension to it by an old Alliance, by which it had descended to him; and having conquered it, when they found that the trouble of keeping it, was equal to that of gaining it; for the conquered People would be still apt to rebel, or be exposed to Forreign Invasions, so that they must always be in War, either for them, or against them; and that therefore they could never disband their Army: That in the mean time Taxes lay heavy on them, that Mony went out of the Kingdom; that their Blood was sacrificed to their King's Glory, and that they were nothing the better by it, even in time of Peace; their Manners being corrupted by a long War; Robbing and Murders abounding every where, and their Laws falling under contempt, because their King being distracted with the Cares of the Kingdom, was less able to apply his Mind to any one of them; when they saw there would be no end of those Evils, they by joint Councils made an humble Address to their King, desiring him to chuse which of the two Kingdoms he had the greatest mind to keep, since he could not hold both; for they were too great a People to be governed by a divided King, since no Man would willingly have a Groom that should be in common between him and another. Upon which the good Prince was forced to quit his new Kingdom to one of his Friends, (who was not long after dethroned) and to be contented with his old One. To all this I would add, that after all those Warlike Attempts, and the vast Confusions, with the Consumptions both of Treasure and of People, that must follow them; perhaps upon some Misfortune, they might be forced to throw up all at last; therefore it seemed much more eligible that the King should improve his ancient Kingdom all he could, and make it flourish as much as was possible; that he should love his People, and be beloved of them; that he should live among them, and govern them gently; and that he should let other Kingdoms alone, since that which had fallen to his share was big enough, if not too big for him. Pray how do you think would such a Speech as this be heard? I confess, said I, I think not very well.

But what said he, if I should sort with another kind of Ministers, whose chief Contrivances and Consultations were, by what Art Treasure might be heaped up? Where one proposes, the crying up of Mony, when the King had a great Debt on him, and the crying it down as much when his Revenues were to come in, that so he might both pay much with a little, and in a little receive a great deal: Another proposes a pretence of a War, that so Money might be raised in order to the carrying it on, and that a Peace might be concluded as soon as that was done; and this was to be made up with such appearances of Religion as might work on the People, and make them impute it to the piety of their Prince, and to his tenderness of the Lives of his Subjects. A third offers some old musty Laws, that have been antiquated by a long disuse; and which, as they had been forgotten by all the Subjects, so they had been also broken by them; and that the levying of the Penalties of these Laws, as it would bring in a vast Treasure, so there might be a very good Pretence for it, since it would look like the executing of Law, and the doing of Justice. A fourth

proposes the prohibiting of many things under severe Penalties, especially such things as were against the Interest of the People, and then the dispensing with these Prohibitions upon great Compositions, to those who might make Advantages by breaking them. This would serve two ends, both of them acceptable to many; for as those whose Avarice led them to transgress, would be severely fined; so the selling Licences dear, would look as if a Prince were tender of his People, and would not easily, or at low Rates, dispense with any thing that might be against the Publick Good. Another proposes, that the Judges must be made sure, that they may declare always in favor of the Prerogative, that they must be often sent for to Court, that the King may hear them argue those Points in which he is concerned; since that how unjust soever any of his Pretensions may be, yet still some one or other of them, either out of contradiction to others, or the pride of singularity, or that they may make their Court, would find out some Pretence or other to give the King a fair colour to carry the Point: For if the Judges but differ in Opinion, the clearest thing in the World is made by that means disputable, and Truth being once brought in question, the King upon that may take advantage to expound the Law for his own profit: the Judges that stand out will be brought over, either out of fear or modesty; and they being thus gained, all of them may be sent to the Bench to give Sentence boldly, as the King would have it: for fair Pretences will never be wanting when Sentence is to be given in the Prince's Favor: it will either be said, that Equity lies of his side, or some words in the Law will be found sounding that way, or some forced sence will be put on them; and when all other things fail, the King's undoubted Prerogative will be pretended, as that which is above all Law; and to which a Religious Judg ought to have a special regard. Thus all consent to that Maxim of Grassus, That a Prince cannot have Treasure enough, since he must maintain his Armies out of it: that a King, even tho he would, can do nothing unjustly; that all Property is in him, not excepting the very Persons of his Subjects: And that no Man has any other Property, but that which the King out of his goodness thinks fit to leave him: and they think it is the Prince's Interest, that there be as little of this left as may be, as if it were his advantage that his People should have neither Riches nor Liberty; since these things make them less easy and tame to a cruel and unjust Government; whereas Necessity and Poverty blunts them, makes them patient, and bears them down, and breaks that height of Spirit, that might otherwise dispose them to rebel. Now what if after all these Propositions were made, I should rise up and assert, That such Councils were both unbecoming a King, and mischievous to him: and that not only his Honor but his Safety consisted more in his Peoples Wealth, than in his own; if I should shew, that they choose a King for their own sake, and not for his; that by his care and endeavors they may be both easy and safe: and that therefore a Prince ought to take more care of his Peoples Happiness, than of his own, as a Shepherd is to take more care of his Flock than of himself. It is also certain, that they are much mistaken, that think the Poverty of a Nation is a means of the Publick Safety: Who quarrel more than Beggars do? who does more earnestly long for a change, than he

that is uneasy in his present Circumstances? and who run in to create Confusions with so desperate a boldness, as those who having nothing to lose, hope to gain by them? If a King should fall under so much contempt or envy, that he could not keep his Subjects in their Duty, but by Oppression and ill Usage, and by impoverishing them, it were certainly better for him to quit his Kingdom, than to retain it by such Methods, by which tho he keeps the Name of Authority, yet he loses the Majesty due to it. Nor is it so becoming the Dignity of a King to reign over Beggars, as to reign over rich and happy Subjects. And therefore Fabritius, that was a Man of a noble and exalted Temper, said, He would rather govern rich Men, than be rich himself; and for one Man to abound in Wealth and Pleasure, when all about him are mourning and groaning, is to be a Goaler and not a King. He is an unskilful Physician, that cannot cure a Disease, but by casting his Patient into another: So he that can find no other way for correcting the Errors of his People, but by taking from them the Conveniences of Life, shews that he knows not what it is to govern a free Nation. He himself ought rather to shake off his Sloth, or to lay down his Pride; for the Contempt or Hatred that his People have for him, takes its rise from the Vices in himself. Let him live upon what belongs to himself, without wronging others, and accommodate his Expence to his Revenue. Let him punish Crimes, and by his wise Conduct let him endeavour to prevent them, rather than be severe when he has suffered them to be too common: Let him not rashly revive Laws that are abrogated by disuse, especially if they have been long forgotten, and never wanted. And let him never take any Penalty for the breach of them, to which a Judg would not give way in a private Man, but would look on him as a crafty and unjust Person for pretending to it. To these things I would add, that Law among the Macarians, that lie not far from Utopia, by which their King, in the day on which he begins to reign, is tied by an Oath confirmed by solemn Sacrifices, never to have at once above a thousand Pounds of Gold in his Treasures, or so much Silver as is equal to that in value. This Law, as they say, was made by an excellent King, who had more regard to the Riches of his Country, than to his own Wealth; and so provided against the heaping up of so much Treasure, as might impoverish the People: he thought that moderate Sum might be sufficient for any Accident; if either the King had occasion for it against Rebels, or the Kingdom against the Invasion of an Enemy, but that it was not enough to encourage a Prince to invade other Mens Rights, which was the chief cause of his making that Law. He also thought, that it was a good Provision for a free circulation of Mony, that is necessary for the course of Commerce and Exchange: And when a King must distribute all these extraordinary Accessions that encrease Treasure beyond the due pitch, it makes him less disposed to oppress his Subjects. Such a King as this is, will be the terror of ill Men, and will be beloved of all good Men.

If, I say, I should talk of these or such like things, to Men that had taken their biass another way, how deaf would they be to it all? No doubt, very deaf, answered I; and no wonder, for one is never to offer at Propositions or Advices, that he is certain will not be entertained. Discourses so much out of the road could not

avail any thing, nor have any effect on Men, whose Minds were prepossessed with different Sentiments. This Philosophical way of Speculation, is not unpleasant among Friends in a free Conversation; but there is no room for it in the Courts of Princes, where great Affairs are carried on by Authority. That is what I was saying, replied he, that there is no room for Philosophy in the Courts of Princes. Yes, there is, said I, but not for this Speculative Philosophy, that makes every thing to be alike fitting at all times: But there is another Philosophy that is more pliable, that knows its proper Scene, and accommodates it self to it; and that teaches a Man to act that part which has fallen to his share, fitly and decently. If when one of Plautus's Comedies is upon the Stage, and a Company of Servants are acting their parts, you should come out in the Garb of a Philosopher, and repeat out of Octavia, a Discourse of Seneca's to Nero, had it not been better for you to have said nothing, than by mixing things of such different Natures, to have made such an impertinent Tragi-Comedy? for you spoil and corrupt the Play that is in hand, when you mix with it things disagreeing to it, even tho they were better than it is: therefore go through with the Play that is acting, the best you can; and do not confound it, because another that is pleasanter comes into your thoughts. It is even so in a Common-Wealth, and in the Councils of Princes; if ill Opinions cannot be quite rooted out; and if you cannot cure some received Vices according to your wishes, you must not therefore abandon the Common-Wealth; or forsake the Ship in a Storm, because you cannot command the Winds; nor ought you to assault People with Discourses that are out of their Road, when you see their Notions are such that you can make no impression on them: but you ought to cast about, and as far as you can to manage things dextrously, that so if you cannot make Matters go well, they may be as little ill as is possible; for except all Men were good, all things cannot go well; which I do not hope to see in a great while. By this, answered he, all that I shall do shall be to preserve my self from being mad, while I endeavour to cure the madness of other People: for if I will speak truth, I must say such things as I was formerly saying; and for lying, whether a Philosopher can do it or not, I cannot tell; I am sure I cannot do it. But tho these Discourses may be uneasy and ungrateful to them, I do not see why they should seem foolish or extravagant: indeed if I should either propose such things as Plato has contrived in his Common-Wealth, or as the Utopians practise in theirs, tho they might seem better, as certainly they are, yet they are so quite different from our Establishment, which is founded on Property, there being no such thing among them, that I could not expect that it should have any effect on them: But such Discourses as mine, that only call past Evils to mind, and give warning of what may follow, have nothing in them that is so absurd, that they may not be used at any time; for they can only be unpleasant to those who are resolved to run headlong the contrary way: and if we must let alone every thing as absurd or extravagant, which by reason of the wicked Lives of many may seem uncouth, we must, even among Christians, give over pressing the greatest part of those things that Christ hath taught us: tho he has commanded us not to conceal them, but to proclaim on the House-tops that which he taught

in secret. The greatest parts of his Precepts are more disagreeing to the Lives of the Men of this Age, than any part of my Discourse has been: But the Preachers seem to have learn'd that craft to which you advise me; for they observing that the World would not willingly sute their Lives to the Rules that Christ has given, have fitted his Doctrine, as if it had been a leaden Rule, to their Lives; that so some way or other they might agree with one another. But I see no other effect of this compliance, except it be that Men become more secure in their wickedness by it. And this is all the success that I can have in a Court; for I must always differ from the rest, and then I will signify nothing; or if I agree with them, then I will only help forward their madness. I do not comprehend what you mean by your casting about, or by the bending and handling things so dextrously, that if they go not well, they may go as little ill as may be: for in Courts they will not bear with a Man's holding his peace, or conniving at them: a Man must bare-facedly approve of the worst Councils, and consent to the blackest Designs: So that one would pass for a Spy, or possibly for a Traitor, that did but coldly approve of such wicked Practices: And when a Man is engaged in such a Society, he will be so far from being able to mend Matters by his casting about, as you call it, that he will find no occasions of doing any good: the ill Company will sooner corrupt him, than be the better for him: or if notwithstanding all their ill Company, he remains still entire and innocent, yet their Follies and Knavery will be imputed to him; and by mixing Councils with them, he must bear his share of all the blame that belongs wholly to others.

It was no ill Simily, by which Plato set forth the unreasonableness of a Philosopher's meddling with Government: If one, says he, shall see a great company run out into the Rain every day, and delight to be wet in it; and if he knows that it will be to no purpose for him to go and perswade them to come into their Houses, and avoid the Rain; so that all that can be expected from his going to speak to them, will be, that he shall be wet with them; when it is so, he does best to keep within Doors, and preserve himself, since he cannot prevail enough to correct other Peoples Folly.

Tho to speak plainly what is my Heart, I must freely own to you, that as long as there is any Property, and while Mony is the Standard of all other things, I cannot think that a Nation can be governed either Justly or Happily: Not Justly, because the best things will fall to the share of the worst of Men: Nor Happily, because all things will be divided among a few, (and even these are not in all respects happy) the rest being left to be absolutely miserable. Therefore when I reflect on the wise and good Constitutions of the Utopians, among whom all things are so well governed, and with so few Laws; and among whom as Vertue hath its due reward, yet there is such an equality, that every Man lives in plenty; and when I compare with them so many other Nations that are still making new Laws, and yet can never bring their Constitution to a right Regulation, among whom tho every one has his Property; yet all the Laws that they can invent, cannot prevail so far, that Men can either obtain or preserve it, or be certainly able to distinguish what is their own, from what is another Man's; of which the many Law Suits that every day break out,

and depend without any end, give too plain a demonstration: When, I say, I ballance all these things in my thoughts, I grow more favourable to Plato, and do not wonder that he resolved, not to make any Laws for such as would not submit to a community of all things: For so wise a Man as he was, could not but foresee that the setting all upon the Level, was the only way to make a Nation happy; which cannot be obtained so long as there is Property: for when every Man draws to himself all that he can compass, by one Title or another, it must needs follow, that how plentiful soever a Nation may be, yet a few dividing the Wealth of it among themselves, the rest must fall under Poverty. So that there will be two sorts of People among them, that deserve that their Fortunes should be interchanged; the former being useless, but wicked and ravenous; and the latter, who by their constant industry serve the Publick more than themselves, being sincere and modest Men. From whence I am perswaded, that till Property is taken away, there can be no equitable or just distribution made of things, nor can the World be happily governed: for as long as that is maintained, the greatest and the far best part of Mankind, will be still oppressed with a load of Cares and Anxieties. I confess, without the taking of it quite away, those Pressures that lie on a great part of Mankind, may be made lighter; but they can never be quite removed. For if Laws were made, determining at how great an extent in Soil, and at how much Mony every Man must stop, and limiting the Prince that he may not grow too great, and restraining the People that they may not become too insolent, and that none might factiously aspire to publick Employments; and that they might neither be sold, nor made burdensome by a great expence; since otherwise those that serve in them, will be tempted to reimburse themselves by Cheats and Violence, and it will become necessary to find out rich Men for undergoing those Employments for which wise Men ought rather to be sought out; these Laws, I say, may have such Effects, as good Diet and Care may have on a Sick Man, whose recovery is desperate: they may allay and mitigate the Disease, but it can never be quite healed, nor the Body Politick be brought again to a good Habit, as long as Property remains; and it will fall out as in a complication of Diseases, that by applying a Remedy to one Sore, you will provoke another; and that which removes one ill Symptom, produces others, while the strengthening of one part of the Body weakens the rest. On the contrary, answered I, it seems to me that Men cannot live conveniently, where all things are common: How can there be any Plenty, where every Man will excuse himself from Labour? For as the hope of Gain doth not excite him, so the confidence that he has in other Mens Industry, may make him slothful: And if People come to be pinched with Want, and yet cannot dispose of any thing as their own; what can follow upon this, but perpetual Sedition and Bloodshed, especially when the Reverence and Authority due to Magistrates falls to the Ground? For I cannot imagine how that can be kept up among those that are in all things equal to one another. I do not wonder, said he, that it appears so to you, since you have no Notion, or at least no right one, of such a Constitution: But if you had been in Utopia with me, and had seen their Laws and Rules as I did, for the space of five Years, in which I lived among them;

and during which time I was so delighted with them, that indeed I would never have left them, if it had not been to make the discovery of that new World to the Europeans; you would then confess that you had never seen a People so well constituted as they are. You will not easily persuade me, said Peter, that any Nation in that New World, is better governed than those among us are. For as our Understandings are not worse than theirs, so our Government, if I mistake not, being ancients, a long practice has helped us to find out many Conveniences of Life: And some happy Chances have discovered other things to us, which no Man's Understanding could ever have invented. As for the Antiquity, either of their Government, or of ours, said he, you cannot pass a true Judgment of it, unless you had read their Histories; for if they are to be believed, they had Towns among them, before these parts were so much as inhabited: And as for these Discoveries, that have been either hit on by chance, or made by ingenious Men, these might have hapned there as well as here. I do not deny but we are more ingenious than they are, but they exceed us much in Industry and Application: They knew little concerning us, before our arrival among them; they call us all by a general Name of the Nations that lie beyond the Equinoctial Line; for their Chronicle mentions a Shipwreck that was made on their Coast 1200 Years ago; and that some Romans and Egyptians that were in the Ship, getting safe a Shore, spent the rest of their days amongst them; and such was their Ingenuity, that from this single Opportunity, they drew the advantage of Learning from those unlook'd for Guests, all the useful Arts that were then among the Romans, which those Shipwreck'd Men knew: And by the Hints that they gave them, they themselves found out even some of those Arts which they could not fully explain to them; so happily did they improve that Accident, of having some of our People cast upon their shore: But if any such Accident have at any time brought any from thence into Europe, we have been so far from improving it, that we do not so much as remember it; as in after Times perhaps it will be forgot by our People that I was ever there. For tho they from one such Accident, made themselves Masters of all the good Inventions that were among us; yet I believe it would be long before we would learn or put in practice any of the good Institutions that are among them: And this is the true Cause of their being better governed, and living happier than we do, tho we come not short of them in point of Understanding, or outward Advantages. Upon this I said to him, I do earnestly beg of you, that you would describe that Island very particularly to us. Be not too short in it, but set out in order all things relating to their Soil, their Rivers, their Towns, their People, their Manners, Constitution, Laws, and in a word, all that you imagine we desire to know: and you may well imagine that we desire to know every thing concerning them, of which we are hitherto ignorant. I will do it very willingly, said he, for I have digested the whole Matter carefully; but it will take up some time. Let us go then, said I, first and dine, and then we shall have leasure enough. Be it so, said he. So we went in and dined, and after Dinner we came back, and sat down in the same place. I ordered my Servants to take care that none might come and interrupt us: and both Peter and I desired Raphael to be

as good as his word: So when he saw that we were very intent upon it, he paused a little to recollect himself, and began in this manner.

THE SECOND BOOK

The Island of Utopia, in the middle of it, where it is broadest, is 200 miles broad, and holds almost at the same breadth over a great part of it; but it grows narrower towards both ends. Its Figure is not unlike a Crescent: between its Horns, the Sea comes in eleven miles broad, and spreads it self into a great Bay, which is environed with Land to the compass of about 500 miles, and is well secured from Winds: There is no great Current in the Bay, and the whole Coast is, as it were, one continued Harbour, which gives all that live in the Island great convenience for mutual Commerce: but the entry into the Bay, what by Rocks on one hand, and Shallows on the other, is very dangerous. In the middle of it there is one single Rock which appears above Water, and so is not dangerous; on the top of it there is a Tower built, in which a Garrison is kept. The other Rocks lie under Water, and are very dangerous. The Channel is known only to the Natives, so that if any Stranger should enter into the Bay, without one of their Pilates, he would run a great danger of Shipwrack: for even they themselves could not pass it safe, if some marks that are on their Coast did not direct their way; and if these should be but a little shifted, any Fleet that might come against them, how great soever it were, would be certainly lost. On the other side of the Island, there are likewise many Harbours; and the Coast is so fortified, both by Nature and Art, that a small number of Men can hinder the descent of a great Army. But they report (and there remains good marks of it to make it credible) that this was no Island at first, but a part of the Continent. Utopus that conquered it (whose Name it still carries, for Abraxa was its first Name) and brought the rude and uncivilized Inhabitants into such a good Government, and to that measure of Politeness, that they do now far excel all the rest of mankind; having soon subdued them, he designed to separate them from the Continent, and to bring the Sea quite about them, and in order to that he made a deep Channel to be digged fifteen miles long: He not only forced the Inhabitants to work at it, but likewise his own Souldiers, that the Natives might not think he treated them like Slaves; and having set vast numbers of Men to work, he brought it to a speedy conclusion beyond all Mens expectations: By this their Neighbours, who laughed at the folly of the Undertaking at first, were struck with admiration and terror, when they saw it brought to perfection. There are 54 Cities in the Island, all large and well built: the Manners, Customs, and Laws of all their Cities are the same, and they are all contrived as near in the same manner, as the Ground on which they stand will allow: The nearest lie at least 24 miles distant from one another, and the most remote are not so far distant, but that a Man can go on foot in one day from it, to that which lies next it. Every City sends three of their wisest Senators once a Year to Amaurot, for consulting about their common Concerns; for that is the cheif Town of the Island, being situated near the Center of it, so that it is the most convenient place for their Assemblies.

Every City has so much Ground set off for its Jurisdiction, that there is twenty miles of Soil round it, assigned to it: and where the Towns lie wider, they have much more Ground: no Town desires to enlarge their Bounds, for they consider themselves rather as Tenants than Landlords of their Soil. They have built over all the Country, Farmhouses for Husbandmen, which are well contrived, and are furnished with all things necessary for Countey-labour. Inhabitants are sent by turns from the Cities to dwell in them; no Country-family has fewer than fourty Men and Women in it, besides two Slaves. There is a Master and a Mistress set over every Family; and over thirty Families there is a Magistrate settled. Every Year twenty of this Family come back to the Town, after they have stayed out two Years in the Country: and in their room there are other twenty sent from the Town, that they may learn Country-work, from those that have been already one Year in the Country, which they must teach those that come to them the next Year from the Town. By this means such as dwell in those Country-Farms, are never ignorant of Agriculture, and so commit no Errors in it, which might otherwise be fatal to them, and bring them under a scarcity of corn. But tho there is every Year such a shifting of the Husbandmen, that none may be forced against his mind to follow that hard course of life too long; yet many among them take such pleasure in it, that they desire leave to continue many Years in it. These Husbandmen labour the Ground, breed Cattel, hew Wood, and convey it to the Towns, either by Land or Water, as is most convenient. They breed an infinite multitude of Chickens in a very curious manner: for the Hens do not sit and hatch them, but they lay vast numbers of Eggs in a gentle and equal heat, in which they are hatched; and they are no sooner out of the Shell, and able to stir about, but they seem to consider those that feed them as their Mothers, and follow them as other Chickens do the Hen that hatched them. They breed very few Horses, but those they have, are full of Mettle, and are kept only for exercising their Youth in the Art of sitting and riding of them; for they do not put them to any Work, either of Plowing or Carriage, in which they employ Oxen; for tho Horses are stronger, yet they find Oxen can hold out longer; and as they are not subject to so many Diseases, so they are kept upon a less charge, and with less trouble: And when they are so worn out, that they are no more fit for labour, they are good Meat at last. They sow no Corn, but that which is to be their Bread; for they drink either Wine, Cider, or Perry, and often Water, sometimes pure, and sometimes boiled with Hony or Liqueurish, with which they abound: and tho they know exactly well how much Corn will serve every Town, and all that tract of Country which belongs to it, yet they sow much more, and breed more Cattel than are necessary for their consumption: and they give that overplus of which they make no use to their Neighbours. When they want any thing in the Country which it does not produce, they fetch that from the Town, without carrying any thing in exchange for it: and the Magistrates of the Town take care to see it given them: for they meet generally in the Town once a month, upon a Festival-Day. When the time of Harvest comes, the Magistrates in the Country send to those in the Towns, and let them know how many hands they will need for reaping the

Harvest; and the number they call for being sent to them, they commonly dispatch it all in one day.

Of their Towns, particularly of Amaurot

He that knows one of their Towns, knows them all, they are so like one another, except where the scituation makes some difference. I shall therefore describe one of them, and it is no matter which; but none is so proper as Amaurot: for as none is more eminent, all the rest yielding in precedence to this, because it is the Seat of their Supream Council; so there was none of them better known to me, I having lived five Years altogether in it.

It lies upon the side of a Hill, or rather a rising Ground: its Figure is almost square, for from the one side of it, which shoots up almost to the top of the Hill, it runs down in a descent for two miles to the River Anider; but it is a little broader the other way that runs along by the Bank of that River. The Anider rises about 80 miles above Amaurot, in a small Spring at first; but other Brooks falling into it, of which two are more considerable, as it runs by Amaurot, it is grown half a mile broad, but it still grows larger and larger, till after sixty miles course below, it is buried in the Ocean. Between the Town and the Sea, and for some miles above the Town, it ebbs and flows every six hours, with a strong Current. The Tide comes up for about thirty miles so full, that there is nothing but Salt-water in the River, the fresh Water being driven back with its force; and above that, for some miles, the Water is brackish, but a little higher, as it runs by the Town, it is quite fresh; and when the Tide ebbs, it continues fresh all along to the Sea. There is a Bridg cast over the River, not of Timber, but of fair Stone, consisting of many stately Arches; it lies at that part of the Town which is farthest from the Sea, so that Ships without any hindrance lie all along the side of the Town. There is likewise another River that runs by it, which tho it is not great, yet it runs pleasantly, for it rises out of the same Hill on which the Town stands, and so runs down throw it, and falls into the Anider. The Inhabitants have fortified the Fountain-head of this River, which springs a little without the Towns; that so if they should happen to be besieged, the Enemy might not be able to stop or divert the course of the Water, nor poison it; from thence it is carried in earthen Pipes to the lower Streets: and for those places of the Town to which the Water of that small River cannot be conveyed, they have great Cisterns for receiving the Rain-water, which supplies the want of the other. The Town is compassed with a high and thick Wall, in which there are many Towers and Forts; there is also a broad and deep dry Ditch, set thick with Thorns, cast round three sides of the Town, and the River is instead of a Ditch on the fourth side. The Streets are made very convenient for all Carriage, and are well sheltered from the Winds. Their Buildings are good, and are so uniform, that a whole side of a Street looks like one House. The Streets are twenty foot broad; there lie Gardens behind all their Houses; these are large, but enclosed with Buildings, that on all Hands face the Streets; so that every House has both a Door to the Street, and a back Door to the Garden: their Doors have all two Leaves, which as they are easily

opened, so they shut of their own accord; and there being no Property among them, every Man may freely enter into any House whatsoever. At every ten Years ends, they shift their Houses by Lots. They cultivate their Gardens with great care, so that they have both Vines, Fruits, Herbs, and Flowers in them; and all is so well ordered, and so finely kept, that I never saw Gardens any where that were both so fruitful and so beautiful as theirs are. And this humor of ordering their Gardens so well, is not only kept up by the pleasure they find in it, but also by an emulation between the Inhabitants of the several Streets, who vie with one another in this Matter; and there is indeed nothing belonging to the whole Town, that is both more useful, and more pleasant. So that he who founded the Town, seems to have taken care of nothing more than of their Gardens; for they say, the whole Scheme of the Town was designed at first by Utopus, but he left all that belonged to the Ornament and Improvement of it, to be added by those that should come after him, that being too much for one Man to bring to perfection. Their Records, that contain the History of their Town and State, are preserved with an exact care, and run backwards 1760 Years. From these it appears, that their Houses were at first low and mean, like Cottages made of any sort of Timber, and were built with mud Walls, and thatch'd with Straw: but now their Houses are three Stories high, the Fronts of them are faced either with Stone, Plaistering, or Brick; and between the facings of their Walls, they throw in their Rubbish; their Roofs are flat, and on them they lay a sort of Plaister which costs very little, and yet is so tempered, that as it is not apt to take Fire, so it resists the Weather more than Lead does. They have abundance of Glass among them, with which they glaze their Windows: they use also in their Windows, a thin linnen Cloth, that is so oiled or gummed, that by that means it both lets in the Light more freely to them, and keeps out the Wind the better.

Of their Magistrates

Thirty Families chuse every Year a Magistrate, who was called anciently the Syphogrant, but is now called the Philarch: and over every ten Syphogrants, with the Families subject to them, there is another Magistrate, who was anciently called the Tranibore, but of late the Archphilarch. All the Syphogrants, who are in number 200, chuse the Prince out of a List of four, whom the People of the four Divisions of the City name to them; but they take an Oath before they proceed to an Election, that they will chuse him whom they think meetest for the Office: They give their Voices secretly, so that it is not known for whom every one gives his Suffrage. The Prince is for Life, unless he is removed upon suspicion of some design to enslave the People. The Tranibors are new chosen every Year, but yet they are for the most part still continued: All their other Magistrates are only Annual. The Tranibors meet every third day, and oftner if need be, and consult with the Prince, either concerning the Affairs of the State in general, or such private Differences as may arise sometimes among the People; tho that falls out but seldom. There are always two Syphogrants called into the Council-Chamber,

and these are changed every day. It is a fundamental Rule of their Government, that no Conclusion can be made in any thing that relates to the Publick, till it has been first debated three several days in their Council. It is Death for any to meet and consult concerning the State, unless it be either in their ordinary Council, or in the Assembly of the whole Body of the People.

These things have been so provided among them, that the Prince and the Tranibors may not conspire together to change the Government, and enslave the People; and therefore when any thing of great importance is set on foot, it is sent to the Syphogrants; who after they have communicated it with the Families that belong to their Divisions, and have considered it among themselves, make report to the Senate; and upon great Occasions, the Matter is referred to the Council of the whole Island. One Rule observed in their Council, is, never to debate a thing on the same day in which is first proposed; for that is always referred to the next meeting, that so Men may not rashly, and in the heat of Discourse, engage themselves too soon, which may biass them so much, that instead of considering the Good of the Publick, they will rather study to maintain their own Notions; and by a perverse and preposterous sort of shame, hazard their Country, rather than endanger their own Reputation, or venture the being suspected to have wanted foresight in the Expedients that they proposed at first. And therefore to prevent this, they take care that they may rather be deliberate, than sudden in their Motions.

Of their Trades, and manner of Life

Agriculture is that which is so universally understood among them all, that no Person, either Man or Woman, is ignorant of it; from their Childhood they are instructed in it, partly by what they learn at School, and partly by practice, they being led out often into the Fields, about the Town, where they not only see others at work, but are likewise exercised in it themselves. Besides Agriculture, which is so common to them all, every Man has some peculiar Trade to which he applies himself, such as the Manufacture of Wool, or Flax, Masonry, Smiths Work, or Carpenters Work; for there is no other sort of Trade that is in great esteem among them. All the Island over, they wear the same sort of Clothes without any other distinction, except that which is necessary for marking the difference between the two Sexes, and the married and unmarried. The fashion never alters; and as it is not ungrateful nor uneasy, so it is fitted for their Climate, and calculated both for their Summers and Winters. Every Family makes their own Clothes; but all among them, Women as well as Men, learn one or other of the Trades formerly mentioned. Women, for the most part, deal in Wool and Flax, which sute better with their feebleness, leaving the other ruder Trades to the Men. Generally the same Trade passes down from Father to Son, Inclination often following Descent: but if any Man's Genius lies another way, he is by Adoption translated into a Family that deals in the Trade to which he is inclined: And when that is to be done, care is taken, not only by his Father, but by the Magistrate, that he may be put to a discreet and good Man. And if after a Man has learn'd one Trade, he desires to

acquire another, that is also allowed, and is managed in the same manner as the former. When he has learn'd both, he follows that which he likes best, unless the Publick has more occasion for the other.

The chief, and almost the only Business of the Syphogrants, is to take care that no Man may live idle, but that every one may follow his Trade diligently: yet they do not wear themselves out with perpetual Toil, from Morning to Night, as if they were Beasts of Burden; which as it is indeed a heavy slavery, so it is the common course of Life of all Tradesmen every where, except among the Utopians: But they dividing the Day and Night into twenty four hours, appoint six of these for Work, three of them are before Dinner; and after that they dine, and interrupt their Labour for two hours, and then they go to work again for other three hours; and after that they sup, and at eight a Clock, counting from Noon, they go to bed and sleep eight hours: and for their other hours, besides those of Work, and those that go for eating and sleeping, they are left to every Man's discretion; yet they are not to abuse that Interval to Luxury and Idleness, but must imploy it in some proper Exercise according to their various Inclinations, which is for the most part Reading. It is ordinary to have Publick Lectures every Morning before day-break; to which none are obliged to go, but those that are mark'd out for Literature; yet a great many, both Men and Women of all Ranks, go to hear Lectures of one sort or another, according to the variety of their Inclinations. But if others, that are not made for Contemplation, chuse rather to imploy themselves at that time in their Trade, as many of them do, they are not hindred, but are commended rather, as Men that take care to serve their Country. After Supper, they spend an hour in some Diversion: In Summer it is in their Gardens, and in Winter it is in the Halls where they eat; and thy entertain themselves in them, either with Musick or Discourse. They do not so much as know Dice, or suchlike foolish and mischievous Games: They have two sorts of Games not unlike our . . . [2 missing pages] . . . profitable Trades; and if all that number that languishes out their Life in sloth and idleness, of whom every one consumes as much as any two of the Men that are at work do, were forced to labour, you may easily imagine that a small proportion of time would serve for doing all that is either necessary, profitable, or pleasant to Mankind, pleasure being still kept within its due bounds: Which appears very plainly in Utopia, for there, in a great City, and in all the Territory that lies round it, you can scarce find five hundred, either Men or Women, that by their Age and Strength, are capable of Labour, that are not engaged in it; even the Syphogrants themselves, tho the Law excuses them, yet do not excuse themselves, that so by their Examples they may excite the industry of the rest of the People; the like exemption is allowed to those, who being recommended to the People by the Priests, are by the secret Suffrages of the Syphogrants, priviledged from Labour, that they may apply themselves wholly to study; and if any of these falls short of those Hopes that he seemed to give at first, he is obliged to go to work. And sometimes a Mechanick, that does so imploy his leasure hours, that he makes a considerable advancement in Learning, is eased from being a Tradesman, and ranked among their Learned Men. Out of these they

chuse their Ambassadors, their Priests, their Tranibors, and the Prince himself; who was anciently called their Barzenes, but is called of late their Ademus. And thus from the great numbers among them, that are neither suffered to be idle, nor to be employed in any fruitless Labour; you may easily make the estimate, how much good Work may be done in those few hours in which they are obliged to labour. But besides all that has been already said, this is to be considered, that those needful Arts which are among them, are managed with less labour than any where else. The building, or the repairing of Houses among us, employs many hands, because often a thriftless Heir suffers a House that his Father built, to fall into decay, so that his Successor must, at a great cost, repair that which he might have kept up with a small charge: and often it falls out, that the same House which one built at a vast expence, is neglected by another, that thinks he has a more delicate sense of such things; and he suffering it to fall to ruin, builds another at no less charge. But among the Utopians, all things are so regulated, that Men do very seldom build upon any new piece of Ground; and they are not only very quick in repairing their Houses, but shew their foresight in preventing their decay: So that their Buildings are preserved very long, with very little labour: And thus the Craftsmen to whom that care belongs, are often without any Imploiment, except it be the hewing of Timber, and the squaring of Stones, that so the Materials may be in readiness for raising a Building very suddenly, when there is any occasion for it. As for their Clothes, observe how little work goes for them: While they are at labour, they are cloathed with Leather and Skins, cast carelesly about them, which will last seven Years; and when they appear in publick, they put on an upper Garment, which hides the other: and these are all of one colour, and that is the natural colour of the Wool: and as they need less Woollen Cloth than is used any where else, so that which they do need, is much less costly. They use Linnen Cloth more; but that is prepared with less labour, and they value Cloth only by the whiteness of the Linnen, or the cleanness of the Wool, without much regard to the fineness of the Thread; and whereas in other places, four or five upper Garments of Woollen Cloth, and of different Colours, and as many Vests of Silk will scarce serve one Man; and those that are nicer, think ten too few; every Man there is contented with one which very oft serves him two Years. Nor is there any thing that can tempt a Man to desire more; for if he had them, he would neither be the warmer, nor would he make one jot the better appearance for it. And thus since they are all imploied in some useful Labour; and since they content themselves with fewer things, it falls out that there is a great abundance of all things among them: So that often, for want of other Work, if there is any need of mending their High Ways at any time, you will see marvellous numbers of people brought out to work at them; and when there is no occasion of any publick work, the hours of working are lessened by publick Proclamation; for the Magistrates do not engage the people into any needless Labour, since by their constitution they aim chiefly at this, that except in so far as publick necessity requires it, all the people may have as much free time for themselves as may be necessary for the improvement of their minds, for in this they think the happiness of Life consists.

Of their Traffick

But it is now time to explain to you the mutual Intercourse of this People, their Commerce, and the Rules by which all things are distributed among them. As their Cities are composed of Families, so their Families are made up of those that are nearly related to one another. Their Women, when they grow up, are married out; but all the Males, both Children and Grandchildren, live still in the same House, in great obedience to their common Parent, unless Age has weakned his Understanding; and in that case he that is next to him in Age, comes in his room. But lest any City should become either out of measure great, or fall under a dispeopling by any accident, provision is made that none of their Cities may have above six thousand Families in it, besides those of the Country round it; and that no Family may have less than ten, and more than sixteen Persons in it; but there can be no determined number for the Children under Age: And this Rule is easily observed, by removing some of the Children of a more fruitful Couple, to any other Family that does not abound so much in them. By the same Rule, they supply Cities that do not encrease so fast, by others that breed faster: And if there is any encrease over the whole Island, then they draw out a number of their Citizens out of the several Towns, and send them over to the Neighbouring Continent; where, if they find that the Inhabitants have more Soil than they can well cultivate, they fix a Colony, taking in the Inhabitants to their Society, if they will live with them; and where they do that of their own accord, they quickly go into their method of Life, and to their Rules, and this proves a happiness to both the Nations: for according to their constitution, such care is taken of the Soil, that it becomes fruitful enogh for both, tho it might be otherwise too narrow and barren for any one of them.

But if the Natives refuse to conform themselves to their Laws, they drive them out of those Bounds which they mark out for themselves, and use force if they resist. For they account it a very just cause of War, if any Nation will hinder others to come and possess a part of their Soil, of which they make no use, but let it lie idle and uncultivated; since every Man has by the Law of Nature a right to such a waste Portion of the Earth, as is necessary for his subsistence. If any Accident has so lessened the number of the Inhabitants of any of their Towns, that it cannot be made up from the other Towns of the Island, without diminishing them too much, which is said to have fallen out but twice, since they were first a People, by two Plagues that were among them; then the number is filled up, by recalling so many out of their Colonies, for they will abandon their Colonies, rather than suffer any of their Towns to sink too low.

But to return to the manner of their living together; the Ancientest of every Family governs it, as has been said. Wives serve their Husbands, and Children their Parents, and always the Younger serves the Elder. Every City is divided into four equal Parts, and in the middle of every part there is a Market-place: that which is brought thither manufactured by the several Families, is carried from thence to Houses appointed for that purpose, in which all things of a sort are laid by themselves; and every Father of a Family goes thither, and takes whatsoever he

or his Family stand in need of, without either paying for it, or laying in any thing in pawn or exchange for it. There is no reason for denying any thing to any Person, since there is such plenty of every thing among them: and there is no danger of any Man's asking more than he needs; for what should make any do that, since they are all sure that they will be always supplied? It is the fear of want that makes any of the whole Race of Animals, either greedy or ravenous; but besides Fear, there is in Man a vast Pride, that makes him fancy it a particular Glory for him to excel other in Pomp and Excess. But by the Laws of the Utopians, there is no room for these things among them. Near these Markets there are also others for all sorts of Victuals, where there are not only Herbs, Fruits, and Bread, but also Fish, Fowl, and Cattel. There are also without their Towns, places appointed near some running Water, for killing their Beasts, and for washing away their filth; which is done by their Slaves, for they suffer none of their Citizens to kill their Cattel, because they think, that Pity and good Nature, which are among the best of those Affections that are born with us, are much impaired by the butchering of Animals: Nor do they suffer any thing that is foul or unclean to be brought within their Towns, lest the Air should be infected by ill smells which might prejudice their Health. In every Street there are great Halls that lie at an equal distance from one another, which are marked by particular Names. The Syphogrants dwell in these, that are set over thirty Families, fifteen lying on one side of it, and as many on the other. In these they do all meet and eat. The Stewards of every one of them come to the Market-place at an appointed hour; and according to the number of those that belong to their Hall, they carry home Provisions. But they take more care of their Sick, than of any others, who are looked after and lodged in public Hospitals: They have belonging to every Town four Hospitals, that are built without their Walls, and are so large, that they may pass for little Towns: By this means, if they had ever such a number of sick Persons, they could lodg them conveniently, and at such a distance, that such of them as are sick of infectious Diseases, may be kept so far from the rest, that there can be no danger of Contagion. The Hospitals are so furnished and stored with all things that are convenient for the ease and recovery of their Sick; and those that are put in them, are all looked after with so tender and watchful a care, and are so constantly treated by their skilful Physicians; that as none is sent to them against their will, so there is scarce one in a whole Town, that if he should fall ill, would not chuse rather to go thithither, than lie sick at home.

After the Steward of the Hospitals has taken for them whatsoever the Physician does prescribe at the Market-place, then the best things that remain, are distributed equally among the Halls, in proportion to their numbers, only, in the first place, they serve the Prince, the chief Priest, the Tranibors and Ambassadors, and Strangers, (if there are any, which indeed falls out but seldom, and for whom there are Houses well furnished, particularly appointed when they come among them). At the hours of Dinner and Supper, the whole Syphogranty being called together by sound of Trumpet, meets and eats together, except only such as are in the Hospitals, or lie sick at home. Yet after the Halls are served, no Man is hindred

to carry Provisions home from the Market-place; for they know that none does that but for some good reason for tho any that will may eat at home, yet none does it willingly, since it is both an indecent and foolish thing, for any to give themselves the trouble to make ready an ill Dinner at home, when there is a much more plentiful one made ready for him so near hand. All the uneasy and sordid Services about these Halls, are performed by their Slaves; but the dressing and cooking their Meat, and the ordering their Tables, belongs only to the Women; which goes round all the Women of every Family by turns. They sit at three or more Tables, according to their numbers; the Men sit towards the Wall, and the Women sit on the other side, that if any of them should fall suddenly ill, which is ordinary to Women with Child, she may, without disturbing the rest, rise and go to the Nurses Room, who are there with the suckling Children; where there is always Fire, and clean Water at hand, and some Cradles in which they may lay the young Children, if there is occasion for it, and that they may shift and dress them before the Fire. Every Child is nursed by its own Mother, if Death or Sickness does not intervene; and in that case the Syphogrants Wives find out a Nurse quickly, which is no hard matter to do; for any one that can do it, offers her self chearfully: for as they are much inclined to that piece of Mercy, so the Child whom they nurse, considers the Nurse as its Mother. All the Children under five Years old, sit among the Nurses, the rest of the younger sort of both Sexes, till they are fit for Marriage, do either serve those that sit at Table; or if they are not strong enough for that, they stand by them in great silence, and eat that which is given them, by those that sit at Table; nor have they any other formality of dining. In the middle of the first Table, which stands in the upper end of the Hall, a— [2 pages missing] . . . trey, where they live at a greater distance, every one eats at home, and no Family wants any necessary sort of Provision, for it is from them that Provisions are sent unto those that live in the Towns.

Of the Travelling of the Utopians

If any of them has a mind to visit his Friends that live in some other Town, or desires to travel and see the rest of the Country, he obtains leave very easily from the Syphogrant and Tranibors to do it, when there is no particular occasion for him at home: such as travel, carry with them a Passport from the Prince, which both certifies the Licence that is granted for travvelling, and limits the Time of their return. They are furnished with a Wagon and a Slave, who drives the Oxen, and looks after them: but unless there are Women in the Company, the Wagon is sent back at the end of the Journey as a needless trouble: While they are on the Road, they carry no Provisions with them; yet they want nothing, but are every way treated as if they were at home. If they stay in any place longer then a Night, every one follows his proper Occupation, and is very well used by those of his own Trade: but if any Man goes out of the City to which he belongs, without leave, and is found going about without a Passport, he is roughly handled, and is punished as a Fugitive, and sent home disgracefully; and if he falls again into the like Fault, he

is condemned to slavery. If any Man has a mind to travel only over the Precinct of his own City, he may freely do it, obtaining his Father's Permission, and his Wives Consent; but when he comes into any of the Countrey-houses, he must labour with them according to their Rules, if he expects to be entertained by them: and if he does this, he may freely go over the whole Precinct, being thus as useful to the City to which he belongs, as if he were still within it. Thus you see that there are no idle Persons among them, nor pretences of excusing any from Labour. There are no Taverns, no Alehouses, nor Stews among them; nor any other occasions of corrupting themselves, or of getting into Corners, or forming themselves into Parties: All Men live in full view, so that all are obliged, both to perform their ordinary Task, and to employ themselves well in their spare hours. And it is certain, that a People thus ordered, must live in great abundance of all things; and these being equally distributed among them, no Man can want any thing, or be put to beg.

In their great Council at Amaurot, to which there are three sent from every Town once every Year, they examine what Towns abound in Provisions, and what are under any Scarcity, that so the one may be furnished from the other; and this is done freely, without any sort of exchange; for according to their Plenty or Scarcity, they supply, or are supplied from one another; so that indeed the whole Island is, as it were, one Family. When they have thus taken care of their whole Country, and laid up stores for two Years, which they do in case that an ill Year should happen to come, then they order an Exportation of the Overplus, both of Corn, Honey, Wool, Flax, Wood, Scarlet, and Purple; Wax, Tallow, Leather, and Cattel, which they send out commonly in great quantities to other Countries. They order a seventh part of all these Goods to be freely given to the Poor of the Countries to which they send them, and they sell the rest at moderate Rates. And by this exchange, they not only bring back those few things that they need at home, for indeed they scarce need any thing but Iron, but likewise a great deal of Gold and Silver; and by their driving this trade so long, it is not to be imagined how vast a Treasure they have got among them: so that now they do not much care whether they sell off their Merchandize for Mony in hand, or upon trust. A great part of their Treasure is now in Bonds; but in all their Contracts no private Man stands bound, but the Writing runs in Name of the Town; and the Towns that owe them Mony, raise it from those private hands that owe it to them, and lay it up in their publick Chamber, or enjoy the profit of it till the Utopians call for it; and they chuse rather to let the greatest part of it lie in their hands, who make advantage by it, then to call for it themselves: but if they see that any of their other Neighbours stand more in need of it, then they raise it, and lend it to them; or use it themselves, if they are engaged in a War, which is the only occasion that they can have for all that Treasure that they have laid up; that so either in great Extremities, or sudden Accidents, they may serve themselves by it; chiefly for hiring Foreign Souldiers, whom they more willingly expose to danger than their own People: They give them great Pay, knowing well that this will work even on their Enemies, and engage them either to betray their own side, or at least to desert it, or will set them on to mutual Factions among themselves: for this end

they have an incredible Treasure; but they do not keep it as a Treasure, but in such a manner as I am almost affraid to tell it, lest you think it so extravagant, that you can hardly believe it; which I have the more reason to apprehend from others, because if I had not seen it my self, I could not have been easily perswaded to have beleived it upon any Man's Report.

It is certain, that all things appear so far incredible to us, as they differ from our own Customs: but one who can judg aright, will not wonder to find, that since their other Constitutions differ so much from ours, their value of Gold and Silver should be measured, not by our Standard, but by one that is very different from it; for since they have no use of Mony among themselves, but keep it for an accident; that tho, as it may possibly fall out, it may have great intervals; they value it no further than it deserves, or may be useful to them. So that it is plain, that they must prefer Iron either to Gold or Silver: for Men can no more live without Iron, than without Fire or Water; but Nature has markt out no use for the other Metals, with which we may not very well dispence. The folly of Man has enhansed the value of Gold and Silver, because of their scarcity: whereas on the contrary they reason, that Nature, as an indulgent Parent, has given us all the best things very freely, and in great abundance, such as are Water and Earth, but has laid up and hid from us the things that are vain and useless. If those Metals were laid up in any Tower among them, it would give jealousy of the Prince and Senate, according to that foolish mistrust into which the Rabble is apt to fall, as if they intended to cheat the People, and make advantages to themselves by it; or if they should work it into Vessels, or any sort of Plate, they fear that the People might grow too fond of it, and so be unwilling to let the Plate be run down, if a War made it necessary to pay their Souldiers with it: Therefore to prevent all these inconveniences, they have fallen upon an expedient, which as it agrees with their other Policy, so is very different from ours, and will scarce gain belief among us, who value Gold so much, and lay it up so carefully: for whereas they eat and drink out of Vessels of Earth, or Glass, that tho they look very prety, yet are of very slight Materials; they make their Chamber-pots and Close-stools of Gold and Silver; and that not only in their publick Halls, but in their private Houses: Of the same Mettals they likewise make Chains and Fetters for their Slaves; and as a Badge of Infamy, they hang an Ear-ring of Gold to some, and make others wear a Chain or a Coronet of Gold; and thus they take care, by all manner of ways, that Gold and Silver may be of no esteem among them; And from hence it is, that whereas other Nations part with their Gold and their Silver, as unwillingly as if one tore out their Bowels, those of Utopia would look on their giving in all their Gold or Silver, when there were any use for it, but as the parting with a Trifle, or as we would estimate the loss of a Penny. They find Pearls on their Coast; and Diamonds, and Carbuncles on their Rocks: they do not look after them, but if they find them by chance, they polish them, and with them they adorn their Children, who are delighted with them, and glory in them during their Childhood; but when they grow to Years, and see that none but Children use such Baubles, they of their own accord, without being bid by their Parents, lay them aside; and

would be as much ashamed to use them afterwards, as Children among us, when they come to Years, are of their Nuts, Puppets, and other Toies.

I never saw a clearer Instance of the different impressions that different Customs make on People, than I observed in the Ambassadors of the Anemolians who came to Amaurot when I was there: and because they came to treat of Affairs of great Consequence, the Deputies from the several Towns had met to wait for their coming. The Ambassadors of the Nations that lie near Utopia, knowing their Customs, and that fine Cloaths are in no esteem among them; that Silk is despised, and Gold is a Badg of Infamy, use to come very modestly cloathed; but the Anemolians that lay more remote, and so had little commerce with them, when they understood that they were coursly cloathed, and all in the same manner, they took it for granted that they had none of those fine Things among them of which they made no use; and they being a vain-glorious, rather than a wise People, resolved to set themselves out with so much pomp, that they should look like Gods, and so strike the Eyes of the poor Utopians with their splendor. Thus three Ambassadors made their entry with an hundred Attendants, that were all clad in Garments of different colours, and the greater part in Silk; the Ambassadors themselves, who were of the Nobility of their Country, were in Cloth of Gold, and adorned with massy Chains, Ear-rings and Rings of Gold: Their Caps were covered with Bracelets set full of Pearls and other Gems: In a word, they were set out with all those things, that among the Utopians were either the Badges of Slavery, the Marks of Infamy, or Childrens Rattels. It was not unpleasant to see on the one side how they lookt big, when they compared their rich Habits with the plain Cloaths of the Utopians, who were come out in great numbers to see them make their Entry: And on the other side, to observe how much they were mistaken in the Impression which they hoped this Pomp would have made on them: It appeared so ridiculous a shew to all that had never stirred out of their Country, and so had not seen the Customs of other Nations; that tho they paid some reverence to those that were the most meanly clad, as if they had been the Ambassadors, yet when they saw the Ambassadors themselves, so full of Gold Chains, they looking upon them as Slaves, made them no reverence at all. You might have seen their Children, who were grown up to that bigness, that they had thrown away their Jewels, call to their Mothers, and push them gently, and cry out, See that great Fool that wears Pearls and Gems, as if he were yet a Child. And their Mothers answered them in good earnest, Hold your Peace, this is, I believe, one of the Ambassador's Fools. Others censured the fashion of their Chains, and observed that they were of no use, for they were too slight to bind their Slaves, who could easily break them; and they saw them hang so loose about them, that they reckoned they could easily throw them away, and so get from them. But after the Ambassadors had staid a day among them, and saw so vast a quantity of Gold in their Houses, which was as much despised by them, as it was esteemed in other Nations, and that there was more Gold and Silver in the Chains and Fetters of one Slave, than all their Ornaments amounted to, their Plumes fell, and they were ashamed of all that Glory for which

they had formerly valued themselves, and so laid it aside: to which they were the more determined, when upon their engaging into some free Discourse with the Utopians, they discovered their sense of such things, and their other Customs. The Utopians wonder how any Man should be so much taken with the glaring doubtful lustre of a Jewel or Stone, that can look up to a Star, or to the Sun himself; or how any should value himself, because his Cloth is made of a finer Thread: for how fine soever that Thread may be, it was once no better than the Fleece of a Sheep, and that Sheep was a Sheep still for all its wearing it. They wonder much to hear, that Gold which it self is so useless a thing, should be every where so much esteemed, that even Men for whom it was made, and by whom it has its value, should yet be thought of less value than it is: So that a Man of Lead, who has no more sence than a Log of Wood, and is as bad as he is foolish, should have many wise and good Men serving him, only because he has a great heap of that Metal; and if it should so happen, that by some Accident, or Trick of Law, (which does sometimes produce as great Changes as Chance it self) all this Wealth should pass from the Master to the meanest Varlet of his whole Family, he himself would very soon become one of his Servants, as if he were a thing that belonged to his Wealth, and so were bound to follow its Fortune. But they do much more admire and detest their folly, who when they see a rich Man, tho they neither owe him any thing, nor are in any sort obnoxious to him, yet meerly because he is rich, they give him little less than Divine Honours; even tho they know him to be so covetous and base minded, that notwithstanding all his Wealth, he will not part with one Farthing of it to them as long as he lives. These and such like Notions has that People drunk in, partly from their Education, being bred in a Country, whose Customs and Constitutions are very opposite to all such foolish Maxims: and partly from their Learning and Studies; for tho there are but few in any Town that are excused from Labour, so that they may give themselves wholly to their Studies, these being only such Persons as discover from their Childhood an extraordinary capacity and disposition for Letters, yet their Children, and a great part of the Nation, both Men and Women, are taught to spend those hours in which they are not obliged to work, in Reading: and this they do their whole Life long. They have all their Learning in their own Tongue; which is both a copious and pleasant Language, and in which a Man can fully express his Mind: It runs over a great Tract of many Countries, but it is not equally pure in all places: They had never so much as heard of the Names of any of those Philosophers that are so famous in these parts of the World, before we went among them: and yet they had made the same Discoveries that the Greeks had done, both in Musick, Logick, Arithmetick, and Geometry. But as they are equal to the Ancient Philosophers almost in all things, so they far exceed our Modern Logicians, for they have never yet fallen upon the barbarous Nicities that our Youth are forced to learn in those trifling Logical Schools that are among us; and they are so far from minding Chimera's, and Fantastical Images made in the Mind, that none of them could comprehend what we meant, when we talked to them of a Man in the Abstract, as common to all Men in particular, (so that tho we

spoke of him as a thing that we could point at with our Fingers, yet none of them could perceive him) and yet distinct from every one, as if he were some monstrous Colossus or Giant. Yet for all this ignorance of these empty Notions, they knew Astronomy, and all the Motions of the Orbs exactly; and they have many Instruments, well contrived and divided, by which they do very accurately compute the Course and Positions of the Sun, Moon, and Stars. But for the Cheat, of divining by the Stars, and by their Oppositions or Conjunctions, it has not so much as entred into their Thoughts. They . . . [2 pages missing] . . . this caution, that a lesser Pleasure might not stand in the way of a greater, and that no pleasure ought to be pursued, that should draw a great deal of pain after it: for they think it the maddest thing in the World to pursue Vertue, that is a sour and difficult thing; and not only to renounce the pleasures of Life, but willingly to undergo much pain and trouble, if a Man has no prospect of a Reward. And what Reward can there be, for one that has passed his whole Life, not only without pleasure, but in pain, if there is nothing to be expected after death? Yet they do not place Happiness in all sorts of Pleasures, but only in those that in themselves are good and honest: for whereas there is a Party among them that places Happiness in bare Vertue, others think that our Natures are conducted by Vertue to Happiness, as that which is the chief Good of Man. They define Vertue thus, that it is a living according to Nature; and think that we are made by God for that end: They do believe that a Man does then follow the Dictates of Nature, when he pursues or avoids things according to the direction of Reason: they say, that the first dictate of Reason is, the kindling in us a love and reverence for the Divine Majesty, to whom we owe both all that we have, and all that we can ever hope for. In the next place, Reason directs us, to keep our Minds as free of Passion, and as chearful as we can; and that we should consider our selves as bound by the ties of good Nature and Humanity, to use our utmost endeavours to help forward the Happiness of all other Persons; for there was never any Man that was such a morose and severe pursuer of Vertue, and such an Enemy to Pleasure, that tho he set hard Rules to Men to undergo, much pain, many watchings, and other rigors, yet did not at the same time advise them to do all they could in order to the relieving and easing such People as were miserable; and did not represent it as a mark of a laudable temper, that it was gentle and good natured: And they infer from thence, that if a Man ought to advance the welfare and comfort of the rest of Mankind, there being no Vertue more proper and peculiar to our Nature, than to ease the miseries of others, to free them from trouble & anxiety, in furnishing them with the Comforts of Life, that consist in Pleasure; Nature does much more vigorously lead him to do all this for himself. A Life of Pleasure, is either a real Evil; and in that case we ought not only, not to assist others in their pursuit of it, but on the contrary, to keep them from it all we can, as from that which is hurtful and deadly to them; or if it is a good thing, so that we not only may, but ought to help others to it, Why then ought not a Man to begin with himself? since no Man can be more bound to look after the good of another, than after his own: for Nature cannot direct us to be good and kind to others, and yet at the same

time to be unmerciful and cruel to our selves. Thus as they define Vertue to be a living according to Nature, so they reckon that Nature sets all People on to seek after Pleasure, as the end of all they do. They do also observe, that in order to the supporting the Pleasures of Life, Nature inclines us to enter into Society; for there is no Man so much raised above the rest of mankind, that he should be the only Favorite of Nature, which on the contrary seems to have levelled all those together that belong to the same Species. Upon this they infer, that no Man ought to seek his own Conveniences so eagerly, that thereby he should prejudice others; and therefore they think, that not only all Agreements between private Persons ought to be observed; but likewise, that all those Laws ought to be kept, which either a good Prince has published in due form, or to which a People, that is neither oppressed with Tyranny, nor circumvented by Fraud, has consented, for distributing those Conveniences of Life which afford us all our Pleasures. They think it is an evidence of true Wisdom, for a Man to pursue his own Advantages, as far as the Laws allow it. They account it Piety, to prefer the Publick Good to one's Private Concerns; but they think it unjust, for a Man to seek for his own Pleasure, by snatching another Man's Pleasures from him. And on the contrary, they think it a sign of a gentle and good Soul, for a Man to dispence with his own Advantage for the good of others; and that by so doing, a good Man finds as much pleasure one way, as he parts with another; for as he may expect the like from others when he may come to need it, so if that should fail him, yet the Sense of a good Action, and the Reflections that one makes on the Love and Gratitude of those whom he has so obliged, gives the Mind more Pleasure, than the Body could have found in that from which it had restrained it self: they are also perswaded that God will make up the loss of those small Pleasures, with a vast and endless Joy, of which Religion does easily convince a good Soul. Thus upon an enquiry into the whole Matter, they reckon that all our Actions, and even all our Vertues terminate in Pleasure, as in our chief End and greatest Happiness; and they call every Motion or State, either of Body or Mind, in which Nature teaches us to delight, a Pleasure. And thus they cautiously limit Pleasure, only to those Appetites to which Nature leads us; for they reckon that Nature leads us only to those Delights to which Reason as well as Sense carries us, and by which we neither injure any other Person, nor let go greater Pleasures for it; and which do not draw troubles on us after them: but they look upon those Delights which Men, by a foolish tho common Mistake, call Pleasure, as if they could change the Nature of Things, as well as the use of Words, as things that not only do not advance our Happiness, but do rather obstruct it very much, because they do so entirely possess the Minds of those that once go into them, with a false Notion of Pleasure, that there is no room left for truer and purer Pleasures.

There are many things that in themselves have nothing that is truly delighting: On the contrary, they have a good deal of bitterness in them; and yet by our perverse Appetites after forbidden Objects, are not only ranked among the Pleasures, but are made even the greatest Designs of Life. Among those who pursue these sophisticated Pleasures, they reckon those whom I mentioned before, who think

themselves really the better for having fine Clothes; in which they think they are doubly mistaken, both in the Opinion that they have of their Clothes, and in the Opinion that they have of themselves; for if you consider the use of Clothes, why should a fine Thread be thought better than a coarse one? And yet that sort of Men, as if they had some real Advantages beyond others, and did not owe it wholly to their Mistakes, look big, and seem to fancy themselves to be the more valuable on that account, and imagine that a respect is due to them for the sake of a rich Garment, to which they would not have pretended, if they had been more meanly cloathed; and they resent it as an Affront, if that respect is not paid them. It is also a great folly to be taken with these outward Marks of Respect, which signify nothing: For what true or real Pleasure can one find in this, that another Man stands bare, or makes Legs to him? Will the bending another Man's Thighs give yours an ease? And will his Head's being bare, cure the madness of yours? And yet it is wonderful to see how this false Notion of Pleasure bewitches many, who delight themselves with the fancy of their Nobility, and are pleased with this Conceit, that they are descended from Ancestors, who have been held for some Successions rich, and that they have had great Possessions; for this is all that makes Nobility at present; yet they do not think themselves a whit the less noble, tho their immediate Parents have left none of this Wealth to them; or tho they themselves have squandred it all away. The Utopians have no better Opinion of those, who are much taken with Gems and Precious Stones, and who account it a degree of Happiness, next to a Divine one, if they can purchase one that is very extraordinary; especially if it be of that sort of Stones, that is then in greatest request; for the same sort is not at all times of the same value with all sorts of People; nor will Men buy it, unless it be dismounted and taken out of the Gold: And then the Jeweller is made to give good Security, and required solemnly to swear that the Stone is true, that by such an exact Caution, a false one may not be bought instead of a true: Whereas if you were to examine it, your Eye could find no difference between that which is counterfeit, and that which is true; so that they are all one to you as much as if you were blind: And can it be thought that they who heap up an useless Mass of Wealth, not for any use that it is to bring them, but meerly to please themselves with the contemplation of it, enjoy any true Pleasure in it? The Delight they find, is only a false shadow of Joy: those are no better, whose Error is somewhat different from the former, and who hide it, out of their fear of losing it; for what other Name can fit the hiding it in the Earth, or rather the restoring it to it again, it being thus cut off from being useful, either to its Owner, or to the rest of Mankind? and yet the Owner having hid it carefully, is glad, because he thinks he is now sure of it. And in case one should come to steal it, the Owner, tho he might live perhaps ten Years after that, would all that while after the Theft, of which he knew nothing, find no difference between his having it, or losing it, for both ways it was equally useless to him.

Among those foolish pursuers of Pleasure, they reckon all those that delight in Hunting, or Birding, or Gaming: Of whose madness they have only heard, for they have no such things among them: but they have asked us; What sort of Pleasure is

it that Men can find in throwing the Dice? for if there were any pleasure in it, they think the doing it so often should give one a Surfeit of it: And what pleasure can one find in hearing the barking and howling of Dogs, which seem rather odious than pleasant sounds? Nor can they comprehend the pleasure of seeing Dogs run after a Hare, more than of seeing one Dog run after another; for you have the same entertainment to the Eye on both these Occasions; if the seeing them run is that which gives the pleasure, since that is the same in both cases: but if the Pleasure lies in seeing the Hare killed and torn by the Dogs, this ought rather to stir pity, when a weak, harmless, and fearful Hare, is devoured by a strong, fierce, and cruel Dog. Therefore all this business of hunting, is among the Utopians turned over to their Butchers; and those are all Slaves, as was formerly said: and they look on Hunting, as one of the basest parts of a Butcher's work: for they account it both more profitable, and more decent to kill those Beasts that are more necessary and useful to Mankind; whereas the killing and tearing of so small and miserable an Animal, which a Huntsman proposes to himself, can only attract him with the false shew of Pleasure; for it is of little use to him: they look on the desire of the Bloodshed, even of Beasts, as a mark of a Mind that is already corrupted with cruelty, or that at least by the frequent returns of so brutal a pleasure, must degenerate into it.

Thus tho the Rabble of Mankind looks upon these, and all other things of this kind, which are indeed innumerable, as Pleasures; the Utopians on the contrary observing, that there is nothing in the nature of them that is truly pleasant, conclude that they are not to be reckoned among Pleasures: for tho these things may create some tickling in the Senses, (which seems to be a true Notion of Pleasure) yet they reckon that this does not arise from the thing it self, but from a depraved Custom, which may so vitiate a Man's taste, that bitter things may pass for sweet; as Women with Child think Pitch or Tallow taste sweeter than Hony; but as a Man's Sense when corrupted, either by a Disease, or some ill Habit, does not change the nature of other things, so neither can it change the nature of Pleasure.

They reckon up several sorts of these Pleasures, which they call true Ones: Some belong to the Body, and others to the Mind. The Pleasures of the Mind lie in Knowledg, and in that delight which the contemplation of Truth carries with it; to which they add the joyful Reflections on a well-spent Life, and the assured hopes of a future Happiness. They divide the Pleasures of the Body into two sorts; the one is that which gives our Senses some real delight, and is performed, either by the recruiting of Nature, and supplying those parts on which the internal heat of Life feeds; and that is done by eating or drinking: Or when Nature is eased of any surcharge that oppresses it, as when we empty our Guts, beget Children, or free any of the parts of our Body from Aches or Heats by friction. There is another kind of this sort of Pleasure, that neither gives us any thing that our Bodies require, nor frees us from any thing with which we are overcharged; and yet it excites our Senses by a secret unseen Vertue, and by a generous Impression, it so tickles and affects them, that it turns them inwardly upon themselves; and this is the Pleasure begot by Musick. Another sort of bodily Pleasure is, that which consists in a quiet

and good constitution of Body, by which there is an entire healthiness spread over all the parts of the Body, not allayed with any Disease. This, when it is free from all mixture of pain, gives an inward pleasure of it self, even tho it should not be excited by any external and delighting Object; and altho this Pleasure does not so vigorously affect the Sense, nor act so strongly upon it; yet as it is the greatest of all Pleasures, so almost all the Utopians reckon it the Foundation and Basis of all the other Joys of Life; since this alone makes one's state of Life to be easy and desirable; and when this is wanting, a Man is really capable of no other Pleasure. They look upon indolence and freedom from Pain, if it does not rise from a perfect Health, to be a state of Stupidity rather than of Pleasure. There has been a Controversy in this Matter very narrowly canvassed among them; Whether a firm and entire Health could be called a Pleasure, or not? Some have thought that there was no Pleasure, but that which was excited by some sensible Motion in the Body. But this Opinion has been long ago run down among them, so that now they do almost all agree in this, That Health is the greatest of all bodily Pleasures; and that as there is a Pain in Sickness, which is as opposite in its nature to Pleasure, as Sickness it self is to Health, so they hold that Health carries a Pleasure along with it: And if any should say, that Sickness is not really a Pain, but that it only carries a Pain along with it, they look upon that as a fetch of subtilty, that does not much alter the Matter. So they think it is all one, whether it be said, that Health is in it self a Pleasure, or that it begets a Pleasure, as Fire gives Heat; so it be granted, that all those whose Health is entire, have a true pleasure in it: And they reason thus, What is the Pleasure of eating, but that a Man's Health which had been weakned, does, with the assistance of Food, drive away Hunger, and so recruiting it self, recovers its former Vigour? And being thus refresh'd, it finds a pleasure in that Conflict: and if the Conflict is Pleasure, the Victory must yet breed a greater Pleasure, except we will fancy that it becomes stupid as soon as it has obtained that which it pursued, and so does neither know nor rejoice in its own welfare. If it is said, that Health cannot be felt, they absolutely deny that, for what Man is in Health, that does not perceive it when he is awake? Is there any Man that is so dull and stupid, as not to acknowledg that he feels a delight in Health? And what is Delight, but another name for Pleasure?

But of all Pleasures, they esteem those to be the most valuable that lie in the Mind; and the chief of these, are those that arise out of true Vertue, and the witness of a good Conscience: They account Health the chief Pleasure that belongs to the Body; for they think that the pleasure of eating and drinking, and all the other delights of the Body, are only so far desirable, as they give or maintain Health: but they are not pleasant in themselves, otherwise than as they resist those Impressions that our natural Infirmity is still making upon us: And as a wise Man desires rather to avoid Diseases, than to take Physick; and to be freed from pain, rather than to find ease by Remedies: so it were a more desirable state, not to need this sort of Pleasure, than to be obliged to indulge it: And if any Man imagines that there is a real Happiness in this Pleasure, he must then confess that he would be the happiest of all Men, if he were to lead his life in a perpetual hunger, thirst, and itching, and

by consequence in perpetual eating, drinking, and scratching himself, which any one may easily see would be not only a base, but a miserable state of Life. These are indeed the lowest of Pleasures, and the least pure: for we can never relish them, but when they are mixed with the contrary pains. The pain of Hunger, must give us the pleasure of Eating; and here the Pain outballances the Pleasure: and as the Pain is more vehement, so it lasts much longer; for as it is upon us before the Pleasure comes, so it does not cease, but with the Pleasure that extinguishes it, and that goes off with it: So that they think none of those Pleasures are to be valued, but as they are necessary. Yet they rejoice in them, and with due gratitude acknowledg the tenderness of the great Author of Nature, who has planted in us Appetites, by which those things that are necessary for our preservation, are likewise made pleasant to us. For how miserable a thing would Life be, if those daily Diseases of Hunger and Thirst, were to be carried off by such bitter Drugs, as we must use for those Diseases that return seldomer upon us? and thus these pleasant, as well as proper Gifts of Nature, do maintain the strength and the sprightliness of our Bodies.

They do also entertain themselves with the other Delights that they let in at their Eyes, their Ears, and their Nostrils, as the pleasant relishes and seasonings of Life, which Nature seems to have marked out . . . [2 page missing] . . . to be seen a greater encrease, both of Corn and Cattel, nor are there any where healthier Men to be found, and freer from Diseases than among them: for one may see there, not only such things put in practice, that Husbandmen do commonly for manuring and improving an ill Soil, but in some places a whole Wood is plucked up by the Roots, as well as whole ones planted in other places, where there were formerly none: In doing of this the cheif consideration they have is of carriage, that their Timber may be either near their Towns, or lie upon the Sea, or some Rivers, so that it may be floated to them; for it is a harder work to carry Wood at any distance over Land, then Corn. The People are industrious, apt to learn, as well as chearful and pleasant; and none can endure more labour, when it is necessary, than they; but except in that case they love their ease. They are unwearied pursuers of knowledg; for when we had given them some hints of the Learning and Discipline of the Greeks, concerning whom we only instructed them, (for we know that there was nothing among the Romans, except their, Historians and their Poets, that they would value much) it was strange to see how eagerly they were set on learning that Language: We began to read a little of it to them, rather in compliance with their importunity, than out of any hopes of their profiting much by it: But after a very short trial, we found they made such a progress in it, that we saw our labour was like to be more successful than we could have expected. They learned to write their Characters, and to pronounce their Language so right, and took up all so quick, they remembered it so faithfully, and became so ready and correct in the use of it, that it would have look'd like a Miracle, if the greater part of those whom we taught had not been Men, both of extraordinay Capacity, and of a fit Age for it: They were for the greatest part chosen out among their learned Men, by their cheif Council, tho some learn'd it of their own accord. In

three Years time they became Masters of the whole Language, so that they read the best of the Greek Authors very exactly. I am indeed apt to think, that they learned that Language the more easily, because it seems to be of kin to their own: I believe that they were a Colony of the Greeks; for tho their Language comes nearer the Persian, yet they retain many Names, both for their Towns and Magistrates, that are of Greek Origination. I had happened to carry a great many Books with me, instead of Merchandise, when I failed my fourth Voyage; for I was so far from thinking of coming back soon, that I rather thought never to have returned at all, and I gave them all my Books, among which many of Plato's and some of Aristotle's works were. I had also Theophrastus of the Plants, which to my great regret, was imperfect; for having laid it carelessly by, while we were at Sea, a Monkey had fallen upon it and had torn out leaves in many places. They have no Books of Grammar, but Lascares, for I did not carry Theodorus with me; nor have they any Dictionaries but Hesichius and Dioscorides. They esteem Plutarch highly, and were much taken with Lucian's Wit, and with his pleasant way of writing. As for the Poets, they have Aristophanes, Homer, Euripides, and Sophocles of Aldus's Edition; and for Historians, they have Thucidydes, Herodotus and Herodian. One of my Companions, Thricius Apinatus, happened to carry with him some of Hippocrates's Works, and Galen's Microtechne, which they hold in great estimation; for tho there is no Nation in the World, that needs Physick so little as they do, yet there is not any that honours it so much: They reckon the knowledg of it to be one of the pleasantest and profitablest parts of Philosophy, by which, as they search into the Secrets of Nature, so they not only find marvellous pleasure in it, but think that in making such enquiries, they do a most acceptable thing to the Author of Nature; and imagine that he, as all Inventers of curious Engines, has exposed to our view this great Machine of the Universe, we being the only Creatures capable of contemplating it: and that therefore an exact and curious Observer and Admirer of his Workmanship, is much more acceptable to him, than one of the Herd; who as if he were a Beast, and not capable of Reason, looks on all this glorious Scene, only as a dull and unconcerned Spectator.

The Minds of the Utopians, when they are once excited by Learning, are very ingenious in finding out all such Arts as tend to the conveniences of Life. Two things they owe to us, which are the Art of Printing, and the Manufacture of Paper: yet they do not owe these so entirely to us, but that a great part of the invention was their own; for after we had shewed them some Paper-books of Aldus's Impression, and began to explain to them the way of making Paper, and of printing, tho we spake but very crudely of both these, not being practised in either of them, they presently took up the whole matter from the hints that we gave them: and whereas before they only writ on Parchment, or on the Barks of Trees, or Reeds; they have now set up the Manufacture of Paper, and Printing presses: and tho at first they could not arrive at a perfection in them, yet by making many essays, they at last found out, and corrected all their Errors, and brought the whole thing to perfection; so that if they had but a good number of Greek Authors, they would be quickly

supplied with many Copies of them: at present; tho they have no more than those I have mentioned, yet by several Impressions, they have multiplied them into many thousands. If any Man should go among them, that had some extraordinary Talent, or that by much travelling had observed the Customs of many Nations, (which made us to be so well received) he would be very welcome to them; for they are very desirous to know the state of the whole World. Very few go among them on the account of Traffick, for what can a Man carry to them but Iron, or Gold, or Silver, which Merchants desire rather to export, than import to any strange Country: and as for their Exportation, they think it better to manage that themselves, than to let Forraigners come and deal in it, for by this means, as they understand the state of the neighbouring Countries better, so they keep up the Art of Navigation, which cannot be maintained but by much practise in it.

Of their Slaves, and of their Marriages

They do not make Slaves of Prisoners of War, except those that are taken fighting against them; nor of the Sons of their Slaves, nor of the Slaves of other Nations: the Slaves among them, are only such as are condemned to that state of Life for some Crime that they had committed, or which is more common, such as their Merchants find condemned to die in those parts to which they trade, whom they redeem sometimes at low rates; and in other places they have them for nothing; and so they fetch them away. All their Slaves are kept at perpetual labour, and are always chained, but with this difference, that they treat their own Natives much worse, looking on them as a more profligate sort of People; who not being restrained from Crimes, by the advantages of so excellent an Education, are judged worthy of harder usage than others. Another sort of Slaves, is, when some of the poorer sort in the neighbouring Countries, offer of their own accord to come and serve them; they treat these better, and use them in all other respects, as well as their own Country Men, except that they impose more labour upon them, which is no hard task to them that have been accustomed to it; and if any of these have a mind to go back to their own Country, which indeed falls out but seldom, as they do not force them to stay▪ so they do not send them away empty handed.

I have already told you with what care they look after their Sick, so that nothing is left undone that can contribute either to their Ease or Health: and for those who are taken with fixed and incurable Diseases, they use all possible ways to cherish them, and to make their Lives as comfortable as may be: they visit them often, and take great pains to make their time pass off easily: but when any is taken with a torturing and lingering pain, so that there is no hope, either of recovery or ease, the Priests and Magistrates come and exhort them, that since they are now unable to go on with the business of Life, and are become a burden to themselves, and to all about them, so that they have really out-lived themselves, they would no longer nourish such a rooted Distemper, but would chuse rather to die, since they cannot live, but in much misery: being assured, that if they either deliver themselves from their Prison and Torture, or are willing that others should do it, they shall be happy

after their Deaths: And since by their dying thus, they lose none of the Pleasures, but only the Troubles of Life; they think they act, not only reasonably in so doing, but religiously and piously; because they follow the Advices that are given them by the Priests, who are the Expounders of the Will of God to them. Such as are wrought on by these Perswasions, do either starve themselves of their own accord, or they take Opium, and so they die without pain. But no Man is forced on this way of ending his Life; and if they cannot be perswaded to it, they do not for that fail in their attendance and care of them: But as they believe that a voluntary Death, when it is chosen upon such an Authority, is very honourable; so if any Man takes away his own Life, without the approbation of the Priests and the Senate, they give him none of the Honours of a decent Funeral, but throw his Body into some Ditch.

Their Women are not married before eighteen, nor their Men before two and twenty; and if any of them run into forbidden Embraces before their Marriage, they are severely punished, and the privilege of Marriage is denied them, unless there is a special Warrant obtained for it afterward from the Prince. Such Disorders cast a great reproach upon the Master and Mistress of the Family in which they fall out; for it is supposed, that they have been wanting to their Duty. The reason of punishing this so severely, is, because they think that if they were not so strictly restrained from all vagrant Appetites, very few would engage in a married state, in which Men venture the quiet of their whole Life, being restricted to one Person; besides many other Inconveniencies that do accompany it. In the way of chusing of their Wives, they use a method that would appear to us very absurd and ridiculous, but is constantly observed among them, and accounted a wise and good Rule. Before Marriage, some grave Matron presents the Bride naked, whether she is a Virgin or a Widow, to the Bridegroom; and after that, some grave Man presents the Bridegroom naked to the Bride. We indeed both laughed at this, and condemned it as a very indecent thing. But they, on the other hand, wondered at the folly of the Men of all other Nations; who if they are but to buy a Horse of a small value, are so cautious, that they will see every part of him, and take off both his Sadle, and all his other Tackle, that there may be no secret Ulcer hid under any of them; and that yet in the choice of a Wife, on which depends the happiness or unhappiness of the rest of his Life, a Man should venture upon trust, and only see about an handbreadth of the Face, all the rest of the Body being covered; under which there may lie hid that which may be contagious, as well as loathsome. All Men are not so wise, that they chuse a Woman only for her good Qualities; and even wise Men consider the Body, as that which adds not a little to the Mind: And it is certain, there may be some such deformity covered with ones Clothes, as may totally alienate a Man from his Wife, when it is too late to part with her: for if such a thing is discovered after Marriage, a Man has no remedy but patience: So they think it is reasonable, that there should be a good provision made against such mischievous Frauds.

There was so much the more reason in making a regulation in this Matter, because they are the only People of those parts that do neither allow of Polygamy,

nor of Divorces, except in the cases of Adultery, or insufferable Perversness: for in these Cases the Senate dissolves the Marriage, and grants the injured Person leave to marry again; but the Guilty are made infamous, and are never allowed the privilege of a second Marriage. None are suffered to put away their Wives against their Wills, because of any great Calamity that may have fallen on their Person; for they look on it as the height of Cruelty and Treachery to abandon either of the married Persons, when they need most the tender care of their Consort; and that chiefly in the case of old Age, which as it carries many Diseases along with it, so it is a Disease of it self. But it falls often out, that when a married Couple do not agree well together, they by mutual consent separate, and find out other Persons with whom they hope they may live more happily: yet this is not done, without obtaining leave of the Senate; which never admits of a Divorce, but upon a strict enquiry made, both by the Senators and their Wives, into the Grounds upon which it proceeds: and even when they are satisfied concerning the Reasons of it, they go on but slowly, for they reckon that too great easiness, in granting leave for new Marriages, would very much shake the kindness of married Persons. They punish severely those that defile the Marriage-Bed: If both Parties are married, they are divorced, and the injured Persons may marry one another, or whom they please; but the Adulterer, and the Adulteress are condemned to slavery. Yet if either of the injured Persons cannot shake off the Love of the married Person, they may live with them still in that state; but they must follow them to that Labour to which the Slaves are condemned; and sometimes the Repentance of the condemned Person, together with the unshaken kindness of the innocent and injured Person, has prevailed so far with the Prince, that he has taken off the Sentence. But those that relapse, after they are once pardoned, are punished with Death. Their Law does not determine the Punishment for other Crimes; but that is left to the Senate, to temper it according to the Circumstances of the Fact. Husbands have power to correct their Wives, and Parents to correct their Children, unless the Fault is so great, that a publick Punishment is thought necessary for the striking terror into others. For the most part, Slavery is the punishment even of the greatest Crimes; for as that is no less terrible to the Criminals themselves than Death; so they think the preserving them in a state of servitude, is more for the Interest of the Commonwealth, than the killing them outright; since as their Labour is a greater benefit to the Publick, than their Death could be; so the sight of their Misery is a more lasting terror to other Men, than that which would be given by their Death. If their Slaves rebel, and will not bear their Yoke, and submit to the Labour that is enjoined them, they are treated as wild Beasts that cannot be kept in order, neither by a Prison, nor by their Chains; and are at last put to death. But those who bear their Punishment patiently, and are so much wrought on by that pressure, that lies so hard on them, that it appears they are really more troubled for the Crimes they have committed, than for the Miseries they suffer, are not out of hope, but that at last either the Prince will, by his Prerogative, or the People will by their intercession restore them again to their liberty, or at least very much mitigate their slavery. He that tempts a

married Woman to Adultery, is no less severely punished, than he that commits it; for they reckon that a laid and studied Design of committing any Crime, is equal to the Fact it self; since its not taking effect does not make the Person that did all that in him lay in order to it, a whit the less guilty.

They take great pleasure in Fools, and as it is thought a base and unbecoming thing to use them ill, so they do not think it amiss for People to divert themselves with their Folly: and they think this is a great advantage to the Fools themselves: For if Men were so sullen and severe, as not at all to please themselves with their ridiculous behaviour, and foolish sayings, which is all that they can do to recommend themselves to others, it could not be expected that they would be so well look'd to, nor so tenderly used as they must otherwise be. If any Man should reproach another for his being mishaped or imperfect in any part of his Body, it would not at all be thought a reflection on the Person that were so treated, but it would be accounted a very unworthy thing for him that had upbraided another with that which he could not help. It is thought a sign of a sluggish and sordid Mind, not to preserve carefully one's natural Beauty; but it is likewise an infamous thing among them to use Paint or Fard. And they all see that no Beauty recommends a Wife so much to her Husband, as the probity of her Life, and her Obedience: for as some few are caught and held only by Beauty, so all People are held by the other Excellencies which charm all the World.

As they fright Men from committing Crimes by Punishments, so they invite them to the love of Vertue, by publick Honours: therefore they erect Statues in honour to the memories of such worthy Men as have deserved well of their Country, and set these in their Market-places, both to perpetuate the remembrance of their Actions, and to be an incitement to their Posterity to follow their example.

If any Man aspires to any Office, he is sure never to compass it: They live all easily together, for none of the Magistrates are either insolent or cruel to the People; but they affect rather to be called Fathers, and by being really so, they well deserve that Name; and the People pay them all the marks of Honour the more freely, because none are exacted of them. The Prince himself has no distinction, either of Garments, or of a Crown; but is only known by a Sheaf of Corn that is carried before him, as the High Priest is also known by a Wax Light that is carried before him.

They have but few Laws, and such is their Constitution, that they need not many. They do very much condemn other Nations, whose Laws, together with the Commentaries on them, swell up to so many Volumes; for they think it an unreasonable thing to oblige Men to obey a Body of Laws, that are both of such a bulk, and so dark, that they cannot be read or understood by every one of the Subjects.

They have no Lawyers among them, for they consider them as a sort of People, whose Profession it is to disguise Matters, as well as to wrest Laws; and therefore they think it is much better that every Man should plead his own Cause, and trust it to the Judg, as well as in other places the Client does it to a Counsellor. By this means they both cut off many delays, and find out Truth more certainly: for after

the Parties have laid open the Merits of their Cause, without those Artifices which Lawyers are apt to suggest, the Judge examines the whole Matter, and supports the simplicity of such well-meaning Persons, whom otherwise crafty Men would be sure to run down: And thus they avoid those Evils, which appear very remarkably among all those Nations that labour under a vast load of Laws. Every one of them is skilled in their Law, for as it is a very short study, so the plainest meaning of which words are capable, is always the sense of their Laws. And they argue thus; All Laws are promulgated for this end, that every Man may know his Duty; and therefore the plainest and most obvious sense of the words, is that which must be put on them; since a more refined Exposition cannot be easily comprehended, and Laws become thereby useless to the greater part of Mankind, who need most the direction of them: for to them it is all one, not to make a Law at all, and to couch it in such terms, that without a quick apprehension, and much study, a Man cannot find out the true meaning of it; and the generality of Mankind are both so dull, and so much employed in their several Trades, that they have neither the leisure nor the capacity requisite for such an enquiry.

Some of their Neighbours, who are Masters of their own Liberties, having long ago, by the assistance of the Utopians, shaken off the Yoke of Tyranny; and being much taken with those Vertues that they observe among them, have come to them, and desired that they would send Magistrates among them to govern them; some changing them every Year, and others every five Years. At the end of their Government, they bring them back to Utopia, with great expressions of honour and esteem, and carry away others to govern in their stead. In this they seem to have fallen upon a very good Expedient for their own happiness and safety: For since the good or ill Condition of a Nation depends so much upon their Magistrates, they could not have made a better choice, than by pitching on Men whom no Advantages can bias; for Wealth is of no use to them, since they must go so soon back to their own Country; and they being strangers among them, are not engaged in any of their Heats or Animositities: And it is certain, that when Publick Judicatories are swayed, either by partial Affections, or by Avarice, there must follow upon it a dissolution of all Justice, which is the chief Sinew of Society.

The Utopians call those Nations that come and ask Magistrates from them, Neighbours; but they call those to whom they have been more particularly assisting, Friends. And whereas all other Nations are perpetually either making Leagues, or breaking them, they never enter into any Alliance with any other State. They think Leagues are useless things, and reckon, that if the common Ties of Humane Nature do not knit Men together, the Faith of Promises will have no great effect on them: And they are the more confirmed in this, by that which they see among the Nations round about them, who are no strict observers of Leagues and Treaties. We know how religiously they are observed in Europe; more particularly where the Christian Doctrine is received, among whom they are sacred and inviolable. Which is partly owing to the Justice and Goodness of the Princes themselves, and partly to their Reverence that they pay to the Popes: who as they

are most religious observers of their own Promises, so they exhort all other Princes to perform theirs; and when fainter Methods do not prevail, they compel them to it by the severity of the Pastoral Censure; and think that it would be the most indecent thing possible, if Men who are particularly designed by the title of the Faithful, should not religiously keep the Faith of their Treaties. But in that new found World, which is not more distant from us in Scituation, than it is disagreeing from us in their Manners, and course of Life, there is no trusting to Leagues, even tho they were made with all the pomp of the most Sacred Ceremonies that is possible: On the contrary, they are the sooner broken for that, some slight Pretence being found in the words of the Treaties, which are contrived in such ambiguous Terms, and that on design, that they can never be so strictly bound, but they will always find some Loop-hole to escape at; and so they break both their Leagues and their Faith. And this is done with that impudence, that those very Men who value themselves on having suggested these Advices to their Princes, would yet, with a haughty scorn, declaim against such Craft, or to speak plainer, such Fraud and Deceit, if they found private Men make use of it in their Bargains; and would readily say, that they deserved to be hanged for it.

By this means it is, that all sort of Justice passes in the World, but for a low-spirited and vulgar Vertue, which is far below the dignity of Royal Greatness Or at least, there are two sorts of Justice set up: the one is mean, and creeps on the Ground, and therefore becomes none but the baser sort of Men, and so must be kept in severely by many restraints, that it may not break out beyond the Bounds that are set to it. The other is, the peculiar Vertue of Princes, which as it is more majestick than that which becomes the, Rabble, so takes a freer compass; and lawful or unlawful, are only measured by Pleasure and Interest. These practices among the Princes that lie about Utopia, who make so little account of their Faith, seem to be the Reasons that determine them to engage in no Confederacies: perhaps they would change their mind if they lived among us: but yet tho Treaties were more religiously observed, they would still dislike the custom of making them; since the World has taken up a false Maxim upon it, as if there were no tie of Nature knitting one Nation to another, that are only separated perhaps by a Mountain, or a River, and that all were born in a state of Hostility, and so might lawfully do all that mischief to their Neighbours, against which there is no provision made by Treaties: And that when Treaties are made, they do not cut off the Enmity, or restrain the License of preying upon one another, if by the unskilfulness of wording them, there are not effectual Proviso's made against them. They on the other hand judg, that no Man is to be esteemed our Enemy that has never injured us; and that the Partnership of the Humane Nature, that is among all Men, is instead of a League. And that kindness and good Nature unite Men more effectually, and more forcibly than any Agreements whatsoever; since thereby the Engagements of Mens Hearts become stronger, than any thing can be to which a few words can bind them.

Of their Military Discipline

They detest War as a very brutal thing; and which, to the reproach of Humane Nature, is more practised by Men, than by any sort of Beasts: and they, against the custom of almost all other Nations, think that there is nothing more inglorious than that Glory that is gained by War: And therefore tho they accustom themselves daily to Military Exercises, and the Discipline of War, in which not only their Men, but their Women likewise, are trained up, that so in cases of Necessity, they may not be quite useless: Yet they do not rashly engage in War, unless it be either to defend themselves, or their Friends, from any unjust Aggressors; or out of good Nature, or in compassion to an oppressed Nation, that they assist them to the shaking off the Yoke Tyranny. They indeed help their Friends, not only in Defensive, but also in Offensive Wars: but they never do that, unless they had been consulted with while the Matter was yet entire; and that being satisfied with the Grounds on which they went, they had found that all Demands of Reparation were rejected, so that a War was necessary: which they do not think to be only just, when one Neighbour makes an inroad on another, by publick Order, and carries away their Spoils; but when the Merchants of one Country are oppressed in another, either under the pretence of some unjust Laws, or by the perverse wresting of good ones: this they count a juster cause of War than the other, because those Injuries are done under some colour of Laws. This was the only Ground of that War, in which they engaged with the Nephelotes against the Aleopolitanes, a little before our time: for the Merchants of the former, having, as they thought, met with great injustice among the latter, that, whether it was in it self right or wrong, did draw on a terrible War, many of their Neighbours being engaged in it; and their keenness in carrying it on, being supported by their strength in maintaining it; it not only shook some very flourishing States, and very much afflicted others; but after a series of much Mischief, it ended in the entire conquest and slavery of the Aleopolitanes, who tho before the War, they were in all respects much superior to the Nephelotes, yet by it they fell under their Empire; But the Utopians, tho they had assisted them in the War, yet pretended to no share of the spoil.

But tho they assist their Friends so vigorously, in taking reparation for Injuries that are done them in such Matters; yet if they themselves should meet with any such fraud, provided there were no violence done to their Persons, they would only carry it so far, that unless satisfaction were made, they would give over trading with such a People. This is not done, because they consider their Neighbours more than their own Citizens; but since their Neighbours trade every one upon his own Stock, Fraud is a more sensible injury to them, than it is to the Utopians, among whom the Publick only suffers in such a case: And since they expect nothing in return for the Merchandize that they export; but that in which they abound so much, and is of little use to them, the loss does not much affect them; therefore they think it would be too severe a thing to revenge a Loss that brings so little inconvenience with it, either to their Life, or their Livelihood, with the death of many People: but if any of their People is either killed or wounded wrongfully, whether that be done

by Publick Authority, or only by private Men, as soon as they hear of it, they send Ambassadors, and demand, that the Guilty Persons may be delivered up to them; and if that is denied, they declare War; but if that is done, they condemn those either to Death or Slavery.

They would be both troubled and ashamed of a bloody Victory over their Enemies; and think it would be as foolish a Purchase, as to buy the most valuable Goods at too high a Rate. And in no Victory do they glory so much, as in that which is gained by dexterity and good conduct, without Bloodshed. They appoint publick Triumphs in such Cases, and erect Trophies to the honour of those who have succeeded well in them; for then do they reckon that a Man acts suitably to his Nature, when he conquers his Enemy in such a way, that no other Creature but a Man could be capable of it, and that is, by the strength of his Understanding. Bears, Lions, Boars, Wolves, and Dogs, and other Animals, employ their bodily Force one against another, in which as many of them are superior to Man, both in strength and fierceness, so they are all subdued by the reason and understanding that is in him.

The only Design of the Utopians in War, is to obtain that by Force, which if it had been granted them in time, would have prevented the War; or if that cannot be done, to take so severe a Revenge of those that have injured them, that they may be terrified from doing the like in all time coming. By these Ends they measure all their Designs, and manage them so, that it is visible that the Appetite of Fame or Vain-glory, does not work so much on them, as a just care of their own Security.

As soon as they declare War, they take care to have a great many Schedules, that are sealed with their Common Seal, affixed in the most conspicuous places of their Enemies Country. This is carried secretly, and done in many places all at once. In those they promise great Rewards to such as shall kill the Prince, and lesser in proportion to such as shall kill any other Persons, who are those on whom, next to the Prince himself, they cast the chief blame of the War. And they double the Sum to him, that instead of killing the Person so marked out, shall take him alive, and put him in their hands. They offer not only Indemnity, but Rewards, to such of the Persons themselves that are so marked, if they will act against their Countrymen: By this means those that are named in their Schedules, become not only distrustful of their Fellow-Citizens, but are jealous of one another: and are much distracted by Fear and Danger; for it has often fallen out, that many of them, and even the Prince himself, have been betrayed by those in whom they have trusted most: for the Rewards that the Utopians offer, are so unmeasurably great, that there is no sort of Crime to which Men cannot be drawn by them. They consider the Risque that those run, who undertake such Services, and offer a Recompence proportioned to the danger; not only a vast deal of Gold, but great Revenues in Lands that lie among other Nations that are their Friends, where they may go and enjoy them very securely; and they observe the Promises they make of this kind most religiously. They do very much approve of this way of corrupting their Enemies, tho it appears to others to be a base and cruel thing; but they look

on it as a wise course, to make an end of that which would be otherwise a great War, without so much as hazarding one Battel to decide it. They think it likewise an Act of Mercy and Love to Mankind, to prevent the great slaughter of those that must otherwise be killed in the progress of the War, both of their own side, and of their Enemies, by the death of a few that are most guilty; and that in so doing, they are kind even to their Enemies, and pity them no less than their own People, as knowing that the greater part of them do not engage in the War of their own accord, but are driven into it by the Passions of their Prince.

If this Method does not succeed with them, then they sow Seeds of Contention among their Enemies, and animate the Prince's Brother, or some of the Nobility, to aspire to the Crown. If they cannot disunite them by Domestick Broils, then they engage their Neighbours against them, and make them set on foot some old Pretensions, which are never wanting to Princes, when they have occasion for them. And they supply them plentifully with Mony, tho but very sparingly with any Auxiliary Troops: for they are so render of their own People, that they would not willingly exchange one of them, even with the Prince of their Enemies Country. But as they keep their Gold and Silver only for such an occasion, so when that offers it self, they easily part with it, since it would be no inconvenience to them, tho they should reserve nothing of it to themselves. For besides the Wealth that they have among them at home, they have a vast Treasure abroad; Many Nations round about them, being deep in their Debt: so that they hire Souldiers from all Places for carrying on their Wars; but chiefly from the Zapolets, who lie five hundred miles from Utopia eastward. They are a rude, wild, and fierce Nation, who delight in the Woods and Rocks, among which they were born and bred up. They are hardned both against Heat, Cold, and Labour, and know nothing of the delicacies of Life. They do not apply themselves to Agriculture, nor do they care either for their Houses or their Clothes. Cattel is all that they look after; and for the greatest part, they live either by their Hunting, or upon Rapine; and are made, as it were, only for War. They watch all opportunities of engaging in it, and very readily embrace such as are offered them. Great numbers of them will often go out, and offer themselves upon a very low Pay, to serve any that will employ them: they know none of the Arts of Life, but those that lead to the taking it away; they serve those that hire them, both with much courage and great Fidelity; but will not engage to serve for any determin'd time, and agree upon such Terms, that the next day they may go over to the Enemies of those whom they serve, if they offer them a greater pay: and they will perhaps return to them the day after that, upon a higher advance of their Pay. There are few Wars in which they make not a considerable part of the Armies of both sides: so it falls often out, that they that are of kin to one another, and were hired in the same Country, and so have lived long and familiarly together; yet they forgetting both their Relation and former Friendship, kill one another upon no other consideration, but because they are hired to it for a little Mony, by Princes of different Interests: and so great regard have they to Mony, that they are easily wrought on by the difference of one Penny a Day, to change sides. So entirely does

their Avarice turn them, and yet this Money on which they are so much set, is of little use to them; for what they purchase thus with their Blood, they quickly waste it on Luxury, which among them is but of a poor and miserable form.

This Nation serves the Utopians against all People whatsoever, for they pay higher than any other. The Utopians hold this for a Maxim, that as they seek out the best sort of Men for their own use at home, so they make use of this worst sort of Men for the Consumption of War, and therefore they hire them with the offers of vast Rewards, to expose themselves to all sorts of hazards, out of which the greater part never returns to claim their Promises. Yet they make them good most religiously to such as escape. And this animates them to adventure again, when there is occasion for it; for the Utopians are not at all troubled how many of them soever happen to be killed; and reckon it a service done to Mankind, if they could be a mean to deliver the World from such a leud and vicious sort of People, that seem to have run together, as to the Drain of Humane Nature. Next to these they are served in their Wars, with those upon whose account they undertake them, and with the Auxiliary Troops of their other Friends, to whom they join some few of their own People, and send some Man of eminent and approved Vertue to command in chief. There are two sent with him, who during his Command, are but private Men, but the first is to succeed him if he should happen to be either killed or taken; and in case of the like misfortune to him, the third comes in his place; and thus they provide against ill Events, that such Accidents as may befall their Generals, may not endanger their Armies. When they draw out Troops of their own People, they take such out of every City as freely offer themselves, for none are forced to the Laws of the Country, and their Learning, add more vigor to their Minds: for as they do not undervalue Life to the degree of throwing it away too prodigally; so they are not so indecently fond of it, that when they see they must sacrifice it honourably, they will preserve it by base and unbecoming Methods. In the greatest heat of Action, the bravest of their Youth, that have jointly devoted themselves for that piece of Service, single out the General of their Enemies, and set on him either openly, or lay an Ambuscade for him: if any of them are spent and wearied in the Attempt, others come in their stead, so that they never give over pursuing him, either by close Weapons, when they can get near him, or those that wound at a distance, when others get in between: thus they seldom fail to kill or take him at last, if he does not secure himself by flight. When they gain the Day in any Battel, they kill as few as possibly they can; and are much more set on taking many Prisoners, than on killing those that fly before them: nor do they ever let their Men so loose in the pursuit of their Enemies, that they do not retain an entire Body still in order; so that if they have been forced to engage the last of their Battalions, before they could gain the day, they will rather let their Enemies all escape than pursue them, when their own Army is in disorder; remembering well what has often fallen out to themselves; that when the main Body of their Army has been quite defeated and broken, so that their Enemies reckoning the Victory was sure and in their hands, have let themselves loose into an irregular pursuit, a few

of them that lay for a reserve, waiting a fit opportunity, have fallen on them while they were in this chase, stragling and in disorder, apprehensive of no danger, but counting the Day their own; and have turned the whole Action, and so wresting out of their hands a Victory that seemed certain and undoubted, the vanquished have of a sudden become victorious.

It is hard to tell whether they are more dextrous in laying or avoiding Ambushes: they sometimes seem to fly when it is far from their thoughts; and when they intend to give Ground, they do it so, that it is very hard to find out their Design. If they see they are ill posted, or are like to be overpowered by numbers, then they . . . [2 pages missing] . . . their Friends to reimburse them of their expence in it; but they take that from the conquered, either in Mony which they keep for the next occasion, or in Lands, out of which a constant Revenue is to be paid them; by many increases, the Revenue which they draw out from several Countries on such Occasions, is now risen to above 700000 Ducats a Year. They send some of their own People to receive these Revenues, who have orders to live magnificently, and like Princes, and so they consume much of it upon the place; and either bring over the rest to Utopia, or lend it to that Nation in which it lies. This they most commonly do, unless some great occasion which falls out, but very seldom, should oblige them to call for it all. It is out of these Lands that they assign those Rewards to such as they encourage to adventure on desperate Attempts, which was mentioned formerly. If any Prince that engages in War with them, is making preparations for invading their Country, they prevent him, and make his Country the Seat of the War; for they do not willingly suffer any War to break in upon their Island; and if that should happen, they would only defend themselves by their own People; but would not at all call for Auxiliary Troops to their assistance.

Of the Religions of the Utopians

There are several sorts of Religions, not only in different parts of the Island, but even in every Town; some worshipping the Sun, others the Moon, or one of the Planets: some worship such Men as have been eminent in former times for Vertue, or Glory, not only as ordinary Deities, but as the supream God: yet the greater and wiser sort of them worship none of these, but adore one Eternal, Invisible, Infinite, and Incomprehensible Deity; as a Being that is far above all our Apprehensions, that is spread over the whole Universe, not by its Bulk, but by its Power and Vertue; him they call the Father of all, and acknowledg that the beginnings, the encrease, the progress, the vicissitudes, and the end of all things come only from him; nor do they offer divine honours to any but to him alone. And indeed, tho they differ concerning other things, yet all agree in this; that they think there is one supream Being that made and governs the World, whom they call in the Language of their Country, Mithras. They differ in this, that one thinks the God whom he worships is this Supream Being, and another thinks that his Idol is that God; but they all agree in one principle, that whatever is this Supream Being, is also that Great Essence, to whose Glory and Majesty all honours are ascribed by the consent of all Nations.

By degrees, they all fall off from the various Superstitions that are among them, and grow up to that one Religion that is most in request, and is much the best: and there is no doubt to be made, but that all the others had vanished long ago, if it had not happened that some unlucky Accidents, falling on those who were advising the change of those superstitious ways of Worship; these have been ascribed not to Chance, but to somewhat from Heaven; and so have raised in them a fear, that the God, whose Worship was like to be abandoned, has interposed and revenged himself on those that designed it.

After they had heard from us, an account of the Doctrine, the course of Life, and the Miracles of Christ, and of the wonderful constancy of so many Martyrs, whose Blood, that was so willingly offered up by them, was the chief occasion of spreading their Religion over a vast number of Nations; it is not to be imagined how inclined they were to receive it. I shall not determine whether this proceeded from any secret inspiration of God, or whether it was because it seemed so favorable to that community of Goods, which is an opinion so particular, as well as so dear to them; since they perceived that Christ and his Followers lived by that Rule; and that it was still kept up in some Communities among the sincerest sort of Christians, from which soever of these Motives it might be true it is, that many of them came over to our Religion, and were initiated into it by Baptism. But as two of our number were dead, so none of the four that survived, were in Priests Orders; therefore we could do no more but baptize them; so that to our great regret, they could not partake of the other Sacraments, that can only be administred by Priests: but they are instructed concerning them, and long most vehemently for them; and they were disputing very much among themselves, Whether one that were chosen by them to be a Preist, would not be thereby qualified to do all the things that belong to that Character, even tho he had no Authority derived from the Pope; and they seemed to be resolved to chuse some for that Employment, but they had not done it when I left them

Those among them that have not received our Religion, yet do not fright any from it, and use none ill that goes over to it; so that all the while I was there, one Man was only punished on this occasion. He being newly baptized, did, notwithstanding all that we could say to the contrary, dispute publicly concerning the Christian Religion, with more zeal than discretion; and with so much heat, that he not only preferred our Worship to theirs, but condemned all their Rites as profane; and cried out against all that adhered to them, as impious and sacrilegious Persons, that were to be damned to everlasting Burnings. Upon this he, having preached these things often, was seized on, and after a Trial, he was condemned to banishment, not for having disparaged their Religion, but for his inflaming the People to Sedition: for this is one of their ancientest Laws, that no Man ought to be punished for his Religion. At the first constitution of their Government, Utopus having understood, that before his coming among them, the old Inhabitans had been engaged in grtat quarrels concerning Religion, by which they were so broken among themselves, that he found it an easy thing to conquer them, since they did not unite their

Forces against him, but every different Party in Religion fought by themselves: upon that, after he had subdued them, he made a Law that every Man might be of what Religion he pleased, and might endeavor to draw others to it by the force of Argument, and by amicable and modest ways, but without bitterness against those of other Opinions; but that he ought to use no other Force but that of Persuasion; and was neither to mixt Reproaches nor Violence with it; and such as did otherwise, were to be condemned to Banishment or Slavery.

This Law was made by Utopus, not only for preserving the Publick Peace, which he saw suffered much by daily Contentions and Irreconcilable Heats in these Matters, but because he thought the Interest of Religion it self required it.

He judged it was not fit to determine any thing rashly in that Matter; and seemed to doubt whether those different Forms of Religion might not all come from God, who might inspire Men differently, he being possibly pleased with a variety in it: and so he thought it was a very indecent and foolish thing for any Man to frighten and threaten other Men to believe any thing because it seemed true to him; and in case that one Religion were certainly true, and all the rest false, he reckoned that the native Force of Truth would break forth at last, and shine bright, if it were managed only by the strength of Argument, and with a winning gentleness; whereas if such Matters were carried on by Violence and Tumults, then, as the wickedest sort of Men is always the most obstinate, so the holiest and best Religion in the World might be overlaid with so much foolish superstition, that it would be quite choaked with it, as Corn is with Briars and Thorns; therefore he left Men wholly to their liberty in this matter, that they might be free to beleive as they should see cause; only he made a solemn and severe Law against such as should so far degenerate from the dignity of humane Nature, as to think that our Souls died with our Bodies, or that the World was governed by Chance, without a wise over-ruling Providence: for they did all formerly believe that there was a state of Rewards and Punishments to the Good and Bad after this Life; and they look on those that think otherwise, as scarce fit to be counted Men, since they degrade so noble a Being as our Soul is, and reckon it to be no better than a Beast's; so far are they from looking on such Men as fit for humane society, or to be Citizens of a well-ordered Common-Wealth; since a Man of such Principles must needs, as oft as he dares do it, despise all their Laws and Customs: for there is no doubt to be made, that a Man who is affraid of nothing but the Law, and apprehends nothing after death, will not stand to break through all the Laws of his Country, either by fraud or force, that so he may satisfy his Appetites. They never raise any that hold these Maxims, either to Honours or Offices, nor employ them in any publick Trust, but despise them, as Men of base and sordid Minds: yet they do not punish them, because they lay this down for a ground, that a Man cannot make himself beleive any thing he pleases; nor do they drive any to dissemble their thoughts by threatnings, so that Men are not tempted to lie or disguise their Opinions among them; which being a sort of Fraud, is abhorred by the Utopians: they take indeed care that they may not argue for these Opinions, especially before the common

People: But they do suffer, and even encourage them to dispute concerning them in private with their Priests, and and other grave Men, being confident that they will be cured of those mad Opinions, by having reason laid before them. There are many among them that run far to the other extream, tho it is neither thought an ill nor unreasonable Opinion, and therefore is not at all discouraged. They think that the Souls of Beasts are immortal, tho far inferior to the dignity of the humane Soul, and not capable of so great a happiness. They are almost all of them very firmly perswaded, that good Men will be infinitely happy in another state; so that tho they are compassionate to all that are sick, yet they lament no Man's Death, except they see him part with Life uneasy, and as if he were forced to it; For they look on this as a very ill persage, as if the Soul being conscious to it self of Guilt, and quite hopeless, were affraid to die, from some secret hints of approaching misery. They think that such a Man's appearance before God, cannot be acceptable to him, who being called on, does not go out chearfully, but is backward and unwilling, and is, as it were, dragged to it. They are struck with horror, when they see any die in this manner, and carry them out in silence, and with sorrow, and praying God that he would be merciful to the Errors of the departed Soul, they lay the Body in the Ground: but when any die chearfully, and full of hope, they do not mourn for them, but sing Hymns when they carry out their Bodies, and commending their Souls very earnestly to God, in such a manner, that their whole behaviour is rather grave then sad, they burn their Body, and set up a Pillar where the Pile was made, with an Inscription to the honour of such Mens memory; And when they come from the Funeral, they discourse of their good Life, and worthy Actions, but speak of nothing oftner and with more . . . [2 pages missing] . . . himself that happiness that comes after Death. Some of these visit the Sick; others mend High-ways, cleanse Ditches, or repair Bridges, and dig Turf, Gravel, or Stones. Others fell and cleave Timber, and bring Wood, Corn, and other Necessaries, on Carts, into their Towns. Nor do these only serve the Publick, but they serve even Private Men, more than the Slaves themselves do: for if there is any where a rough, hard, and sordid piece of work to be done, from which many are frightned by the labour and loathsomeness of it, if not the despair of accomplishing it, they do chearfully, and of their own accord, take that to their share; and by that means, as they ease others very much, so they afflict themselves, and spend their whole life in hard Labor: and yet they do not value themselves upon that, nor lessen other peoples credit, that by so doing they may raise their own; but by their stooping to such seville Employments, they are so far from being despised, that they are so much the more esteemed by the whole Nation.

Of these there are two sorts: Some live unmarried and chast, and abstain from eating any sort of Flesh; and thus weaning themselves from all the pleasures of the present Life, which they account hurtful, they pursue, even by the hardest and painfulllest methods possible, that blessedness which they hope for hereafter; and the nearer they approach to it, they are the more chearful and earnest in their endeavours after it. Another sort of them is less willing to put themselves to much

toil, and so they prefer a married state to a single one; and as they do not deny themselves the pleasure of it, so they think the begetting of Children is a debt which they owe to Humane Nature, and to their Country: nor do they avoid any Pleasure that does not hinder Labour; and therefore they eat Flesh so much the more willingly, because they find themselves so much the more able for work by it: The Utopians look upon these as the wiser Sect, but they esteem the others as the holier. They would indeed laugh at any Man, that upon the Principles of Reason, would prefer an unmarried state to a married, or a Life of Labour to an easy Life: but they reverence and admire such as do it upon a Motive of Religion. There is nothing in which they are more cautious, than in giving their Opinion positively concerning any sort of Religion. The Men that lead those severe Lives, are called in the Language of their Country Brutheskas, which answers to those we call Religious Orders.

Their Priests are Men of eminent Piety, and therefore they are but few, for there are only thirteen in every Town, one for every Temple in it; but when they go to War, seven of these go out with their Forces, and seven others are chosen to supply their room in their absence; but these enter again upon their Employment when they return; and those who served in their absence, attend upon the High Priest, till Vacancies fall by Death; for there is one that is set over all the rest. They are chosen by the People, as the other Magistrates are, by Suffrages given in secret, for preventing of Factions: and when they are chosen, they are consecrated by the College of Priests. The care of all Sacred Things, and the Worship of God, and an inspection into the Manners of the People, is committed to them. It is a reproach to a Man to be sent for by any of them, or to be even spoke to in secret by them, for that always gives some suspicions: all that is incumbent on them, is only to exhort and admonish People; for the power of correcting and punishing ill Men, belongs wholly to the Prince, and to the other Magistrates: The severest thing that the Priest does, is the excluding of Men that are desperately wicked from joining in their Worship: There's not any sort of Punishment that is more dreaded by them than this, for as it loads them with Infamy, so it fills them with secret Horrors, such is their reverence to their Religion; nor will their Bodies be long exempted from their share of trouble; for if they do not very quickly satisfy the Priests of the truth of their Repentance, they are seized on by the Senate, and punished for their Impiety. The breeding of the Youth belongs to the Priests, yet they do not take so much care of instructing them in Letters, as of forming their Minds and Manners aright; and they use all possible Methods to infuse very early in the tender and flexible Minds of Children, such Opinions as are both good in themselves, and will be useful to their Country: for when deep impressions of these things are made at that Age, they follow Men through the whole course of their Lives, of much Blood on either side; and when the Victory turns to their side, they run in among their own Men to restrain their Fury; and if any of their Enemies see them, or call to them, they are preserved by that means: and such as can come so near them as to touch their Garments, have not only their Lives, but their Fortunes secured to them: It is upon

this account, that all the Nations round about consider them so much, and pay them so great reverence, that they have been often no less able to preserve their own People from the fury of their Enemies, than to save their Enemies from their rage: for it has sometimes fallen out, that when their Armies have been in disorder, and forced to fly, so that their Enemies were running upon the slaughter and spoil, the Priests by interposing, have stop'd the shedding of more Blood, and have separated them from one another; so that by their Mediation, a Peace has been concluded on very reasonable Terms; nor is there any Nation about them so fierce, cruel, or barbarous, as not to look upon their Persons as Sacred and Inviolable The first and the last day of the Month, and of the Year, is a Festival: they measure their Months by the course of the Moon; and their Years by the course of the Sun: The first days are called in their Language the Cynemernes, and the last the Trapemernes, which answers in our Language to the Festival that begins, or ends the Season.

They have magnificent Temples, that are not only nobly built, but are likewise of great Reception: which is necessary, since they have so few of them: They are a little dark within, which flows not from any Error in their Architecture, but is done on design; for their Priests think that too much light dissipates the thoughts, and that a more moderate degree of it, both recollects the Mind, and raises Devotion. Tho there are many different Forms of Religion among them, yet all these, how various soever, agree in the main Point, which is the worshipping the Divine Essence; and therefore there is nothing to be seen or heard in their Temples, in which the several Perswasions among them may not agree; for every Sect performs those Rites that are peculiar to it, in their private Houses, nor is there any thing in the Publick Worship, that contradicts the particular ways of those different Sects. There are no Images for God in their Temples, so that every one may represent him to his thoughts, according to the way of his Religion; nor do they call this one God by any other Name, but that of Mithras, which is the common Name by which they all express the Divine Essence, whatsoever otherwise they think it to be; nor are there any Prayers among them, but such as every one of them may use without prejudice to his own Opinion.

They meet in their Temples on the Evening of the Festival that concludes a Season: and not having yet broke their Fast, they thank God for their good success during that Year or Month, which is then at an end: and the next day, being that which begins the new Season, they meet early in their Temples, to pray for the happy Progress of all their Affairs during that Period, upon which they then enter. In the Festival which concludes the Period, before they go to the Temple, both Wives and Children fall on their Knees before their Husbands or Parents, and confess every thing in which they have either erred or failed in their Duty, and beg pardon for it: Thus all little Discontents in Families are removed, that so they may offer up their Devotions with a pure and serene mind; for they hold it a great impiety to enter upon them with disturbed thoughts; or when they are conscious to themselves that they bear Hatred or Anger in their Hearts to any Person; and think that they should become liable to severe Punishments, if they presumed to offer

Sacrifices without cleansing their Hearts, and reconciling all their Differences. In the Temples, the two Sexes are separated, the Men go to the right hand, and the Women to the left: and the Males and Females do all place themselves before the Head, and Master or Mistress of that Family to which they belong; so that those who have the Government of them at home, may see their deportment in publick; and they intermingle them so, that the younger and the older may be set by one another; for if the younger sort were all set together, they would perhaps trifle away that time too much, in which they ought to beget in themselves a most religious dread of the Supreme Being, which is the greatest, and almost the only incitement to Vertue.

They offer up no living Creature in Sacrifice, nor do they think it suitable to the Divine Being, from whose Bounty it is that these Creatures have derived their Lives, to take pleasure in their Death, or the offering up their Blood. They burn Incense, and other sweet Odours, and have a great number of Wax Lights during their Worship; not out of any Imagination that such Oblations can add any thing to the Divine Nature, for even Prayers do not that; but as it is a harmless and pure way of worshipping God, so they think those sweet Savors and Lights, together with some other Ceremonies, do, by a secret and unaccountable Vertue, elevate Mens Souls, and inflame them with more force and chearfulness during the Divine Worship.

The People appear all in the Temples in white Garments; but the Priest's Vestments are particoloured; both the Work and Colours are wonderful: they are made of no rich Materials, for they are neither embroidered, nor set with precious Stones, but are composed of the Plumes of several Birds, laid together with so much Art, and so neatly, that the true value of them is far beyond the costliest Materials. They say, that in the ordering and placing those Plumes, some dark Mysteries are represented, which pass down among their Priests in a secret Tradition concerning them; and that they are as Hieroglyphicks, putting them in mind of the Blessings that they have received from God, and of their Duties, both to him and to their Neighbours. As soon as the Priest appears in those Ornaments, they all fall prostrate on the Ground, with so much reverence and so deep a silence, that such as look on, cannot but be struck with it, as if it were the effect of the appearance of a Deity. After they have been for some time in this posture, they all stand up, upon a sign given by the Priest, and sing some Hymns to the Honour of God, some musical Instruments playing all the while. These are quite of another form than those that are used among us: but, as many of them are much sweeter than ours, so others are not to be compared to those that we have. Yet in one thing they exceed us much, which is, that all their Musick, both Vocal and Instrumental, does so imitate and express the Passions, and is so fitted to the present occasion, whether the subject matter of the Hymn is chearful, or made to appease, or troubled, doleful, or angry; that the Musick makes an impression of that which is represented, by which it enters deep into the Hearers, and does very much affect and kindle them. When this is done, both Priests and People offer up very solemn Prayers to God in a set

Form of Words; and these are so composed, that whatsoever is pronounced by the whole Assembly, may be likewise applied by every Man in particular to his own condition; in these they acknowledg God to be the Author and Governor of the World, and the Fountain of all the Good that they receive; for which they offer up their Thanksgivings to him; and in particular, they bless him for his Goodness in ordering it so, that they are born under a Government that is the happiest in the World, and are of a Religion that they hope is the truest of all others: but if they are mistaken, and if there is either a better Government, or a Religion more acceptable to God, they implore his Goodness to let them know it, vowing, that they resolve to follow him whithersoever he leads them: but if their Government is the best, and their Religion the truest, then they pray that he may fortify them in it, and bring all the World, both to the same Rules of Life, and to the same Opinions concerning himself; unless, according to the unsearchableness of his Mind, he is pleased with a variety of Religions. Then they pray that God may give them an easy passage at last to himself; not presuming to set limits to him, how early or late it should be; but if it may be wish'd for, without derogating from his Supream Authority, they desire rather to be quickly delivered, and to go to God, tho by the terriblest sort of Death, than to be detained long from seeing him, in the most prosperous course of Life possible. When this Prayer is ended, they all fall down again upon the Ground, and after a little while they rise up, and go home to Dinner; and spend the rest of the day in diversion or Military Exercises. Thus have I described to you, as particularly as I could, the Constitution of that Common-Wealth, which I do not only think to be the best in the World, but to be indeed the only Common-Wealth that truly deserves that name. In all other places, it is visible, that whereas People talk of a Common-Wealth, every Man only seeks his own Wealth; but there where no Man has any Property, all Men do zealously pursue the good of the Publick: and indeed, it is no wonder to see Men act so differently, for in other Common-Wealths, every Man knows, that unless he provides for himself, how flourishing soever the Common-Wealth may be, he must die of Hunger; so that he sees the necessity of preferring his own Concerns to the Publick; but in Utopia, where every Man has a right to every thing, they do all know, that if care is taken to keep the Publick Stores full, no private Man can want any thing; for among them there is no unequal distribution, so that no Man is poor, nor in any necessity; and tho no Man has any thing, yet they are all rich; for what can make a Man so rich, as to lead a serene and chearful Life, free from anxieties; neither apprehending want himself, nor vexed with the endless complaints of his Wife? he is not affraid of the misery of his Children, nor is he contriving how to raise a Portion for his Daughters, but is secure in this, that both he and his Wife, his Children and Grand-Children, to as many Generations as he can fancy, will all live, both plentifully and happily, since among them there is no less care taken of those who were once engaged in Labour, but grow afterwards unable to follow it, than there is elsewhere for these that continue still at it. I would gladly hear any Man compare the Justice that is among them, with that which is among all other Nations; among whom, may I

perish, if I see any thing that looks either like Justice, or Equity; for what Justice is there in this, that a Noble-man, a Goldsmith, or a Banquer, or any other Man, that either does nothing at all, or at best is employed in things that are of no use to the Publick, should live in great luxury and splendor, upon that which is so ill acquired; and a mean Man, a Carter, a Smith, or a Ploughman, that works harder, even than the Beasts themselves, and is employed in Labours that are so necessary, that no Common-Wealth could hold out an Year to an end without them, can yet be able to earn so poor a livelihood out of it, and must lead so miserable a Life in it, that . . . [2 pages missing] . . . whole People, then they are accounted Laws: and yet these wicked Men after they have, by a most insatiable covetousness, divided that among themselves, with which all the rest might have been well supplied, are far from that happiness, that is enjoyed among the Utopians: for the use as well as the desire of Mony being extinguished, there is much anxiety and great occasions of Mischief cut off with it: and who does not see that Frauds, Thefts, Robberies, Quarrels, Tumults, Contentions, Seditious, Murders, Treacheries, and Witchcrafts, that are indeed rather punished than restrained by the severities of Law, would all fall off, if Mony were not any more valued by the World? Mens Fears, Solicitudes, Cares, Labours, and Watchings, would all perish in the same moment, that the value of Mony did sink: even Poverty it self, for the relief of which Mony seems most necessary, would fall, if there were no Mony in the World. And in order to the apprehending this aright, take one instance.

Consider any Year that has been so unfruitful, that many thousands have died of Hunger; and yet if at the end of that Year a survey were made of the Granaries of all the rich Men, that have hoarded up the Corn, it would be found that there was enough among them, to have prevented all that consumption of Men that perished in that Misery: and that if it had been distributed among them, none would have felt the terrible effects of that scarcity; so easy a thing would it be to supply all the necessities of Life, if that blessed thing called Mony, that is pretended to be invented for procuring it, were not really the only thing that obstructed it.

I do not doubt but rich Men are sensible of this, and that they know well how much a greater happiness it were to want nothing that were necessary, than to abound in many superfluities; and to be rescued out of so much Misery, than to abound with so much Wealth: and I cannot think but the sense of every Man's Interest, and the Authority of Christ's Commands, who as he was infinitely wise, and so knew what was best, so was no less good in discovering it to us, would have drawn all the World over to the Laws of the Utopians, if Pride, that plague of Humane Nature, that is the source of so much misery, did not hinder . . . [2 pages missing] . . . count the had given of it in general; and so taking him by the hand, I carried him to supper, and told him I would find out some other time for examining that matter more particularly, and for discoursing more copiously concerning it; for which I wish I may find a good opportunity. In the mean while, tho I cannot perfectly agree to every thing that was related by Raphael, yet there are many things in the Common-Wealth of Utopia, that I rather wish than hope to

see followed in our Governments; tho it must be confessed, that he is both a very learned Man, and has had a great practice in the World.

FINIS

2.4.2 Reading and Review Questions

1. Why does More insist on the factuality of this fiction, with himself being a character in the text who firsthand witnesses Hythloday's account of Utopia? How does his self-characterization compare with that of Chaucer's in his Tale of Sir Thopas?
2. What human qualities does More suggest are innate to human beings of all races, places, times, and classes? What are the adverse effects of these innate human qualities? How do the Utopians overcome these adverse effects?
3. How do the Utopians treat gender matters? What qualities does he suggest are innate to all women, to all men? What qualities does he suggest are conditioned by society? What conditioned behaviors of both men and women do the Utopians overcome, and how, and to what effect?
4. Why does More have the Utopians require every person to work on a farm? Why does he not have the Utopians require institutionalized learning?
5. In terms of religion, how tolerant are the Utopians, do you think? Why do they require faith in a divine figure—regardless of which figure?

2.5 THOMAS WYATT

(1503-1542)

The life of Thomas Wyatt, son of minor nobleman Sir Henry Wyatt, modeled the capriciousness of medieval Fortuna—in a Renaissance courtier. Educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, married to the daughter of Lord Cobham, and early serving as a court official, Wyatt followed the expected paths of the successful courtier. In his official capacity, he traveled to France and Italy where studied literature, including Petrarch's sonnets and Pietro Aretino's poems in ottava rima (poems with eight-line stanzas, ten or eleven syllables per line, and ABABABCC rhyme scheme). Wyatt won official posts as Marshal of Calais, Commissioner of the Peace in Essex, and ambassador to Spain.

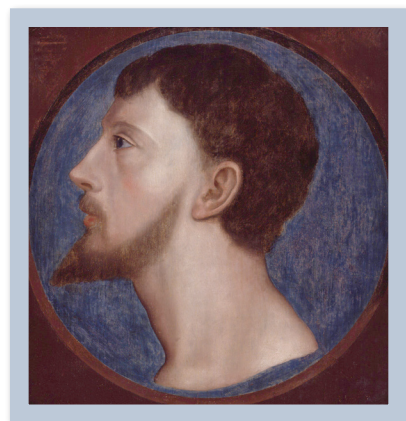


Image 2.3 | Sir Thomas Wyatt

Artist | Unknown

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While in Italy, though, Wyatt was captured by Spanish troops, from whom he escaped. While serving as Commissioner of Peace, he was briefly imprisoned—for uncertain cause. Perhaps a quarrel with the duke of Suffolk led to this misfortune. Perhaps his unverified relationship with Anne Boleyn prior to her marrying Henry VIII won Wyatt disfavor. As ambassador to Spain, he certainly had to face the ire of Emperor Charles V, nephew of Catherine of Aragon, then divorced from Henry VIII. And in 1541, Wyatt was accused of treason by Thomas Bonner, the bishop of London. His masterful self-defense attests to his rhetorical skills, for he won full pardon and resumed his role of ambassador. And en route to meet the Spanish ambassador, Wyatt caught fever and died.

His writing similarly embodies opposing trends. A complete courtier and gentleman, Wyatt was adept at learned pursuits; his prose translation of Plutarch's essay *Quiet of the Mind* was published during his lifetime and well-received. His poetry circulated at court but was not published until 1557 when several of his poems were included in Tottel's important *Songes and Sonettes*, also known as *Tottel's Miscellany*. Wyatt's native English lyrics reflect the influence of medieval popular song and Chaucer's poetry. His metrical stanzas, including terza rima (three-line stanza with chained rhyme scheme of ABA BCB CDC, etc.), ottava rima, rondeau (lyric poems with refrains), and sonnets, reflect the influence of Italian and French literature. Indeed, his translations of Petrarch's sonnets led to Wyatt's introducing the sonnet into English. And he is credited with inventing the fourteen-line poem with ABBA ABBA CDDC EE rhyme scheme known as the English (or Shakespearian) sonnet.

He did not invent but certainly helped popularize sonnet conventions (or conceits), including the disdainful lady, the agonized lover, and the idealized mistress. He added to traditional sonnet imagery—such as comparing love to sickness, servitude, and war—his unique perspective on life's instabilities and uncertainties. And to the metrical regularity he brought to English poetry, he added his own irregular metric patterns and rough, often colloquial, speech patterns and language.

2.5.1 "The Long Love That in My Thought Doth Harbor"

(1557)

The long love that in my thought doth harbour
 And in mine hert doth keep his residence,
 Into my face presseth with bold pretence
 And therein campeth, spreading his banner.
 She that me learneth to love and suffer
 And will that my trust and lustës negligence
 Be rayned by reason, shame, and reverence,
 With his hardiness taketh displeasure.
 Wherewithall unto the hert's forest he fleeth,

Leaving his enterprise with pain and cry,
 And there him hideth and not appeareth.
 What may I do when my master feareth
 But in the field with him to live and die?
 For good is the life ending faithfully.

2.5.2 "My Galley"

(1557)

My galley, chargèd with forgetfulness,
 Thorough sharp seas in winter nights doth pass
 'Tween rock and rock; and eke mine en'my, alas,
 That is my lord, steereth with cruelty;
 And every owre a thought in readiness,
 As though that death were light in such a case.
 An endless wind doth tear the sail apace
 Of forced sighs and trusty fearfulness.
 A rain of tears, a cloud of dark disdain,
 Hath done the weared cords great hinderance;
 Wreathèd with error and eke with ignorance.
 The stars be hid that led me to this pain;
 Drownèd is Reason that should me comfort,
 And I remain despairing of the port.

2.5.3 "Whoso List to Hunt"

(1557)

Whoso list to hunt, I know where is an hind,
 But as for me, hélas, I may no more.
 The vain travail hath wearied me so sore,
 I am of them that farthest cometh behind.
 Yet may I by no means my wearied mind
 Draw from the deer, but as she fleeth afore
 Fainting I follow. I leave off therefore,
 Sithens in a net I seek to hold the wind.
 Who list her hunt, I put him out of doubt,
 As well as I may spend his time in vain.
 And graven with diamonds in letters plain
 There is written, her fair neck round about:
 Noli me tangere, for Caesar's I am,
 And wild for to hold, though I seem tame.

2.5.4 "My Lute, Awake!"

(1557)

My labor that thou and I shall waste
And end that I have now begun,
For when this song is sung and past,
My lute, be still, for I have done.

As to be heard where ear is none,
As lead to grave in marble stone,
My song may pierce her heart as soon.
Should we then sigh or sing or moan?
No, no, my lute, for I have done.

Proud of the spoil that thou hast got
Of simple hearts through love's shot,
By whom, unkind, thou hast them won,
Think not he hath his bow forgot,
Although my lute and I have done.

Vengeance shall fall on thy disdain
That makest but game on earnest pain;
Think not alone under the sun
Unquit to cause thy lovers plain
Although my lute and I have done.

Perchance thee lie withered and old
The winter nights that are so cold,
Plaining in vain unto the moon;
Thy wishes then dare not be told.
Care then who list, for I have done.

And then may chance thee to repent
The time that thou hast lost and spent
To cause thy lovers sigh and swoon;
Then shalt thou know beauty but lent,
And wish and want as I have done.

Now cease, my lute, this is the last
Labor that thou and I shall waste
And ended is that we begun.
Now is the song both sung and past;
My lute, be still, for I have done.

2.5.5 "They Flee From Me"

(1557)

They flee from me that sometime did me seek
With naked foot, stalking in my chamber.
I have seen them gentle, tame, and meek,
That now are wild and do not remember
That sometime they put themselves in danger
To take bread at my hand; and now they range,
Busily seeking with a continual change.

Thanked be fortune it hath been otherwise
Twenty times better; but once in special,
In thin array after a pleasant guise,
When her loose gown from her shoulders did fall,
And she me caught in her arms long and small;
Therewithall sweetly did me kiss
And softly said, 'dear heart, how like you this?'

It was no dream: I lay broad waking.
But all is turned thorough my gentleness
Into a strange fashion of forsaking;
And I have leave to go of her goodness,
And she also, to use newfangledness.
But since that I so kindly am served
I would fain know what she hath deserved.

2.5.6 "And Wilt Thou Leave Me Thus?"

(1557)

And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay, say nay, for shame,
To save thee from the blame
Of all my grief and grame;
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay, say nay!

And wilt thou leave me thus,
That hath loved thee so long
In wealth and woe among?
And is thy heart so strong

As for to leave me thus?
Say nay, say nay!

And wilt thou leave me thus,
That hath given thee my heart
Never for to depart,
Nother for pain nor smart;
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay, say nay!

And wilt thou leave me thus
And have no more pity
Of him that loveth thee?
Hélas, thy cruelty!
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay, say nay!

2.5.7 Reading and Review Questions

1. How consistent, or logically-developed, are the metaphors in Wyatt's poetry? Consider, for example, the following metaphors in "The Long Love:" love harbors in his heart and keeps residence there; love camps and spreads a banner; love is like a deer taking refuge in a forest, etc.
2. In "My Galley," how effective, if at all, is the extended comparison of the speaker to a storm-tossed ship?
3. "Whoso List to Hunt" is a translation of a Petrarchan sonnet. Yet, some scholars perceive in it autobiographical references to Wyatt's supposed relationship with Anne Boleyn ("Noli me tangere, for Caesar's I am,/ And wild for to hold, though I seem tame"). How, if at all, does Wyatt introduce personal elements in his sonnets? How sincere are his sonnets? How do you know?
4. In "My Lute, Awake!" Wyatt seems to be displaying his own artfulness. His song is his complaint to an unnamed desired lady, and when he ends the song, his lute will be silent. What is the purpose of this art, do you think? Between the lady and his art, which is more important to Wyatt, do you think? How do you know?
5. "And Wilt Thou Leave Me Thus?" repeats lines almost like a song. Do these repetitions add meaning to the poem, or are they ornamental? How do you know?

2.6 HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY

(1517-1547)

Henry Howard had a somewhat ostentatious childhood, as his friends and blood relations tied him to Henry VIII. He was first cousin to both Queens Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard (1523-1542), respectively the second and fifth wives of Henry VIII, both of whom he had beheaded. He was also childhood comrade and close friend to Henry FitzRoy, 1st Duke of Richmond and Somerset (1519-1536), Henry VIII's illegitimate son.

He served as Lieutenant General of the King on Sea and Land, fighting in the wars against France. He also participated in the suppression of the Pilgrimage of Grace, the Yorkshire uprising

against the dissolution of the monasteries. These official activities were offset by more unruly and imperious behavior, including striking a courtier and destroying property by rapping with pebbles on the windows of houses in London, for both of which actions he was imprisoned. He was beheaded for the prideful and treasonable act of quartering the arms of Edward the Confessor (1003-1066). Though he was entitled to bear Edward the Confessor's arms, Surrey's doing so posed a threat to Henry VIII who had him tried for desiring to usurp the crown from Henry's only male heir, the future Edward VI. Surrey was condemned and executed on Tower Hill on January 19, 1547.

He was survived by five children by his wife Frances de Vere, daughter of John de Vere, 15th Earl of Oxford; memorialized by an opulent painted alabaster tomb in St. Michael's at Framlingham; and immortalized in literature by joining Wyatt as one of the first poets to write sonnets in English. He most commonly used Wyatt's English or Shakespearean sonnet form. These formal restraints release an intimate, emotional expression and responsiveness. In his translations of Virgil's *Aeneid* Books 2 and 4, Surrey was the first to use blank verse, or lines of iambic pentameter, that has been deemed uniquely appropriate to the English language. His literary output included love poems, elegies, and translations of Psalms and Ecclesiastes from the Bible.



Image 2.4 | Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey

Artist | Unknown

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Image 2.5 | Tomb of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey and his wife Frances de Vere

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2.6.1 “The soote season”

(1557)

The soote season, that bud and bloom forth brings,
 With green hath clad the hill and eke the vale.
 The nightingale with feathers new she sings;
 The turtle to her make hath told her tale.
 Summer is come, for every spray now springs.
 The hart hath hung his old head on the pale;
 The buck in brake his winter coat he flings;
 The fishes float with new repaired scale;
 The adder all her slough away she slings;
 The swift swallow pursueth the fliès small;
 The busy bee her honey now she mings.
 Winter is worn, that was the flowers' bale.
 And thus I see among these pleasant things,
 Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs.

2.6.2 "Love, that doth reign and live within my thought"

(1557)

Love, that doth reign and live within my thought,
 And built his seat within my captive breast,
 Clad in the arms wherein with me he fought,
 Oft in my face he doth his banner rest.
 But she that taught me love and suffer pain,
 My doubtful hope and eke my hot desir
 With shamefast look to shadow and refrain,
 Her smiling grace converteth straight to ire.
 And coward Love then to the heart apace
 Taketh his flight, where he doth lurk and plain,
 His purpose lost, and dare not show his face.
 For my lord's guilt thus faultless bide I pain,
 Yet from my lord shall not my foot remove:
 Sweet is the death that taketh end by love.

2.6.3 "Alas! so all things now do hold their peace"

(1557)

Alas! so all things now do hold their peace,
 Heaven and earth disturbèd in no thing.
 The beast, the air, the birds their song do cease;
 The nightè chare the stars about doth bring;
 Calm is the sea, the waves work less and less.
 So am not I, whom love, alas, doth wring,
 Bringing before my face the great increase
 Of my desires, whereat I weep and sing,
 In joy and woe, as in a doubtful ease:
 For my sweet thoughts sometime do pleasure bring,
 But by and by the cause of my disease
 Gives me a pang that inwardly doth sting,
 When that I think what grief it is, again,
 To live, and lack the thing should rid my pain.

2.6.4 "So cruel prison how could betide"

(1557)

So cruel prison how could betide, alas,
 As proud Windsor, where I in lust and joy
 With a king's son my childish years did pass
 In greater feast than Priam's sons of Troy?

Where each sweet place returns a taste full sour:
The large green courts, where we were wont to hove,
With eyes cast up unto the Maidens' Tower,
And easy sighs, such as folk draw in love.

The stately sales, the ladies bright of hue,
The dances short, long tales of great delight,
With words and looks that tigers could but rue,
Where each of us did plead the other's right.

The palm play where, dispoilèd for the game,
With dazed eyes oft we by gleams of love
Have missed the ball and got sight of our dame,
To bait her eyes, which kept the leads above.

The graveled ground, with sleeves tied on the helm,
On foaming horse, with swords and friendly hearts,
With cheer as though the one should overwhelm,
Where we have fought and chasèd oft with darts.

With silver drops the meads yet spread for ruth,
In active games of nimbleness and strength,
Where we did strain, trailèd by swarms of youth,
Our tender limbs that yet shot up in length.

The secret groves which oft we made resound
Of pleasant plaint and of our ladies' praise,
Recording soft what grace each one had found,
What hope of speed, what dread of long delays.

The wild forest, the clothèd holts with green,
With reins availed and swift breathèd horse,
With cry of hounds and merry blasts between,
Where we did chase the fearful hart a force.

The void walls eke that harbored us each night,
Wherewith, alas, revive within my breast
The sweet accord, such sleeps as yet delight,
The pleasant dreams, the quiet bed of rest,

The secret thoughts imparted with such trust,
The wanton talk, the divers change of play,

The friendship sworn, each promise kept so just,
Wherewith we passed the winter nights away.

And with this thought, the blood forsakes my face,
The tears berain my cheeks of deadly hue,
The which as soon as sobbing sighs, alas,
Upsuppèd have, thus I my plaint renew:

“O place of bliss, renewer of my woes,
Give me accompt, where is my noble fere,
Whom in thy walls thou didst each night enclose,
To other lief, but unto me must dear.”

Each stone, alas, that doth my sorrow rue,
Returns thereto a hollow sound of plaint.
Thus I alone, where all my freedom grew,
In prison pine with bondage and restraint.

And with remembrance of the greater grief
To banish the less, I find my chief relief.

2.6.5 “O happy dames, that may embrace”

(1557)

O happy dames, that may embrace
The fruit of your delight,
Help to bewail the woeful case
And eke the heavy plight
Of me, that wanted to rejoice
The fortune of my pleasant choice:
Good ladies, help to fill my mourning voice.

In ship, freight with remembrance
Of thoughts and pleasures past,
He sails, that hath in governance
My life, while it will last;
With scalding sighs, for lack of gale,
Futhering his hope, that is his sail,
Toward me, the sweet port of his avail.

Alas, how oft in dreams I see
Those eyes, that were my food,
Which sometime so delighted me,

That yet they do me good;
 Wherewith I wake with his return,
 Whose absent flame did make me burn:
 But when I find the lack, Lord how I mourn!

When other lovers in arms across
 Rejoice their chief delight,
 Drowned in tears to mourn my loss
 I stand the bitter night
 In my window, where I may see
 Before the winds how the clouds flee.
 Lo, what a mariner love hath made me!

And in green waves when the salt flood
 Doth rise by rage of wind,
 A thousand fancies in that mood
 Assail my restless mind.
 Alas, now drencheth my sweet foe,
 That with the spoil of my heart did go
 And left me; but, alas, why did he so?

And when the seas wax calm again,
 To chese from me annoy,
 My doubtful hope doth cause my plain,
 So dread cuts off my joy.
 Thus is my wealth mingled with woe,
 And of each thought a doubt doth grow:
 Now he comes! Will he come? Alas, no, no!

2.6.6 Reading and Review Questions

1. To what effect does Surrey use sounds, like consonance and assonance? How does his use of sounds compare to Wyatt's?
2. What seems characteristically English in the sonnets' nature imagery, especially considering that their source is Italian (Petrarch's Sonnets)? How does his use of sonnet conventions compare with Wyatt's?
3. How do Surrey's closing couplet's complete their respective sonnets' meaning and intent?
4. To Surrey, what makes Windsor a more than physical prison, and why?
5. The speaker in "O happy dames, that may embrace," is a female. What attitudes towards and expectations of women does Surrey reveal through his speaker's words?

2.7 QUEEN ELIZABETH

(1533-1603)

Queen Elizabeth I was the daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, who was beheaded when Elizabeth was two years old. After Henry and his third wife Jane Seymour (c. 1508-1537) had Edward, Henry's longed-for male heir, Elizabeth and her half sister Mary were declared illegitimate. As Henry's daughter, legitimate or otherwise, Elizabeth was tutored in music and in the French, Spanish, Greek, and Latin languages. Her tutors included the classicists William Grindal (d. 1548) and Roger Ascham (c. 1515-1568).

Although she lost her biological mother at an early age, Elizabeth received care from her step-mothers, particularly Catherine Parr (1512-1548), who survived Henry. After Henry's death, Catherine married Thomas

Seymour, who used his proximity to Elizabeth to influence her and possibly to angle for her hand in a future marriage. Her half-brother Edward's brief reign had little effect on Elizabeth's life. The reign of his successor, Elizabeth's half-sister Mary, however, caused dangerous upheaval, to Elizabeth proper and to the country as a whole. Protestant rebels rallied against the Roman Catholic Mary's succession, first for Jane Grey (1537-1554), a legitimate daughter of Henry's sister, then for Elizabeth. Although she herself did not encourage or conspire with the rebels, Elizabeth was briefly imprisoned in the Tower of London under suspicion of treason.

Elizabeth succeeded Mary to rule a country straitened by Continental war and internal religious strife. With the Act of Supremacy (1558), Elizabeth reestablished the Church of England; with the Act of Uniformity (1558), she established the Book of Common Prayer. She also maintained a tenuous peace with the Continent, particularly France and Spain, for the greater part of her reign. Prudent, cautious, and extremely wise in her choice of advisors, Elizabeth used her single status to her advantage. Nations that might have warred with her instead sent her suitors,



Image 2.6 | The Coronation of Queen Elizabeth

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including the Dukes of Saxony, Holstein, Anjou and Savoy; Prince Frederick of Denmark; Don Carlos of Spain; and King Charles IX of France. Only when she supported the Protestant rebellion against Spain in the Netherlands did she trigger the long-threatened attack of the Spanish Armada in 1588. Its defeat heralded a golden age for her realm and her rule.

Religious strife again threatened when her cousin Mary Stuart, Queen of the Scots, married the future King of France. His early death brought the threats closer to home with several assassination attempts made against Elizabeth in hopes of making Mary Queen of England as well as Scotland. When Mary took refuge in England, Elizabeth had her imprisoned in Fotheringhay Castle, keeping the threat at bay for nineteen years. From her imprisonment, Mary encouraged rebellion and was implicated in the Babington Plot against Elizabeth's life and was consequently beheaded.

In her later years, Elizabeth faced riots at home due to food shortages and rebellion in Ireland. The latter gave armed troops to a court favorite, Robert Devereaux, 2nd Earl of Essex (b. 1565). His troops did not suppress the Irish rebellion but instead supported his own against Elizabeth. He was beheaded for treason in 1601. Elizabeth I's long reign fostered England's economic growth, military strength, and, most importantly, artistic and literary immortality. To the end of her life, she refused to soothe her nation's fears against her own mortality by marrying and then bearing an heir. She wedded herself to England and her subjects.

Her writing reflects the emotional weight of the political challenges she faced as a female and as a sovereign—as a woman, who was both an individual and a symbol, who always had too much to lose. She wrote in many forms, including speeches for state occasions, translations, and poems. In her poems, we hear her voice—poignant and strong, emotional and moral—and can appreciate her complexity.

2.7.1 “The Doubt of Future Foes”

(ca. 1568)

The doubt of future foes exiles my present joy,
 And wit me warns to shun such snares as threatens mine annoy.
 For falsehood now doth flow, and subjects faith doth ebb,
 Which should not be, if reason ruled or wisdom weaved the web.
 But clouds of toys untried do cloak aspiring minds,
 Which turns to rain of late repent, by course of changèd winds.
 The top of hope supposed, the root of rue shall be,
 And fruitless all their grafted guile, as shortly you shall see.
 Their dazzled eyes with pride, which great ambition blinds,
 Shall be unsealed by worthy wights whose foresight falsehood finds.
 The daughter of debate, that discord aye doth sow,
 Shall reap no gain where former rule still peace hath taught to grow.

No foreign banished wight shall anchor in this port:
 Our realm brooks no seditious sects--let them elsewhere resort.
 My rusty sword through rest shall first his edge employ
 To poll their tops who seek such change or gape for future joy.

2.7.2 "On Monsieur's Departure"

(ca. 1582)

I grieve and dare not show my discontent,
 I love and yet am forced to seem to hate,
 I do, yet dare not say I ever meant,
 I seem stark mute but inwardly do prate.
 I am and not, I freeze and yet am burned,
 Since from myself another self I turned.

My care is like my shadow in the sun,
 Follows me flying, flies when I pursue it,
 Stands and lies by me, doth what I have done.
 His too familiar care doth make me rue it.
 No means I find to rid him from my breast,
 Till by the end of things it be supprest.

Some gentler passion slide into my mind,
 For I am soft and made of melting snow;
 Or be more cruel, love, and so be kind.
 Let me or float or sink, be high or low.
 Or let me live with some more sweet content,
 Or die and so forget what love ere meant.

2.7.3 "The Golden Speech"

(1601)

Mr Speaker,

We have heard your declaration and perceive your care of our estate. I do assure you there is no prince that loves his subjects better, or whose love can countervail our love. There is no jewel, be it of never so rich a price, which I set before this jewel: I mean your love. For I do esteem it more than any treasure or riches; for that we know how to prize, but love and thanks I count invaluable. And, though God hath raised me high, yet this I count the glory of my Crown, that I have reigned with your loves. This makes me that I do not so much rejoice that God hath made me to be a Queen, as to be a Queen over so thankful a people. Therefore I have cause to wish nothing more than to content the subject and that is a duty which I owe.

Neither do I desire to live longer days than I may see your prosperity and that is my only desire. And as I am that person still yet, under God, hath delivered you and so I trust by the almighty power of God that I shall be his instrument to preserve you from every peril, dishonour, shame, tyranny and oppression, partly by means of your intended helps which we take very acceptably because it manifesteth the largeness of your good loves and loyalties unto your sovereign.

Of myself I must say this: I never was any greedy, scraping grasper, nor a strait fast-holding Prince, nor yet a waster. My heart was never set on any worldly goods. What you bestow on me, I will not hoard it up, but receive it to bestow on you again. Therefore render unto them I beseech you Mr Speaker, such thanks as you imagine my heart yieldeth, but my tongue cannot express. Mr Speaker, I would wish you and the rest to stand up for I shall yet trouble you with longer speech. Mr Speaker, you give me thanks but I doubt me I have greater cause to give you thanks, than you me, and I charge you to thank them of the Lower House from me. For had I not received a knowledge from you, I might have fallen into the lapse of an error, only for lack of true information.

Since I was Queen, yet did I never put my pen to any grant, but that upon pretext and semblance made unto me, it was both good and beneficial to the subject in general though a private profit to some of my ancient servants, who had deserved well at my hands. But the contrary being found by experience, I am exceedingly beholden to such subjects as would move the same at first. And I am not so simple to suppose but that there be some of the Lower House whom these grievances never touched. I think they spake out of zeal to their countries and not out of spleen or malevolent affection as being parties grieved. That my grants should be grievous to my people and oppressions to be privileged under colour of our patents, our kingly dignity shall not suffer it. Yea, when I heard it, I could give no rest unto my thoughts until I had reformed it. Shall they, think you, escape unpunished that have oppressed you, and have been disrespectful of their duty and regardless our honour? No, I assure you, Mr Speaker, were it not more for conscience' sake than for any glory or increase of love that I desire, these errors, troubles, vexations and oppressions done by these varlets and lewd persons not worthy of the name of subjects should not escape without condign punishment. But I perceive they dealt with me like physicians who, ministering a drug, make it more acceptable by giving it a good aromatical savour, or when they give pills do gild them all over.

I have ever used to set the Last Judgement Day before mine eyes and so to rule as I shall be judged to answer before a higher judge, and now if my kingly bounties have been abused and my grants turned to the hurt of my people contrary to my will and meaning, and if any in authority under me have neglected or perverted what I have committed to them, I hope God will not lay their culps and offenses in my charge. I know the title of a King is a glorious title, but assure yourself that the shining glory of princely authority hath not so dazzled the eyes of our understanding, but that we well know and remember that we also are to yield an account of our actions before the great judge. To be a king and wear a crown is a thing more

glorious to them that see it than it is pleasant to them that bear it. For myself I was never so much enticed with the glorious name of a King or royal authority of a Queen as delighted that God hath made me his instrument to maintain his truth and glory and to defend his kingdom as I said from peril, dishonour, tyranny and oppression. There will never Queen sit in my seat with more zeal to my country, care to my subjects and that will sooner with willingness venture her life for your good and safety than myself. For it is my desire to live nor reign no longer than my life and reign shall be for your good. And though you have had, and may have, many princes more mighty and wise sitting in this seat, yet you never had nor shall have, any that will be more careful and loving.

For I, oh Lord, what am I, whom practices and perils past should not fear? Or what can I do? That I should speak for any glory, God forbid. And I pray to you Mr Comptroller, Mr Secretary and you of my Council, that before these gentlemen go into their countries, you bring them all to kiss my hand.

2.7.4 Reading and Review Questions

1. “The doubt of future foes” takes as its subject a woman, Mary Queen of Scots, the “daughter of debate.” Does this poem attribute any womanly qualities to its subject? Why, or why not?
2. Many Elizabethan love poems lament and deplore the beloved who is often portrayed as deceptive and untrustworthy. How does “On Monsieur’s Departure” both repeat and reevaluate this depiction of a beloved woman? How does this depiction compare with that of Wyatt’s?
3. In the Elizabethan era, women were considered weak and passive. To what degree, if any, does “On Monsieur’s Departure” rely on this view, and why?
4. What virtues, if any, does Elizabeth attribute to herself in her “Golden Speech” (given to members of Parliament after she revoked patents that gave disproportionate wealth to their holders)? What societal values, if any, does she claim to uphold, and why?
5. What heroic qualities, if any, does Elizabeth attribute to herself in her poems, in her “Golden Speech,” and why?

2.8 EDMUND SPENSER

(1552-1599)

Although connected to a “house of auncient fame,” that of the Spencers of Althorpe, Northampton, Edmund Spenser entered Pembroke College, Cambridge as a poor scholar. There he benefitted from the Renaissance concept of the perfect courtier and studied Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, vernacular English, and vocal and instrumental music. He also acquired proper deportment by acting in annual plays performed for the court.

He published his first poetry while at Cambridge, including translations from Petrarch (1304-1374) and Joachim du Bellay (1522-1560). He also became friends with the poet and scholar Gabriel Harvey (c. 1552-1631) who later published his correspondence with Spenser and whom Spenser later portrayed as Hobinol in *Shepherd's Calendar* (1579). After earning his Master of Art degree, he returned to London where Harvey introduced Spenser to Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586) and secured him a place in the household of Robert Dudley, 1st Earl of Leicester (1532-1588). Although he may have traveled to various places, including Ireland—likely serving as private messenger to Leicester—Spenser spent most of his time at the homes of either Sidney or Leicester. Sidney's *Defense of Poesy* as well as his Protestant advocacy seem especially to have influenced Spenser. And it is Sidney to whom Spenser dedicated his pastoral eclogue (classically-styled poem on a pastoral subject) *Shepherd's Calendar*.

This work was modeled on Greek, Italian, and French pastorals but was particularly indebted to Chaucer, as appears in its use of archaic language. It establishes and builds on the growing interest in native poetry. Interest in native, or vernacular, English literature was growing due to increased education, Renaissance learning, and increased nationalism. Spenser's poetic fame grew as he circulated several of his poetic works among friends. For a short time, Spenser was a member of the “Areopagus,” a group of writers including Fulke Greville, 1st Baron Brooke (1554-162) that promoted English as a literary language. Among Spenser's important contributions to this endeavor are the ABAB BCBC CDCD EE rhyme scheme of what came to be known as the Spenserian sonnet as well as the Spenserian stanza, comprising eight lines in iambic pentameter with the final line in iambic hexameter.

In 1580, Spenser was appointed private secretary by Arthur Grey, Baron Grey de Wilton (1536-1593), the new Lord Deputy, with whom Spenser traveled to



Image 2.7 | Edmund Spenser

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Ireland. Grey actively suppressed Irish rebels and attempted to do the same to Roman Catholicism in Ireland. After Grey left Ireland, Spenser remained there as a civil servant, acquiring property in County Kildare, Cork, and Munster. Sir Walter Raleigh, who had extensive property in Munster, visited Spenser in 1589. Raleigh encouraged Spenser's literary ambitions, and the two returned to London where Raleigh presented Spenser to Elizabeth I. In 1590, Spenser published the first installment of *The Faerie Queene*, dedicated to "the most mighty and magnificent Empresse Elizabeth, by the grace of God, Queene of England, France, and Ireland; Defender of the Faith, &c." He prefaced his epic with sonnets commended to such important figures of his day as William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley (1520-1598), Raleigh, and Mary (Sidney) Herbert, the Countess of Pembroke.

The Faerie Queene won Spenser immediate acclaim and a pension of fifty pounds a year, but not the preferment at Court to which he aspired. He returned to Ireland, to his duties as clerk, to the management of his estate, and to his writing. In 1594, he married Elizabeth Boyle, who was related to Sir Richard Boyle, later created the first Earl of Cork. The next year, Spenser commemorated his courtship and marriage in his *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion*, the latter after the classical celebration of a bride and bridegroom.

In 1596, he published the second instalment of *The Faerie Queene* at the Stationers' Hall. The following year, Elizabeth I recommended him as Sheriff of Cork in Ireland. The tone of his Mutability Cantos, the last cantos of *The Faerie*

Queene he wrote, was justified by the final events of his life. During Tyrone's Rebellion, his castle at Kilcolman was sacked and burnt to the ground. Spenser and his family escaped to Cork. He then traveled to Westminster with dispatches for Elizabeth I, including his own policy statement on the "recovery of the Realme of Ireland." Whatever role he may have played in that recovery was cut short by his death, following a sudden illness soon after his arrival in Westminster. He died on January 16, 1599. He was buried at Westminster Abbey, next to Chaucer.

Envisaged as a national epic, *The Faerie Queene* draws on Arthurian legend and includes elements of romance, fable, and allegory. Although he completed only six of the twenty-four books he projected, Spenser seems to have offered a completed poem through which he declared himself to be a Poet, that is, his country's Virgil.

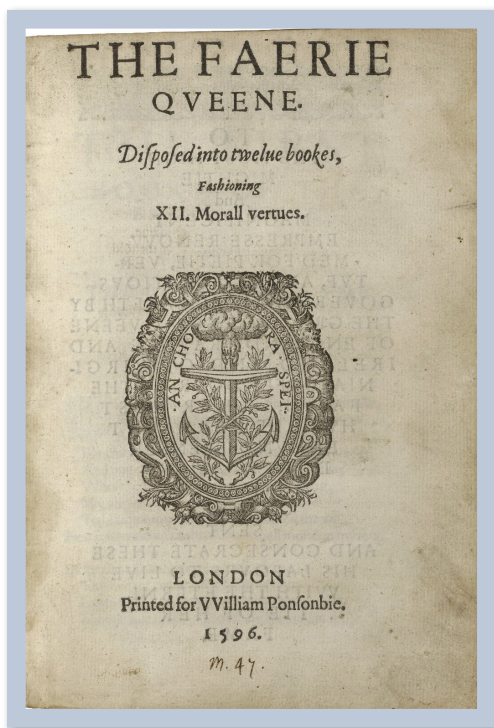


Image 2.8 | *The Faerie Queene* Title Page

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Indeed, the body of Spenser's work as a whole follows Virgil's, who wrote in the order of the creation of the arts: pastoral, romances, and epics. The opening of *The Faerie Queene* echoes Virgil's *Aeneid*, as does also its overall structure with twelve cantos similar to the *Aeneid's* twelve books. Each book of the *Faerie Queene* is dedicated to a single virtue: Holiness, Temperance, Chastity, Friendship, Justice, and Courtesy. As a national epic, *The Faerie Queene* is also a religious and moral work, an embodiment of its dedicated virtues, the forms of which we cannot actually see. However, we can see beauty (with which we can fall in love), so Spenser presents these virtues as beauties, as abstract ideals made concrete.

Each book also has its own hero, beginning with the Redcrosse Knight, the knight of holiness. The technical hero is Prince Arthur, who connects with each book's hero, traveling through their lives and assisting them as he searches for his beloved, Gloriana, who first joined him in a dream. Prince Arthur represents the complete gentleman, for each virtue is magnified in him in the appropriate book, and at the epic's end, Arthur will be the perfect (or perfected) knight. The real virtue needed to read the epic is constancy, which is the virtue announced in the Mutability Cantos, the fragment that "completes" the epic.

The conception of the poem, the twelve virtues formed in Prince Arthur, is found in Sidney's *Defense of Poesy* which declares the intent of poetry to be making the reader virtuous. Prince Arthur models the perfect gentleman and courtier for England, and the grand intent and effect of Spenser's poem is to produce a similarly-perfected reader.

The Faerie Queene is also an allegory, writing in which the subject and object are both divided and brought together. One of the first people we meet in Book I, Canto I is a beautiful virgin named Una whose parents (Adam and Eve) are held captive by a dragon (death); Una represents Veiled Truth, and allegory is a form of Veiled Truth. The allegory in Canto I represents not only the one true (Protestant) church—that frees all sons of Adam and daughters of Eve from death—but also Spenser's literary art. The Redcrosse Knight mistakenly defends unveiled truth in the figure of (the Roman Catholic, Whore of Babylon) Duessa, the "two-faced," not-at-all virgin, false mirror of Una. Veiled and unveiled Truth thus represent how allegory can be two things at the same time: truth and fiction (or "lie"). Like a labyrinth, this epic leads the reader past images and symbols of art to truth itself.

2.8.1 from *The Faerie Queene*

Book I

Canto I

*The Patron of true Holinesse
foule Errour doth defeate;
Hypocrisie him to entrappe
doth to his home entreate.*

I

A GENTLE Knight was pricking on the plaine,
 Ycladd in mightie armes and silver shielde,
 Wherein old dints of deepe wounds did remaine,
 The cruel markes of many'a bloody fielde;
 Yet armes till that time did he never wield:
 His angry steede did chide his foming bitt,
 As much disdayning to the curbe to yield:
 Full jolly knight he seemd, and faire did sitt,
 As one for knightly giusts and fierce encounters fitt.

II

And on his brest a bloudie Crosse he bore,
 The deare remembrance of his dying Lord,
 For whose sweete sake that glorious badge he wore,
 And dead as living ever him ador'd:
 Upon his shield the like was also scor'd,
 For soveraine hope, which in his helpe he had:
 Right faithfull true he was in deede and word,
 But of his cheere did seeme too solemne sad;
 Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.

III

Upon a great adventure he was bond,
 That greatest Gloriana to him gave,
 That greatest Glorious Queene of Faerie lond,
 To winne him worship, and her grace to have,
 Which of all earthly things he most did crave;
 And ever as he rode, his hart did earne
 To prove his puissance in battell brave
 Upon his foe, and his new force to learne;
 Upon his foe, a Dragon horrible and stearne.

IV

A lovely Ladie rode him faire beside,
 Upon a lowly Asse more white then snow,
 Yet she much whiter, but the same did hide
 Under a vele, that wimpled was full low,
 And over all a blacke stole she did throw,
 As one that inly mournd: so was she sad,
 And heavie sat upon her palfrey slow;
 Seemed in heart some hidden care she had,
 And by her in a line a milke white lambe she lad.

V

So pure and innocent, as that same lambe,
 She was in life and every vertuous lore,
 And by descent from Royall lynage came
 Of ancient Kings and Queenes, that had of yore
 Their scepters stretcht from East to Westerne shore,
 And all the world in their subjection held;
 Till that infernall feend with foule uprore
 Forwasted all their land, and them expeld:
 Whom to avenge, she had this Knight from far compeld.

VI

Behind her farre away a Dwarfe did lag,
 That lasie seemd in being ever last,
 Or wearied with bearing of her bag
 Of needments at his backe. Thus as they past,
 The day with cloudes was suddeine overcast,
 And angry Jove an hideous storme of raine
 Did poure into his Lemans lap so fast,
 That everie wight to shrowd it did constrain,
 And this faire couple eke to shroud themselves were fain.

VII

Enforst to seeke some covert nigh at hand,
 A shadie grove not far away they spide,
 That promist ayde the tempest to withstand:
 Whose loftie trees yclad with sommers pride
 Did spred so broad, that heavens light did hide,
 Not perceable with power of any starre:
 And all within were pathes and alleies wide,
 With footing worne, and leading inward farre:
 Faire harbour that them seemes; so in they entred arre.

VIII

And forth they passe, with pleasure forward led,
 Joying to heare the birdes sweete harmony,
 Which therein shrouded from the tempest dred,
 Seemd in their song to scorne the cruell sky.
 Much can they prayse the trees so straight and hy,
 The sayling Pine, the Cedar proud and tall,
 The vine-prop Elme, the Poplar never dry,
 The builder Oake, sole king of forrests all,
 The Aspine good for staves, the Cypresse funerall.

IX

The Laurell, meed of mightie Conquerours
 And Poets sage, the firre that weepeth still,
 The Willow worne of forlorne Paramours,
 The Eugh obedient to the benders will,
 The Birch for shaftes, the Sallow for the mill,
 The Mirrhe sweete bleeding in the bitter wound,
 The warlike Beech, the Ash for nothing ill,
 The fruitfull Olive, and the Platane round,
 The carver Holme, the Maple seeldom inward sound.

X

Led with delight, they thus beguile the way,
 Untill the blustering storme is overblowne;
 When weening to returne, whence they did stray,
 They cannot finde that path, which first was showne,
 But wander too and fro in wayes unknowne,
 Furthest from end then, when they nearest weene,
 That makes them doubt their wits be not their owne:
 So many pathes, so many turnings seene,
 That which of them to take, in diverse doubt they been.

XI

At last resolving forward still to fare,
 Till that some end they finde or in or out,
 That path they take, that beaten seemd most bare,
 And like to lead the labyrinth about;
 Which when by tract they hunted had throughout,
 At length it brought them to a hollow cave
 Amid the thickest woods. The Champion stout
 Eftsoones dismounted from his courser brave,
 And to the Dwarfe awhile his needlesse spere he gave.

XII

Be well aware, quoth then that Ladie milde,
 Least suddaine mischief ye too rash provoke:
 The danger hid, the place unknowne and wilde,
 Breedes dreadfull doubts: Oft fire is without smoke,
 And perill without show: therefore your stroke,
 Sir Knight, with-hold, till further triall made.
 Ah Ladie, (said he) shame were to revoke
 The forward footing for an hidden shade:
 Vertue gives her selfe light, through darkenesse for to wade.

XIII

Yea but (quoth she) the perill of this place
 I better wot then you, though now too late
 To wish you backe returne with foule disgrace,
 Yet wisdom warnes, whilest foot is in the gate,
 To stay the steppe, ere forced to retrate.
 This is the wandring wood, this Errours den,
 A monster vile, whom God and man does hate:
 Therefore I read beware. Fly fly (quoth then
 The fearefull Dwarfe) this is no place for living men.

XIV

But full of fire and greedy hardiment,
 The youthfull knight could not for ought be staide,
 But forth unto the darksome hole he went,
 And looked in: his glistring armor made
 A litle glooming light, much like a shade,
 By which he saw the ugly monster plaine,
 Halfe like a serpent horribly displaide,
 But th'other halfe did womans shape retaine,
 Most lothsom, filthie, foule, and full of vile disdain.

XV

And as she lay upon the durtie ground,
 Her huge long taile her den all overspred,
 Yet was in knots and many boughtes upwound,
 Pointed with mortall sting. Of her there bred
 A thousand yong ones, which she dayly fed,
 Sucking upon her poisnous dugs, eachone
 Of sundry shapes, yet all ill favored:
 Soone as that uncouth light upon them shone,
 Into her mouth they crept, and suddain all were gone.

XVI

Their dam upstart, out of her den effraide,
 And rushed forth, hurling her hideous taile
 About her cursed head, whose folds displaid
 Were stretcht now forth at length without entraile.
 She lookt about, and seeing one in mayle
 Armed to point, sought backe to turne againe;
 For light she hated as the deadly bale,
 Ay wont in desert darknesse to remaine,
 Where plain none might her see, nor she see any plaine.

XVII

Which when the valiant Elfe perceiv'd, he lept
 As Lyon fierce upon the flying pray,
 And with his trenchand blade her boldly kept
 From turning backe, and forced her to stay:
 Therewith enrag'd she loudly gan to bray,
 And turning fierce, her speckled taile advaunst,
 Threatning her angry sting, him to dismay:
 Who nought aghast his mightie hand enhaunst:
 The stroke down from her head unto her shoulder glaunst.

XVIII

Much daunted with that dint, her sence was dazd,
 Yet kindling rage, her selfe she gathered round,
 And all attonce her beastly body raizd
 With doubled forces high above the ground:
 Tho wrapping up her wrethed sterne arownd,
 Lept fierce upon his shield, and her huge traine
 All suddenly about his body wound,
 That hand or foot to stirre he strove in vaine:
 God helpe the man so wrapt in Errours endlesse traine.

XIX

His Lady sad to see his sore constraint,
 Cride out, Now now Sir knight, shew what ye bee,
 Add faith unto your force, and be not faint:
 Strangle her, else she sure will strangle thee.
 That when he heard, in great perplexitie,
 His gall did grate for grieve and high disdain,
 And knitting all his force got one hand free,
 Wherewith he grypt her gorge with so great paine,
 That soone to loose her wicked bands did her constraine.

XX

Therewith she spewd out of her filthy maw
 A floud of poyson horrible and blacke,
 Full of great lumpes of flesh and gobbets raw,
 Which stunck so vildly, that it forst him slacke
 His grasping hold, and from her turne him backe:
 Her vomit full of bookes and papers was,
 With loathly frogs and toades, which eyes did lacke,
 And creeping sought way in the weedy gras:
 Her filthy parbreake all the place defiled has.

XXI

As when old father Nilus gins to swell
 With timely pride above the Aegyptian vale,
 His fattie waves do fertile slime outwell,
 And overflow each plaine and lowly dale:
 But when his later spring gins to avale,
 Huge heapes of mudd he leaves, wherein there breed
 Ten thousand kindes of creatures, partly male
 And partly female of his fruitful seed;
 Such ugly monstrous shapes elsewhere may no man reed.

XXII

The same so sore annoyed has the knight,
 That welnigh choked with the deadly stinke,
 His forces faile, ne can no lenger fight.
 Whose corage when the feend perceiv'd to shrinke,
 She poured forth out of her hellish sinke
 Her fruitfull cursed spawne of serpents small,
 Deformed monsters, fowle, and blacke as inke,
 With swarming all about his legs did crall,
 And him encombred sore, but could not hurt at all.

XXIII

As gentle Shepheard in sweete even-tide,
 When ruddy Phoebus gins to welke in west,
 High on an hill, his flocke to vewen wide,
 Markes which do byte their hasty supper best,
 A cloud of combrous gnattes do him molest,
 All striving to infixe their feeble stings,
 That from their noyance he no where can rest,
 But with his clownish hands their tender wings
 He brusheth oft, and oft doth mar their murmurings.

XXIV

Thus ill bestedd, and fearefull more of shame,
 Then of the certeine perill he stood in,
 Halfe furious unto his foe he came,
 Resolv'd in minde all suddenly to win,
 Or soone to lose, before he once would lin
 And strooke at her with more then manly force,
 That from her body full of filthie sin
 He raft her hatefull head without remorse;
 A streame of cole black bloud forth gushed from her corse.

XXV

Her scattred brood, soone as their Parent deare
 They saw so rudely falling to the ground,
 Groning full deadly, all with troublous feare,
 Gathred themselves about her body round,
 Weening their wonted entrance to have found
 At her wide mouth: but being there withstood
 They flocked all about her bleeding wound,
 And sucked up their dying mothers blood,
 Making her death their life, and eke her hurt their good.

XXVI

That detestable sight him much amazde,
 To see th' unkindly Impes, of heaven accurst,
 Devoure their dam; on whom while so he gazd,
 Having all satisfide their bloody thirst,
 Their bellies swolne he saw with fulnesse burst,
 And bowels gushing forth: well worthy end
 Of such as drunke her life, the which them nurst;
 Now needeth him no lenger labour spend,
 His foes have slaine themselves, with whom he should contend.

XXVII

His Ladie seeing all that chaunst, from farre
 Approcht in hast to greet his victorie,
 And said, Faire knight, borne under happy starre,
 Who see your vanquisht foes before you lye:
 Well worthie be you of that Armorie,
 Wherin ye have great glory wonne this day,
 And proof'd your strength on a strong enimie,
 Your first adventure: many such I pray,
 And henceforth ever wish that like succeed it may.

XXVIII

Then mounted he upon his Steede againe,
 And with the Lady backward sought to wend;
 That path he kept which beaten was most plaine,
 Ne ever would to any by-way bend,
 But still did follow one unto the end,
 The which at last out of the wood them brought.
 So forward on his way (with God to frend)

He passed forth, and new adventure sought;
 Long way he travelled, before he heard of ought.

XXIX

At length they chaunst to meet upon the way
 An aged Sire, in long blacke weedes yclad,
 His feete all bare, his beard all hoarie gray
 And by his belt his booke he hanging had;
 Sober he seemde, and very sagely sad,
 And to the ground his eyes were lowly bent,
 Simple in shew, and voyde of malice bad,
 And all the way he prayed, as he went,
 And often knockt his brest, as one that did repent.

XXX

He faire the knight saluted, louting low,
 Who faire him quited, as that courteous was:
 And after asked him, if he did know
 Of straunge adventures, which abroad did pas.
 Ah my deare Sonne (quoth he) how should, alas,
 Silly old man, that lives in hidden cell,
 Bidding his beades all day for his trespas,
 Tydings of warre and worldly trouble tell?
 With holy father sits not with such things to mell.

XXXI

But if of daunger which hereby doth dwell,
 And homebred evil ye desire to heare,
 Of a straunge man I can you tidings tell,
 That wasteth all this countrey farre and neare.
 Of such (said he) I chiefly do inquere,
 And shall you well reward to shew the place,
 In which that wicked wight his dayes doth weare:
 For to all knighthood it is foule disgrace,
 That such a cursed creature lives so long a space.

XXXII

Far hence (quoth he) in wastfull wildernesse
 His dwelling is, by which no living wight
 May ever passe, but thorough great distresse.
 Now (sayd the Lady) draweth toward night,
 And well I wote, that of your later fight
 Ye all forwearied be: for what so strong,

But wanting rest will also want of might?
 The Sunne that measures heaven all day long,
 At night doth baite his steedes the Ocean waves emong.

XXXIII

Then with the Sunne take Sir, your timely rest,
 And with new day new worke at once begin:
 Untroubled night they say gives counsell best.
 Right well Sir knight ye have advised bin,
 (Quoth then that aged man;) the way to win
 Is wisely to advise: now day is spent;
 Therefore with me ye may take up your In
 For this same night. The knight was well content:
 So with that godly father to his home they went.

XXXIV

A little lowly Hermitage it was,
 Downe in a dale, hard by a forests side,
 Far from resort of people, that did pas
 In travell to and froe: a little wyde
 There was an holy Chappell edifyde,
 Wherein the Hermite dewly wont to say
 His holy things each morne and eventyde:
 Thereby a Christall streame did gently play,
 Which from a sacred fountaine welled forth alway.

XXXV

Arrived there, the little house they fill,
 Ne looke for entertainment, where none was:
 Rest is their feast, and all things at their will:
 The noblest mind the best contentment has.
 With faire discourse the evening so they pas:
 For that old man of pleasing wordes had store,
 And well could file his tongue as smooth as glas,
 He told of Saintes and Popes, and evermore
 He strowd an *Ave-Mary* after and before.

XXXVI

The drouping Night thus creepeth on them fast,
 And the sad humour loading their eye liddes,
 As messenger of Morpheus on them cast
 Sweet slombring deaw, the which to sleepe them biddes.
 Unto their lodgings then his guestes he riddes:

Where when all drownd in deadly sleepe he findes,
 He to this study goes, and there amiddes
 His Magick bookes and artes of sundry kindes,
 He seekes out mighty charmes, to trouble sleepey mindes.

XXXVII

Then choosing out few words most horrible,
 (Let none them read) thereof did verses frame,
 With which and other spelles like terrible,
 He bad awake blacke Plutoes griesly Dame,
 And cursed heaven and spake reprochfull shame
 Of highest God, the Lord of life and light;
 A bold bad man, that dar'd to call by name
 Great Gorgon, Prince of darknesse and dead night,
 At which Cocytus quakes, and Styx is put to flight.

XXXVIII

And forth he cald out of deepe darknesse dred
 Legions of Sprights, the which like little flies
 Fluttring about his ever damned hed,
 Awaite whereto their service he applyes,
 To aide his friends, or fray his enimies:
 Of those he chose out two, the falsest two,
 And fittest for to forge true-seeming lyes;
 The one of them he gave a message too,
 The other by him selfe staide other worke to doo.

XXXIX

He making speedy way through spersed ayre,
 And through the world of waters wide and deepe,
 To Morpheus house doth hastily repaire.
 Amid the bowels of the earth full steepe,
 And low, where dawning day doth never peepe,
 His dwelling is; there Tethys his wet bed
 Doth ever wash, and Cynthia still doth steepe
 In silver deaw his ever-drouping hed,
 Whiles sad Night over him her mantle black doth spred.

XL

Whose double gates he findeth locked fast,
 The one faire fram'd of burnisht Yvory,
 The other all with silver overcast;
 And wakeful dogges before them farre do lye,

Watching to banish Care their enemy,
 Who oft is wont to trouble gentle Sleepe.
 By them the Sprite doth passe in quietly,
 And unto Morpheus comes, whom drowned deepe
 In drowsie fit he findes: of nothing he takes keepe.

XLI

And more, to lulle him in his slumber soft,
 A trickling streame from high rock tumbling downe,
 And ever-drizling raine upon the loft,
 Mixt with a murmuring winde, much like the sowne
 Of swarming Bees, did cast him in a swowne:
 No other noyse, nor peoples troublous cryes,
 As still are wont t'annoy the walled towne,
 Might there be heard: but carelesse Quiet lyes,
 Wrapt in eternall silence farre from enemyes.

XLII

The messenger approching to him spake,
 But his wast wordes returnd to him in vaine:
 So sound he slept, that nought mought him awake.
 Then rudely he him thrust, and pusht with paine
 Whereat he gan to stretch: but he againe
 Shooke him so hard, that forced him to speake.
 As one then in a dreame, whose dryer braine
 Is tost with troubled sights and fancies weake,
 He mumbled soft, but would not all his silence breake.

XLIII

The Sprite then gan more boldly him to wake,
 And threatned unto him the dreaded name
 Of Hecate: whereat he gan to quake,
 And lifting up his lumpish head, with blame
 Halfe angry asked him, for what he came.
 Hither (quoth he) me Archimago sent,
 He that the stubborne Sprites can wisely tame,
 He bids thee to him send for his intent
 A fit false dreame, that can delude the sleepers sent.

XLIV

The God obayde, and, calling forth straightway
 A diverse dreame out of his prison darke,
 Delivered it to him, and downe did lay

His heavie head, devoide of carefull carke,
 Whose sences all were straight benumbed and starke.
 He backe returning by the Yvorie dore,
 Remounted up as light as chearefull Larke,
 And on his litle winges the dreame he bore
 In hast unto his Lord, where he him left afore.

XLV

Who all this while with charmes and hidden artes,
 Had made a Lady of that other Spright,
 And fram'd of liquid ayre her tender partes
 So lively, and so like in all mens sight,
 That weaker sence it could have ravisht quight:
 The maker selfe, for all his wondrous witt,
 Was nigh beguiled with so goodly sight:
 Her all in white he clad, and over it
 Cast a black stole, most like to seeme for Una fit.

XLVI

Now when that ydle dreame was to him brought,
 Unto that Elfin knight he bad him fly,
 Where he slept soundly void of evill thought,
 And with false shewes abuse his fantasy,
 In sort as he him schooled privily:
 And that new creature, borne without her dew,
 Full of the makers guile, with usage sly
 He taught to imitate that Lady trew,
 Whose semblance she did carrie under feigned hew.

XLVII

Thus well instructed, to their worke they hast,
 And coming where the knight in slomber lay,
 The one upon his hardy head him plast
 And made him dreame of loves and lustfull play,
 That nigh his manly hart did melt away,
 Bathed in wanton blis and wicked joy:
 Then seemed him his Lady by him lay,
 And to him playnd, how that false winged boy,
 Her chast hart had subdewd, to learne Dame Pleasures toy.

XLVIII

And she herselfe of beautie soveraigne Queene,
 Fayre Venus seemde unto his bed to bring

Her, whom he waking evermore did weene,
 To bee the chastest flowre, that ay did spring
 On earthly braunch, the daughter of a king,
 Now a loose Leman to vile service bound:
 And eke the Graces seemed all to sing,
Hymen Iö Hymen dauncing all around,
 Whilst freshest Flora her with Yvie girlond crownd.

XLIX

In this great passion of unwonted lust,
 Or wonted feare of doing ought amis,
 He started up, as seeming to mistrust
 Some secret ill, or hidden foe of his:
 Lo there before his face his Lady is,
 Under blake stole hyding her bayted hooke;
 And as halfe blushing offred him to kis,
 With gentle blandishment and lovely looke,
 Most like that virgin true, which for her knight him took.

L

All cleane dismayd to see so uncouth sight,
 And half enraged at her shamelesse guise,
 He thought have slaine her in his fierce despight:
 But hasty heat tempring with suffrance wise,
 He stayde his hand, and gan himselfe advise
 To prove his sense, and tempt her faigned truth.
 Wringing her hands in womans pitteous wise,
 Tho can she weepe, to stirre up gentle ruth,
 Both for her noble bloud, and for her tender youth.

LI

And said, Ah Sir, my liege Lord and my love,
 Shall I accuse the hidden cruell fate,
 And mightie causes wrought in heaven above,
 Or the blind God, that doth me thus amate,
 For hoped love to winne me certaine hate?
 Yet thus perforce he bids me do, or die.
 Die is my dew; yet rew my wretched state
 You, whom my hard avenging destinie
 Hath made judge of my life or death indifferently.

LII

Your owne deare sake forst me at first to leave
 My Fathers kingdome—There she stopt with teares;
 Her swollen hart her speech seemd to bereave,
 And then againe begun; My weaker yeares
 Captiv'd to fortune and frayle worldly feares,
 Fly to your fayth for succour and sure ayde:
 Let me not dye in languor and long teares.
 Why Dame (quoth he) what hath ye thus dismayd?
 What frayes ye, that were wont to comfort me affrayd?

LIII

Love of your selfe, she saide, and deare constraint,
 Lets me not sleepe, but wast the wearie night
 In secret anguish and unpittied plaint,
 Whiles you in carelesse sleepe are drowned quight.
 Her doubtfull words made that redoubted knight
 Suspect her truth: yet since no' untruth he knew,
 Her fawning love with foule disdainfull spight
 He would not shend; but said, Deare dame I rew,
 That for my sake unknowne such griefe unto you grew.

LIV

Assure your selfe, it fell not all to ground;
 For all so deare as life is to my hart,
 I deeme your love, and hold me to you bound:
 Ne let vaine feares procure your needlesse smart,
 Where cause is none, but to your rest depart.
 Not all content, yet seemd she to appease
 Her mournfull plaintes, beguiled of her art,
 And fed with words that could not chuse but please,
 So slyding softly forth, she turned as to her ease.

LV

Long after lay he musing at her mood,
 Much griev'd to thinke that gentle Dame so light,
 For whose defence he was to shed his blood.
 At last, dull wearinesse of former fight
 Having yrockt asleepe his irkesome spright,
 That troublous dreame gan freshly tosse his braine,
 With bowres, and beds, and Ladies deare delight:
 But when he saw his labour all was vaine,
 With that misformed spright he backe returnd againe.

Canto II

*The guilefull great Enchaunter parts
the Redcrosse Knight from truth,
Into whose stead faire Falshood steps,
and workes him wofull ruth.*

I

BY this the Northerne wagoner had set
His sevenfold teme behind the stedfast starre,
That was in Ocean waves yet never wet,
But firme is fixt, and sendeth light from farre
To all that in the wide deepe wandring arre:
And chearefull Chaunticlere with his note shrill
Had warned once, that Phœbus fiery carre
In hast was climbing up the Easterne hill,
Full envious that night so long his roome did fill.

II

When those accursed messengers of hell,
That feigning dreame, and that faire-forged Spright
Came to their wicked maister, and gan tell
Their bootelesse paines, and ill succeeding night:
Who all in rage to see his skilfull might
Deluded so, gan threaten hellish paine
And sad Proserpines wrath, them to affright.
But when he saw his threatning was but vaine,
He cast about, and searcht his baleful bookes againe.

III

Eftsoones he tooke that miscreated faire,
And that false other Spright, on whom he spred
A seeming body of the subtile aire,
Like a young Squire, in loves and lustybed
His wanton dayes that ever loosely led,
Without regard of armes and dreaded fight:
Those two he tooke, and in a secret bed,
Coverd with darknesse and misdeeming night,
Them both together laid, to joy in vaine delight.

IV

Forthwith he runnes with feigned faithfull hast
Unto his guest, who after troublous sights
And dreames, gan now to take more sound repast,

Whom suddenly he wakes with fearfull frights,
 As one aghast with feends or damned sprights,
 And to him cals, Rise, rise, unhappy Swaine
 That here wex old in sleepe, whiles wicked wights
 Have knit themselves in Venus shameful chaine,
 Come see where your false Lady doth her honour staine.

V

All in amaze he suddenly upstart
 With sword in hand, and with the old man went
 Who soone him brought into a secret part
 Where that false couple were full closely ment
 In wanton lust and leud embracement:
 Which when he saw, he burnt with gealous fire,
 The eye of reason was with rage yblent,
 And would have slaine them in his furious ire,
 But hardly was restrained of that aged sire.

VI

Returning to his bed in torment great,
 And bitter anguish of his guiltie sight,
 He could not rest, but did his stout heart eat,
 And wast his inward gall with deepe despight,
 Yrkesome of life, and too long lingring night.
 At last faire Hesperus in highest skie
 Had spent his lampe and brought forth dawning light,
 Then up he rose, and clad him hastily;
 The Dwarfe him brought his steed: so both away do fly.

VII

Now when the rosy-fingred Morning faire,
 Weary of aged Tithones saffron bed,
 Had spread her purple robe through deawy aire,
 And the high hils Titan discovered,
 The royall virgin shooke off drowsy-hed;
 And rising forth out of her baser bowre,
 Lookt for her knight, who far away was fled,
 And for her Dwarfe, that wont to wait each houre:
 Then gan she waile and weepe, to see that woefull stowre.

VIII

And after him she rode with so much speede
 As her slow beast could make; but all in vaine:

For him so far had borne his light-foot steede,
 Pricked with wrath and fiery fierce disdain,
 That him to follow was but fruitlesse paine;
 Yet she her weary limbes would never rest,
 But every hill and dale, each wood and plaine,
 Did search, sore grieved in her gentle brest,
 He so ungently left her, whom she loved best.

IX

But subtill Archimago, when his guests
 He saw divided into double parts,
 And Una wandring in woods and forrests,
 Th' end of his drift, he praisd his divelish arts,
 That had such might over true meaning harts:
 Yet rests not so, but other meanes doth make,
 How he may worke unto her further smarts:
 For her he hated as the hissing snake,
 And in her many troubles did most pleasure take.

X

He then devisde himselfe how to disguise;
 For by his mightie science he could take
 As many formes and shapes in seeming wise,
 As ever Proteus to himselfe could make:
 Sometime a fowle, sometime a fish in lake,
 Now like a foxe, now like a dragon fell,
 That of himselfe he ofte for feare would quake,
 And oft would flie away. O who can tell
 The hidden power of herbes and might of Magicke spell?

XI

But now seemde best the person to put on
 Of that good knight, his late beguiled guest:
 In mighty armes he was yclad anon:
 And silver shield, upon his coward brest
 A bloody crosse, and on his craven crest
 A bunch of haire discoloured diversly:
 Full jolly knight he seemde, and well adrest,
 And when he sate upon his courser free,
 Saint George himself ye would have deemed him to be.

XII

But he the knight, whose semblaunt he did beare,
 The true Saint George, was wandred far away,
 Still flying from his thoughts and gealous feare;
 Will was his guide, and grieffe led him astray.
 At last him chaunst to meete upon the way
 A faithless Sarazin all arm'd to point,
 In whose great shield was writ with letters gay
Sans foy: full large of limbe and every joint
 He was, and cared not for God or man a point.

XIII

He had a faire companion of his way,
 A goodly Lady clad in scarlot red,
 Purfled with gold and pearle of rich assay,
 And like a Persian mitre on her hed
 She wore, with crowns and owches garnished,
 The which her lavish lovers to her gave;
 Her wanton palfrey all was overspred
 With tinsell trappings, woven like a wave,
 Whose bridle rung with golden bells and bosses brave.

XIV

With faire disport and courting dalliaunce
 She intertaine her lover all the way:
 But when she saw the knight his speare advaunce,
 She soone left off her mirth and wanton play,
 And bade her knight addresse him to the fray:
 His foe was nigh at hand. He prickt with pride
 And hope to winne his Ladies heart that day,
 Forth spurred fast: adowne his coursers side
 The red bloud trickling staid the way, as he did ride.

XV

The knight of the Redcrosse when him he spide,
 Spurring so hote with rage dispiteous,
 Gan fairely couch his speare, and towards ride:
 Soone meete they both, both fell and furious,
 That daunted with their forces hideous,
 Their steeds do stagger, and amazed stand,
 And eke themselves, too rudely rigorous,
 Astonied with the stroke of their owne hand
 Doe backe rebut, and each to other yeeldeth land.

XVI

As when two rams stird with ambitious pride,
 Fight for the rule of the rich fleeced flocke,
 Their horned fronts so fierce on either side
 Do meete, that with the terrour of the shocke
 Astonied both, stand sencelesse as a blocke,
 Forgetfull of the hanging victory:
 So stood these twaine, unmoved as a rocke,
 Both staring fierce, and holding idely
 The broken reliques of their former cruelty.

XVII

The Sarazin sore daunted with the buffe
 Snatcheth his sword, and fiercely to him flies;
 Who well it wards, and quyteth cuff with cuff:
 Each others equall puissaunce envies,
 And through their iron sides with cruell spies
 Does seeke to perce: repining courage yields
 No foote to foe. The flashing fier flies
 As from a forge out of their burning shields,
 And streams of purple bloud new dies the verdant fields.

XVIII

Curse on that Crosse (quoth then the Sarazin),
 That keepes thy body from the bitter fit;
 Dead long ygoe I wote thou haddest bin,
 Had not that charme from thee forwarned it:
 But yet I warne thee now assured sitt,
 And hide thy head. Therewith upon his crest
 With rigour so outrageous he smitt,
 That a large share it hewd out of the rest,
 And glauncing down his shield from blame him fairly blest.

XIX

Who thereat wondrous wroth, the sleeping spark
 Of native vertue gan eftsoones revive,
 And at his haughtie helmet making mark,
 So hugely stroke, that it the steele did rive,
 And cleft his head. He tumbling downe alive,
 With bloody mouth his mother earth did kis.
 Greeting his grave: his grudging ghost did strive
 With the fraile flesh; at last it flitted is,
 Whither the soules do fly of men that live amis.

XX

The Lady when she saw her champion fall,
 Like the old ruines of a broken towre,
 Staid not to waile his woefull funerall,
 But from him fled away with all her powre;
 Who after her as hastily gan scowre,
 Bidding the Dwarfe with him to bring away
 The Sarazins shield, signe of the conqueroure.
 Her soone he overtooke, and bad to stay,
 For present cause was none of dread her to dismay.

XXI

She turning backe with ruefull countenance,
 Cride, Mercy mercy Sir vouchsafe to show
 On silly Dame, subject to hard mischaunce,
 And to your mighty will. Her humblesse low
 In so ritche weedes and seeming glorious show,
 Did much emmove his stout heroicke heart,
 And said, Deare dame, your suddin overthrow
 Much rueth me; but now put feare apart,
 And tell, both who ye be, and who that tooke your part.

XXII

Melting in teares, then gan she thus lament;
 The wretched woman, whom unhappy howre
 Hath now made thrall to your commandement,
 Before that angry heavens list to lowre,
 And fortune false betraide me to your powre,
 Was, (O what now availeth that I was!)
 Borne the sole daughter of an Emperour,
 He that the wide West under his rule has,
 And high hath set his throne, where Tiberis doth pas.

XXIII

He in the first flowre of my freshest age,
 Betrothed me unto the onely haire
 Of a most mighty king, most rich and sage;
 Was never Prince so faithfull and so faire,
 Was never Prince so meeke and debonaire;
 But ere my hoped day of spousall shone,
 My dearest Lord fell from high honours staire
 Into the hands of his accursed fone,
 And cruelly was slaine, that shall I ever mone.

XXIV

His blessed body spoild of lively breath,
 Was afterward, I know not how, convaid
 And fro me hid: of whose most innocent death
 When tidings came to me, unhappy maid,
 O how great sorrow my sad soule assaid.
 Then forth I went his woefull corse to find,
 And many yeares throughout the world I straid,
 A virgin widow, whose deepe wounded mind
 With love long time did languish as the striken hind.

XXV

At last it chaunced this proud Sarazin
 To meete me wandring, who perforce me led
 With him away, but yet could never win
 The Fort, that Ladies hold in soveraigne dread;
 There lies he now with foule dishonour dead,
 Who whiles he livde, was called proud Sansfoy,
 The eldest of three brethren, all three bred
 Of one bad sire, whose youngest is Sansjoy;
 And twixt them both was born the bloody bold Sansloy.

XXVI

In this sad plight, friendlesse, unfortunate,
 Now miserable I Fidessa dwell,
 Craving of you in pittie of my state,
 To do none ill, if please ye not do well.
 He in great passion all this while did dwell,
 More busying his quicke eyes, her face to view,
 Then his dull eares, to heare what she did tell;
 And said, Faire Lady hart of flint would rew
 The undeserved woes and sorrowes which ye shew.

XXVII

Henceforth in safe assuraunce may ye rest,
 Having both found a new friend you to aid,
 And lost an old foe that did you molest:
 Better new friend then an old foe is said.
 With change of cheare the seeming simple maid
 Let fall her eyen, as shamefast to the earth,
 And yeelding soft, in that she nought gain-said,
 So forth they rode, he feining seemely merth,
 And she coy lookes: so dainty they say maketh dert.

XXVIII

Long time they thus together traveled,
 Till weary of their way, they came at last
 Where grew two goodly trees, that faire did spread
 Their armes abroad, with gray mosse overcast,
 And their greene leaves trembling with every blast,
 Made a calme shadow far in compasse round:
 The fearfull Shepheard often there aghast
 Under them never sat, ne wont there sound
 His mery oaten pipe, but shund th' unlucky ground.

XXIX

But this good knight soone as he them can spie,
 For the cool shade him thither hastily got:
 For golden Phœbus now ymounted hie,
 From fiery wheelles of his faire chariot
 Hurlled his beame so scorching cruell hot,
 That living creature mote it not abide;
 And his new Lady it endured not.
 There they alight, in hope themselves to hide
 From the fierce heat, and rest their weary limbs a tide.

XXX

Faire seemely pleasaunce each to other makes,
 With goodly purposes there as they sit:
 And in his falsed fancy he her takes
 To be the fairest wight that lived yit;
 Which to expresse he bends his gentle wit,
 And thinking of those braunches greene to frame
 A girlond for her dainty forehead fit,
 He pluckt a bough; out of whose rift there came
 Small drops of gory bloud, that trickled down the same.

XXXI

Therewith a piteous yelling voyce was heard,
 Crying, O spare with guilty hands to teare
 My tender sides in this rough rynd embard,
 But fly, ah fly far hence away, for feare
 Least to you hap, that happened to me heare,
 And to this wretched Lady, my deare love,
 O too deare love, love bought with death too deare.
 Astond he stood, and up his haire did hove,
 And with that suddein horror could no member move.

XXXII

At last whenas the dreadfull passion
 Was overpast, and manhood well awake,
 Yet musing at the straunge occasion,
 And doubting much his sence, he thus bespake;
 What voyce of damned Ghost from Limbo lake,
 Or guilefull spright wandring in empty aire,
 Both which fraile men do oftentimes mistake,
 Sends to my doubtfull eares these speaches rare,
 And ruefull plaints, me bidding guiltlesse bloud to spare?

XXXIII

Then groning deepe, Nor damned Ghost, (quoth he,)
 Nor guileful sprite to thee these wordes doth speake,
 But once a man Fradubio, now a tree,
 Wretched man, wretched tree; whose nature weake
 A cruell witch her cursed will to wreake,
 Hath thus transformd, and plast in open plaines,
 Where Boreas doth blow full bitter bleake,
 And scorching Sunne does dry my secret vaines:
 For though a tree I seeme, yet cold and heat me paines.

XXXIV

Say on Fradubio then, or man, or tree,
 Quoth then the knight, by whose mischievous arts
 Art thou misshaped thus, as now I see?
 He oft finds med'cine, who his griefe imparts;
 But double griefs afflict concealing harts,
 As raging flames who striveth to suppress.
 The author then (said he) of all my smarts,
 Is one Duessa a false sorceresse,
 That many errant knights hath brought to wretchednesse.

XXXV

In prime of youthly yeares, when corage hot
 The fire of love and joy of chevalree
 First kindled in my brest, it was my lot
 To love this gentle Lady, whom ye see,
 Now not a Lady, but a seeming tree;
 With whom as once I rode accompanyde,
 Me chaunced of a knight encountred bee,
 That had a like faire Lady by his syde,
 Like a faire Lady, but did fowle Duessa hyde.

XXXVI

Whose forged beauty he did take in hand,
 All other Dames to have exceeded farre;
 I in defence of mine did likewise stand,
 Mine, that did then shine as the Morning starre.
 So both to battell fierce arraunged arre,
 In which his harder fortune was to fall
 Under my speare: such is the dye of warre:
 His Lady left as a prise martiall,
 Did yield her comely person to be at my call.

XXXVII

So doubly lov'd of Ladies unlike faire,
 Th' one seeming such, the other such indeede,
 One day in doubt I cast for to compare,
 Whether in beauties glorie did exceede;
 A Rosy girlond was the victors meede:
 Both seemde to win, and both seemde won to bee,
 So hard the discord was to be agreede.
 Fraelissa was as faire, as faire mote bee,
 And ever false Duessa seemde as faire as shee.

XXXVIII

The wicked witch now seeing all this while
 The doubtfull ballaunce equally to sway,
 What not by right, she cast to win by guile,
 And by her hellish science raisd streightway
 A foggy mist, that overcast the day,
 And a dull blast, that breathing on her face,
 Dimmed her former beauties shining ray,
 And with foule ugly forme did her disgrace:
 Then was she faire alone, when none was faire in place.

XXXIX

Then cride she out, Fye, fye, deformed wight,
 Whose borrowed beautie now appeareth plaine
 To have before bewitched all mens sight;
 O leave her soone, or let her soone be slaine.
 Her loathly visage viewing with disdain,
 Eftsoones I thought her such, as she me told,
 And would have kild her; but with faigned paine
 The false witch did my wrathfull hand with-hold;
 So left her, where she now is turnd to treen mould.

XL

Then forth I tooke Duessa for my Dame,
 And in the witch unweeting joyd long time,
 Ne ever wist but that she was the same,
 Till on a day (that day is every Prime,
 When Witches wont do penance for their crime)
 I chaunst to see her in her proper hew,
 Bathing her selfe in origane and thyme:
 A filthy foule old woman I did vew,
 That ever to have toucht her I did deadly rew.

XLI

Her neather parts misshapen, monstrous,
 Were hidd in water, that I could not see.
 But they did seeme more foule and hideous,
 Then womans shape man would beleeeve to bee.
 Thensforth from her most beastly companie
 I gan refraine, in minde to slip away,
 Soone as appeared safe opportunitie:
 For danger great, if not assur'd decay,
 I saw before mine eyes, if I were knowne to stray.

XLII

The divelish hag by chaunges of my cheare
 Perceiv'd my thought, and drownd in sleepeie night,
 With wicked herbs and ointments did besmeare
 My body all, through charms and magicke might,
 That all my senses were bereaved quight:
 Then brought she me into this desert waste,
 And by my wretched lovers side me pight,
 Where now enclosd in wooden wals full faste,
 Banisht from living wights, our wearie dayes we waste.

XLIII

But how long time, said then the Elfin knight,
 Are you in this misformed house to dwell?
 We may not chaunge (quoth he) this evil plight,
 Till we be bathed in a living well;
 That is the terme prescribed by the spell.
 O how, said he, mote I that well out find,
 That may restore you to your wanted well?
 Time and suffised fates to former kynd
 Shall us restore, none else from hence may us unbynd.

XLIV

The false Duessa, now Fidessa hight,
 Heard how in vaine Fradubio did lament,
 And knew well all was true. But the good knight
 Full of sad feare and ghastly dreriment,
 When all this speech the living tree had spent,
 The bleeding bough did thrust into the ground,
 That from the bloud he might be innocent,
 And with fresh clay did close the wooden wound:
 Then turning to his Lady, dead with feare her found.

XLV

Her seeming dead he found with feigned feare,
 As all unweeting of that well she knew,
 And paynd himselfe with busie care to reare
 Her out of carelesse swowne. Her eyelids blew
 And dimmed sight with pale and deadly hew
 At last she up gan lift: with trembling cheare
 Her up he tooke, too simple and too trew,
 And oft her kist. At length all passed feare,
 He set her on her steede, and forward forth did beare.

Canto III

*Forsaken Truth long seekes her love,
 and makes the Lyon mylde,
 Marres blind Devotions mart, and fals
 in hand of leachour vylde.*

I

NOUGHT is there under heav'ns wide hollownesse,
 That moves more deare compassion of mind,
 Then beautie brought t' unworthy wretchednesse
 Through envies snares, or fortunes freakes unkind.
 I, whether lately through her brightnesse blind,
 Or through alleageance and fast fealtie,
 Which I do owe unto all woman kind,
 Feele my hart perst with so great agonie,
 When such I see, that all for pittie I could die.

II

And now it is empassioned so deepe,
 For fairest Unaes sake, of whom I sing,
 That my fraile eyes these lines with teares do steepe,

To thinke how she through guilefull handeling,
 Though true as touch, though daughter of a king,
 Though faire as ever living wight was faire,
 Though nor in word nor deede ill meriting,
 Is from her knight divorced in despaire,
 And her due loves deriv'd to that vile witches share.

III

Yet she most faithfull Ladie all this while
 Forsaken, wofull, solitarie mayd
 Far from all peoples prease, as in exile,
 In wilderness and wastfull deserts strayd,
 To seeke her knight; who subtilly betrayd
 Through that late vision, which th' Enchaunter wrought,
 Had her abandond. She of nought affrayd,
 Through woods and wastnesse wide him daily sought;
 Yet wished tydings none of him unto her brought.

IV

One day nigh wearie of the yrkesome way,
 From her unhastie beast she did alight,
 And on the grasse her daintie limbes did lay
 In secret shadow, farre from all mens sight:
 From her faire head her fillet she undight,
 And laid her stole aside. Her angels face
 As the great eye of heaven shyned bright,
 And made a sunshine in the shadie place;
 Did never mortall eye behold such heavenly grace.

V

It fortun'd out of the thickest wood
 A ramping Lyon rushed suddainly,
 Hunting full greedy after salvage blood;
 Soone as the royall virgin he did spy,
 With gaping mouth at her ran greedily,
 To have attonce devourd her tender corse:
 But to the pray when as he drew more ny,
 His bloody rage asswaged with remorse,
 And with the sight amazd, forgat his furious forse.

VI

In stead thereof he kist her wearie feet,
 And lickt her lilly hands with fawning tong,

As he her wronged innocence did weet.
 O how can beautie maister the most strong,
 And simple truth subdue avenging wrong?
 Whose yeilded pride and proud submission,
 Still dreading death, when she had marked long,
 Her hart gan melt in great compassion,
 And drizzling teares did shed for pure affection.

VII

The Lyon Lord of every beast in field,
 Quoth she, his princely puissance doth abate,
 And mightie proud to humble weake does yield,
 Forgetfull of the hungry rage, which late
 Him prickt, in pittie of my sad estate:
 But he my Lyon, and my noble Lord,
 How does he find in cruell hart to hate,
 Her that him lov'd, and ever most adord,
 As the God of my life? why hath he me abhord?

VIII

Redounding teares did choke th' end of her plaint,
 Which softly ecchoed from the neighbour wood;
 And sad to see her sorrowfull constraint
 The kingly beast upon her gazing stood;
 With pittie calmd, downe fell his angry mood.
 At last in close hart shutting up her paine,
 Arose the virgin borne of heavenly brood,
 And to her snowy Palfrey got againe,
 To seeke her strayed Champion, if she might attaine.

IX

The Lyon would not leave her desolate,
 But with her went along, as a strong gard
 Of her chast person, and a faithfull mate
 Of her sad troubles and misfortunes hard:
 Still when she slept, he kept both watch and ward,
 And when she wakt, he waited diligent,
 With humble service to her will prepard:
 From her faire eyes he tooke commaundement,
 And ever by her lookes conceived her intent.

X

Long she thus traveled through deserts wyde,
 By which she thought her wandring knight shold pas,
 Yet never shew of living wight espyde;
 Till that at length she found the troden gras,
 In which the tract of peoples footing was,
 Under the steepe foot of a mountaine hore;
 The same she followes, till at last she has
 A damzell spyde slow footing her before,
 That on her shoulders sad a pot of water bore.

XI

To whom approching she to her gan call,
 To weet, if dwelling place were nigh at hand;
 But the rude wench her answerd nought at all;
 She could not heare, nor speake, nor understand;
 Till seeing by her side the Lyon stand,
 With suddaine feare her pitcher downe she threw,
 And fled away: for never in that land
 Face of faire Ladie she before did vew,
 And that dread Lyons looke her cast in deadly hew.

XII

Full fast she fled, ne never lookt behynd,
 As if her life upon the wager lay,
 And home she came, whereas her mother blynd
 Sate in eternall night: nought could she say,
 But suddaine catching hold, did her dismay
 With quaking hands, and other signes of feare;
 Who full of ghastly fright and cold affray,
 Gan shut the dore. By this arrived there
 Dame Una, wearie Dame, and entrance did requere.

XIII

Which when none yeilded, her unruly Page
 With his rude claws the wicket open rent,
 And let her in; where of his cruell rage
 Nigh dead with feare, and faint astonishment,
 She found them both in darkesome corner pent;
 Where that old woman day and night did pray
 Upon her beads devoutly penitent;
 Nine hundred *Pater nosters* every day,
 And thrise nine hundred *Aves* she was wont to say.

XIV

And to augment her painefull pennance more,
Thrise every weeke in ashes she did sit,
And next her wrinkled skin rough sackcloth wore,
And thrise three times did fast from any bit:
But now for feare her beads she did forget.
Whose needlesse dread for to remove away,
Faire Una framed words and count'nance fit:
Which hardly doen, at length she gan them pray,
That in their cotage small that night she rest her may.

XV

The day is spent, and commeth drowsie night,
When every creature shrowded is in sleepe;
Sad Una downe her laies in wearie plight,
And at her feete the Lyon watch doth keepe:
In stead of rest, she does lament, and weepe
For the late losse of her deare loved knight,
And sighes, and grones, and ever more does steepe
Her tender brest in bitter teares all night,
All night she thinks too long, and often lookes for light.

XVI

Now when Aldeboran was mounted hie
Above the shynie Cassiopeias chaire,
And all in deadly sleepe did drowned lie,
One knocked at the dore, and in would fare;
He knocked fast, and often curst, and sware,
That readie entrance was not at his call:
For on his backe a heavy load he bare
Of nightly stelths, and pillage severall,
Which he had got abroad by purchase criminall.

XVII

He was, to weete, a stout and sturdy thiefe,
Wont to robbe Churches of their ornaments,
And poore mens boxes of their due reliefe,
Which given was to them for good intents;
The holy Saints of their rich vestiments
He did disrobe, when all men carelesse slept,
And spoild the Priests of their habiliments,
Whiles none the holy things in safety kept;
Then he by conning sleights in at the window crept.

XVIII

And all that he by right or wrong could find,
 Unto this house he brought, and did bestow
 Upon the daughter of this woman blind,
 Abessa, daughter of Corceca slow,
 With whom he whoredome usd, that few did know,
 And fed her fat with feast of offerings,
 And plentie, which in all the land did grow;
 Ne spared he to give her gold and rings:
 And now he to her brought part of his stolen things.

XIX

Thus long the dore with rage and threats he bet,
 Yet of those fearfull women none durst rize,
 The Lyon frayed them, him in to let:
 He would no longer stay him to advize,
 But open breakes the dore in furious wize,
 And entring is; when that disdainfull beast
 Encountring fierce, him suddaine doth surprize,
 And seizing cruell clawes on trembling brest,
 Under his Lordly foot him proudly hath supprest.

XX

Him booteth not resist, nor succour call,
 His bleeding hart is in the vengers hand,
 Who streight him rent in thousand peeces small,
 And quite dismembred hath: the thirsty land
 Drunke up his life; his corse left on the strand.
 His fearefull friends weare out the wofull night,
 Ne dare to weepe, nor seeme to understand
 The heavie hap, which on them is alight,
 Affraid, least to themselves the like mishappen might.

XXI

Now when broad day the world discovered has,
 Up Una rose, up rose the Lyon eke,
 And on their former journey forward pas,
 In wayes unknowne, her wandring knight to seeke,
 With paines farre passing that long wandring Greeke,
 That for his love refused deitie;
 Such were the labours of his Lady meeke,
 Still seeking him, that from her still did flie;
 Then furthest from her hope, when most she weened nie.

XXII

Soone as she parted thence, the fearfull twaine,
 That blind old woman and her daughter deare,
 Came forth, and finding Kirkrapine there slaine,
 For anguish great they gan to rend their heare,
 And beat their brests, and naked flesh to teare.
 And when they both had wept and wayld their fill,
 Then forth they ran like two amazed deare,
 Halfe mad through malice, and revenging will,
 To follow her, that was the causer of their ill.

XXIII

Whom overtaking, they gan loudly bray,
 With hollow howling, and lamenting cry,
 Shamefully at her rayling all the way,
 And her accusing of dishonesty,
 That was the flowre of faith and chastity;
 And still amidst her rayling, she did pray,
 That plagues, and mischiefs, and long misery
 Might fall on her, and follow all the way,
 And that in endlesse error she might ever stray.

XXIV

But when she saw her prayers nought prevaile,
 She backe returned with some labour lost;
 And in the way as shee did weepe and waile,
 A knight her met in mighty armes embost,
 Yet knight was not for all his bragging bost,
 But subtill Archimag, that Una sought
 By traynes into new troubles to have tost:
 Of that old woman tidings he besought,
 If that of such a Ladie she could tellen ought.

XXV

Therewith she gan her passion to renew,
 And cry, and curse, and raile, and rend her heare,
 Saying, that harlot she too lately knew,
 That caused her shed so many a bitter teare,
 And so forth told the story of her feare:
 Much seemed he to mone her haplesse chaunce,
 And after for that Ladie did inquare;
 Which being taught, he forward gan advaunce
 His fair enchanted steed, and eke his charmed launce.

XXVI

Ere long he came where Una traveild slow,
 And that wilde Champion wayting her besyde:
 Whom seeing such, for dread he durst not show
 Himselfe too nigh at hand, but turned wyde
 Unto an hill; from whence when she him spyde,
 By his like seeming shield, her knight by name
 She weend it was, and towards him gan ryde:
 Approaching nigh, she wist it was the same,
 And with faire fearefull humblesse towards him shee came:

XXVII

And weeping said, Ah my long lacked Lord,
 Where have ye bene thus long out of my sight?
 Much feared I to have bene quite abhord,
 Or ought have done, that ye displeasen might,
 That should as death unto my deare heart light:
 For since mine eye your joyous sight did mis,
 My chearefull day is turnd to chearelesse night,
 And eke my night of death the shadow is;
 But welcome now my light, and shining lampe of blis.

XXVIII

He thereto meeting said, My dearest Dame,
 Farre be it from your thought, and fro my will,
 To thinke that knighthood I so much should shame,
 As you to leave, that have me loved still,
 And chose in Faery court of meere goodwill,
 Where noblest knights were to be found on earth:
 The earth shall sooner leave her kindly skill,
 To bring forth fruit, and make eternall derth,
 Then I leave you, my lief, yborne of heavenly berth.

XXIX

And sooth to say, why I left you so long,
 Was for to seeke adventure in strange place,
 Where Archimago said a felon strong
 To many knights did daily worke disgrace;
 But knight he now shall never more deface:
 Good cause of mine excuse; that mote ye please
 Well to accept, and evermore embrace
 My faithfull service, that by land and seas
 Have vowd you to defend: now then your plaint appease.

XXX

His lovely words her seemd due recompence
 Of all her passed paines: one loving howre
 For many yeares of sorrow can dispence:
 A dram of sweet is worth a pound of sowre:
 She has forgot, how many a woful stowre
 For him she late endurd; she speakes no more
 Of past: true is, that true love hath no powre
 To looken backe; his eyes be fixt before.
 Before her stands her knight, for whom she toyld so sore.

XXXI

Much like, as when the beaten marinere,
 That long hath wandred in the Ocean wide,
 Oft soust in swelling Tethys saltish teare,
 And long time having tand his tawney hide
 With blustering breath of heaven, that none can bide,
 And scorching flames of fierce Orions hound,
 Soone as the port from farre he has espide,
 His chearefull whistle merrily doth sound,
 And Nereus crownes with cups; his mates him pledg around.

XXXII

Such joy made Una, when her knight she found;
 And eke th' enchaunter joyous seemd no lesse,
 Then the glad marchant, that does vew from ground
 His ship farre come from watrie wilderness,
 He hurles out vowes, and Neptune oft doth blesse:
 So forth they past, and all the way they spent
 Discoursing of her dreadful late distresse,
 In which he askt her, what the Lyon ment:
 Who told her all that fell in journey as she went.

XXXIII

They had not ridden farre, when they might see
 One pricking towards them with hastie heat,
 Full strongly armd, and on a courser free,
 That through his fiercenesse fomed all with sweat,
 And the sharpe yron did for anger eat,
 When his hot ryder spurd his chauffed side;
 His looke was sterne, and seemed still to threat
 Cruell revenge, which he in hart did hyde,
 And on his shield *Sans loy* in bloudie lines was dyde.

XXXIV

When nigh he drew unto this gentle payre
 And saw the Red-crosse, which the knight did beare,
 He burnt in fire, and gan eftsoones prepare
 Himselfe to battell with his couched speare.
 Loth was that other, and did faint through feare,
 To taste th' untryed dint of deadly steele;
 But yet his Lady did so well him cheare,
 That hope of new goodhap he gan to feele;
 So bent his speare, and spurd his horse with yron heele.

XXXV

But that proud Paynim forward came so fierce,
 And full of wrath, that with his sharp-head speare,
 Through vainly crossed shield he quite did pierce,
 And had his staggering steede not shrunke for feare,
 Through shield and bodie eke he should him beare:
 Yet so great was the puissance of his push,
 That from his saddle quite he did him beare:
 He tombling rudely downe to ground did rush,
 And from his gored wound a well of bloud did gush.

XXXVI

Dismounting lightly from his loftie steed,
 He to him lept, in mind to reave his life,
 And proudly said, Lo there the worthie meed
 Of him that slew Sansfoy with bloudie knife;
 Henceforth his ghost freed from repining strife,
 In peace may passen over Lethe lake,
 When mourning altars purgd with enemies life,
 The blacke infernall Furies doen aslake:
 Life from Sansfoy thou tookst, Sansloy shall from thee take.

XXXVII

Therewith in haste his helmet gan unlace,
 Till Una cried, O hold that heavie hand,
 Deare Sir, what ever that thou be in place:
 Enough is, that thy foe doth vanquisht stand
 Now at thy mercy: Mercie not withstand:
 For he is one the truest knight alive,
 Though conquered now he lie on lowly land,
 And whilst him fortune favourd, faire did thrive
 In bloudie field: therefore of life him not deprive.

XXXVIII

Her piteous words might not abate his rage,
 But rudely rending up his helmet, would
 Have slaine him straight: but when he sees his age,
 And hoarie head of Archimago old,
 His hasty hand he doth amazed hold,
 And halfe ashamed, wondred at the sight:
 For that old man well knew he, though untold,
 In charmes and magicke to have wondrous might,
 Ne ever wont in field, ne in round lists to fight;

XXXIX

And said, Why Archimago, lucklesse syre,
 What doe I see? what hard mishap is this,
 That hath thee hither brought to taste mine yre?
 Or thine the fault, or mine the error is,
 Instead of foe to wound my friend amis?
 He answered nought, but in a traunce still lay,
 And on those guilefull dazed eyes of his
 The cloude of death did sit. Which doen away,
 He left him lying so, ne would no lenger stay:

XL

But to the virgin comes, who all this while
 Amased stands, her selfe so mockt to see
 By him, who has the guerdon of his guile,
 For so misfeigning her true knight to bee:
 Yet is she now in more perplexitie,
 Left in the hand of that same Paynim bold,
 From whom her booteth not at all to flie;
 Who, by her cleanly garment catching hold,
 Her from her Palfrey pluckt, her visage to behold.

XLI

But her fierce servant, full of kingly awe
 And high disdaine, whenas his souveraine Dame
 So rudely handled by her foe he sawe,
 With gaping jawes full greedy at him came,
 And ramping on his shield, did weene the same
 Have reft away with his sharpe rending clawes:
 But he was stout, and lust did now inflame
 His corage more, that from his griping pawes
 He hath his shield redeem'd, and fourth his swerd he drawes.

XLII

O then too weake and feeble was the forse
 Of salvage beast, his puissance to withstand:
 For he was strong, and of so mightie corse,
 As ever wielded speare in warlike hand,
 And feates of armes did wisely understand.
 Eftsoones he perced through his chaufed chest
 With thrilling point of deadly yron brand,
 And launcht his Lordly hart: with death opprest
 He roar'd aloud, whiles life forsooke his stubborne brest.

XLIII

Who now is left to keepe the forlorne maid
 From raging spoile of lawlesse victors will?
 Her faithfull gard remov'd, her hope dismaid,
 Her selfe a yielded pray to save or spill.
 He now Lord of the field, his pride to fill,
 With foule reproches, and disdainfull spight
 Her vildly entertaines, and will or nill,
 Beares her away upon his courser light:
 Her prayers nought prevaile, his rage is more of might.

XLIV

And all the way, with great lamenting paine,
 And piteous plaints she filleth his dull eares,
 That stony hart could riven have in twaine,
 And all the way she wets with flowing teares:
 But he enrag'd with rancor, nothing heares.
 Her servile beast yet would not leave her so,
 But followes her farre off, ne ought he feares,
 To be partaker of her wandring woe,
 More mild in beastly kind, then that her beastly foe.

Canto IV

*To sinfull house of Pride, Duessa
 guides the faithfull knight,
 Where brother's death to wreak Sansjoy
 doth challenge him to fight.*

I

YOUNG knight whatever that dost armes professe,
 And through long labours hunttest after fame,
 Beware of fraud, beware of ficklenesse,

In choice, and change of thy deare loved Dame,
 Least thou of her beleve too lightly blame,
 And rash misweening doe thy hart remove:
 For unto knight there is no greater shame,
 Then lightnesse and inconstancie in love;
 That doth this Redcrosse knights ensample plainly prove.

II

Who after that he had faire Una lorne,
 Through light misdeeming of her loialtie,
 And false Duessa in her sted had borne,
 Called Fidess', and so supposd to bee;
 Long with her traveild, till at last they see
 A goodly building, bravely garnished,
 The house of mightie Prince it seemd to bee:
 And towards it a broad high way that led,
 All bare through peoples feet, which thither traveiled.

III

Great troupes of people traveild thitherward
 Both day and night, of each degree and place,
 But few returned, having scaped hard,
 With balefull beggerie, or foule disgrace;
 Which ever after in most wretched case,
 Like loathsome lazars, by the hedges lay.
 Thither Duessa bad him bend his pace:
 For she is wearie of the toilesome way,
 And also nigh consumed is the lingring day.

IV

A stately Pallace built of squared bricke,
 Which cunningly was without mortar laid,
 Whose wals were high, but nothing strong, nor thick,
 And golden foile all over them displaid,
 That purest skye with brightnesse they dismaid:
 High lifted up were many loftie towres,
 And goodly galleries farre over laid,
 Full of faire windowes and delightful bowres;
 And on the top a Diall told the timely howres.

V

It was a goodly heape for to behould,
 And spake the praises of the workmans wit;

But full great pittie, that so faire a mould
 Did on so weake foundation ever sit:
 For on a sandie hill, that still did flit
 And fall away, it mounted was full hie,
 That every breath of heaven shaken it:
 And all the hinder parts, that few could spie,
 Were ruinous and old, but painted cunningly.

VI

Arrived there, they passed in forth right;
 For still to all the gates stood open wide:
 Yet charge of them was to a Porter hight
 Cald Malvenù, who entrance none denide:
 Thence to the hall, which was on every side
 With rich array and costly arras dight:
 Infinite sorts of people did abide
 There waiting long, to win the wished sight
 Of her that was the Lady of that Pallace bright.

VII

By them they passe, all gazing on them round,
 And to the Presence mount; whose glorious vew
 Their frayle amazed senses did confound:
 In living Princes court none ever knew
 Such endlesse richesse, and so sumptuous shew;
 Ne Persia selfe, the nurse of pompous pride
 Like ever saw. And there a noble crew
 Of Lordes and Ladies stood on every side,
 Which with their presence faire the place much beautifide.

VIII

High above all a cloth of State was spread,
 And a rich throne, as bright as sunny day,
 On which there sate most brave embellished
 With royall robes and gorgeous array,
 A mayden Queene, that shone as Titans ray,
 In glistring gold, and peerelesse pretious stone:
 Yet her bright blazing beautie did assay
 To dim the brightnesse of her glorious throne,
 As envying her selfe, that too exceeding shone.

IX

Exceeding shone, like Phœbus fairest childe,
 That did presume his fathers firie wayne,
 And flaming mouthes of steedes unwonted wilde
 Through highest heaven with weaker hand to rayne;
 Proud of such glory and advancement vaine,
 While flashing beames do daze his feeble eyen,
 He leaves the welkin way most beaten plaine,
 And rapt with whirling wheelles, inflames the skyen,
 With fire not made to burne, but fairely for to shyne.

X

So proud she shyned in her Princely state,
 Looking to heaven; for earth she did disdayne:
 And sitting high; for lowly she did hate:
 Lo underneath her scornfull feete was layne
 A dreadfull Dragon with an hideous trayne,
 And in her hand she held a mirrhour bright,
 Wherein her face she often vewed fayne,
 And in her selfe-lov'd semblance tooke delight;
 For she was wondrous faire, as any living wight.

XI

Of griesly Pluto she the daughter was,
 And sad Proserpina the Queene of hell;
 Yet did she thinke her pearlesse worth to pas
 That parentage, with pride so did she swell;
 And thundring Jove, that high in heaven doth dwell,
 And wield the world, she claymed for her syre,
 Or if that any else did Jove excell:
 For to the highest she did still aspyre,
 Or if ought higher were then that, did it desyre.

XII

And proud Lucifera men did her call,
 That made her selfe a Queene, and crownd to be,
 Yet rightfull kingdome she had none at all,
 Ne heritage of native soveraintie,
 But did usurpe with wrong and tyrannie
 Upon the scepter, which she now did hold:
 Ne ruld her Realmes with lawes, but pollicie,
 And strong advizement of six wisards old,
 That with their counsels bad her kingdome did uphold.

XIII

Soone as the Elfin knight in presence came,
 And false Duessa seeming Lady faire,
 A gentle Husher, Vanitie by name
 Made rowme, and passage for them did prepaire:
 So goodly brought them to the lowest staire
 Of her high throne, where they on humble knee
 Making obeysance, did the cause declare,
 Why they were come, her royall state to see,
 To prove the wide report of her great Majestee.

XIV

With loftie eyes, halfe loth to looke so low,
 She thanked them in her disdainefull wise;
 Ne other grace vouchsafed them to show
 Of Princesse worthy, scarce them bad arise.
 Her Lordes and Ladies all this while devise
 Themselves to setten forth to straungers sight:
 Some frounce their curled haire in courtly guise,
 Some prancke their ruffes, and others trimly dight
 Their gay attire: each others greater pride does spight.

XV

Goodly they all that knight do entertaine,
 Right glad with him to have increast their crew:
 But to Duess' each one himselfe did paine
 All kindnesse and faire courtesie to shew;
 For in that court whylome her well they knew:
 Yet the stout Faerie mongst the middest crowd
 Thought all their glorie vaine in knightly vew,
 And that great Princesse too exceeding prowde,
 That to strange knight no better countenance allowd.

XVI

Suddein upriseth from her stately place
 The royall Dame, and for her coche did call:
 All hurtlen forth, and she with Princely pace,
 As faire Aurora in her purple pall,
 Out of the east the dawning day doth call:
 So forth she comes: her brightnesse brode doth blaze;
 The heapes of people thronging in the hall,
 Do ride each other, upon her to gaze:
 Her glorious glitterand light doth all mens eyes amaze.

XVII

So forth she comes, and to her coche does clyme,
 Adorned all with gold, and girlonds gay,
 That seemd as fresh as Flora in her prime,
 And strove to match, in royall rich array,
 Great Junoes golden chaire, the which they say
 The Gods stand gazing on, when she does ride
 To Joves high house through heavens bras-paved way
 Drawne of faire Pecoocks, that excell in pride,
 And full of Argus eyes their tailes dispredden wide.

XVIII

But this was drawne of six unequall beasts,
 On which her six sage Counsellours did ryde,
 Taught to obay their bestiall beheasts,
 With like conditions to their kinds applyde:
 Of which the first, that all the rest did guyde,
 Was sluggish Idlenesse the nourse of sin;
 Upon a slouthful Asse he chose to ryde,
 Arayd in habit blacke, and amis thin,
 Like to an holy Monck, the service to begin.

XIX

And in his hand his Portesse still he bare,
 That much was worne, but therein little red,
 For of devotion he had little care,
 Still drownd in sleepe, and most of his dayes ded;
 Scarse could he once uphold his heavie hed,
 To looken, whether it were night or day:
 May seeme the wayne was very evill led,
 When such an one had guiding of the way,
 That knew not, whether right he went, or else astray.

XX

From worldly cares himselfe he did esloyne,
 And greatly shunned manly exercise,
 From every worke he chalenged essoynne,
 For contemplation sake: yet otherwise,
 His life he led in lawlesse riotise;
 By which he grew to grievous malady;
 For in his lustlesse limbs through evill guise
 A shaking fever raignd continually:
 Such one was Idlenesse, first of this company.

XXI

And by his side rode loathsome Gluttony,
 Deformed creature, on a filthie swyne;
 His belly was up-blowne with luxury,
 And eke with fatnesse swollen were his eyne,
 And like a Crane his necke was long and fyne,
 With which he swallowed up excessive feast,
 For want whereof poore people oft did pyne;
 And all the way, most like a brutish beast,
 He spued up his gorge, that all did him deteast.

XXII

In greene vine leaves he was right fitly clad;
 For other clothes he could not weare for heat,
 And on his head an yvie girland had,
 From under which fast trickled downe the sweat:
 Still as he rode, he somewhat still did eat,
 And in his hand did beare a bouzing can,
 Of which he supt so oft, that on his seat
 His dronken corse he scarce upholden can,
 In shape and life more like a monster, then a man.

XXIII

Unfit he was for any worldly thing,
 And eke unhable once to stirre or go,
 Not meet to be of counsell to a king,
 Whose mind in meat and drinke was drowned so,
 That from his friend he seldome knew his fo:
 Full of diseases was his carcas blew,
 And a dry dropsie through his flesh did flow:
 Which by misdiet daily greater grew:
 Such one was Gluttony, the second of that crew.

XXIV

And next to him rode lustfull Lechery,
 Upon a bearded Goat, whose rugged haire,
 And whally eyes (the signe of gelosy),
 Was like the person selfe, whom he did beare:
 Who rough, and blacke, and filthy did appeare,
 Unseemely man to please faire Ladies eye;
 Yet he of Ladies oft was loved deare,
 When fairer faces were bid standen by:
 O who does know the bent of womens fantasy?

XXV

In a greene gowne he clothed was full faire,
 Which underneath did hide his filthinesse,
 And in his hand a burning hart he bare,
 Full of vaine follies, and new fanglenesse,
 For he was false, and fraught with ficklenesse;
 And learned had to love with secret lookes;
 And well could daunce, and sing with ruefulnessse,
 And fortunes tell, and read in loving bookes,
 And thousand other wayes, to bait his fleshly hookes.

XXVI

Inconstant man, that loved all he saw,
 And lusted after all that he did love;
 Ne would his looser life be tide to law,
 But joyd weak wemens hearts to tempt and prove,
 If from their loyall loves he might them move;
 Which lewdnesse fild him with reprochfull paine
 Of that fowle evill, which all men reprove,
 That rots the marrow and consumes the braine:
 Such one was Lecherie, the third of all this traine.

XXVII

And greedy Avarice by him did ride,
 Upon a Camell loaden all with gold;
 Two iron coffers hong on either side,
 With precious mettall full as they might hold;
 And in his lap an heape of coine he told;
 For of his wicked pelfe his God he made,
 And unto hell him selfe for money sold;
 Accursed usurie was all his trade,
 And right and wrong ylike in equall ballaunce waide.

XXVIII

His life was nigh unto deaths doore yplast,
 And thred-bare cote, and cobled shoes he ware,
 Ne scarce good morsell all his life did tast,
 But both from backe and belly still did spare,
 To fill his bags, and richesse to compare;
 Yet chylde ne kinsman living had he none
 To leave them to; but thorough daily care
 To get, and nightly feare to lose his owne,
 He led a wretched life unto him selfe unknowne.

XXIX

Most wretched wight, whom nothing might suffise,
 Whose greedy lust did lacke in greatest store,
 Whose need had end, but no end covetise,
 Whose wealth was want, whose plenty made him pore,
 Who had enough, yet wished ever more;
 A vile disease, and eke in foote and hand
 A grievous gout tormented him full sore,
 That well he could not touch, nor go, nor stand;
 Such one was Avarice, the fourth of this faire band.

XXX

And next to him malicious Envie rode,
 Upon a ravenous wolfe, and still did chaw
 Betweene his cankred teeth a venemous tode,
 That all the poison ran about his chaw;
 But inwardly he chawed his owne maw
 At neighbours wealth, that made him ever sad;
 For death it was when any good he saw,
 And wept, that cause of weeping none he had,
 But when he heard of harme, he wexed wondrous glad.

XXXI

All in a kirtle of discoloured say
 He clothed was, ypainted full of eyes;
 And in his bosome secretly there lay
 An hatefull Snake, the which his taile uptyes
 In many folds, and mortall sting implyes.
 Still as he rode, he gnasht his teeth, to see
 Those heapes of gold with griple Covetyse;
 And grudged at the great felicitie
 Of proud Lucifera, and his owne companie.

XXXII

He hated all good workes and vertuous deeds,
 And him no lesse, that any like did use,
 And who with gracious bread the hungry feeds,
 His almes for want of faith he doth accuse;
 So every good to bad he doth abuse:
 And eke the verse of famous Poets witt
 He does backebite, and spightfull poison spues
 From leprous mouth on all that ever writt:
 Such one vile Envie was, that fifte in row did sitt.

XXXIII

And him beside rides fierce revenging Wrath,
 Upon a Lion, loth for to be led;
 And in his hand a burning brond he hath,
 The which he brandisheth about his hed;
 His eyes did hurle forth sparkles fiery red,
 And stared sterne on all that him beheld,
 As ashes pale of hew and seeming ded;
 And on his dagger still his hand he held,
 Trembling through hasty rage, when choler in him sweld.

XXXIV

His ruffin raiment all was staind with blood,
 Which he had spilt, and all to rags yrent,
 Through unadvized rashnesse woxen wood;
 For of his hands he had no gouvernement,
 Ne car'd for bloud in his avengement:
 But when the furious fit was overpast,
 His cruell facts he often would repent;
 Yet wilfull man he never would forecast,
 How many mischieves should ensue his heedlesse hast.

XXXV

Full many mischiefes follow cruell Wrath;
 Abhorred bloodshed and tumultuous strife,
 Unmanly murder, and unthrifty scath,
 Bitter despight, with rancours rusty knife,
 And fretting grieffe the enemy of life;
 All these, and many evils moe haunt ire,
 The swelling Splene, and Frenzy raging rife,
 The shaking Palsey, and Saint Fraunces fire:
 Such one was Wrath, the last of this ungodly tire.

XXXVI

And after all, upon the wagon beame
 Rode Sathan, with a smarting whip in hand,
 With which he forward lasht the laesie teme,
 So oft as Slowth still in the mire did stand.
 Hugh routs of people did about them band,
 Showting for joy, and still before their way
 A foggy mist had covered all the land;
 And underneath their feet, all scattered lay
 Dead sculs and bones of men, whose life had gone astray.

XXXVII

So forth they marchen in this goodly sort,
 To take the solace of the open aire,
 And in fresh flowring fields themselves to sport;
 Amongst the rest rode that false Lady faire,
 The foule Duessa, next unto the chaire
 Of proud Lucifera, as one of the traine:
 But that good knight would not so nigh repaire,
 Him selfe estraunging from their joyaunce vaine,
 Whose fellowship seemd far unfit for warlike swaine.

XXXVIII

So having solaced themselves a space
 With pleasaunce of the breathing fields yfed,
 They backe retourned to the Princely Place;
 Whereas an errant knight in armes yched,
 And heathnish shield, wherein with letters red
 Was writ *Sans joy*, they new arrived find:
 Enflam'd with fury and fiers hardy-hed
 He seemd in hart to harbour thoughts unkind,
 And nourish bloody vengeaunce in his bitter mind.

XXXIX

Who when the shamed shield of slaine Sansfoy
 He spide with that same Faery champions page,
 Bewraying him, that did of late destroy
 His eldest brother, burning all with rage
 He to him leapt, and that same envious gage
 Of victors glory from him snatcht away:
 But th' Elfin knight, which ought that warlike wage
 Disdained to loose the meed he wonne in fray,
 And him rencountring fierce, reskewd the noble pray.

XL

Therewith they gan to hurtlen greedily,
 Redoubted battaile ready to darrayne,
 And clash their shields, and shake their swords on hy,
 That with their sturre they troubled all the traine;
 Till that great Queene upon eternall paine
 Of high displeasure that ensewen might,
 Commaunded them their fury to refraine,
 And if that either to that shield had right,
 In equall lists they should the morrow next it fight.

XLI

Ah dearest Dame, (quoth then the Paynim bold,)
 Pardon the error of enraged wight,
 Whom great griefe made forget the raines to hold
 Of reasons rule, to see this recreant knight,
 No knight, but treachour full of false despight
 And shamefull treason, who through guile hath slayn
 The prowest knight that ever field did fight,
 Even stout Sansfoy (O who can then refrayn?)
 Whose shield he beares renverst, the more to heape disdayn.

XLII

And to augment the glorie of his guile,
 His dearest love, the faire Fidessa, loe
 Is there possessed of the traytour vile,
 Who reapes the harvest sowed by his foe,
 Sowed in bloody field, and bought with woe:
 That brothers hand shall dearely well requight,
 So be, O Queene, you equall favour showe.
 Him litle answerd th' angry Elfin knight;
 He never meant with words, but swords to plead his right.

XLIII

But threw his gauntlet as a sacred pledge,
 His cause in combat the next day to try:
 So been they parted both, with harts on edge
 To be aveng'd each on his enemy.
 That night they pas in joy and jollity,
 Feasting and courting both in bowre and hall;
 For Steward was excessive Gluttonie,
 That of his plenty poured forth to all;
 Which doen, the Chamberlain Slowth did to rest them call.

XLIV

Now whenas darkesome night had all displayed
 Her coleblacke curtein over brightest skye,
 The warlike youthes on dayntie couches layd,
 Did chace away sweet sleepe from sluggish eye,
 To muse on meanes of hoped victory.
 But whenas Morpheus had with leaden mace
 Arrested all that courtly company,
 Up-rose Duessa from her resting place,
 And to the Paynims lodging comes with silent pace.

XLV

Whom broad awake she finds, in troublous fit,
 Forecasting, how his foe he might annoy,
 And him amoves with speaches seeming fit:
 Ah deare Sansjoy, next dearest to Sansfoy,
 Cause of my new grieffe, cause of my new joy,
 Joyous, to see his ymage in mine eye,
 And greev'd, to thinke how foe did him destroy,
 That was the flowre of grace and chevalrye;
 Lo his Fidessa to thy secret faith I flye.

XLVI

With gentle wordes he can her fairely greet,
 And bad say on the secret of her hart.
 Then sighing soft, I learne that litle sweet
 Oft tempred is (quoth she) with muchell smart:
 For since my brest was launcht with lovely dart
 Of deare Sans foy, I never joyed howre,
 But in eternall woes my weaker hart
 Have wasted, loving him with all my powre,
 And for his sake have felt full many an heavie stowre.

XLVII

At last when perils all I weened past,
 And hop'd to reape the crop of all my care,
 Into new woes unweeting I was cast,
 By this false faytor, who unworthy ware
 His worthy shield, whom he with guilefull snare
 Entrapped slew, and brought to shamefull grave.
 Me silly maid away with him he bare,
 And ever since hath kept in darksome cave,
 For that I would not yeeld, that to Sans foy I gave.

XLVIII

But since faire Sunne hath sperst that lowring clowd,
 And to my loathed life now shewes some light,
 Under your beames I will me safely shrowd,
 From dreaded storme of his disdainfull spight:
 To you th' inheritance belongs by right
 Of brothers prayse, to you eke longs his love.
 Let not his love, let not his restlesse spright,
 Be unreveng'd, that calles to you above
 From wandring Stygian shores, where it doth endlesse move.

XLIX

Thereto said he, Faire Dame, be nought dismaid
 For sorrowes past; their grieffe is with them gone:
 Ne yet of present perill be affraid;
 For needlesse feare did never vantage none
 And helplesse hap it booteth not to mone.
 Dead is Sansfoy, his vitall paines are past,
 Though greeved ghost for vengeance deepe do grone:
 He lives, that shall him pay his dewties last,
 And guiltie Elfin blood shall sacrifice in hast.

L

O but I feare the fickle freakes (quoth shee)
 Of fortune false, and oddes of armes in field.
 Why Dame (quoth he) what oddes can ever bee,
 Where both do fight alike, to win or yield?
 Yea but (quoth she) he beares a charmed shield,
 And eke enchaunted armes, that none can perce,
 Ne none can wound the man that does them wield.
 Charmd or enchaunted (answerd he then ferce)
 I no whit reck, ne you the like need to reherce.

LI

But faire Fidessa, sithens fortunes guile,
 Or enimies powre, hath now captived you,
 Returne from whence ye came, and rest a while
 Till morrow next, that I the Elfe subdew,
 And with Sansfoyes dead dowry you endew.
 Ay me, that is a double death (she said)
 With proud foes sight my sorrow to renew:
 Where ever yet I be, my secret aid
 Shall follow you. So passing forth she him obaid.

Canto V

*The faithfull knight in equall field
 subdewes his faithlesse foe,
 Whom false Duessa saves, and for
 his cure to hell does goe.*

I

THE noble hart, that harbours vertuous thought,
 And is with child of glorious great intent,
 Can never rest, untill it forth have brought

Th' eternall brood of glorie excellent.
 Such restlesse passion did all night torment
 The flaming corage of that Faery knight,
 Devizing, how that doughtie turnament
 With greatest honour he atchieven might;
 Still did he wake, and still did watch for dawning light.

II

At last the golden Orientall gate,
 Of greatest heaven gan to open faire,
 And Phoebus fresh, as bridegrome to his mate,
 Came dauncing forth, shaking his deawie haire:
 And hurls his glistring beams through gloomy aire.
 Which when the wakeful Elfe perceiv'd, streightway
 He started up, and did him selfe prepaire,
 In sunbright armes, and battailous array:
 For with that Pagan proud he combat will that day.

III

And forth he comes into the commune hall,
 Where earely waite him many a gazing eye,
 To weet what end to straunger knights may fall.
 There many Minstrales maken melody,
 To drive away the dull melancholy,
 And many Bardes, that to the trembling chord
 Can tune their timely voyces cunningly,
 And many Chroniclers that can record
 Old loves, and warres for Ladies doen by many a Lord.

IV

Soone after comes the cruell Sarazin,
 In woven maile all armed warily,
 And sternly lookes at him, who not a pin
 Does care for looke of living creatures eye.
 They bring them wines of Greece and Araby,
 And daintie spices fetcht from furthest Ynd,
 To kindle heat of corage privily:
 And in the wine a solemne oth they bynd
 T' observe the sacred lawes of armes, that are assynd.

V

At last forth comes that far renommed Queene,
 With royall pomp and Princely majestie;

She is ybrought unto a paled greene,
 And placed under stately canapee,
 The warlike feates of both those knights to see.
 On th' other side in all mens open vew
 Duessa placed is, and on a tree
 Sans-foy his shield is hangd with bloody hew:
 Both those the lawrell girlonds to the victor dew.

VI

A shrilling trompet sownded from on hye,
 And unto battaill bad them selves addresse:
 Their shining shieldes about their wrestes they tye,
 And burning blades about their heads do blesse,
 The instruments of wrath and heavinesse:
 With greedy force each other doth assayle,
 And strike so fiercely, that they do impresse
 Deepe dinted furrowes in the battred mayle;
 The yron walles to ward their blowes are weak and fraile.

VII

The Sarazin was stout, and wondrous strong,
 And heaped blowes like yron hammers great;
 For after bloud and vengeance he did long.
 The knight was fiers, and full of youthly heat,
 And doubled strokes, like dreaded thunders threat:
 For all for prayse and honour he did fight.
 Both stricken strike, and beaten both do beat,
 That from their shields forth flyeth firie light,
 And helmets hewen deepe show marks of eithers might.

VIII

So th' one for wrong, the other strives for right;
 As when a Gryfon seized of his pray,
 A Dragon fiers encountreth in his flight,
 Through widest ayre making his ydle way,
 That would his rightfull ravine rend away;
 With hideous horror both together smight,
 And souce so sore that they the heavens affray:
 The wise Soothsayer seeing so sad sight,
 Th' amazed vulgar tels of warres and mortall fight.

IX

So th' one for wrong, the other strives for right,
 And each to deadly shame would drive his foe:
 The cruell steele so greedily doth bight
 In tender flesh that streames of bloud down flow,
 With which the armes, that earst so bright did show,
 Into a pure vermillion now are dyde:
 Great ruth in all the gazers harts did grow,
 Seeing the gored woundes to gape so wyde,
 That victory they dare not wish to either side.

X

At last the Paynim chaunst to cast his eye,
 His suddein eye, flaming with wrathful fyre,
 Upon his brothers shield, which hong thereby:
 Therewith redoubled was his raging yre,
 And said, Ah wretched sonne of wofull syre,
 Doest thou sit wayling by blacke Stygian lake,
 Whilest here thy shield is hangd for victors hyre,
 And sluggish german doest thy forces slake
 To after-send his foe, that him may overtake?

XI

Goe caytive Elfe, him quickly overtake,
 And soone redeeme from his long wandring woe;
 Goe guiltie ghost, to him my message make,
 That I his shield have quit from dying foe.
 Therewith upon his crest he stroke him so,
 That twise he reeled, readie twise to fall;
 End of the doubtfull battell deemed tho
 The lookers on, and lowd to him gan call
 The false Duessa, Thine the shield, and I, and all.

XII

Soone as the Faerie heard his Ladie speake,
 Out of his swowning dreame he gan awake,
 And quickning faith, that earst was woxen weake,
 The creeping deadly cold away did shake:
 Tho mov'd with wrath, and shame, and Ladies sake,
 Of all attonce he cast avengd to bee,
 And with so' exceeding furie at him strake,
 That forced him to stoupe upon his knee;
 Had he not stouped so, he should have cloven bee.

XIII

And to him said, Goe now proud Miscreant,
 Thy selfe thy message do to german deare;
 Alone he wandring thee too long doth want:
 Goe say, his foe thy shield with his doth beare.
 Therewith his heavie hand he high gan reare,
 Him to have slaine; when loe a darkesome clowd
 Upon him fell: he no where doth appeare,
 But vanisht is. The Elfe him calls alowd,
 But answer none receives: the darkness him does shrowd.

XIV

In haste Duessa from her place arose,
 And to him running said, O prowest knight,
 That ever Ladie to her love did chose,
 Let now abate the terror of your might,
 And quench the flame of furious despight,
 And bloudie vengeance; lo th' infernall powres,
 Covering your foe with cloud of deadly night,
 Have borne him hence to Plutoes balefull bowres.
 The conquest yours, I yours, the shield, the glory yours.

XV

Not all so satisfide, with greedie eye
 He sought all round about, his thristie blade
 To bath in bloud of faithlesse enemy;
 Who all that while lay hid in secret shade:
 He standes amazed, how he thence should fade.
 At last the trumpets Triumph sound on hie,
 And running Heralds humble homage made,
 Greeting him goodly with new victorie,
 And to him brought the shield, the cause of enmitie.

XVI

Wherewith he goeth to that soveraine Queene,
 And falling her before on lowly knee,
 To her makes present of his service seene:
 Which she accepts, with thankes, and goodly gree,
 Greatly advauncing his gay chevalree.
 So marcheth home, and by her takes the knight,
 Whom all the people follow with great glee,
 Shouting, and clapping all their hands on hight,
 That all the aire it fills, and flyes to heaven bright.

XVII

Home is he brought, and laid in sumptuous bed:
 Where many skilfull leaches him abide,
 To salve his hurts, that yet still freshly bled.
 In wine and oyle they wash his woundes wide,
 And softly can embalme on every side.
 And all the while, most heavenly melody
 About the bed sweet musicke did divide,
 Him to beguile of grieve and agony:
 And all the while Duessa wept full bitterly.

XVIII

As when a wearie traveller that straves
 By muddy shore of broad seven-mouthed Nile,
 Unweeting of the perillous wandring wayes,
 Doth meete a cruell craftie Crocodile,
 Which in false grieve hyding his harmefull guile,
 Doth weepe full sore, and sheddeth tender teares:
 The foolish man, that pitties all this while
 His mournefull plight, is swallowed up unawares,
 Forgetfull of his owne, that mindes anothers cares.

XIX

So wept Duessa untill eventide,
 That shyning lampes in Joves high house were light:
 Then forth she rose, ne lenger would abide,
 But comes unto the place, where th' Hethen knight
 In slombring swownd nigh voyd of vitall spright,
 Lay cover'd with inchaunted cloud all day:
 Whom when she found, as she him left in plight,
 To wayle his woefull case she would not stay,
 But to the easterne coast of heaven makes speedy way.

XX

Where griesly Night, with visage deadly sad,
 That Phoebus chearefull face durst never vew,
 And in a foule blacke pitchie mantle clad,
 She findes forth comming from her darkesome mew,
 Where she all day did hide her hated hew.
 Before the dore her yron charet stood,
 Alreadie harnessed for journey new;
 And coleblacke steedes yborne of hellish brood,
 That on their rustie bits did champ, as they were wood.

XXI

Who when she saw Duessa sunny bright,
 Adorn'd with gold and jewels shining cleare,
 She greatly grew amazed at the sight,
 And th' unacquainted light began to feare:
 For never did such brightnesse there appeare,
 And would have backe retyred to her cave,
 Until the witches speech she gan to heare,
 Saying, Yet, O thou dreaded Dame, I crave
 Abide, till I have told the message which I have.

XXII

She stayd, and fourth Duessa gan proceede
 O thou most auncient Grandmother of all,
 More old then Jove, whom thou at first didst breede,
 Or that great house of Gods cælestiall,
 Which wast begot in Daemogorgons hall,
 And sawst the secrets of the world unmade,
 Why suffredst thou thy Nephewes deare to fall
 With Elfin sword, most shamefully betrade?
 Lo where the stout Sansjoy doth sleepe in deadly shade.

XXIII

And him before, I saw with bitter eyes
 The bold Sansfoy shrinke underneath his speare;
 And now the pray of fowles in field he lyes,
 Nor wayld of friends, nor layd on groning beare,
 That whylome was to me too dearely deare.
 O what of Gods then boots it to be borne,
 If old Aveugles sonnes so evill heare?
 Or who shall not great Nightes children scorne,
 When two of three her Nephews are so fowle forlorne?

XXIV

Up then, up dreary Dame, of darknesse Queene,
 Go gather up the reliques of thy race,
 Or else goe them avenge, and let be seene,
 That dreaded Night in brightest day hath place,
 And can the children of faire light deface.
 Her feeling speeches some compassion moved
 In hart, and change in that great mothers face:
 Yet pittie in her hart was never proved
 Till then: for evermore she hated, never loved.

XXV

And said, Deare daughter rightly may I rewe
 The fall of famous children borne of mee,
 And good successes, which their foes ensewe:
 But who can turne the streame of destinee,
 Or breake the chayne of strong necessitee,
 Which fast is tyde to Joves eternall seat?
 The sonnes of Day he favoureth, I see,
 And by my ruines thinkes to make them great:
 To make one great by others losse, is bad excheat.

XXVI

Yet shall they not escape so freely all;
 For some shall pay the price of others guilt:
 And he the man that made Sansfoy to fall,
 Shall with his owne bloud price that he has spilt.
 But what art thou, that telst of Nephews kilt?
 I that do seeme not I, Duessa am,
 (Quoth she) how ever now in garments gilt,
 And gorgeous gold arrayd I to thee came;
 Duessa I, the daughter of Deceipt and Shame.

XXVII

Then bowing downe her aged backe, she kist
 The wicked witch, saying; In that faire face
 The false resemblance of Deceipt I wist
 Did closely lurke; yet so true-seeming grace
 It carried, that I scarce in darkesome place
 Could it discerne, though I the mother bee
 Of falshood, and roote of Duessaes race.
 O welcome child, whom I have longd to see,
 And now have seene unwares. Lo now I go with thee.

XXVIII

Then to her yron wagon she betakes,
 And with her beares the fowle welfavourd witch:
 Through mirkesome aire her readie way she makes.
 Her twyfold Teme, of which two blacke as pitch,
 And two were browne, yet each to each unlich,
 Did softly swim away, ne ever stampe,
 Unlesse she chaunst their stubborne mouths to twitch;
 Then foming tarre, their bridles they would champe,
 And trampling the fine element would fiercely rampe.

XXIX

So well they sped, that they be come at length
 Unto the place, whereas the Paynim lay,
 Devoid of outward sense, and native strength,
 Coverd with charmed cloud from vew of day
 And sight of men, since his late luckesse fray.
 His cruell wounds with cruddy bloud congeald
 They binden up so wisely, as they may,
 And handle softly, till they can be healed:
 So lay him in her charet close in night concealed.

XXX

And all the while she stood upon the ground,
 The wakefull dogs did never cease to bay,
 As giving warning of th' unwonted sound,
 With which her yron wheelles did them affray,
 And her darke griesly looke them much dismay:
 The messenger of death, the ghastly Owle
 With drery shriekes did also her bewray;
 And hungry Wolves continually did howle,
 At her abhorred face, so filthy and so fowle.

XXXI

Thence turning backe in silence soft they stole,
 And brought the heavie corse with easie pace
 To yawning gulfe of deepe Avernus hole.
 By that same hole an entrance darke and bace
 With smoake and sulphure hiding all the place,
 Descends to hell: there creature never past,
 That backe returned without heavenly grace;
 But dreadfull Furies which their chaines have brast,
 And damned sprights sent forth to make ill men aghast.

XXXII

By that same way the direfull dames doe drive
 Their mournfull charet, fild with rusty blood,
 And downe to Plutoes house are come bilive:
 Which passing through, on every side them stood
 The trembling ghosts with sad amazed mood,
 Chattring their yron teeth, and staring wide
 With stonie eyes; and all the hellish brood
 Of feends infernall flockt on every side,
 To gaze on earthly wight that with the Night durst ride.

XXXIII

They pas the bitter waves of Acheron,
 Where many soules sit wailing woefully,
 And come to fiery flood of Phlegeton,
 Whereas the damned ghosts in torments fry,
 And with sharpe shrilling shriekes doe bootlesse cry,
 Cursing high Jove, the which them thither sent.
 The house of endlesse paine is built thereby,
 In which ten thousand sorts of punishment
 The cursed creatures doe eternally torment.

XXXIV

Before the threshold dreadfull Cerberus
 His three deformed heads did lay along,
 Curled with thousand adders venemous,
 And lilled forth his bloudie flaming tong:
 At them he gan to reare his bristles strong,
 And felly gnarre, until Dayes enemy
 Did him appease; then downe his taile he hong
 And suffred them to passen quietly:
 For she in hell and heaven had power equally.

XXXV

There was Ixion turned on a wheele,
 For daring tempt the Queene of heaven to sin;
 And Sisyphus an huge round stone did reele
 Against an hill, ne might from labour lin;
 There thirsty Tantalus hong by the chin;
 And Tityus fed a vulture on his maw;
 Typhœus joynts were stretched on a gin,
 Theseus condemnd to endlesse slouth by law,
 And fifty sisters water in leake vessels draw.

XXXVI

They all beholding worldly wights in place,
 Leave off their worke, unmindfull of their smart,
 To gaze on them; who forth by them doe pace,
 Till they be come unto the furthest part;
 Where was a Cave ywrought by wondrous art,
 Deepe, darke, uneasie, dolefull, comfortlesse,
 In which sad Aesculapius farre apart
 Emprisond was in chaines remedillesse,
 For that Hippolytus rent corse he did redresse.

XXXVII

Hippolytus a jolly huntsman was
 That wont in charett chace the foming Bore:
 He all his Peeres in beauty did surpas,
 But Ladies love as losse of time forbore:
 His wanton stepdame loved him the more,
 But when she saw her offred sweets refused,
 Her love she turnd to hate, and him before
 His father fierce of treason false accused,
 And with her gealous termes his open eares abused.

XXXVIII

Who all in rage his Sea-god syre besought,
 Some cursed vengeaunce on his sonne to cast,
 From surging gulf two monsters straight were brought,
 With dread whereof his chasing steedes aghast,
 Both charet swift and huntsman overcast.
 His goodly corps on ragged cliffs yrent,
 Was quite dismembred, and his members chast
 Scattered on every mountaine, as he went,
 That of Hippolytus was left no monument.

XXXIX

His cruell step-dame seeing what was donne,
 Her wicked dayes with wretched knife did end,
 In death avowing th' innocence of her sonne,
 Which hearing, his rash Syre began to rend
 His haire, and hastie tongue that did offend.
 Tho gathering up the relicks of his smart,
 By Dianes meanes, who was Hippolyts frend,
 Them brought to Æsculape, that by his art
 Did heale them all againe, and joyned every part.

XL

Such wondrous science in mans wit to raine
 When Jove avizd, that could the dead revive,
 And fates expired could renew againe,
 Of endlesse life he might him not deprive,
 But unto hell did thrust him downe alive,
 With flashing thunderbolt ywounded sore:
 Where long remaining, he did alwaies strive
 Himselfe with salves to health for to restore,
 And slake the heavenly fire, that raged evermore.

XLI

There auncient Night arriving, did alight
 From her nigh wearie waine, and in her armes
 To Æsculapius brought the wounded knight:
 Whom having softly disarayd of armes,
 Tho gan to him discover all his harmes,
 Beseeching him with prayer, and with praise,
 If either salves, or oyles, or herbes, or charmes
 A fordonne wight from dore of death mote raise,
 He would at her request prolong her nephews daies.

XLII

Ah Dame (quoth he) thou temptest me in vaine,
 To dare the thing, which daily yet I rew,
 And the old cause of my continued paine
 With like attempt to like end to renew.
 Is not enough, that thrust from heaven dew
 Here endlesse penance for one fault I pay,
 But that redoubled crime with vengeance new
 Thou biddest me to eeke? can Night defray
 The wrath of thundring Jove that rules both night and day?

XLIII

Not so (quoth she) but sith that heavens king
 From hope of heaven hath thee excluded quight,
 Why fearest thou, that canst not hope for thing;
 And fearest not, that more thee hurten might,
 Now in the powre of everlasting Night?
 Goe to then, O thou farre renowmed sonne
 Of great Apollo, shew thy famous might
 In medicine, that else hath to thee wonne
 Great paines, and greater praise, both never to be donne.

XLIV

Her words prevaild: And then the learned leach
 His cunning hand gan to his wounds to lay,
 And all things else, the which his art did teach:
 Which having seene, from thence arose away
 The mother of dread darknesse, and let stay
 Aveugles sonne there in the leaches cure,
 And backe returning tooke her wonted way,
 To runne her timely race, whilst Phoebus pure,
 In westerne waves his weary wagon did recure.

XLV

The false Duessa leaving noyous Night,
 Returnd to stately pallace of Dame Pride;
 Where when she came, she found the Faery knight
 Departed thence, albe his woundes wide
 Not throughly heald, unreadie were to ride.
 Good cause he had to hasten thence away;
 For on a day his wary Dwarfe had spide
 Where in a dongeon deepe huge numbers lay
 Of caytive wretched thrals, that wayled night and day.

XLVI

A ruefull sight, as could be seene with eie;
 Of whom he learned had in secret wise
 The hidden cause of their captivitie,
 How mortgaging their lives to Covetise,
 Through wastfull Pride and wanton Riotise,
 They were by law of that proud Tyrannesse,
 Provokt with Wrath, and Envies false surmise,
 Condemned to that Dongeon mercilesse,
 Where they should live in woe, and die in wretchednesse.

XLVII

There was that great proud king of Babylon,
 That would compell all nations to adore,
 And him as onely God to call upon,
 Till through celestiall doome throwne out of dore,
 Into an Oxe he was transform'd of yore:
 There also was king Croesus, that enhaunst
 His hart too high through his great riches store;
 And proud Antiochus, the which advaunst
 His cursed hand gainst God and on his altars daunst.

XLVIII

And them long time before, great Nimrod was,
 That first the world with sword and fire warrayd;
 And after him old Ninus farre did pas
 In princely pompe, of all the world obayd;
 There also was that mightie Monarch layd
 Low under all, yet above all in pride,
 That name of native syre did fowle upbrayd,
 And would as Ammons sonne be magnifide,
 Till scornd of God and man a shamefull death he dide.

XLIX

All these together in one heape were throwne,
 Like carkases of beasts in butchers stall.
 And in another corner wide were strowne
 The antique ruines of the Romaines fall:
 Great Romulus the Grandsyre of them all,
 Proud Tarquin, and too lordly Lentulus,
 Stout Scipio, and stubborne Hanniball,
 Ambitious Sylla, and sterne Marius,
 High Caesar, great Pompey, and fierce Antonius.

L

Amongst these mightie men were wemen mixt,
 Proud wemen, vaine, forgetfull of their yoke:
 The bold Semiramis, whose sides transfixt
 With sonnes own blade, her fowle reproches spoke;
 Faire Sthenoboea, that her selfe did choke
 With wilfull cord, for wanting of her will;
 High minded Cleopatra, that with stroke
 Of Aspes sting her selfe did stoutly kill:
 And thousands moe the like, that did that dongeon fill;

LI

Besides the endlesse routs of wretched thrallles,
 Which thither were assembled day by day,
 From all the world after their wofull falles
 Through wicked pride, and wasted wealthes decay.
 But most of all, which in the Dongeon lay,
 Fell from high Princes courts, or Ladies bowres;
 Where they in idle pompe, or wanton play,
 Consumed had their goods, and thriftlesse howres,
 And lastly throwne themselves into these heavy stowres.

LII

Whose case when as the carefull Dwarfe had tould,
 And made ensample of their mournefull sight
 Unto his maister, he no lenger would
 There dwell in perill of like painefull plight,
 But early rose, and ere that dawning light
 Discovered had the world to heaven wyde,
 He by a privie Posterne tooke his flight,
 That of no envious eyes he mote be spyde:
 For doubtlesse death ensewd, if any him descryde.

LIII

Scarse could he footing find in that fowle way,
 For many corses, like a great Lay-stall,
 Of mured men which therein strowed lay,
 Without remorse, or decent funerall:
 Which all through that great Princesse pride did fall
 And came to shamefull end. And them beside
 Forth ryding underneath the castell wall,
 A donghill of dead carkases he spide,
 The dreadfull spectacle of that sad house of Pride.

Canto VI

*From lawlesse lust by wondrous grace
 fayre Una is releast:
 Whom salvage nation does adore,
 and learnes her wise beheast.*

I

AS when a ship, that flyes faire under saile,
 An hidden rocke escaped hath unwares,
 That lay in waite her wrack for to bewaile,
 The Marriner yet halfe amazed stares
 At perill past, and yet in doubt ne dares
 To joy at his foole-happie oversight:
 So doubly is distrest twixt joy and cares
 The dreadlesse courage of this Elfin knight,
 Having escapt so sad ensamples in his sight.

II

Yet sad he was that his too hastie speede
 The faire Duesse' had forst him leave behind;
 And yet more sad, that Una his deare dreed
 Her truth had staine with treason so unkind;
 Yet crime in her could never creature find,
 But for his love, and for her owne selfe sake,
 She wandred had from one to other Ynd,
 Him for to seeke, ne ever would forsake,
 Till her unwares the fiers Sansloy did overtake.

III

Who, after Archimagoes fowle defeat,
 Led her away into a forest wilde,
 And turning wrathfull fyre to lustfull heat,

With beastly sin thought her to have defilde,
 And made the vassal of his pleasures wilde.
 Yet first he cast by treatie, and by traynes,
 Her to persuade that stubborne fort to yilde:
 For greater conquest of hard love he gaynes,
 That workes it to his will, then he that it constraines.

IV

With fawning words he courted her awhile,
 And looking lovely, and oft sighing sore,
 Her constant hart did tempt with diverse guile,
 But wordes and lookes, and sighes she did abhore;
 As rocke of Diamond steadfast evermore,
 Yet for to feed his fyrie lustfull eye,
 He snatcht the vele that hong her face before;
 Then gan her beautie shyne, as brightest skye
 And burnt his beastly hart t'efforce her chastitye.

V

So when he saw his flatt'ring artes to fayle,
 And subtile engines bett from batteree;
 With greedy force he gan the fort assayle,
 Whereof he weend possessed soone to bee,
 And with rich spoile of ransackt chastitee.
 Ah heavens! that do this hideous act behold,
 And heavenly virgin thus outraged see,
 How can ye vengeance just so long withhold
 And hurle not flashing flames upon that Paynim bold?

VI

The pitteous maiden carefull comfortlesse,
 Does throw out thrilling shriekes, and shrieking cryes,
 The last vaine helpe of womens great distresse,
 And with loud plaints importuneth the skyes,
 That molten starres do drop like weeping eyes;
 And Phœbus flying so most shameful sight,
 His blushing face in foggy cloud implyes,
 And hides for shame. What wit of mortall wight
 Can now devise to quit a thrall from such a plight?

VII

Eternal providence exceeding thought,
 Where none appeares can make herselfe a way:

A wondrous way it for this Lady wrought,
 From Lyons clawes to pluck the griped pray.
 Her shrill outcries and shriekes so loud did bray,
 That all the woodes and forestes did resownd;
 A troupe of Faunes and Satyres far away
 Within the wood were dauncing in a rownd,
 Whiles old Sylvanus slept in shady arber sownd:

VIII

Who when they heard that pitteous strained voice,
 In haste forsooke their rurall meriment,
 And ran towards the far rebownded noyce,
 To weet, what wight so loudly did lament.
 Unto the place they come incontinent:
 Whom when the raging Sarazin espide,
 A rude, mishapen, monstrous rablement,
 Whose like he never saw, he durst not bide,
 But got his ready steed, and fast away gan ride.

IX

The wyld woodgods arrived in the place,
 There find the virgin dolefull desolate,
 With ruffled rayments, and faire blubbred face,
 As her outrageous foe had left her late;
 And trembling yet through feare of former hate:
 All stand amazed at so uncouth sight,
 And gin to pittie her unhappie state;
 All stand astonied at her beautie bright,
 In their rude eyes unworthy of so wofull plight.

X

She more amaz'd, in double dread doth dwell;
 And every tender part for feare doth shake:
 As when a greedie Wolfe, through hunger fell,
 A seely Lambe farre from the flocke does take,
 Of whom he meanes his bloudie feast to make,
 A Lyon spyes fast running towards him,
 The innocent pray in hast he does forsake,
 Which quit from death yet quakes in every lim
 With change of feare, to see the Lyon looke so grim.

XI

Such fearefull fit assaid her trembling hart,
 Ne word to speake, ne joynt to move she had:
 The salvage nation feele her secret smart,
 And read her sorrow in her count'nance sad;
 Their frowning forheads with rough hornes yclad,
 And rustick horror all a side doe lay;
 And gently grenning, show a semblance glad
 To comfort her, and feare to put away,
 Their backward bent knees teach her humbly to obey.

XII

The doubtfull Damzell dare not yet commit
 Her single person to their barbarous truth;
 But still twixt feare and hope amazd does sit,
 Late learnd what harme to hasty trust ensu'th:
 They in compassion of her tender youth,
 And wonder of her beautie souveraine,
 Are wonne with pittie and unwonted ruth,
 And all prostrate upon the lowly plaine,
 Do kisse her feete, and fawne on her with count'nance faine.

XIII

Their harts she ghessest by their humble guise,
 And yielde her to extremitie of time;
 So from the ground she fearlesse doth arise,
 And walketh forth without suspect of crime:
 They all as glad, as birdes of joyous Prime,
 Thence lead her forth, about her dauncing round,
 Shouting, and singing all a shepherds ryme,
 And with greene braunches strowing all the ground,
 Do worship her, as Queene, with olive girlond croud.

XIV

And all the way their merry pipes they sound,
 That all the woods with doubled Eccho ring,
 And with their horned feet do weare the ground,
 Leaping like wanton kids in pleasant Spring.
 So towards old Sylvanus they her bring;
 Who with the noyse awaked commeth out
 To weet the cause, his weake steps governing,
 And aged limbs on Cypresse stadle stout;
 And with an yvie twyne his wast is girt about.

XV

Far off he wonders, what them makes so glad,
 Or Bacchus merry fruit they did invent,
 Or Cybeles franticke rites have made them mad,
 They drawing nigh, unto their God present
 That flowre of faith and beautie excellent.
 The God himselfe, vewing that mirrhour rare,
 Stood long amazd, and burnt in his intent;
 His owne faire Dryope now he thinkes not faire,
 And Pholoe fowle when her to this he doth compaire.

XVI

The woodborne people fall before her flat,
 And worship her as Goddesse of the wood;
 And old Sylvanus selfe bethinkes not, what
 To thinke of wight so faire, but gazing stood,
 In doubt to deeme her borne of earthly brood;
 Sometimes Dame Venus selfe he seemes to see,
 But Venus never had so sober mood;
 Sometimes Diana he her takes to bee,
 But misseth bow, and shaftes, and buskins to her knee.

XVII

By vew of her he ginneth to revive
 His ancient love, and dearest Cyparisse,
 And calles to mind his pourtraiture alive,
 How faire he was, and yet not faire to this,
 And how he slew with glauncing dart amisse
 A gentle Hynd, the which the lovely boy
 Did love as life, above all worldly blisse;
 For griefe whereof the lad n'ould after joy,
 But pynd away in anguish and selfe-wild annoy.

XVIII

The wooddy Nymphes, faire Hamadryades,
 Her to behold do thither runne apace,
 And all the troupe of light-foot Naiades
 Flocke all about to see her lovely face:
 But when they vewed have her heavenly grace,
 They envy her in their malitious mind,
 And fly away for feare of fowle disgrace:
 But all the Satyres scorne their woody kind,
 And henceforth nothing faire but her on earth they find.

XIX

Glad of such lucke, the luckelesse lucky maid,
 Did her content to please their feeble eyes,
 And long time with that salvage people staid,
 To gather breath in many miseries.
 During which time her gentle wit she plyes,
 To teach them truth, which worshipt her in vaine,
 And made her th' Image of Idolatryes;
 But when their bootlesse zeale she did restraine
 From her own worship, they her Asse would worship fayn.

XX

It fortun'd a noble warlike knight
 By just occasion to that Forrest came,
 To seeke his kindred, and the lignage right,
 From whence he tooke his well deserved name:
 He had in armes abroad wonne muchell fame,
 And fild far lands with glorie of his might,
 Plaine, faithfull, true, and enemy of shame,
 And ever lov'd to fight for Ladies right:
 But in vaine glorious frayes he litle did delight.

XXI

A Satyres sonne yborne in Forrest wyld,
 By straunge adventure as it did betyde,
 And there begotten of a Lady myld,
 Faire Thyamis the daughter of Labryde,
 That was in sacred bands of wedlocke tyde
 To Therion, a loose unruly swayne;
 Who had more joy to raunge the Forrest wyde,
 And chase the salvage beast with busie payne,
 Then serve his Ladies love, and wast in pleasures vayne.

XXII

The forlorne mayd did with loves longing burne
 And could not lacke her lovers company,
 But to the wood she goes, to serve her turne,
 And seeke her spouse that from her still does fly,
 And followes other game and venery:
 A Satyre chaunst her wandring for to finde,
 And kindling coles of lust in brutish eye,
 The loyall links of wedlocke did unbind,
 And made her person thrall unto his beastly kind.

XXIII

So long in secret cabin there he held
 Her captive to his sensuall desire,
 Till that with timely fruit her belly sweld,
 And bore a boy unto that salvage sire:
 Then home he suffred her for to retyre,
 For ransome leaving him the late borne childe;
 Whom till to ryper yeares he gan aspire,
 He nounsled up in life and manners wilde,
 Emongst wild beasts and woods, from lawes of men exilde.

XXIV

For all he taught the tender ymp, was but
 To banish cowardize and bastard feare;
 His trembling hand he would him force to put
 Upon the Lyon and the rugged Beare;
 And from the she Beares teats her whelps to teare;
 And eke wyld roaring Buls he would him make
 To tame, and ryde their backes not made to beare;
 And the Robuckes in flight to overtake,
 That every beast for feare of him did fly and quake.

XXV

Thereby so fearlesse, and so fell he grew,
 That his owne sire and maister of his guise
 Did often tremble at his horrid vew,
 And oft for dread of hurt would him advise,
 The angry beasts not rashly to despise,
 Nor too much to provoke; for he would learne
 The Lyon stoup to him in lowly wise,
 (A lesson hard) and make the Libbard sterne
 Leave roaring, when in rage he for revenge did earne.

XXVI

And for to make his powre approved more,
 Wyld beasts in yron yokes he would compell;
 The spotted Panther, and the tusked Bore,
 The Pardale swift, and the tigre cruell,
 The Antelope, and Wolfe both fierce and fell;
 And them constraine in equall teme to draw.
 Such joy he had, their stubborne harts to quell,
 And sturdie courage tame with dreadfull aw,
 That his beheast they feared, as a tyrans law.

XXVII

His loving mother came upon a day
 Unto the woods, to see her little sonne;
 And chaunst unwares to meet him in the way,
 After his sportes, and cruell pastime donne;
 When after him a Lyonesse did runne,
 That roaring all with rage, did lowd requere
 Her children deare, whom he away had wonne:
 The Lyon whelpes she saw how he did beare,
 And lull in rugged armes, withouten childish feare.

XXVIII

The fearefull Dame all quaked at the sight,
 And turning backe, gan fast to fly away,
 Untill with love revokt from vaine affright,
 She hardly yet perswaded was to stay,
 And then to him these womanish words gan say;
 Ah Satyrane, my darling, and my joy,
 For love of me leave off this dreadfull play;
 To dally thus with death is no fit toy,
 Go find some other play-fellowes, mine own sweet boy.

XXIX

In these and like delights of bloody game
 He trayned was, till ryper yeares he raught;
 And there abode, whilst any beast of name
 Walkt in that forest, whom he had not taught
 To feare his force: and then his courage haught
 Desird of forreine foemen to be knowne,
 And far abroad for straunge adventures sought;
 In which his might was never overthrowne;
 But through all Faery lond his famous worth was blown.

XXX

Yet evermore it was his manner faire,
 After long labours and adventures spent,
 Unto those native woods for to repaire,
 To see his sire and offspring auncient.
 And now he thither came for like intent;
 Where he unwares the fairest Una found,
 Straunge Lady, in so straunge habiliment,
 Teaching the Satyres, which her sat around,
 Trew sacred lore, which from her sweet lips did redound.

XXXI

He wondred at her wisdom heavenly rare,
 Whose like in womens wit he never knew;
 And when her curteous deeds he did compare,
 Gan her admire, and her sad sorrowes rew,
 Blaming of Fortune, which such troubles threw,
 And joyd to make prooffe of her crueltie,
 On gentle Dame, so hurtlesse, and so trew:
 Thenceforth he kept her goodly company,
 And learnd her discipline of faith and veritie.

XXXII

But she all vowd unto the Redcrosse knight,
 His wandring perill closely did lament,
 Ne in this new acquaintaunce could delight,
 But her deare heart with anguish did torment,
 And all her wit in secret counsels spent,
 How to escape. At last in privie wise
 To Satyrane she shewed her intent;
 Who glad to gain such favour, gan devise
 How with that pensive Maid he best might thence arise.

XXXIII

So on a day when Satyres all were gone
 To do their service to Sylvanus old,
 The gentle virgin left behind alone
 He led away with courage stout and bold.
 Too late it was, to Satyres to be told,
 Or ever hope recover her againe:
 In vaine he seekes that having cannot hold.
 So fast he carried her with carefull paine,
 That they the woods are past, and come now to the plaine.

XXXIV

The better part now of the lingring day,
 They traveld had, whenas they farre espide
 A weary wight forwandring by the way,
 And towards him they gan in haste to ride,
 To weete of newes, that did abroad betide,
 Or tydings of her knight of the Redcrosse.
 But he them spying, gan to turne aside,
 For feare as seemd, or for some feigned losse;
 More greedy they of newes, fast towards him do crosse.

XXXV

A silly man, in simple weedes forworne,
 And soild with dust of the long dried way;
 His sandales were with toilsome travell torne,
 And face all tand with scorching sunny ray,
 As he had traveild many a sommers day,
 Through boyling sands of Arabie and Ynde;
 And in his hand a Jacobs staffe, to stay
 His wearie limbes upon: and eke behind,
 His scrip did hang, in which his needments he did bind.

XXXVI

The knight approaching nigh, of him inquerd
 Tidings of warre, and of adventures new;
 But warres, nor new adventures none he herd.
 Then Una gan to aske, if ought he knew,
 Or heard abroad of that her champion trew,
 That in his armour bare a croslet red.
 Aye me, Deare dame (quoth he) well may I rew
 To tell the sad sight which mine eies have red.
 These eies did see that knight both living and eke ded.

XXXVII

That cruell word her tender hart so thrild,
 That suddein cold did runne through every vaine,
 And stony horroure all her sences fild
 With dying fit, that downe she fell for paine.
 The knight her lightly reared up againe,
 And comforted with curteous kind reliefe:
 Then, wonne from death, she bad him tellen plaine
 The further processe of her hidden griefe:
 The lesser pangs can beare, who hath endur'd the chiefe.

XXXVIII

Then gan the Pilgrim thus, I chaunst this day,
 This fatall day, that shall I ever rew,
 To see two knights in travell on my way
 (A sory sight) arraung'd in battell new,
 Both breathing vengeaunce, both of wrathfull hew:
 My fearefull flesh did tremble at their strife,
 To see their blades so greedily imbrew,
 That drunke with bloud, yet thirsted after life:
 What more? the Redcrosse knight was slaine with Paynim knife.

XXXIX

Ah dearest Lord (quoth she) how might that bee,
 And he the stoughtest knight, that ever wonne?
 Ah dearest dame (quoth he) how might I see
 The thing, that might not be, and yet was donne?
 Where is (said Satyrane) that Paynims sonne,
 That him of life, and us of joy hath reft?
 Not far away (quoth he) he hence doth wonne
 Foreby a fountaine, where I late him left
 Washing his bloody wounds, that through the steele were cleft.

XL

Therewith the knight thence marched forth in hast,
 Whiles Una with huge heavinesse opprest,
 Could not for sorrow follow him so fast;
 And soone he came, as he the place had ghest,
 Whereas that Pagan proud him selfe did rest,
 In secret shadow by a fountaine side:
 Even he it was, that earst would have supprest
 Faire Una: whom when Satyrane espide,
 With fowle reprochfull words he boldly him defide.

XLI

And said, Arise thou cursed Miscreaunt,
 That hast with knightlesse guile and trecherous train
 Faire knighthood fowly shamed, and doest vaunt
 That good knight of the Redcrosse to have slain:
 Arise, and with like treason now maintain
 Thy guilty wrong, or els thee guilty yield.
 The Sarazin this hearing, rose amain,
 And catching up in hast his three-square shield,
 And shining helmet, soone him buckled to the field.

XLII

And drawing nigh him said, Ah misborne Elfe,
 In evill houre thy foes thee hither sent,
 Anothers wrongs to wreake upon thy selfe:
 Yet ill thou blamest me, for having blent
 My name with guile and traiterous intent:
 That Redcrosse knight, perdie, I never slew,
 But had he beene, where earst his arms were lent,
 Th' enchaunter vaine his errour should not rew:
 But thou his errour shalt, I hope, now proven trew.

XLIII

Therewith they gan, both furious and fell,
 To thunder blowes, and fiersly to assaile
 Each other bent his enemy to quell,
 That with their force they perst both plate and maile,
 And made wide furrowes in their fleshes fraile,
 That it would pittie any living eie.
 Large floods of bloud adowne their sides did raile;
 But floods of bloud could not them satisfie:
 Both hungred after death: both chose to win, or die.

XLIV

So long they fight, and fell revenge pursue,
 That fainting each, themselves to breathe let,
 And oft refreshed, battell oft renue:
 As when two Bores with rancling malice met,
 Their gory sides fresh bleeding fiercely fret,
 Til breathlesse both them selves aside retire,
 Where foming wrath, their cruell tuskes they whet,
 And trample th' earth, the whiles they may respire;
 Then backe to fight againe, new breathed and entire.

XLV

So fiersly, when these knights had breathed once,
 They gan to fight returne, increasing more
 Their puissant force, and cruell rage attonce.
 With heaped strokes more hugely then before,
 That with their drerie wounds and bloody gore
 They both deformed, scarsely could be known.
 By this, sad Una fraught with anguish sore,
 Led with their noise, which through the aire was thrown:
 Arriv'd, wher they in erth their fruitles bloud had sown.

XLVI

Whom all so soone as that proud Sarazin
 Espide, he gan revive the memory
 Of his lewd lusts, and late attempted sin,
 And left the doubtfull battell hastily,
 To catch her, newly offred to his eie:
 But Satyrane with strokes him turning, staid,
 And sternely bad him other businesse plie,
 Then hunt the steps of pure unspotted Maid:
 Wherewith he all enrag'd, these bitter speaches said.

XLVII

O foolish faeries son, what fury mad
 Hath thee incenst, to hast thy doefull fate?
 Were it not better I that Lady had,
 Then that thou hadst repented it too late?
 Most senseless man he, that himselfe doth hate
 To love another. Lo then for thine ayd
 Here take thy lovers token on thy pate.
 So they two fight; the whiles the royall Mayd
 Fledd farre away, of that proud Paynim sore afrayd.

XLVIII

But that false Pilgrim, which that leasing told,
 Being in deed old Archimage, did stay
 In secret shadow, all this to behold,
 And much rejoiced in their bloody fray:
 But when he saw the Damsell passe away,
 He left his stond, and her pursewd apace,
 In hope to bring her to her last decay,
 But for to tell her lamentable cace,
 And eke this battels end, will need another place.

Canto VII

*The Redcrosse knight is captive made
 by Gyaunt proud opprest,
 Prince Arthur meets with Una great-
 ly with those newes distrest.*

I

WHAT man so wise, what earthly wit so ware,
 As to discry the crafty cunning traine,
 By which deceit doth maske in visour faire,
 And cast her colours dyed deepe in graine,
 To seeme like Truth, whose shape she well can faine,
 And fitting gestures to her purpose frame;
 The guiltlesse man with guile to entertaine?
 Great maistresse of her art was that false Dame,
 The false Duessa, cloked with Fidessaes name.

II

Who when returning from the dreery Night,
 She fownd not in that perilous house of Pryde,
 Where she had left, the noble Redcrosse knight,

Her hoped pray; she would no lenger bide,
 But forth she went, to seeke him far and wide.
 Ere long she fownd, whereas he wearie sate
 To rest him selfe, foreby a fountaine side,
 Disarmed all of yron-coted Plate,
 And by his side his steed the grassy forage ate.

III

He feedes upon the cooling shade, and bayes
 His sweatie forehead in the breathing wind,
 Which through the trembling leaves full gently playes,
 Wherein the cherefull birds of sundry kind
 Do chaunt sweet musick, to delight his mind:
 The Witch approaching gan him fairely greet,
 And with reproch of carelesnesse unkind
 Upbrayd, for leaving her in place unmeet,
 With fowle words tempring faire, soure gall with hony sweet.

IV

Unkindnesse past, they gan of solace treat,
 And bathe in pleasaunce of the joyous shade,
 Which shielded them against the boyling heat,
 And with greene boughes decking a gloomy glade,
 About the fountaine like a gylond made;
 Whose bubbling wave did ever freshly well,
 Ne ever would through fervent sommer fade:
 The sacred Nymph, which therein wont to dwell,
 Was out of Dianes favour, as it then befell.

V

The cause was this: One day, when Phœbe fayre
 With all her band was following the chace,
 This Nymph, quite tyr'd with heat of scorching ayre,
 Sat downe to rest in middest of the race:
 The goddesse wroth gan fowly her disgrace,
 And bad the waters, which from her did flow,
 Be such as she her selfe was then in place.
 Thenceforth her waters waxed dull and slow,
 And all that drinke thereof do faint and feeble grow.

VI

Hereof this gentle knight unweeting was,
 And lying downe upon the sandie graile,

Drunke of the streame, as cleare as cristall glas:
 Eftsoones his manly forces gan to faile,
 And mightie strong was turned to feeble fraile.
 His chaunged powres at first them selves not felt,
 Till crudled cold his corage gan assaile,
 And cheareful bloud in faintnesse chill did melt,
 Which like a fever fit through all his body swelt.

VII

Yet goodly court he made still to his Dame,
 Poured out in loosnesse on the grassy grownd,
 Both carelesse of his health, and of his fame:
 Till at the last he heard a dreadfull sownd,
 Which through the wood loud bellowing did rebownd,
 That all the earth for terrour seemd to shake,
 And trees did tremble. Th' Elfe therewith astownd,
 Upstarted lightly from his looser make,
 And his unready weapons gan in hand to take.

VIII

But ere he could his armour on him dight,
 Or get his shield, his monstrous enemy
 With sturdie steps came stalking in his sight,
 An hideous Geant, horrible and hye,
 That with his tallnesse seemd to threat the skye,
 The ground eke groned under him for dreed;
 His living like saw never living eye,
 Ne durst behold: his stature did exceed
 The hight of three the tallest sonnes of mortall seed.

IX

The greatest Earth his uncouth mother was,
 And blustering Æolus his boasted syre,
 Who with his breath, which through the world doth pas,
 Her hollow womb did secretly inspire,
 And fild her hidden caves with stormie yre,
 That she conceived; and trebling the dew time,
 In which the wombes of women do expire,
 Brought forth this monstrous masse of earthly slime
 Puft up with emptie wind, and fild with sinfull crime.

X

So grown great through arrogant delight
 Of th' high descent, whereof he was yborne,
 And through presumption of his matchlesse might,
 All other powres and knighthood he did scorne.
 Such now he marcheth to this man forlorne,
 And left to losse: his stalking steps are stayde
 Upon a snaggy Oke, which he had torne
 Out of his mothers bowelles, and it made
 His mortall mace, wherewith his foeman he dismayde.

XI

That when the knight he spide, he gan advance
 With huge force and insupportable mayne,
 And towardes him with dreadfull fury prauce;
 Who haplesse, and eke hopelesse, all in vaine
 Did to him pace, sad battaile to darrayne,
 Disarmd, disgrast, and inwardly dismayde,
 And eke so faint in every joynt and vaine,
 Through that fraile fountaine, which him feeble made,
 That scarcely could he weeld his bootlesse single blade.

XII

The Geaunt strooke so maynly mercilesse,
 That could have overthrowne a stony towre,
 And were not heavenly grace, that did him blesse,
 He had beene pouldred all, as thin as flowre:
 But he was wary of that deadly stowre,
 And lightly lept from underneath the blow:
 Yet so exceeding was the villeins powre,
 That with the wind it did him overthrow,
 And all his sences stound, that still he lay full low.

XIII

As when that divelish yron Engin wrought
 In deepest Hell, and framd by Furies skill,
 With windy Nitre and quick Sulphur fraught,
 And ramd with bullet round, ordaind to kill,
 Conceiveth fire, the heavens it doth fill
 With thundring noyse, and all the ayre doth choke,
 That none can breath, nor see, nor heare at will,
 Through smouldry cloud of duskish stincking smoke,
 That th' onely breath him daunts, who hath escapt the stroke.

XIV

So daunted when the Geaunt saw the knight,
 His heavie hand he heaved up on hye,
 And him to dust thought to have battred quight,
 Untill Duessa loud to him gan crye;
 O great Orgoglio, greatest under skye,
 O hold thy mortall hand for Ladies sake,
 Hold for my sake, and do him not to dye,
 But vanquisht thine eternall bondslave make,
 And me, thy worthy meed, unto thy Leman take.

XV

He hearkned, and did stay from further harmes,
 To gayne so goodly guerdon, as she spake:
 So willingly she came into his armes,
 Who her as willingly to grace did take,
 And was possessed of his new found make.
 Then up he tooke the slombred sencelesse corse,
 And ere he could out of his swowne awake,
 Him to his castle brought with hastie forse,
 And in a Dongeon deepe him threw without remorse.

XVI

From that day forth Duessa was his deare,
 And highly honourd in his haughtie eye,
 He gave her gold and purple pall to weare,
 And triple crowne set on her head full hye,
 And her endowd with royall majesty:
 Then for to make her dreaded more of men,
 And peoples harts with awfull terrour tye,
 A monstrous beast ybred in filthy fen
 He chose, which he had kept long time in darksome den.

XVII

Such one it was, as that renownmed Snake
 Which great Alcides in Stremona slew,
 Long fostred in the filth of Lerna lake,
 Whose many heads out budding ever new
 Did breed him endlesse labour to subdew:
 But this same Monster much more ugly was;
 For seven great heads out of his body grew,
 An yron brest, and back of scaly bras,
 And all embrewd in bloud, his eyes did shine as glas.

XVIII

His tayle was stretched out in wondrous length,
 That to the house of heavenly gods it raught,
 And with extorted powre, and borrow'd strength,
 The ever-burning lamps from thence it braught,
 And prowdly threw to ground, as things of naught;
 And underneath his filthy feet did tread
 The sacred things, and holy heasts foretaught.
 Upon this dreadfull Beast with sevenfold head
 He sett the false Duessa, for more aw and dread.

XIX

The wofull Dwarfe, which saw his maisters fall,
 Whiles he had keeping of his grasing steed,
 And valiant knight become a caytive thrall,
 When all was past, tooke up his forlorne weed,
 His mightie armour, missing most at need;
 His silver shield, now idle maisterlesse;
 His poynant speare, that many made to bleed,
 The rueful monuments of heavinesse,
 And with them all departes, to tell his great distresse.

XX

He had not travaild long, when on the way
 He wofull Ladie, wofull Una met,
 Fast flying from that Paynims greedy pray,
 Whilest Satyrane him from pursuit did let:
 Who when her eyes she on the Dwarfe had set,
 And saw the signes, that deadly tydings spake,
 She fell to ground for sorrowfull regret,
 And lively breath her sad brest did forsake,
 Yet might her pitteous hart be seene to pant and quake.

XXI

The messenger of so unhappie newes,
 Would faine have dyde: dead was his hart within,
 Yet outwardly some little comfort shewes:
 At last recovering hart, he does begin
 To rub her temples, and to chaufe her chin,
 And everie tender part does tosse and turne.
 So hardly he the flitted life does win,
 Unto her native prison to retourne:
 Then gins her grieved ghost thus to lament and mourne.

XXII

Ye dreary instruments of dolefull sight,
 That doe this deadly spectacle behold,
 Why do ye lenger feed on loathed light,
 Or liking find to gaze on earthly mould,
 Sith cruell fates the carefull threds unfould,
 The which my life and love together tyde?
 Now let the stony dart of senselesse cold
 Perce to my hart, and pas through every side,
 And let eternall night so sad sight fro me hide.

XXIII

O lightsome day, the lampe of highest Jove,
 First made by him, mens wandring wayes to guyde,
 When darkenesse he in deepest dongeon drove,
 Henceforth thy hated face for ever hyde,
 And shut up heavens windowes shyning wyde:
 For earthly sight can nought but sorrow breed,
 And late repentance, which shall long abyde.
 Mine eyes no more on vanitie shall feed,
 But seeled up with death, shall have their deadly meed.

XXIV

Then downe againe she fell unto the ground;
 But he her quickly reared up againe:
 Thrise did she sinke adowne in deadly swownd
 And thrise he her reviv'd with busie paine,
 At last when life recover'd had the raine,
 And over-wrestled his strong enemye,
 With foltring tong, and trembling every vaine,
 Tell on (quoth she) the wofull Tragedie,
 The which these reliques sad present unto mine eie.

XXV

Tempestuous fortune hath spent all her spight,
 And thrilling sorrow throwne his utmost dart;
 Thy sad tongue cannot tell more heavy plight,
 Then that I feele, and harbour in mine hart:
 Who hath endur'd the whole, can beare each part.
 If death it be, it is not the first wound,
 That launched hath my brest with bleeding smart.
 Begin, and end the bitter balefull stound;
 If lesse then that I feare, more favour I have found.

XXVI

Then gan the Dwarfe the whole discourse declare,
 The subtill traines of Archimago old;
 The wanton loves of false Fidessa faire,
 Bought with the blood of vanquisht Paynim bold;
 The wretched payre transformed to treen mould;
 The house of Pride, and perils round about;
 The combat, which he with Sansjoy did hould;
 The lucklesse conflict with the Gyant stout,
 Wherein captiv'd, of life or death he stood in doubt.

XXVII

She heard with patience all unto the end,
 And strove to maister sorrowfull assay,
 Which greater grew, the more she did contend,
 And almost rent her tender hart in tway;
 And love fresh coles unto her fire did lay:
 For greater love, the greater is the losse.
 Was never Lady loved dearer day,
 Then she did love the knight of the Redcrosse;
 For whose deare sake so many troubles her did tosse.

XXVIII

At last when fervent sorrow slaked was,
 She up arose, resolving him to find
 Alive or dead: and forward forth doth pas,
 All as the Dwarfe the way to her assynd:
 And evermore, in constant carefull mind,
 She fed her wound with fresh renewed bale;
 Long tost with stormes, and bet with bitter wind,
 High over hills, and low adowne the dale,
 She wandred many a wood, and measurd many a vale.

XXIX

At last she chaunced by good hap to meet
 A goodly knight, faire marching by the way
 Together with his Squire, arrayed meet:
 His glitterand armour shined farre away,
 Like glauncing light of Phœbus brightest ray;
 From top to toe no place appeared bare,
 That deadly dint of steele endanger may:
 Athwart his brest a bauldrick brave he ware,
 That shynd, like twinkling stars, with stons most pretious rare.

XXX

And in the midst thereof one pretious stone
 Of wondrous worth, and eke of wondrous might,
 Shapt like a Ladies head, exceeding shone,
 Like Hesperus emongst the lesser lights,
 And strove for to amaze the weaker sights:
 Thereby his mortall blade full comely hong
 In yvory sheath, yearv'd with curious slights;
 Whose hilts were burnisht gold, and handle strong
 Of mother pearle, and buckled with a golden tong.

XXXI

His haughtie helmet, horrid all with gold,
 Both glorious brightnesse, and great terrour bred;
 For all the crest a Dragon did enfold
 With greedie pawes, and over all did spread
 His golden wings: his dreadfull hideous hed
 Close couched on the bever, seem'd to throw
 From flaming mouth bright sparkles fierie red,
 That suddaine horror to faint harts did show,
 And scaly tayle was stretcht adowne his backe full low.

XXXII

Upon the top of all his loftie crest,
 A bunch of haire discolourd diversly,
 With sprinced pearle, and gold full richly drest,
 Did shake, and seemd to daunce for jollity,
 Like to an Almond tree ymounted hye
 On top of greene Selinis all alone,
 With blossoms brave bedecked daintily;
 Whose tender locks do tremble every one
 At every little breath that under heaven is blowne.

XXXIII

His warlike shield all closely cover'd was,
 Ne might of mortall eye be ever seene;
 Not made of steele, nor of enduring bras,
 Such earthly mettals soone consumed beene;
 But all of Diamond perfect pure and cleene
 It framed was, one massie entire mould,
 Hewen out of Adamant rocke with engines keene,
 That point of speare it never percen could,
 Ne dint of direfull sword divide the substance would.

XXXIV

The same to wight he never wont disclose,
 But when as monsters huge he would dismay,
 Or daunt unequal armies of his foes,
 Or when the flying heavens he would affray;
 For so exceeding shone his glistening ray,
 That Phœbus golden face it did attain,
 As when a cloud his beames doth over-lay;
 And silver Cynthia waxed pale and faint,
 As when her face is staynd with magicke arts constraint.

XXXV

No magicke arts hereof had any might,
 Nor bloudie wordes of bold Enchaunters call;
 But all that was not such as seemd in sight,
 Before that shield did fade, and suddaine fall;
 And, when him list the raskall routes appall,
 Men into stones therewith he could transmew,
 And stones to dust, and dust to nought at all;
 And when him list the prouder lookes subdew,
 He would them gazing blind, or turne to other hew.

XXXVI

Ne let it seeme, that credence this exceeds,
 For he that made the same, was knowne right well
 To have done much more admirable deedes.
 It Merlin was, which whylome did excell
 All living wightes in might of magicke spell:
 Both shield, and sword, and armour all he wrought
 For this young Prince, when first to armes he fell;
 But when he dyde, the Faerie Queene it brought
 To Faerie lond, where yet it may be seene, if sought.

XXXVII

A gentle youth, his dearely loved Squire,
 His speare of heben wood behind him bare,
 Whose harmefull head, thrice heated in the fire,
 Had riven many a brest with pikehead square:
 A goodly person, and could menage faire
 His stubborne steed with curbed canon bit,
 Who under him did trample as the aire,
 And chaft, that any on his backe should sit;
 The yron rowels into frothy fome he bit.

XXXVIII

When as this knight nigh to the Ladie drew,
 With lovely court he gan her entertaine;
 But when he heard her answeres loth, he knew
 Some secret sorrow did her heart distraine:
 Which to allay, and calme her storming paine,
 Faire feeling words he wisely gan display,
 And for her humour fitting purpose faine,
 To tempt the cause it selfe for to bewray;
 Wherewith emmov'd, these bleeding words she gan to say.

XXXIX

What worlds delight, or joy of living speach
 Can heart, so plung'd in sea of sorrowes deep,
 And heaped with so huge misfortunes, reach?
 The carefull cold beginneth for to creepe,
 And in my heart his yron arrow steepe,
 Soone as I thinke upon my bitter bale:
 Such helplesse harmes yts better hidden keepe,
 Then rip up grieffe, where it may not availe,
 My last left comfort is, my woes to weepe and waile.

XL

Ah Ladie deare, quoth then the gentle knight,
 Well may I weene your grieffe is wondrous great;
 For wondrous great grieffe groneth in my spright,
 Whiles thus I heare you of your sorrowes treat.
 But wofull Ladie, let me you intrete
 For to unfold the anguish of your hart:
 Mishaps are maistred by advice discrete,
 And counsell mittigates the greatest smart;
 Found never helpe who never would his hurts impart.

XLI

O but (quoth she) great grieffe will not be tould,
 And can more easily be thought then said.
 Right so (quoth he), but he that never would,
 Could never: will to might gives greatest aid.
 But grieffe (quoth she) does greater grow displaid,
 If then it find not helpe, and breedes despaire.
 Despaire breedes not (quoth he) where faith is staid.
 No faith so fast (quoth she) but flesh does paire.
 Flesh may empaire (quoth he) but reason can repaire.

XLII

His goodly reason, and well guided speach,
 So deepe did settle in her gracious thought,
 That her perswaded to disclose the breach,
 Which love and fortune in her heart had wrought,
 And said; Faire Sir, I hope good hap hath brought
 You to inquire the secrets of my grieffe,
 Or that your wisdom will direct my thought,
 Or that your prowesse can me yield reliefe:
 Then heare the storie sad, which I shall tell you briefe.

XLIII

The forlorne Maiden, whom your eyes have seene
 The laughing stocke of fortunes mockeries,
 Am th' only daughter of a King and Queene,
 Whose parents deare, whilest equal destinies
 Did runne about, and their felicities
 The favourable heavens did not envy,
 Did spread their rule through all the territories,
 Which Phison and Euphrates floweth by,
 And Gehons golden waves doe wash continually.

XLIV

Till that their cruell cursed enemy,
 An huge great Dragon horrible in sight,
 Bred in the loathly lakes of Tartary,
 With murdrous ravine, and devouring might
 Their kingdome spoild, and countrey wasted quight:
 Themselves, for feare into his jawes to fall,
 He forst to castle strong to take their flight,
 Where fast embard in mighty brasen wall,
 He has them now foure yeres besiegd to make them thrall.

XLV

Full many knights adventurous and stout
 Have enterpriz'd that Monster to subdew;
 From every coast that heaven walks about,
 Have thither come the noble Martiall crew,
 That famous hard atchievements still pursew;
 Yet never any could that girlond win,
 But all still shronke, and still he greater grew:
 All they for want of faith, or guilt of sin,
 The pitteous pray of his fierce crueltie have bin.

XLVI

At last yledd with farre reported praise,
 Which flying fame throughout the world had spred,
 Of doughty knights, whom Faery land did raise,
 That noble order hight of Maidenhed,
 Forthwith to court of Gloriane I sped
 Of Gloriane great Queene of glory bright,
 Whose Kingdomes seat Cleopolis is red,
 There to obtaine some such redoubted knight,
 The Parents deare from tyrants powre deliver might.

XLVII

It was my chance (my chance was faire and good)
 There for to find a fresh unproved knight,
 Whose manly hands imbrew'd in guiltie blood
 Had never bene, ne ever by his might
 Had throwne to ground the unregarded right:
 Yet of his prowesse prooffe he since hath made
 (I witnesse am) in many a cruell fight;
 The groning ghosts of many one dismaide
 Have felt the bitter dint of his avenging blade.

XLVIII

And ye the forlorne reliques of his powre,
 His byting sword, and his devouring speare,
 Which have endured many a dreadfull stowre,
 Can speake his prowesse, that did earst you beare,
 And well could rule: now he hath left you heare
 To be the record of his ruefull losse,
 And of my dolefull disaventurous deare:
 O heavie record of the good Redcrosse,
 Where have you left your Lord, that could so well you tosse?

XLIX

Well hoped I, and faire beginnings had,
 That he my captive languor should redeeme,
 Till all unweeting, an Enchaunter bad
 His sence abusd, and made him to misdeeme
 My loyalty, not such as it did seeme;
 That rather death desire, then such despight.
 Be judge ye heavens, that all things right esteeme,
 How I him lov'd, and love with all my might,
 So thought I eke of him, and thinke I thought aright.

L

Thenceforth me desolate he quite forsooke,
 To wander, where wilde fortune would me lead,
 And other bywaies he himselfe betooke,
 Where never foot of living wight did tread,
 That brought not backe the balefull body dead;
 In which him chaunced false Duessa meete,
 Mine onely foe, mine onely deadly dread,
 Who with her witchcraft, and misseeming sweete,
 Inveigled him to follow her desires unmeete.

LI

At last by subtill sleights she him betraid
 Unto his foe, a Gyant huge and tall,
 Who him disarmed, dissolute, dismaid,
 Unwares surprised, and with mighty mall
 The monster mercilesse him made to fall,
 Whose fall did never foe before behold;
 And now in darkesome dungeon, wretched thrall,
 Remedilesse, for aie he doth him hold;
 This is my cause of griefe, more great then may be told.

LII

Ere she had ended all, she gan to faint:
 But he her comforted and faire bespake,
 Certes, Madame, ye have great cause of plaint,
 The stoutest heart, I weene, could cause to quake.
 But be of cheare, and comfort to you take:
 For till I have acquit your captive knight,
 Assure your selfe, I will you not forsake.
 His chearefull wordes reviv'd her chearelesse spright,
 So forth they went, the Dwarfe them guiding ever right.

Canto VIII

*Faire virgin, to redeeme her deare
 brings Arthur to the fight:
 Who slayes that Gyant, woundes the beast,
 and strips Duessa quight.*

I

AY me, how many perils doe enfold
 The righteous man, to make him daily fall,
 Were not that heavenly grace doth him uphold,

And stedfast truth acquite him out of all.
 Her love is firme, her care continuall,
 So oft as he through his owne foolish pride,
 Or weaknesse is to sinfull bands made thrall:
 Else should this Redcrosse knight in bands have dydd
 For whose deliverance she this Prince doth thither guide.

II

They sadly traveild thus, until they came
 Nigh to a castle builded strong and hie:
 Then cryde the Dwarfe, Lo yonder is the same,
 In which my Lord my liege doth lucklesse lie,
 Thrall to that Gyants hateful tyrannie:
 Therefore, deare Sir, your mightie powres assay.
 The noble knight alighted by and by
 From loftie steede, and bad the Ladie stay,
 To see what end of fight should him befall that day.

III

So with the Squire, th' admirer of his might,
 He marched forth towards that castle wall;
 Whose gates he found fast shut, ne living wight
 To ward the same, nor answer commers call.
 Then tooke that Squire an horne of bugle small.
 Which hong adowne his side in twisted gold
 And tassels gay. Wyde wonders over all
 Of that same hornes great vertues weren told,
 Which had approved bene in uses manifold.

IV

Was never wight that heard that shrilling sownd,
 But trembling feare did feel in every vaine;
 Three miles it might be easie heard around,
 And Ecchoes three answerd it selfe againe:
 No false enchauntment, nor deceitfull traine,
 Might once abide the terror of that blast,
 But presently was voide and wholly vaine:
 No gate so strong, no locke so firme and fast,
 But with that percing noise flew open quite, or brast.

V

The same before the Geants gate he blew,
 That all the castle quaked from the ground,

And every dore of freewill open flew.
 The Gyant selfe dismaied with that sownd,
 Where he with his Duessa dalliance fownd,
 In hast came rushing forth from inner bowre,
 With staring countenance sterne, as one astownd,
 And staggering steps, to weet, what suddein stowre,
 Had wrought that horror strange, and dar'd his dreaded powre.

VI

And after him the proud Duessa came
 High mounted on her many-headed beast;
 And every head with fyrie tongue did flame,
 And every head was crowned on his creast,
 And bloody mouthed with late cruell feast.
 That when the knight beheld, his mightie shild
 Upon his manly arme he soone adrest,
 And at him fiercely flew, with courage fild,
 And eger greedinesse through every member thrild.

VII

Therewith the Gyant buckled him to fight,
 Inflam'd with scornefull wrath and high disdaine,
 And lifting up his dreadfull club on hight,
 All arm'd with ragged snubbes and knottie graine,
 Him thought at first encounter to have slaine.
 But wise and wary was that noble Pere,
 And lightly leaping from so monstrous maine,
 Did faire avoide the violence him nere;
 It booted nought to thinke such thunderbolts to beare.

VIII

Ne shame he thought to shunne so hideous might:
 The idle stroke, enforcing furious way,
 Missing the marke of his misaymed sight
 Did fall to ground, and with his heavie sway
 So deeply dinted in the driven clay,
 That three yardes deepe a furrow up did throw:
 The sad earth wounded with so sore assay,
 Did grone full grievous underneath the blow,
 And trembling with strange feare, did like an earthquake show.

IX

As when almightie Jove, in wrathfull mood,
 To wreake the guilt of mortall sins is bent,
 Hurles forth his thundring dart with deadly food,
 Enrold in flames, and smouldring dreriment,
 Through riven cloudes and molten firmament;
 The fierce threeforked engin making way
 Both loftie towres and highest trees hath rent,
 And all that might his angry passage stay,
 And shooting in the earth, casts up a mount of clay.

X

His boystrous club, so buried in the ground,
 He could not rearen up againe so light,
 But that the knight him at avantage found,
 And whiles he strove his combred clubbe to quight
 Out of the earth, with blade all burning bright
 He smote off his left arme, which like a blocke
 Did fall to ground, depriv'd of native might;
 Large streames of bloud out of the truncked stocke
 Forth gushed, like fresh water streame from riven rocke.

XI

Dismayed with so desperate deadly wound,
 And eke impatient of unwonted paine,
 He lowdly brayd with beastly yelling sound,
 That all the fields rebellowed againe;
 As great a noyse, as when in Cymbrian plaine
 An heard of Bulles, whom kindly rage doth sting,
 Do for the milkie mothers want complaine,
 And fill the fields with troublous bellowing,
 The neighbour woods around with hollow murmur ring.

XII

That when his deare Duessa heard, and saw
 The evil stownd, that daungerd her estate,
 Unto his aide she hastily did draw
 Her dreadfull beast, who swolne with blood of late
 Came ramping forth with proud presumptuous gate,
 And threatned all his heads like flaming brands.
 But him the Squire made quickly to retrate,
 Encountring fierce with single sword in hand,
 And twixt him and his Lord did like a bulwarke stand.

XIII

The proud Duessa, full of wrathfull spight,
 And fierce disdain, to be affronted so,
 Enforst her purple beast with all her might
 That stop out of the way to overthrow,
 Scorning the let of so unequall foe:
 But nathemore would that courageous swayne
 To her yeeld passage, gainst his Lord to goe,
 But with outrageous strokes did him restraine,
 And with his bodie bard the way atwixt them twaine.

XIV

Then tooke the angrie witch her golden cup,
 Which still she bore, replete with magick artes;
 Death and despeyre did many thereof sup,
 And secret poyson through their inner parts,
 Th' eternall bale of heavie wounded harts;
 Which after charmes and some enchauntments said
 She lightly sprinkled on his weaker parts;
 Therewith his sturdie courage soone was quayd,
 And all his senses were with suddeine dread dismayd.

XV

So downe he fell before the cruell beast,
 Who on his neck his bloody clawes did seize,
 That life nigh crusht out of his panting brest:
 No powre he had to stirre, nor will to rize.
 That when the carefull knight gan well avise,
 He lightly left the foe, with whom he fought,
 And to the beast gan turne his enterprise;
 For wondrous anguish in his hart it wrought,
 To see his loved Squire into such thraldome brought.

XVI

And high advauncing his blood-thirstie blade,
 Stroke one of those deformed heads so sore,
 That of his puissance proud ensample made;
 His monstrous scalpe downe to his teeth it tore,
 And that misformed shape mis-shaped more:
 A sea of blood gusht from the gaping wound,
 That her gay garments staynd with filthy gore,
 And overflowed all the field around;
 That over shoes in bloud he waded on the ground.

XVII

Thereat he roared for exceeding paine,
 That to have heard great horror would have bred,
 And scourging th' emptie ayre with his long traine,
 Through great impatience of his grieved hed
 His gorgeous ryder from her loftie sted
 Would have cast downe, and trod in durtie myre,
 Had not the Gyant soone her succoured;
 Who all enrag'd with smart and franticke yre,
 Came hurtling in full fierce, and forst the knight retyre.

XVIII

The force which wont in two to be disperst,
 In one alone left hand he now unites,
 Which is through rage more strong than both were erst;
 With which his hideous club aloft he dites,
 And at his foe with furious rigour smites,
 That strongest Oake might seeme to overthrow:
 The stroke upon his shield so heavie lites,
 That to the ground it doubleth him full low:
 What mortall wight could ever beare so monstrous blow?

XIX

And in his fall his shield, that covered was,
 Did loose his vele by chaunce, and open flew:
 The light whereof, that heavens light did pas,
 Such blazing brightnesse through the aier threw,
 That eye mote not the same endure to vew.
 Which when the Gyaunt spyde with staring eye,
 He downe let fall his arme, and soft withdrew
 His weapon huge, that heaved was on hye
 For to have slaine the man, that on the ground did lye.

XX

And eke the fruitfull-headed beast, amazd
 At flashing beames of that sunshiny shield,
 Became starke blind, and all his sences daz'd,
 That downe he tumbled on the durtie field,
 And seem'd himselfe as conquered to yield.
 Whom when his maistresse proud perceiv'd to fall,
 Whiles yet his feeble feet for faintnesse reeld,
 Unto the Gyant loudly she gan call,
 O helpe Orgoglio, helpe, or else we perish all.

XXI

At her so pitteous cry was much amoov'd
 Her champion stout, and for to ayde his frend,
 Againe his wonted angry weapon proof'd:
 But all in vaine: for he has read his end
 In that bright shield, and all their forces spend
 Themselves in vaine: for since that glauncing sight,
 He had no powre to hurt, nor to defend;
 As where th' Almightyes lightning brond does light,
 It dimmes the dazed eyen, and daunts the senses quight.

XXII

Whom when the Prince, to battell new addrest,
 And threatning high his dreadfull stroke did see,
 His sparkling blade about his head he blest,
 And smote off quite his right leg by the knee,
 That downe he tumbled; as an aged tree,
 High growing on the top of rocky clift,
 Whose hartstrings with keene steele nigh hewen be,
 The mightie trunk halfe rent, with ragged rift
 Doth roll adowne the rocks, and fall with fearefull drift.

XXIII

Or as a Castle reared high and round,
 By subtile engins and malicious slight
 Is undermined from the lowest ground,
 And her foundation forst, and feebled quight,
 At last downe falles, and with her heaped hight
 Her hastie ruine does more heavie make,
 And yields it selfe unto the victours might;
 Such was this Gyants fall, that seemd to shake
 The stedfast globe of earth, as it for feare did quake.

XXIV

The knight then lightly leaping to the pray,
 With mortall steele him smot againe so sore,
 That headlesse his unwelody bodie lay,
 All wallowd in his owne fowle bloody gore,
 Which flowed from his wounds in wondrous store.
 But soone as breath out of his breast did pas,
 That huge great body, which the Gyaunt bore,
 Was vanisht quite, and of that monstrous mas
 Was nothing left, but like an emptie bladder was.

XXV

Whose grievous fall, when false Duessa spide,
 Her golden cup she cast unto the ground,
 And crowned mitre rudely threw aside;
 Such percing grieffe her stubborne hart did wound,
 That she could not endure that dolefull stound,
 But leaving all behind her, fled away;
 The light-foot Squire her quickly turnd around,
 And by hard meanes enforcing her to stay,
 So brought unto his Lord, as his deserved pray.

XXVI

The royall Virgin which beheld from farre,
 In pensive plight, and sad perplexitie,
 The whole atchievement of this doubtfull warre,
 Came running fast to greet his victorie,
 With sober gladnesse, and myld modestie,
 And with sweet joyous cheare him thus bespake:
 Faire braunch of noblesse, flowre of chevalrie,
 That with your worth the world amazed make,
 How shall I quite the paines ye suffer for my sake?

XXVII

And you fresh budd of vertue springing fast,
 Whom these sad eyes saw nigh unto deaths dore,
 What hath poore Virgin for such perill past
 Wherewith you to reward? Accept therefore
 My simple selfe, and service evermore;
 And he that high does sit, and all things see
 With equall eyes, their merites to restore,
 Behold what ye this day have done for mee,
 And what I cannot quite, requite with usuree.

XXVIII

But sith the heavens, and your faire handeling
 Have made you master of the field this day,
 Your fortune maister eke with governing,
 And well begun end all so well, I pray.
 Ne let that wicked woman scape away;
 For she it is, that did my Lord bethrall,
 My dearest Lord, and deepe in dongeon lay,
 Where he his better dayes hath wasted all.
 O heare, how piteous he to you for ayd does call.

XXIX

Forthwith he gave in charge unto his Squire,
 That scarlot whore to keepen carefully;
 Whiles he himselfe with greedie great desire
 Into the Castle entred forcibly,
 Where living creature none he did espye;
 Then gan he lowdly through the house to call:
 But no man car'd to answer to his crye.
 There raignd a solemne silence over all,
 Nor voice was heard, nor wight was seene in bowre or hall.

XXX

At last with creeping crooked pace forth came
 An old old man, with beard as white as snow,
 That on a staffe his feeble steps did frame,
 And guide his wearie gate both to and fro:
 For his eye sight him failed long ygo,
 And on his arme a bounch of keyes he bore,
 The which unused rust did overgrow:
 Those were the keyes of every inner dore,
 But he could not them use, but kept them still in store.

XXXI

But very uncouth sight was to behold,
 How he did fashion his untoward pace,
 For as he forward moov'd his footing old,
 So backward still was turnd his wrinckled face,
 Unlike to men, who ever as they trace,
 Both feet and face one way are wont to lead.
 This was the auncient keeper of that place,
 And foster father of the Gyant dead;
 His name Ignaro did his nature right ahead.

XXXII

His reverend haire and holy gravitie
 The knight much honor'd, as beseemed well,
 And gently askt, where all the people bee,
 Which in that stately building wont to dwell.
 Who answerd him full soft, he could not tell.
 Again he askt, where that same knight was layd,
 Whom great Orgoglio with his puissance fell
 Had made his caytive thrall, againe he sayde,
 He could not tell: ne ever other answer made.

XXXIII

Then asked he, which way he in might pas:
He could not tell, againe he answered.
Thereat the curteous knight displeasd was,
And said, Old sire, it seemes thou hast not red
How ill it sits with that same silver hed,
In vaine to mocke, or mockt in vaine to bee:
But if thou be, as thou art pourtrahed
With natures pen, in ages grave degree,
Aread in graver wise, what I demaund of thee.

XXXIV

His answere likewise was, he could not tell.
Whose sencelesse speach, and doted ignorance
When as the noble Prince had marked well,
He ghest his nature by his countenance,
And calmd his wrath with goodly temperance.
Then to him stepping, from his arme did reach
Those keys, and made himselfe free enterance.
Each dore he opened without any breach;
There was no barre to stop, nor foe him to empeach.

XXXV

There all within full rich arrayd he found,
With royall arras and resplendent gold.
And did with store of every thing abound,
That greatest Princes presence might behold.
But all the floore (too filthy to be told)
With bloud of guiltlesse babes, and innocents trew,
Which there were slaine, as sheepe out of the fold,
Defiled was, that dreadfull was to vew,
And sacred ashes over it was strowed new.

XXXVI

And there beside of marble stone was built
An Altare, carv'd with cunning ymagery,
On which true Christians bloud was often spilt,
And holy Martyrs often doen to dye,
With cruell malice and strong tyranny:
Whose blessed sprites from underneath the stone
To God for vengeance cryde continually,
And with great griefe were often heard to grone,
That hardest heart would bleede, to hear their piteous mone.

XXXVII

Through every rowme he sought, and every bowr,
 But no where could he find that woful thrall:
 At last he came unto an yron doore,
 That fast was lockt, but key found not at all
 Emongst that bounch, to open it withall;
 But in the same a little grate was pight,
 Through which he sent his voyce, and lowd did call
 With all his powre, to weet, if living wight
 Were housed there within, whom he enlargen might.

XXXVIII

Therewith an hollow, dreary, murmuring voyce
 These pitteous plaints and dolours did resound;
 O who is that, which brings me happy choyce
 Of death, that here lye dying every stound,
 Yet live perforce in balefull darkenesse bound?
 For now three Moones have changed thrice their hew,
 And have been thrice hid underneath the ground,
 Since I the heavens chearfull face did vew,
 O welcome thou, that doest of death bring tydings trew.

XXXIX

Which when that Champion heard, with percing point
 Of pittie deare his hart was thrilled sore,
 And trembling horror ran through every joynt
 For ruth of gentle knight so fowle forlore:
 Which shaking off, he rent that yron dore,
 With furious force, and indignation fell;
 Where entred in, his foot could find no flore,
 But all a deepe descent, as darke as hell,
 That breathed ever forth a filthie banefull smell.

XL

But neither darkenesse fowle, nor filthy bands,
 Nor noyous smell his purpose could withhold,
 (Entire affection hateth nicer hands)
 But that with constant zeale, and courage bold,
 After long paines and labours manifold,
 He found the meanes that Prisoner up to reare;
 Whose feeble thighes, unhable to uphold
 His pined corse, him scarce to light could beare.
 A ruefull spectacle of death and ghastly drere.

XLI

His sad dull eyes deepe sunck in hollow pits,
 Could not endure th' unwonted sunne to view;
 His bare thin cheekes for want of better bits,
 And empty sides deceived of their dew,
 Could make a stony hart his hap to rew;
 His rawbone armes, whose mighty brawned bowrs
 Were wont to rive steele plates, and helmets hew,
 Were cleane consum'd, and all his vitall powres
 Decayd, and all his flesh shronk up like withered flowres.

XLII

Whom when his Lady saw, to him she ran
 With hasty joy: to see him made her glad,
 And sad to view his visage pale and wan,
 Who earst in flowres of freshest youth was clad.
 Tho when her well of teares she wasted had,
 She said, Ah dearest Lord, what evill starre
 On you hath fround, and pourd his influence bad,
 That of your selfe ye thus berobbed arre,
 And this misseeming hew your manly looks doth marre?

XLIII

But welcome now my Lord, in wele or woe,
 Whose presence I have lackt too long a day;
 And fie on Fortune mine avowed foe,
 Whose wrathful wreaques them selves doe now alay.
 And for these wrongs shall treble penaunce pay
 Of treble good: good growes of evils priefe.
 The chearelesse man, whom sorrow did dismay,
 Had no delight to treaten of his griefe;
 His long endured famine needed more reliefe.

XLIV

Faire Lady, then said that victorious knight,
 The things, that grievous were to do, or beare,
 Them to renew, I wote, breeds no delight;
 Best musicke breeds delight in loathing eare:
 But th' onely good, that growes of passed feare,
 Is to be wise, and ware of like agein.
 This dayes ensample hath this lesson deare
 Deepe written in my heart with yron pen,
 That blisse may not abide in state of mortall men.

XLV

Henceforth sir knight, take to you wonted strength,
 And maister these mishaps with patient might;
 Loe where your foe lyes stretcht in monstrous length,
 And loe that wicked woman in your sight,
 The roote of all your care, and wretched plight,
 Now in your powre, to let her live, or dye.
 To do her dye (quoth Una) were despight,
 And shame t'avenge so weake an enemy;
 But spoile her of her scarlot robe, and let her fly.

XLVI

So as she bad, that witch they disaraid,
 And robd of royall robes, and purple pall,
 And ornaments that richly were displaid;
 Ne spared they to strip her naked all.
 Then when they had despoiled her tire and call,
 Such as she was, their eyes might her behold,
 That her misshaped parts did them appall,
 A loathly, wrinkled hag, ill favoured, old,
 Whose secret filth good manners biddeth not be told.

XLIX

Which when the knights beheld, amazd they were,
 And wondred at so fowle deformed wight.
 Such then (said Una) as she seemeth here,
 Such is the face of falshood, such the sight
 Of fowle Duessa, when her borrowed light
 Is laid away, and counterfesaunce knowne.
 Thus when they had the witch disrobed quight,
 And all her filthy feature open showne,
 They let her goe at will, and wander wayes unknowne.

L

She flying fast from heavens hated face,
 And from the world that her discovered wide,
 Fled to the wastfull wildernesse apace,
 From living eyes her open shame to hide,
 And lurkt in rocks and caves long unespide.
 But that faire crew of knights, and Una faire
 Did in that castle afterwards abide,
 To rest them selves, and weary powres repaire,
 Where store they found of all that dainty was and rare.

Canto IX

*His loves and lignage Arthur tells:
the Knights knit friendly hands:
Sir Trevisan flies from Despayre,
whom Redcrosse Knight withstands.*

I

O GOODLY golden chaine, wherewith yfere
The vertues linked are in lovely wize:
And noble mindes of yore allyed were,
In brave poursuit of chevalrous emprize,
That none did others safety despize,
Nor aid envy to him, in need that stands,
But friendly each did others prayse devize,
How to advaunce with favourable hands,
As this good Prince redeemd the Redcrosse knight from bands.

II

Who when their powres empaired through labour long,
With dew repast they had recured well,
And that weake captive wight now wexed strong,
Them list no lenger there at leasure dwell,
But forward fare, as their adventures fell,
But ere they parted, Una faire besought
That straunger knight his name and nation tell;
Least so great good, as he for her had wrought,
Should die unknown, and buried be in thanklesse thought.

III

Faire virgin (said the Prince) ye me require
A thing without the compas of my wit:
For both the lignage and the certain Sire,
From which I sprong, from me are hidden yit.
For all so soone as life did me admit
Into this world, and shewed heavens light,
From mothers pap I taken was unfit:
And streight deliver'd to a Faery knight,
To be upbrought in gentle thewes and martiall might.

IV

Unto old Timon he me brought bylive,
Old Timon, who in youthly yeares hath beene
In warlike feates th'expertest man alive,

And is the wisest now on earth I weene;
 His dwelling is low in a valley greene,
 Under the foot of Rauran mossy hore,
 From whence the river Dee as silver cleene,
 His tomling billowes roll with gentle rore:
 There all my dayes he traind me up in vertuous lore.

V

Thither the great magicien Merlin came,
 As was his use, ofttimes to visit me:
 For he had charge my discipline to frame,
 And Tutours nouriture to oversee.
 Him oft and oft I askt in privitie,
 Of what loines and what lignage I did spring:
 Whose aunswere bad me still assured bee,
 That I was sonne and heire unto a king,
 As time in her just terme the truth to light should bring.

VI

Well worthy impe, said then the Lady gent,
 And pupill fit for such a Tutours hand.
 But what adventure, or what high intent
 Hath brought you hither into Faery land,
 Aread Prince Arthur, crowne of Martiall band?
 Full hard it is (quoth he) to read aright
 The course of heavenly cause, or understand
 The secret meaning of th' eternall might,
 That rules mens wayes, and rules the thoughts of living wight.

VII

For whether he through fatall deepe foresight
 Me hither sent, for cause to me unghest,
 Or that fresh bleeding wound, which day and night
 Whilome doth rancle in my riven brest,
 With forced fury following his behest,
 Me hither brought by wayes yet never found;
 You to have helpt I hold myself yet blest.
 Ah curteous knight (quoth she) what secret wound
 Could ever find, to grieve the gentlest hart on ground?

VIII

Deare dame (quoth he) you sleeping sparkes awake,
 Which troubled once, into huge flames will grow,

Ne ever will their fervent fury slake,
 Till living moysture into smoke do flow,
 And wasted life do lye in ashes low.
 Yet sithens silence lesseneth not my fire,
 But told it flames, and hidden it does glow;
 I will revele what ye so much desire:
 Ah Love, lay down thy bow, the whiles I may respire.

IX

It was in freshest flowre of youthly yeares,
 When courage first does creepe in manly chest,
 Then first the coale of kindly heat appeares
 To kindle love in every living brest;
 But me had warnd old Timons wise behest,
 Those creeping flames by reason to subdew,
 Before their rage grew to so great unrest,
 As miserable lovers use to rew,
 Which still wex old in woe, whiles woe still wexeth new.

X

That idle name of love, and lovers life,
 As losse of time, and vertues enemy,
 I ever scornd, and joyd to stirre up strife,
 In midst of their mournfull Tragedy,
 Ay wont to laugh, when them I heard to cry,
 And blow the fire, which them to ashes brent:
 Their God himselfe, griev'd at my libertie,
 Shot many a dart at me with fiers intent,
 But I them warded all with wary government.

XI

But all in vaine: no fort can be so strong,
 Ne fleshly brest can armed be so sound,
 But will at last be wonne with battrie long,
 Or unawares at disadvantage found:
 Nothing is sure, that growes on earthly ground:
 And who most trustes in arme of fleshly might,
 And boasts in beauties chaine not to be bound,
 Doth soonest fall in disaventrous fight,
 And yeeldes his caytive neck to victours most despight.

XII

Ensample make of him your haplesse joy,
 And of my selfe now mated, as ye see;
 Whose prouder vaunt that proud avenging boy
 Did soone pluck downe and curbd my libertie.
 For on a day, prickt forth with jollitie
 Of looser life, and heat of hardiment,
 Raunging the forest wide on courser free,
 The fields, the floods, the heavens with one consent
 Did seeme to laugh on me, and favour mine intent.

XIII

For-wearied with my sports, I did alight
 From loftie steed, and downe to sleepe me layd;
 The verdant gras my couch did goodly dight,
 And pillow was my helmet faire displayd:
 Whiles every sence the humour sweet embayd,
 And slombring soft my hart did steale away,
 Me seemed, by my side a royall Mayd
 Her daintie limbes full softly down did lay:
 So faire a creature yet saw never sunny day.

XIV

Most goodly glee and lovely blandishment
 She to me made, and bad me love her deare;
 For dearely sure her love was to me bent,
 As when just time expired should appeare.
 But whether dreames delude, or true it were,
 Was never hart so ravisht with delight,
 Ne living man like words did ever heare,
 As she to me delivered all that night;
 And at her parting said, She Queene of Faeries hight.

XV

When I awoke, and found her place devoyd,
 And nought but pressed gras, where she had lyen,
 I sorrowed all so much as earst I joyd,
 And washed all her place with watry eyen.
 From that day forth I lov'd that face divine;
 From that day forth I cast in carefull mind
 To seeke her out with labour, and long tyne,
 And never vovd to rest till her I find,
 Nine monethes I seeke in vain, yet ni'll that vow unbind.

XVI

Thus as he spake, his visage wexed pale,
 And chaunge of hew great passion did bewray;
 Yet still he strove to cloke his inward bale,
 And hide the smoke that did his fire display,
 Till gentle Una thus to him gan say;
 O happy Queene of Faeries, that has found
 Mongst many, one that with his prowesse may
 Defend thine honour, and thy foes confound:
 True Loves are often sown, but seldom grow on ground.

XVII

Thine, O then, said the gentle Recrosse knight,
 Next to that Ladies love, shal be the place,
 O fairest virgin, full of heavenly light,
 Whose wondrous faith exceeding earthly race,
 Was firmest fixt in mine extremest case.
 And you, my Lord, the Patrone of my life,
 Of that great Queene may well gaine worthy grace:
 For onely worthy you through prowes priefe,
 Yf living man mote worthie be, to be her lief.

XVIII

So diversly discoursing of their loves,
 The golden Sunne his glistring head gan shew,
 And sad remembraunce now the Prince amoves
 With fresh desire his voyage to pursew;
 Als Una earnd her traveill to renew.
 Then those two knights, fast friendship for to bynd,
 And love establish each to other trew,
 Gave goodly gifts, the signes of gratefull mynd,
 And eke the pledges firme, right hands together joynd.

XIX

Prince Arthur gave a boxe of Diamond sure,
 Embowd with gold and gorgeous ornament,
 Wherein were closd few drops of liquor pure,
 Of wondrous worth, and vertue excellent,
 That any wound could heale incontinent:
 Which to requite, the Redcrosse knight him gave
 A booke, wherein his Saveours testament
 Was writ with golden letters rich and brave;
 A worke of wondrous grace, and able soules to save.

XX

Thus beene they parted, Arthur on his way
 To seeke his love, and th' other for to fight
 With Unaes foe, that all her realme did pray.
 But she now weighing the decayed plight,
 And shrunken synewes of her chosen knight,
 Would not a while her forward course pursew,
 Ne bring him forth in face of dreadfull fight,
 Till he recovered had his former hew:
 For him to be yet weake and wearie well she knew.

XXI

So as they traveild, lo they gan espy
 An armed knight towards them gallop fast,
 That seemed from some feared foe to fly,
 Or other griesly thing, that him aghast.
 Still as he fled, his eye was backward cast,
 As if his feare still followed him behind;
 Als flew his steed, as he his bands had brast,
 And with his winged heeles did tread the wind,
 As he had beene a fole of Pegasus his kind.

XXII

Nigh as he drew, they might perceive his head
 To be unarmd, and curld uncombed heares
 Upstaring stiffe, dismayd with uncouth dread;
 Nor drop of bloud in all his face appeares
 Nor life in limbe: and to increase his feares
 In fowle reproch of knighthoods faire degree,
 About his neck an hempen rope he weares,
 That with his glistring armes does ill agree;
 But he of rope or armes has now no memoree.

XXIII

The Redcrosse knight toward him crossed fast,
 To weet, what mister wight was so dismayd:
 There him he finds all sencelesse and aghast,
 That of him selfe he seemd to be afraid;
 Whom hardly he from flying forward stayd,
 Till he these wordes to him deliver might;
 Sir knight, aread who hath ye thus arayd,
 And eke from whom make ye this hasty flight:
 For never knight I saw in such misseeming plight.

XXIV

He answerd nought at all, but adding new
 Feare to his first amazment, staring wide
 With stony eyes, and hartlesse hollow hew,
 Astonisht stood, as one that had aspide
 Infernall furies, with their chaines untide.
 Him yet againe, and yet againe bespake
 The gentle knight; who nought to him replide,
 But trembling every joint did inly quake,
 And foltring tongue at last these words seemd forth to shake.

XXV

For Gods deare love, Sir knight, do me not stay;
 For loe he comes, he comes fast after mee.
 Eft looking back would faine have runne away;
 But he him forst to stay, and tellen free
 The secret cause of his perplexitie:
 Yet nathemore by his bold hartie speach
 Could his bloud-frosen hart emboldned bee,
 But through his boldnesse rather feare did reach,
 Yet forst, at last he made through silence suddein breach.

XXVI

And am I now in safetie sure (quoth he)
 From him, that would have forced me to dye?
 And is the point of death now turnd fro mee,
 That I may tell this haplesse history?
 Feare nought: (quoth he) no daunger now is nye.
 Then shall I you recount a ruefull cace,
 (Said he) the which with this unlucky eye
 I late beheld, and had not greater grace
 Me reft from it, had bene partaker of the place.

XXVII

I lately chaunst (would I had never chaunst)
 With a faire knight to keepen companee,
 Sir Terwin hight, that well himselfe advaunst
 In all affaires, and was both bold and free,
 But not so happy as mote happy bee:
 He lov'd, as was his lot, a Ladie gent,
 That him againe lov'd in the least degree:
 For she was proud, and of too high intent,
 And joyd to see her lover languish and lament.

XXVIII

From whom returning sad and comfortlesse,
 As on the way together we did fare,
 We met that villen (God from him me blesse)
 That cursed wight, from whom I scapt whyleare,
 A man of hell, that cald himselfe Despaire:
 Who first us greets, and after faire areedes
 Of tydings strange, and of adventures rare:
 So creeping close, as Snake in hidden weedes,
 Inquireth of our states, and of our knightly deedes.

XXIX

Which when he knew, and felt our feeble harts
 Embost with bale, and bitter byting grieffe,
 Which love had launched with his deadly darts,
 With wounding words and termes of foule reprieffe,
 He pluckt from us all hope of due relieffe,
 That earst us held in love of lingring life;
 Then hopelesse hartlesse, gan the cunning thiefe
 Perswade us die, to stint all further strife:
 To me he lent this rope, to him a rustie knife.

XXX

With which sad instrument of hasty death,
 That wofull lover, loathing lenger light,
 A wide way made to let forth living breath.
 But I more fearfull, or more luckie wight,
 Dismayd with that deformed dismall sight,
 Fled fast away, halfe dead with dying feare:
 Ne yet assur'd of life by you, Sir knight,
 Whose like infirmitie like chaunce may beare:
 But God you never let his charmed speches heare.

XXXI

How may a man (said he) with idle speach
 Be wonne, to spoyle the Castle of his health?
 I wote (quoth he) whom triall late did teach,
 That like would not for all this worldes wealth:
 His subtill tongue, like dropping honny, mealt'h
 Into the hart, and searcheth every vaine;
 That ere one be aware, by secret stealth
 His powre is reft, and weaknesse doth remaine.
 O never Sir desire to try his guilefull traine.

XXXII

Certes (said he) hence shall I never rest,
 Till I that treacherours art have heard and tride;
 And you Sir knight, whose name mote I request,
 Of grace do me unto his cabin guide.
 I that hight Trevisan (quoth he) will ride,
 Against my liking backe, to do you grace:
 But not for gold nor glee will I abide
 By you, when ye arrive in that same place
 For lever had I die, then see his deadly face.

XXXIII

Ere long they come, where that same wicked wight
 His dwelling has, low in an hollow cave,
 Farre underneath a craggie clift ypight,
 Darke, dolefull, drearie, like a greedy grave,
 That still for carrion carcasses doth crave:
 On top whereof aye dwelt the ghastly Owle,
 Shrieking his balefull note, which ever drave
 Far from that haunt all other chearefull fowle;
 And all about it wandring ghostes did waile and howle.

XXXIV

And all about old stockes and stubs of trees,
 Whereon nor fruit nor leafe was ever seene,
 Did hang upon the ragged rocky knees;
 On which had many wretches hanged beene,
 Whose carcasses were scattered on the greene,
 And throwne about the clifts. Arrived there,
 That bare-head knight for dread and dolefull teene,
 Would faine have fled, ne durst approchen neare,
 But th' other forst him stay, and comforted in feare.

XXXV

That darkesome cave they enter, where they find
 That cursed man, low sitting on the ground,
 Musing full sadly in his sullein mind;
 His griesie lockes, long growen, and unbound,
 Disordred hong about his shoulders round,
 And hid his face; through which his hollow eyne
 Lookt deadly dull, and stared as astound;
 His raw-bone cheekes, through penurie and pine,
 Were shronke into his jawes, as he did never dine.

XXXVI

His garment nought but many ragged clouts,
 With thornes together pind and patched was,
 The which his naked sides he wrapt abouts;
 And him beside there lay upon the gras
 A drearie corse, whose life away did pas,
 All wallowed in his owne yet luke-warme blood,
 That from his wound yet welled fresh alas;
 In which a rustie knife fast fixed stood,
 And made an open passage for the gushing flood.

XXXVII

Which piteous spectacle, approving trew
 The wofull tale that Trevisan had told,
 When as the gentle Redcrosse knight did vew,
 With firie zeale he burnt in courage bold,
 Him to avenge, before his bloud were cold,
 And to the villein said, Thou damned wight,
 The author of this fact we here behold,
 What justice can but judge against thee right,
 With thine owne bloud to price his bloud, here shed in sight.

XXXVIII

What franticke fit (quoth he) hath thus distraught
 Thee, foolish man, so rash a doome to give?
 What justice ever other judgement taught,
 But he should die, who merites not to live?
 None else to death this man despayring drive,
 But his owne guiltie mind deserving death.
 Is then unjust to each his due to give?
 Or let him die, that loatheth living breath?
 Or let him die at ease, that liveth here uneth?

XXXIX

Who travels by the wearie wandring way,
 To come unto his wished home in haste,
 And meetes a flood, that doth his passage stay,
 Is not great grace to helpe him over past,
 Or free his feet that in the myre sticke fast?
 Most envious man, that grieves at neighbours good,
 And fond, that joyest in the woe thou hast,
 Why wilt not let him passe, that long hath stood
 Upon the banke, yet wilt thy selfe not passe the flood?

XL

He there does now enjoy eternall rest
 And happy ease, which thou dost want and crave,
 And further from it daily wanderest:
 What if some little paine the passage have,
 That makes fraile flesh to feare the bitter wave?
 Is not short paine well borne, that brings long ease,
 And layes the soule to sleepe in quiet grave?
 Sleepe after toyle, port after stormie seas,
 Ease after warre, death after life does greatly please.

XLI

The knight much wondred at his suddeine wit,
 And said, The terme of life is limited,
 Ne may a man prolong, nor shorten it;
 The souldier may not move from watchfull sted,
 Nor leave his stand, untill his Captaine bed.
 Who life did limit by almightie doome
 (Quoth he) knowes best the termes established;
 And he, that points the Centonell his roome,
 Doth license him depart at sound of morning droome.

XLII

Is not his deed, what ever thing is donne
 In heaven and earth? did not he all create
 To die againe? all ends that was begonne.
 Their times in his eternall booke of fate
 Are written sure, and have their certaine date.
 Who then can strive with strong necessitie,
 That holds the world in his still chaunging state,
 Or shunne the death ordaynd by destinie?
 When houre of death is come, let none aske whence, nor why.

XLIII

The lenger life, I wote the greater sin,
 The greater sin, the greater punishment:
 All those great battels, which thou boasts to win,
 Through strife, and blood-shed, and avengement,
 Now praysd, hereafter deare thou shalt repent:
 For life must life, and blood must blood repay.
 Is not enough thy evill life forespent?
 For he that once hath missed the right way,
 The further he doth goe, the further he doth stray.

XLIV

Then do no further goe, no further stray,
 But here lie downe, and to thy rest betake,
 Th' ill to prevent, that life ensewen may.
 For what hath life, that may it loved make,
 And gives not rather cause it to forsake?
 Feare, sicknesse, age, losse, labour, sorrow, strife,
 Paine, hunger, cold, that makes the hart to quake;
 And ever fickle fortune rageth rife,
 All which, and thousands mo do make a loathsome life.

XLV

Thou wretched man, of death hast greatest need,
 If in true ballance thou wilt weigh thy state:
 For never knight, that dared warlike deede,
 More lucklesse disaventures did amate:
 Witnessse the dungeon deepe, wherein of late
 Thy life shut up, for death so oft did call;
 And though good lucke prolonged hath thy date,
 Yet death then would the like mishaps forestall,
 Into the which hereafter thou maiest happen fall.

XLVI

Why then doest thou, O man of sin, desire
 To draw thy dayes forth to their last degree?
 Is not the measure of thy sinfull hire
 High heaped up with huge iniquitie,
 Against the day of wrath, to burden thee?
 Is not enough, that to this Ladie milde
 Thou falsed hast thy faith with perjurie,
 And sold thy selfe to serve Duessa vilde,
 With whom in all abuse thou hast thy selfe defilde?

XLVII

Is not he just, that all this doth behold
 From highest heaven, and beares an equall eye?
 Shall he thy sins up in his knowledge fold,
 And guilty be of thine impietie?
 Is not his law, Let every sinner die:
 Die shall all flesh? what then must needs be donne,
 Is it not better to doe willinglie,
 Then linger, till the glasse be all out ronne?
 Death is the end of woes: die soone, O faeries sonne.

XLVIII

The knight was much enmoved with his speach,
 That as a sword's point through his hart did perse,
 And in his conscience made a secret breach,
 Well knowing true all that he did rehearse,
 And to his fresh remembrance did reverse
 The ugly view of his deformed crimes,
 That all his manly powers it did disperse,
 As he were charmed with inchaunted rimes,
 That oftentimes he quakt, and fainted oftentimes.

XLIX

In which amazement, when the Miscreant
 Perceived him to waver weake and fraile,
 Whiles trembling horror did his conscience dant,
 And hellish anguish did his soule assaile,
 To drive him to despaire, and quite to quail,
 He shew'd him painted in a table plaine,
 The damned ghosts, that doe in torments waile,
 And thousand feends that doe them endlesse paine
 With fire and brimstone, which for ever shall remaine.

L

The sight whereof so throughly him dismaid,
 That nought but death before his eyes he saw,
 And ever burning wrath before him laid,
 By righteous sentence of th' Almightyes law.
 Then gan the villein him to overcraw,
 And brought unto him swords, ropes, poison, fire,
 And all that might him to perdition draw;
 And bad him choose, what death he would desire:
 For death was due to him, that had provokt Gods ire.

LI

But when as none of them he saw him take,
 He to him raught a dagger sharpe and keene,
 And gave it him in hand: his hand did quake,
 And tremble like a leafe of Aspin greene,
 And troubled blood through his pale face was seene
 To come, and goe with tidings from the heart,
 As it a running messenger had beene.
 At last resolv'd to worke his finall smart,
 He lifted up his hand, that backe againe did start.

LII

Which whenas Una saw, through every vaine
 The crudled cold ran to her well of life,
 As in a swowne: but soone reliv'd againe,
 Out of his hand she snatcht the cursed knife,
 And threw it to the ground, enraged rife,
 And to him said, Fie, fie, faint harted knight,
 What meanest thou by this reprochfull strife?
 Is this the battell, which thou vauntst to fight
 With that fire-mouthed Dragon, horrible and bright?

LIII

Come, come away, fraile, seely, fleshly wight,
 Ne let vaine words bewitch thy manly hart,
 Ne divelish thoughts dismay thy constant spright.
 In heavenly mercies hast thou not a part?
 Why shouldst thou then despeire, that chosen art?
 Where justice growes, there grows eke greater grace,
 The which doth quench the brond of hellish smart,
 And that accurst hand-writing doth deface.
 Arise, Sir knight, arise, and leave this cursed place.

LIV

So up he rose, and thence amounted streight.
 Which when the carle beheld, and saw his guest
 Would safe depart for all his subtill sleight,
 He chose an halter from among the rest,
 And with it hung himselfe, unbid unblest.
 But death he could not worke himselfe thereby;
 For thousand times he so himselfe had drest,
 Yet nathesle it could not doe him die,
 Till he should die his last, that is, eternally.

Canto X

*Her faithfull knight faire Una brings
 to house of Holinesse,
 Where he is taught repentance, and
 the way to heavenly blesse.*

I

WHAT man is he, that boasts of fleshly might
 And vaine assurance of mortality,
 Which all so soone as it doth come to fight

Against spirituall foes, yeelds by and by,
 Or from the field most cowardly doth fly?
 Ne let the man ascribe it to his skill,
 That thorough grace hath gained victory.
 If any strength we have, it is to ill,
 But all the good is Gods, both power and eke will.

II

But that, which lately hapned, Una saw,
 That this her knight was feeble, and too faint;
 And all his sinews woxen weake and raw,
 Through long enprisonment, and hard constraint,
 Which he endured in his late restraint,
 That yet he was unfit for bloody fight:
 Therefore to cherish him with diets daint,
 She cast to bring him, where he chearen might.
 Till he recovered had his late decayed plight.

III

There was an auntient house not farre away,
 Renowmd throughout the world for sacred lore,
 And pure unspotted life: so well they say
 It governd was, and guided evermore,
 Through wisdom of a matrone grave and hore
 Whose onely joy was to relieve the needes
 Of wretched soules, and helpe the helpelesse pore:
 All night she spent in bidding of her bedes,
 And all the day in doing good and godly deedes.

IV

Dame Coelia men did her call, as thought
 From heaven to come, or thither to arise,
 The mother of three daughters, well upbrought
 In goodly thewes, and godly exercise:
 The eldest two, most sober, chast, and wise,
 Fidelia and Speranza virgins were,
 Though spousd, yet wanting wedlocks solemnize:
 But faire Charissa to a lovely fere
 Was lincked, and by him had many pledges dere.

V

Arrived there, the dore they find fast lockt;
 For it was warely watched night and day,

For feare of many foes: but when they knockt,
 The Porter opened unto them streight way:
 He was an aged syre, all hory gray,
 With lookes full lowly cast, and gate full slow,
 Wont on a staffe his feeble steps to stay,
 Hight Humiltà. They passe in stouping low;
 For streight and narrow was the way which he did show.

VI

Each goodly thing is hardest to begin,
 But entred in a spacious court they see,
 Both plaine, and pleasant to be walked in,
 Where them does meete a francklin faire and free,
 And entertaines with comely courteous glee,
 His name was Zele, that him right well became,
 For in his speeches and behaviour hee
 Did labour lively to expresse the same,
 And gladly did them guide, till to the Hall they came.

VII

There fairely them receives a gentle Squire,
 Of milde demeanure, and rare courtesie,
 Right cleanly clad in comely sad attire;
 In word and deede that shew'd great modestie,
 And knew his good to all of each degree,
 Hight Reverence. He them with speeches meet
 Does faire entreat; no courting nicetie,
 But simple true, and eke unfained sweet,
 As might become a Squire so great persons to greet.

VIII

And afterwards them to his Dame he leads,
 That aged Dame, the Ladie of the place:
 Who all this while was busy at her beades:
 Which doen, she up arose with seemely grace,
 And toward them full matronely did pace.
 Where when that fairest Una she beheld,
 Whom well she knew to spring from heavenly race,
 Her hart with joy unwonted inly sweld,
 As feeling wondrous comfort in her weaker eld.

IX

And her embracing said, O happie earth,
 Whereon thy innocent feet doe ever tread,
 Most vertuous virgin borne of heavenly berth,
 That, to redeeme thy woefull parents head,
 From tyrans rage, and ever dying dread,
 Hast wandred through the world now long a day;
 Yet ceapest not thy weary soles to lead,
 What grace hath thee now hither brought this way?
 Or doen thy feeble feet unweeting hither stray?

X

Strange thing it is an errant knight to see
 Here in this place, or any other wight,
 That hither turnes his steps. So few there bee
 That chose the narrow path, or seeke the right:
 All keepe the broad high way, and take delight
 With many rather for to go astray,
 And be partakers of their evill plight,
 Then with a few to walke the rightest way;
 O foolish men, why haste ye to your owne decay?

XI

Thy selfe to see, and tyred limbes to rest,
 O matrone sage (quoth she) I hither came;
 And this good knight his way with me adrest,
 Led with thy prayses and broad-blazed fame,
 That up to heaven is blowne. The auncient Dame
 Him goodly greeted in her modest guise,
 And entertaynd them both, as best became,
 With all the court'sies that she could devise,
 Ne wanted ought, to shew her bounteous or wise.

XII

Thus as they gan of sundry things devise,
 Loe two most goodly virgins came in place,
 Ylinked arme in arme in lovely wise,
 With countenance demure, and modest grace,
 They numbred even steps and equall pace:
 Of which the eldest, that Fidelia hight,
 Like sunny beames threw from her christall face,
 That could have dazd the rash beholders sight,
 And round about her head did shine like heavens light.

XIII

She was araied all in lilly white,
 And in her right hand bore a cup of gold,
 With wine and water fild up to the hight,
 In which a Serpent did himselfe enfold,
 That horroure made to all that did behold;
 But she no whit did chaunge her constant mood:
 And in her other hand she fast did hold
 A booke, that was both signd and seald with blood:
 Wherin darke things were writ, hard to be understood.

XIV

Her younger sister, that Speranza hight,
 Was clad in blew, that her beseemed well;
 Not all so chearefull seemed she of sight,
 As was her sister; whether dread did dwell,
 Or anguish in her hart, is hard to tell:
 Upon her arme a silver anchor lay,
 Whereon she leaned ever, as befell:
 And ever up to heaven, as she did pray,
 Her stedfast eyes were bent, ne swarved other way.

XV

They seeing Una, towards her gan wend,
 Who them encounters with like courtesie;
 Many kind speeches they betwene them spend,
 And greatly joy each other well to see:
 Then to the knight with shamefast modestie
 They turne themselves, at Unaes meeke request,
 And him salute with well beseeming glee;
 Who faire them quites, as him beseemed best,
 And goodly gan discourse of many a noble gest.

XVI

Then Una thus; But she your sister deare,
 The deare Charissa where is she become?
 Or wants she health, or busie is elsewhere?
 Ah no, said they, but forth she may not come:
 For she of late is lightned of her wombe,
 And hath encreast the world with one sonne more,
 That her to see should be but troublesome.
 Indeed (quoth she) that should be trouble sore;
 But thankt be God, and her encrease so evermore.

XVII

Then said the aged Cœlia, Deare dame,
 And you good Sir, I wote that of youre toyle,
 And labours long, through which ye hither came,
 Ye both forwearied be: therefore a whyle
 I read you rest, and to your bowres recoyle.
 Then called she a Groome, that forth him led
 Into a goodly lodge, and gan despoile
 Of puissant armes, and laid in easie bed;
 His name was meeke Obedience rightfully ared.

XVIII

Now when their wearie limbes with kindly rest,
 And bodies were refresht with due repast,
 Faire Una gan Fidelia faire request,
 To have her knight into her schoolehouse plaste,
 That of her heavenly learning he might taste,
 And heare the wisdom of her words divine.
 She graunted, and that knight so much agraste,
 That she him taught celestiall discipline,
 And opened his dull eyes, that light mote in them shine.

XIX

And that her sacred Booke, with blood ywrit,
 That none could read, except she did them teach,
 She unto him disclosed every whit,
 And heavenly documents thereout did preach,
 That weaker wit of man could never reach,
 Of God, of grace, of justice, of free will,
 That wonder was to heare her goodly speach:
 For she was able with her words to kill,
 And raise againe to life the hart that she did thrill.

XX

And when she list poure out her larger spright,
 She would commaund the hastie Sunne to stay,
 Or backward turne his course from heavens hight;
 Sometimes great hostes of men she could dismay;
 Dry-shod to passe, she parts the flouds in tway;
 And eke huge mountaines from their native seat
 She would commaund, themselves to beare away,
 And throw in raging sea with roaring threat.
 Almighty God her gave such powre, and puissaunce great.

XXI

The faithfull knight now grew in litle space,
 By hearing her, and by her sisters lore,
 To such perfection of all heavenly grace,
 That wretched world he gan for to abhore,
 And mortall life gan loath, as thing forlore,
 Greevd with remembrance of his wicked wayes,
 And prickt with anguish of his sinnes so sore,
 That he desirde to end his wretched dayes:
 So much the dart of sinfull guilt the soule dismayes.

XXII

But wise Speranza gave him comfort sweet,
 And taught him how to take assured hold
 Upon her silver anchor, as was meet;
 Else had his sinnes so great and manifold
 Made him forget all that Fidelia told.
 In this distressed doubtfull agonie,
 When him his dearest Una did behold,
 Disdeining life, desiring leave to die,
 She found her selfe assayld with great perplexitie.

XXIII

And came to Cœlia to declare her smart,
 Who well acquainted with that commune plight,
 Which sinfull horror workes in wounded hart,
 Her wisely comforted all that she might,
 With goodly counsell and advisement right;
 And streightway sent with carefull diligence,
 To fetch a Leach, the which had great insight
 In that disease of grieved conscience,
 And well could cure the same; his name was Patience.

XXIV

Who comming to that soule-diseased knight,
 Could hardly him intreat to tell his grieffe:
 Which knowne, and all that noyd his heavie spright
 Well searcht, eftsoones he gan apply relief
 Of salves and med'cines, which had passing priefe,
 And thereto added words of wondrous might;
 By which to ease he him recured briefe,
 And much aswag'd the passion of his plight,
 That he his paine endur'd, as seeming now more light.

XXV

But yet the cause and root of all his ill,
 Inward corruption and infected sin,
 Not purg'd nor heald, behind remained still,
 And festring sore did rankle yet within,
 Close creeping twixt the marrow and the skin.
 Which to extirpe, he laid him privily
 Downe in a darkesome lowly place farre in,
 Whereas he meant his corrosives to apply,
 And with streight diet tame his stubborne malady.

XXVI

In ashes and sackcloth he did array
 His daintie corse, proud humors to abate,
 And dieted with fasting every day,
 The swelling of his wounds to mitigate,
 And made him pray both earely and eke late:
 And ever as superfluous flesh did rot
 Amendment readie still at hand did wayt,
 To pluck it out with pincers firie whot,
 That soone in him was left no one corrupted jot.

XXVII

And bitter Penance with an yron whip,
 Was wont him once to disple every day:
 And sharpe Remorse his hart did pricke and nip,
 That drops of blood thence like a well did play:
 And sad Repentance used to embay
 His bodie in salt water smarting sore,
 The filthy blots of sinne to wash away.
 So in short space they did to health restore
 The man that would not live, but earst lay at deathes dore.

XXVIII

In which his torment often was so great,
 That like a Lyon he would cry and rore,
 And rend his flesh, and his owne synewes eat.
 His owne deare Una hearing evermore
 His ruefull shriekes and gronings, often tore
 Her guiltlesse garments, and her golden heare,
 For pittie of his paine and anguish sore;
 Yet all with patience wisely she did beare;
 For well she wist his crime could else be never cleare.

XXIX

Whom thus recover'd by wise Patience
 And trew Repentaunce they to Una brought:
 Who joyous of his cured conscience,
 Him dearely kist, and fairely eke besought
 Himselfe to chearish, and consuming thought
 To put away out of his carefull brest.
 By this Charissa, late in child-bed brought,
 Was woxen strong, and left her fruitfull nest;
 To her faire Una brought this unacquainted guest.

XXX

She was a woman in her freshest age,
 Of wondrous beauty, and of bountie rare,
 With goodly grace and comely personage,
 That was on earth not easie to compare;
 Full of great love, but Cupid's wanton snare
 As hell she hated, chast in worke and will;
 Her necke and breasts were ever open bare,
 That ay thereof her babes might sucke their fill;
 The rest was all in yellow robes arayed still.

XXXI

A multitude of babes about her hong,
 Playing their sports, that joyd her to behold,
 Whom still she fed, whiles they were weake and young,
 But thrust them forth still as they waxed old:
 And on her head she wore a tyre of gold,
 Adornd with gemmes and owches wondrous faire,
 Whose passing price uneath was to be told:
 And by her side there sate a gentle paire
 Of turtle doves, she sitting in an yvorie chaire.

XXXII

The knight and Una entring faire her greet,
 And bid her joy of that her happie brood;
 Who them requites with court'sies seeming meet,
 And entertaines with friendly chearefull mood.
 Then Una her besought, to be so good
 As in her vertuous rules to schoole her knight,
 Now after all his torment well withstood,
 In that sad house of Penaunce, where his spright
 Had past the paines of hell, and long enduring night.

XXXIII

She was right joyous of her just request,
 And taking by the hand that Faeries sonne,
 Gan him instruct in every good behest,
 Of love, and righteousnesse, and well to donne,
 And wrath, and hatred warely to shonne,
 That drew on men Gods hatred and his wrath,
 And many soules in dolours had fordonne:
 In which when him she well instructed hath,
 From thence to heaven she teacheth him the ready path.

XXXIV

Wherein his weaker wandring steps to guide,
 An auncient matrone she to her does call,
 Whose sober lookes her wisdome well describe:
 Her name was Mercie, well knowne over all,
 To be both gracious, and eke liberall:
 To whom the carefull charge of him she gave,
 To lead aright, that he should never fall
 In all his wayes through this wide worldes wave,
 That Mercy in the end his righteous soule might save.

XXXV

The godly Matrone by the hand him beares
 Forth from her presence, by a narrow way,
 Scattered with bushy thornes, and ragged breares,
 Which still before him she remov'd away,
 That nothing might his ready passage stay:
 And ever when his feet encombred were,
 Or gan to shrink, or from the right to stray,
 She held him fast, and firmly did upbeare,
 As carefull Nourse her child from falling oft does reare.

XXXVI

Eftsoones unto an holy Hospitall,
 That was fore by the way, she did him bring,
 In which seven Bead-men that had vowed all
 Their life to service of high heavens king,
 Did spend their dayes in doing godly thing:
 Their gates to all were open evermore,
 That by the wearie way were traveiling,
 And one sate wayting ever them before,
 To call in commers by, that needy were and pore.

XXXVII

The first of them that eldest was, and best,
 Of all the house had charge and government,
 As Guardian and Steward of the rest:
 His office was to give entertainment
 And lodging, unto all that came, and went:
 Not unto such, as could him feast againe,
 And double quite, for that he on them spent,
 But such, as want of harbour did constraîne:
 Those for Gods sake his dewty was to entertaine.

XXXVIII

The second was as Almner of the place,
 His office was, the hungry for to feed,
 And thirsty give to drinke, a worke of grace:
 He feard not once him selfe to be in need,
 Ne car'd to hoord for those whom he did breede:
 The grace of God he layd up still in store,
 Which as a stocke he left unto his seede;
 He had enough, what need him care for more?
 And had he lesse, yet some he would give to the pore.

XXXIX

The third had of their wardrobe custodie,
 In which were not rich tyres, nor garments gay,
 The plumes of pride, and wings of vanitie,
 But clothes meet to keepe keene could away,
 And naked nature seemely to aray;
 With which bare wretched wights he dayly clad,
 The images of God in earthly clay;
 And if that no spare cloths to give he had,
 His owne coate he would cut, and it distribute glad.

XL

The fourth appointed by his office was,
 Poore prisoners to relieve with gracious ayd,
 And captives to redeeme with price of bras,
 From Turkes and Sarazins, which them had stayd,
 And though they faultie were, yet well he wayd,
 That God to us forgiveth every howre
 Much more then that why they in bands were layd,
 And he that harrowd hell with heavie stowre,
 The faultie soules from thence brought to his heavenly bowre.

XLI

The fift had charge sicke persons to attend,
 And comfort those, in point of death which lay;
 For them most needeth comfort in the end,
 When sin, and hell, and death do most dismay
 The feeble soule departing hence away.
 All is but lost, that living we bestow,
 If not well ended at our dying day.
 O man have mind of that last bitter throw
 For as the tree does fall, so lyes it ever low.

XLII

The sixt had charge of them now being dead,
 In seemely sort their corses to engrave,
 And deck with dainty flowres their bridall bed,
 That to their heavenly spouse both sweet and brave
 They might appeare, when he their soules shall save.
 The wondrous workmanship of Gods owne mould,
 Whose face he made all beasts to feare, and gave
 All in his hand, even dead we honour should.
 Ah dearest God me graunt, I dead be not defould.

XLIII

The seventh, now after death and buriall done,
 Had charge the tender orphans of the dead
 And widowes ayd, least they should be undone:
 In face of judgement he their right would plead,
 Ne ought the powre of mighty men did dread
 In their defence, nor would for gold or fee
 Be wonne their rightfull causes downe to tread:
 And, when they stood in most necessitee,
 He did supply their want, and gave them ever free.

XLIV

There when the Elfin knight arrived was,
 The first and chiefest of the seven, whose care
 Was guests to welcome, towards him did pas:
 Where seeing Mercie, that his steps upbare,
 And alwayes led, to her with reverence rare
 He humbly louted in meeke lowlinesse,
 And seemely welcome for her did prepare:
 For of their order she was Patronesse,
 Albe Charissa were their chiefest founderesse.

XLV

There she awhile him stayes, him selfe to rest,
 That to the rest more able he might bee:
 During which time, in every good behest
 And godly worke of almes and charitee,
 She him instructed with great industree;
 Shortly therein so perfect he became,
 That from the first unto the last degree,
 His mortall life he learned had to frame
 In holy righteousnesse, without rebuke or blame.

XLVI

Thence forward by that painfull way they pas,
 Forth to an hill, that was both steepe and hy;
 On top whereof a sacred chappell was,
 And eke a little Hermitage thereby,
 Wherein an aged holy man did lye,
 That day and night said his devotion,
 Ne other worldly busines did apply;
 His name was heavenly Contemplation;
 Of God and goodnesse was his meditation.

XLVII

Great grace that old man to him given had;
 For God he often saw from heavens hight,
 All were his earthly eyen both blunt and bad,
 And through great age had lost their kindly sight,
 Yet wondrous quick and persant was his spright,
 As Eagles eye, that can behold the Sunne:
 That hill they scale with all their powre and might,
 That his fraile thighes nigh weary and fordonne
 Gan faile, but by her helpe the top at last he wonne.

XLVIII

There they do finde that godly aged Sire,
 With snowy lockes adowne his shoulders shed,
 As hoarie frost with spangles doth attire
 The mossy braunches of an Oke halfe ded.
 Each bone might through his body well be red,
 And every sinew seene through his long fast:
 For nought he car'd his carcas long unfed;
 His mind was full of spirituall repast,
 And pyn'd his flesh, to keepe his body low and chast.

XLIX

Who when these two approaching he aspide,
 At their first presence grew agrieved sore,
 That forst him lay his heavenly thoughts aside;
 And had he not that Dame respected more,
 Whom highly he did reverence and adore,
 He would not once have moved for the knight.
 They him saluted, standing far afore;
 Who well them greeting, humbly did requight,
 And asked, to what end they clomb that tedious height.

L

What end (quoth she) should cause us take such paine,
 But that same end which every living wight
 Should make his marke, high heaven to attaine?
 Is not from hence the way, that leadeth right
 To that most glorious house that glistreth bright
 With burning starres and everliving fire,
 Whereof the keyes are to thy hand behight
 By wise Fidelia? She doth thee require,
 To show it to his knight, according his desire.

LI

Thrise happy man, said then the father grave,
 Whose staggering steps thy steady hand doth lead,
 And shewes the way, his sinfull soule to save.
 Who better can the way to heaven aread,
 Then thou thy selfe, that was both borne and bred
 In heavenly throne, where thousand Angels shine?
 Thou doest the prayers of the righteous sead
 Present before the majestie divine,
 And his avenging wrath to clemencie incline.

LII

Yet since thou bidst, thy pleasure shal be donne.
 Then come thou man of earth, and see the way,
 That never yet was seene of Faeries sonne,
 That never leads the traveler astray,
 But after labors long, and sad delay,
 Brings them to joyous rest and endlesse blis.
 But first thou must a season fast and pray,
 Till from her bands the spright assoiled is,
 And have her strength recur'd from fraile infirmitis.

LIII

That donne, he leads him to the highest Mount;
 Such one as that same mighty man of God,
 That blood-red billowes like a walled front
 On either side disparted with his rod,
 Till that his army dry-foot through them yod,
 Dwelt forty dayes upon; where writ in stone
 With bloudy letters by the hand of God,
 The bitter doome of death and balefull mone
 He did receive, whiles flashing fire about him shone.

LIV

Or like that sacred hill, whose head full hie,
 Adorn'd with fruitfull Olives all arownd,
 Is, as it were for endlesse memory
 Of that deare Lord who oft thereon was fownd,
 For ever with a flowring girlond crownd:
 Or like that pleasaunt Mount, that is for ay
 Through famous Poets verse each where renownd,
 On which the thrise three learned Ladies play
 Their heavenly notes, and make full many a lovely lay.

LV

From thence, far off he unto him did shew
 A litle path, that was both steepe and long,
 Which to a goodly Citie led his vew;
 Whose wals and towres were builded high and strong
 Of perle and precious stone, that earthly tong
 Cannot describe, nor wit of man can tell;
 Too high a ditty for my simple song;
 The Citie of the great king hight it well,
 Wherein eternall peace and happinesse doth dwell.

LVI

As he thereon stood gazing, he might see
 The blessed Angels to and fro descend
 From highest heaven in gladsome companee,
 And with great joy into that Citie wend,
 As commonly as friend does with his frend.
 Whereat he wondred much, and gan enquire,
 What stately building durst so high extend
 Her loftie towres unto the starry sphere,
 And what unknowen nation there empeopled were.

LVII

Faire knight (quoth he) Hierusalem that is,
 The new Hierusalem, that God has built
 For those to dwell in, that are chosen his,
 His chosen people purg'd from sinfull guilt
 With pretious blood, which cruelly was spilt
 On cursed tree, of that unspotted lam,
 That for the sinnes of al the world was kilt:
 Now are they Saints all in that Citie sam,
 More dear unto their God then younglings to their dam.

LVIII

Till now, said then the knight, I weened well,
 That great Cleopolis, where I have beene,
 In which that fairest Faerie Queene doth dwell,
 The fairest citie was that might be seene;
 And that bright towre all built of christall cleene,
 Panthea, seemd the brightest thing that was:
 But now by prooffe all otherwise I weene;
 For this great Citie that does far surpas,
 And this bright Angels towre quite dims that towre of glas.

LIX

Most trew, then said the holy aged man;
 Yet is Cleopolis, for earthly frame,
 The fairest peece that eye beholden can;
 And well beseemes all knights of noble name,
 That covett in th' immortall booke of fame
 To be eternized, that same to haunt,
 And doen their service to that soveraigne dame,
 That glorie does to them for guerdon graunt:
 For she is heavenly borne, and heaven may justly vaunt.

LX

And thou faire ymp, sprong out from English race,
 How ever now accompted Elfins sonne,
 Well worthy doest thy service for her grace,
 To aide a virgin desolate fordonne.
 But when thou famous victory hast wonne,
 And high emongst all knights hast hong thy shield,
 Thenceforth the suit of earthly conquest shonne,
 And wash thy hands from guilt of bloody field:
 For blood can nought but sin, and wars but sorrowes yield.

LXI

Then seek this path, that I to thee presage,
 Which after all to heaven shall thee send;
 Then peaceably thy painefull pilgrimage
 To yonder same Hierusalem do bend,
 Where is for thee ordaind a blessed end:
 For thou emongst those Saints, whom thou doest see,
 Shall be a Saint, and thine owne nations frend
 And Patrone: thou Saint George shalt called bee,
 Saint George of mery England, the signe of victoree.

LXII

Unworthy wretch (quoth he) of so great grace,
 How dare I thinke such glory to attaine?
 These that have it attained, were in like cace,
 (Quoth he) as wretched, and liv'd in like paine.
 But deeds of armes must I at last be faine
 And Ladies love to leave so dearely bought?
 What need of armes, where peace doth ay remaine,
 (Said he,) and battailes none are to be fought?
 As for loose loves, they're vain, and vanish into nought.

LXIII

O let me not (quoth he) then turne againe
 Backe to the world, whose joyes so fruitlesse are;
 But let me here for aye in peace remaine,
 Or streight way on that last long voyage fare,
 That nothing may my present hope empare.
 That may not be, (said he) ne maist thou yit
 Forgo that royall maides bequeathed care,
 Who did her cause into thy hand commit,
 Till from her cursed foe thou have her freely quit.

LXIV

Then shall I soone (quoth he) so God me grace,
 Abet that virgins cause disconsolate,
 And shortly backe returne unto this place,
 To walke this way in Pilgrims poore estate.
 But now aread, old father, why of late
 Didst thou behight me borne of English blood,
 Whom all a Faeries sonne doen nominate?
 That word shall I (said he) avouchen good,
 Sith to thee is unknowne the cradle of thy blood.

LXV

For well I wote thou springst from ancient race
 Of Saxon kings, that have with mightie hand
 And many bloody battailes fought in place
 High reard their royall throne in Britane land,
 And vanquisht them, unable to withstand:
 From thence a Faerie thee unweeting reft,
 There as thou slepst in tender swadling band,
 And her base Elfin brood there for thee left.
 Such men do Chaungelings call, so chang'd by Faeries theft.

LXVI

Thence she thee brought into this Faerie lond,
 And in an heaped furrow did thee hyde,
 Where thee a Ploughman all unweeting fond,
 As he his toylesome teme that way did guyde,
 And brought thee up in ploughmans state to byde
 Whereof Georgos he gave thee to name;
 Till prickt with courage, and thy forces pryde,
 To Faerie court thou cam'st to seeke for fame,
 And prove thy puissaunt armes, as seemes thee best became.

LXVII

O holy Sire (quoth he) how shall I quight
 The many favours I with thee have found,
 That hast my name and nation red aright,
 And taught the way that does to heaven bound?
 This said, adowne he looked to the ground,
 To have returnd, but dazed were his eyne
 Through passing brightnesse, which did quite confound
 His feeble sence and too exceeding shyne.
 So darke are earthly things compar'd to things divine.

LXVIII

At last whenas himselfe he gan to find,
 To Una back he cast him to retire;
 Who him awaited still with pensive mind.
 Great thankes and goodly meed to that good syre
 He thence departing gave for his paines hyre.
 So came to Una, who him joyd to see,
 And after little rest, gan him desire
 Of her adventure mindfull for to bee.
 So leave they take of Cœlia, and her daughters three.

Canto XI

*The knight with that old Dragon fights
two dayes incessantly;
The third him overthrowes, and gayns
most glorious victory.*

I

HIGH time now gan it wex for Una faire
To thinke of those her captive Parents deare,
And their forwasted kingdome to repaire:
Whereto whenas they now approched neare,
With hartie wordes her knight she gan to cheare,
And in her modest manner thus bespake;
Deare knight, as deare as ever knight was deare,
That all these sorrowes suffer for my sake,
High heaven behold the tedious toyle ye for me take.

II

Now are we come unto my native soyle,
And to the place where all our perils dwell;
Here haunts that feend, and does his dayly spoyle;
Therefore henceforth be at your keeping well,
And ever ready for your foeman fell.
The sparke of noble courage now awake,
And strive your excellent selfe to excell:
That shall ye evermore renowned make,
Above all knights on earth that batteill undertake.

III

And pointing forth, Lo yonder is (said she)
The brasen towre in which my parents deare
For dread of that huge feend emprisond be,
Whom I from far, see on the walles appeare,
Whose sight my feeble soule doth greatly cheare:
And on the top of all I do espye
The watchman wayting tydings glad to heare,
That O my parents might I happily
Unto you bring, to ease you of your misery.

IV

With that they heard a roaring hideous sound,
That all the ayre with terrour filled wide,
And seemd uneth to shake the stedfast ground.

Eftsoones that dreadful Dragon they espide,
 Where stretcht he lay upon the sunny side,
 Of a great hill, himselfe like a great hill.
 But all so soone as he from far descride
 Those glistring armes, that heaven with light did fill,
 He rousd himselfe full blith, and hastned them untill.

V

Then bad the knight his Lady yede aloofe,
 And to an hill her selfe withdraw aside:
 From whence she might behold that battailles proof,
 And eke be safe from daunger far descryde:
 She him obayd, and turnd a little wyde.
 Now O thou sacred muse, most learned Dame,
 Faire ympe of Phœbus and his aged bride,
 The Nourse of time and everlasting fame,
 That warlike hands ennoblest with immortall name;

VI

O gently come into my feeble brest
 Come gently, but not with that mighty rage,
 Wherewith the martiall troupes thou doest infest,
 And harts of great Heroës doest enrage,
 That nought their kindled courage may aswage,
 Soone as thy dreadfull trompe begins to sownd,
 The God of warre with his fiers equipage
 Thou doest awake, sleepe never he so sownd,
 All scared nations doest with horroure sterne astownd.

VII

Faire Goddesses, lay that furious fit aside,
 Till I of warres and bloody Mars do sing,
 And Briton fields with Sarazin bloud bedyde,
 Twixt that great Faery Queene, and Paynim king,
 That with their horroure heaven and earth did ring;
 A worke of labour long and endlesse prayse:
 But now a while let downe that haughtie string
 And to my tunes thy second tenor rayse,
 That I this man of God his godly armes may blaze.

VIII

By this the dreadfull Beast drew nigh to hand,
 Halfe flying, and halfe footing in his haste,

That with his largenesse measured much land,
 And made wide shadow under his huge wast,
 As mountaine doth the valley overcast.
 Approching nigh, he reared high afore
 His body monstrous, horrible, and vaste,
 Which to increase his wondrous greatnesse more,
 Was swoln with wrath, and poyson, and with bloody gore.

IX

And over, all with brasen scales was armd,
 Like plated coate of steele, so couched neare,
 That nought mote perce, ne might his corse be harmd
 With dint of sword, nor push of pointed speare;
 Which, as an Eagle, seeing pray appeare,
 His aery plumes doth rouze, full rudely dight;
 So shaked he, that horrour was to heare,
 For as the clashing of an Armour bright,
 Such noyse his rouzed scales did send unto the knight.

X

His flaggy wings when forth he did display,
 Were like two sayles, in which the hollow wynd
 Is gathered full, and worketh speedy way:
 And eke the pennes, that did his pineons bynd,
 Were like mayne-yards, with flying canvas lynd;
 With which whenas him list the ayre to beat,
 And there by force unwonted passage find,
 The cloudes before him fled for terrour great,
 And all the heavens stood still amazed with his threat.

XI

His huge long tayle wound up in hundred foldes,
 Does overspred his long bras-scaly backe,
 Whose wreathed boughts when ever he unfolds,
 And thicke entangled knots adown does slacke,
 Bespotted as with shields of red and blacke,
 It sweepeth all the land behind him farre,
 And of three furlongs does but litle lacke;
 And at the point two stings in-fixed arre,
 Both deadly sharpe, that sharpest steele exceeden farre.

XII

But stings and sharpest steele did far exceed
 The sharpnesse of his cruell rending clawes;
 Dead was it sure, as sure as death in deed,
 What ever thing does touch his ravenous pawes,
 Or what within his reach he ever drawes.
 But his most hideous head my tounge to tell
 Does tremble: for his deepe devouring jawes
 Wide gaped, like the griesly mouth of hell,
 Through which into his darke abisse all ravin fell.

XIII

And that more wondrous was, in either jaw
 Three ranckes of yron teeth enraunged were,
 In which yet trickling blood, and gobbets raw
 Of late devoured bodies did appeare,
 That sight thereof bred cold congealed feare:
 Which to increase, and as atonce to kill,
 A cloud of smothering smoke and sulphure seare,
 Out of his stinking gorge forth steemed still,
 That all the ayre about with smoke and stench did fill.

XIV

His blazing eyes, like two bright shining shields,
 Did burne with wrath, and sparkled living fyre:
 As two broad Beacons, set in open fields,
 Send forth their flames far off to every shyre,
 And warning give, that enemies conspyre
 With fire and sword the region to invade;
 So flam'd his eyne with rage and rancorous yre:
 But farre within, as in a hollow glade,
 Those glaring lampes were set, that made a dreadfull shade.

XV

So dreadfully he towards him did pas,
 Forelifting up aloft his speckled brest,
 And often bounding on the brused gras,
 As for great joyance of his newcome guest.
 Eftsoones he gan advance his haughtie crest,
 As chauffed Bore his bristles doth upreare,
 And shoke his scales to battell ready drest;
 That made the Redcrosse knight nigh quake for feare,
 As bidding bold defiance to his foeman neare.

XVI

The knight gan fairely couch his steadie speare,
 And fiercely ran at him with rigorous might:
 The pointed steele arriving rudely theare,
 His harder hide would neither perce, nor bight,
 But glauncing by forth passed forward right;
 Yet sore amoved with so puissaunt push,
 The wrathfull beast about him turned light,
 And him so rudely passing by, did brush
 With his long tayle, that horse and man to ground did rush.

XVII

Both horse and man up lightly rose againe,
 And fresh encounter towards him addrest:
 But th'idle stroke yet backe recoyld in vaine,
 And found no place his deadly point to rest.
 Exceeding rage enflam'd the furious beast,
 To be avenged of so great despight;
 For never felt his imperceable brest
 So wondrous force, from hand of living wight;
 Yet had he prov'd the powre of many a puissant knight.

XVIII

Then with his waving wings displayed wyde,
 Himselfe up high he lifted from the ground,
 And with strong flight did forcibly divide
 The yielding aire, which nigh too feeble found
 Her flitting parts, and element unsound,
 To beare so great a weight: he cutting way
 With his broad sayles, about him soared round:
 At last low stouping with unweldie sway,
 Snatcht up both horse and man, to beare them quite away.

XIX

Long he them bore above the subject plaine,
 So far as Ewghen bow a shaft may send,
 Till struggling strong did him at last constraine
 To let them downe before his flightes end:
 As hagdard hauke, presuming to contend
 With hardie fowle, above his hable might,
 His wearie pounces all in vaine doth spend
 To trusse the pray too heavy for his flight;
 Which comming downe to ground, does free it selfe by fight.

XX

He so disseized of his gryping grosse,
 The knight his thrillant speare again assayd
 In his bras-plated body to embosse,
 And three mens strength unto the stroke he layd;
 Wherewith the stiffe beame quaked, as affrayd,
 And glauncing from his scaly necke, did glyde
 Close under his left wing, then broad displayd:
 The percing steele there wrought a wound full wyde,
 That with the uncouth smart the Monster lowdly cryde.

XXI

He cryde, as raging seas are wont to rore,
 When wintry storme his wrathfull wreck does threat
 The roaring billowes beat the ragged shore,
 As they the earth would shoulder from her seat,
 And greedy gulfe does gape, as he would eat
 His neighbour element in his revenge:
 Then gin the blustring brethren boldly threat
 To move the world from off his steadfast henge,
 And boystrous battell make, each other to avenge.

XXII

The steely head stucke fast still in his flesh,
 Till with his cruell clawes he snatcht the wood,
 And quite a sunder broke. Forth flowed fresh
 A gushing river of blacke goarie blood,
 That drowned all the land, whereon he stood;
 The streame thereof would drive a water-mill:
 Trebly augmented was his furious mood
 With bitter sence of his deepe rooted ill,
 That flames of fire he threw forth from his large nosethrill.

XXIII

His hideous tayle then hurled he about,
 And therewith all enwrapt the nimble thyes
 Of his froth-fomy steed, whose courage stout
 Striving to loose the knot that fast him tyes,
 Himselfe in streighter bandes too rash implies,
 That to the ground he is perforce constraynd
 To throw his rider: who can quickly ryse
 From off the earth, with durty blood distaynd,
 For that reprochfull fall right fowly he disdaynd.

XXIV

And fiercely tooke his trenchand blade in hand,
With which he stroke so furious and so fell,
That nothing seemd the puissaunce could withstand:
Upon his crest the hardned yron fell,
But his more hardned crest was armd so well,
That deeper dint therein it would not make;
Yet so extremely did the buffe him quell,
That from thenceforth he shund the like to take,
But when he saw them come, he did them still forsake.

XXV

The knight was wroth to see his stroke beguyld,
And smote againe with more outrageous might;
But backe againe the sparckling steele recoyld,
And left not any marke, where it did light,
As if in Adamant rocke it had bene pight.
The beast impatient of his smarting wound,
And of so fierce and forcible despight,
Thought with his wings to stye above the ground;
But his late wounded wing unserviceable found.

XXVI

Then full of griefe and anguish vehement,
He lowdly brayd, that like was never heard,
And from his wide devouring oven sent
A flake of fire, that, flashing in his beard,
Him all amazd, and almost made affeard:
The scorching flame sore swinged all his face,
And through his armour all his body seard,
That he could not endure so cruell cace,
But thought his armes to leave, and helmet to unlace.

XXVII

Not that great Champion of the antique world,
Whom famous Poetes verse so much doth vaunt,
And hath for twelve huge labours high extold,
So many furies and sharpe fits did haunt,
When him the poysond garment did enchaunt,
With Centaures bloud and bloudie verses charm'd;
As did this knight twelve thousand dolours daunt,
Whom fyrie steele now burnt, that earst him arm'd,
That erst him goodly arm'd, now most of all him harm'd.

XXVIII

Faint, wearie, sore, emboyled, grieved, brent
 With heat, toyle, wounds, armes, smart, and inward fire,
 That never man such mischiefes did torment;
 Death better were, death did he oft desire,
 But death will never come, when needes require.
 Whom so dismayd when that his foe beheld,
 He cast to suffer him no more respire,
 But gan his sturdy sterne about to weld,
 And him so strongly stroke, that to the ground him feld.

XXIX

It fortun'd, (as faire it then befell,)
 Behind his backe unweeting, where he stood,
 Of auncient time there was a springing well,
 From which fast trickled forth a silver flood,
 Full of great vertues, and for med'cine good.
 Whylome, before that cursed Dragon got
 That happy land, and all with innocent blood
 Defyld those sacred waves, it rightly hot
The well of life, ne yet his vertues had forgot.

XXX

For unto life the dead it could restore,
 And guilt of sinfull crimes cleane wash away,
 Those that with sicknesse were infected sore
 It could recure, and aged long decay
 Renew, as one were borne that very day.
 Both Silo this, and Jordan did excell,
 And th' English Bath, and eke the German Spau;
 Ne can Cephise, nor Hebrus match this well:
 Into the same the knight back overthrown, fell.

XXXI

Now gan the golden Phœbus for to steepe
 His fierie face in billowes of the west,
 And his faint steedes watred in Ocean deepe,
 Whiles from their journall labours they did rest,
 When that infernall Monster, having kest
 His wearie foe into that living well,
 Can high advance his broad discoloured brest
 Above his wonted pitch, with countenance fell,
 And clapt his yron wings, as victor he did dwell.

XXXII

Which when his pensive Ladie saw from farre,
 Great woe and sorrow did her soule assay,
 As weening that the sad end of the warre,
 And gan to highest God entirely pray,
 That feared chance from her to turne away;
 With folded hands and knees full lowly bent,
 All night she watcht, ne once adowne would lay
 Her daintie limbs in her sad dreriment,
 But praying still did wake, and waking did lament.

XXXIII

The morrow next gan early to appeare,
 That Titan rose to runne his daily race;
 But early ere the morrow next gan reare
 Out of the sea faire Titans deawy face,
 Up rose the gentle virgin from her place,
 And looked all about, if she might spy
 Her loved knight to move his manly pace:
 For she had great doubt of his safety,
 Since late she saw him fall before his enemy.

XXXIV

At last she saw, where he upstarted brave
 Out of the well, wherein he drenched lay:
 As Eagle fresh out of the Ocean wave,
 Where he hath left his plumes all hoary gray,
 And deckt himselfe with feathers youthly gay,
 Like Eyas hauke up mounts unto the skies,
 His newly budded pineons to assay,
 And marveiles at himselfe, still as he flies:
 So new this new-borne knight to battell new did rise.

XXXV

Whom when the damned feend so fresh did spy,
 No wonder if he wondred at the sight,
 And doubted, whether his late enemy
 It were, or other new supplied knight.
 He, now to prove his late renewed might,
 High brandishing his bright deaw-burning blade,
 Upon his crested scalpe so sore did smite,
 That to the scull a yawning wound it made;
 The deadly dint his dulled senses all dismaid.

XXXVI

I wote not, whether the revenging steele
 Were hardned with that holy water dew,
 Wherein he fell, or sharper edge did feele,
 Or his baptized hands now greater grew;
 Or other secret vertue did ensew;
 Else never could the force of fleshly arme,
 Ne molten mettall in his blood embrew;
 For till that stownd could never wight him harme,
 By subtilty, nor slight, nor might, nor mighty charme.

XXXVII

The cruell wound enraged him so sore,
 That loud he yelded for exceeding paine;
 As hundred ramping Lyons seem'd to rore,
 Whom ravenous hunger did thereto constraine:
 Then gan he tosse aloft his stretched traine,
 And therewith scourge the buxome aire so sore,
 That to his force to yeelden it was faine;
 Ne ought his sturdy strokes might stand afore,
 That high trees overthrew, and rocks in peeces tore.

XXXVIII

The same advauncing high above his head,
 With sharpe intended sting so rude him smot,
 That to the earth him drove, as stricken dead,
 Ne living wight would have him life behot:
 The mortall sting his angry needle shot
 Quite through his shield, and in his shoulder seasd,
 Where fast it stucke, ne would there out be got:
 The griefe thereof him wondrous sore diseasd,
 Ne might his ranckling paine with patience be appeasd.

XXXIX

But yet more mindfull of his honour deare,
 Then of the grievous smart, which him did wring,
 From loathed soile he can him lightly reare,
 And strove to loose the far infixd sting:
 Which when in vaine he tryde with struggeling,
 Inflam'd with wrath, his raging blade he heft,
 And strooke so strongly, that the knotty string
 Of his huge taile he quite a sunder cleft,
 Five joints thereof he hewd, and but the stump him left.

XL

Hart cannot thinke, what outrage, and what cryes,
 With foule enfouldred smoake and flashing fire,
 The hell-bred beast threw forth unto the skyes,
 That all was covered with darkenesse dire:
 Then fraught with rancour, and engorged ire,
 He cast at once him to avenge for all,
 And gathering up himselfe out of the mire,
 With his uneven wings did fiercely fall,
 Upon his sunne-bright shield, and gript it fast withall.

XLI

Much was the man encombred with his hold,
 In feare to lose his weapon in his paw,
 Ne wist yet, how his talaunts to unfold;
 For harder was from Cerberus greedy jaw
 To plucke a bone, then from his cruell claw
 To reave by strength the griped gage away:
 Thrise he assayd it from his foot to draw,
 And thrise in vaine to draw it did assay,
 It booted nought to thinke to robbe him of his pray.

XLII

Tho when he saw no power might prevaile,
 His trustie sword he cald to his last aid,
 Wherewith he fiercely did his foe assaile,
 And double blowes about him stoutly laid,
 That glauncing fire out of the yron plaid;
 As sparckles from the Andvile use to fly,
 When heavy hammers on the wedge are swaid;
 Therewith at last he forst him to unty
 One of his grasping feete, him to defend thereby.

XLIII

The other foot, fast fixed on his shield,
 Whenas no strength, nor stroks mote him constraine
 To loose, ne yet the warlike pledge to yield,
 He smot thereat with all his might and maine,
 That nought so wondrous puissaunce might sustaine;
 Upon the joint the lucky steele did light,
 And made such way, that hewd it quite in twaine;
 The paw yett missed not his minisht might,
 But hong still on the shield, as it at first was pight.

XLIV

For griefe thereof and divelish despight,
 From his infernall furnace forth he threw
 Huge flames, that dimmed all the heavens light,
 Enrold in duskish smoke and brimstone blew:
 As burning Aetna from his boyling stew
 Doth belch out flames, and rockes in peeces broke,
 And ragged ribs of mountains molten new,
 Enwrapt in coleblacke clouds and filthy smoke,
 That all the land with stench, and heaven with horror choke.

XLV

The heate whereof, and harmefull pestilence
 So sore him noyd, that forst him to retire
 A little backward for his best defence,
 To save his body from the scorching fire,
 Which he from hellish entrailles did expire.
 It chaunst (eternall God that chaunce did guide,)
 As he recoiled backward, in the mire
 His nigh forwearied feeble feet did slide,
 And downe he fell, with dread of shame sore terrifide.

XLVI

There grew a goodly tree him faire beside,
 Loaden with fruit and apples rosie red,
 As they in pure vermilion had beene dide,
 Whereof great vertues over all were red:
 For happy life to all which thereon fed,
 And life eke everlasting did befall:
 Great God it planted in that blessed sted
 With his Almighty hand, and did it call
 The tree of life, the crime of our first fathers fall.

XLVII

In all the world like was not to be found,
 Save in that soile, where all good things did grow,
 And freely sprong out of the fruitfull ground,
 As incorrupted Nature did them sow,
 Till that dread Dragon all did overthrow.
 Another like faire tree eke grew thereby,
 Whereof whoso did eat, eftsoones did know
 Both good and ill: O mornefull memory:
 That tree through one mans fault hath doen us all to dy.

XLVIII

From that first tree forth flowd, as from a well,
 A trickling streame of Balme, most souveraine
 And dainty deare, which on the ground, still fell,
 And overflowed all the fertile plaine,
 As it had deawed bene with timely raine:
 Life and long health that gracious ointment gave,
 And deadly wounds could heale and reare againe
 The senselesse corse appointed for the grave.
 Into that same he fell: which did from death him save.

XLIX

For nigh thereto the ever damned beast
 Durst not approach, for he was deadly made,
 And all that life preserved did detest:
 Yet he is oft adventur'd to invade.
 By this the drouping day-light gan to fade,
 And yield his roome to sad succeeding night,
 Who with her sable mantle gan to shade
 The face of earth, and wayes of living wight,
 And high her burning torch set up in heaven bright.

L

When gentle Una saw the second fall
 Of her deare knight, who wearie of long fight,
 And faint through losse of blood, mov'd not at all,
 But lay, as in a dreame of deepe delight,
 Besmeard with pretious Balme, whose vertuous might
 Did heale his wounds, and scorching heat alay,
 Againe she stricken was with sore affright,
 And for his safetie gan devoutly pray,
 And watch the noyous night, and wait for joyous day.

LI

The joyous day gan early to appeare,
 And faire Aurora from the deawy bed
 Of aged Tithone gan herselfe to reare
 With rosy cheekes, for shame as blushing red;
 Her golden locks for haste were loosely shed
 About her eares, when Una her did marke
 Clymbe to her charet, all with flowers spred;
 From heaven high to chase the chearelesse darke,
 With merry note her loud salutes the mounting larke.

LII

Then freshly up arose the doughtie knight,
 All healed of his hurts and woundes wide,
 And did himselfe to battell ready dight;
 Whose early foe awaiting him beside
 To have devourd, so soone as day he spyde,
 When now he saw himselfe so freshly reare,
 As if late fight had nought him damnifyde,
 He woxe dismayd, and gan his fate to feare;
 Nathlesse with wonted rage he him advanched neare.

LIII

And in his first encounter, gaping wide,
 He thought attonce him to have swallowd quight,
 And rusht upon him with outragious pride;
 Who him r'encountring fierce, as hauke in flight
 Perforce rebutted backe. The weapon bright
 Taking advantage of his open jaw,
 Ran through his mouth with so importune might,
 That deepe emperst his darksome hollow maw,
 And back retyrd, his life blood forth with all did draw.

LIV

So downe he fell, and forth his life did breath,
 That vanisht into smoke and cloudes swift;
 So downe he fell, that th' earth him underneath
 Did grone, as feeble so great load to lift;
 So downe he fell, as an huge rockie clift,
 Whose false foundation waves have washt away,
 With dreadfull poyse is from the mayneland rift,
 And rolling downe, great Neptune doth dismay;
 So downe he fell, and like an heaped mountaine lay.

LV

The knight himselfe even trembled at his fall,
 So huge and horrible a masse it seem'd,
 And his deare Ladie, that beheld it all,
 Durst not approach for dread, which she misdeem'd;
 But yet at last, whenas the direfull feend
 She saw not stirre, off-shaking vaine affright,
 She nigher drew, and saw that joyous end:
 Then God she prayds, and thankt her faithfull knight,
 That had atchieved so great a conquest by his might.

Canto XII

*Faire Una to the Redcrosse knight,
betrouthed is with joy:
Though false Duessa it to barre
her false sleights doe imploy.*

I

BEHOLD I see the haven nigh at hand,
To which I meane my wearie course to bend;
Vere the maine shete, and beare up with the land,
The which afore is fairely to be kend,
And seemeth safe from storms that may offend;
There this faire virgin wearie of her way
Must landed be, now at her journeyes end:
There eke my feeble barke a while may stay
Till merry wind and weather call her thence away.

II

Scarsely had Phœbus in the glooming East
Yet harnessed his firie-footed teeme,
Ne reard above the earth his flaming creast;
When the last deadly smoke aloft did steeme
That signe of last outbreathed life did seeme
Unto the watchman on the castle wall,
Who thereby dead that balefull Beast did deeme,
And to his Lord and Ladie lowd gan call,
To tell how he had seene the Dragons fatall fall.

III

Uprose with hastie joy, and feeble speed
That aged Sire, the Lord of all that land,
And looked forth, to weet if true indeede
Those tydings were, as he did understand,
Which whenas true by tryall he out found,
He bad to open wyde his brazen gate,
Which long time had bene shut, and out of hond
Proclaymed joy and peace through all his state;
For dead now was their foe which them forrayed late.

IV

Then gan triumphant Trompets sound on hie,
That sent to heaven the ecchoed report
Of their new joy, and happie victorie

Gainst him, that had them long opprest with tort,
 And fast imprisoned in sieged fort.
 Then all the people, as in solemne feast,
 To him assembled with one full consort,
 Rejoycing at the fall of that great beast,
 From whose eternall bondage now they were releast.

V

Forth came that auncient Lord and aged Queene,
 Arayd in antique robes downe to the ground,
 And sad habiliments right well beseene;
 A noble crew about them waited round
 Of sage and sober Peres, all gravely gownd;
 Whom farre before did march a goodly band
 Of tall young men, all hable armes to sownd,
 But now they laurell braunches bore in hand;
 Glad signe of victorie and peace in all their land.

VI

Unto that doughtie Conquerour they came,
 And him before themselves prostrating low,
 Their Lord and Patrone loud did him proclame,
 And at his feet their laurell boughes did throw.
 Soone after them all dauncing on a row
 The comely virgins came, with girlands dight,
 As fresh as flowres in medow greene do grow,
 When morning deaw upon their leaves doth light:
 And in their hands sweet Timbrels all upheld on hight.

VII

And them before, the fry of children young
 Their wanton sports and childish mirth did play,
 And to the Maydens sounding tymbrels sung,
 In well attuned notes, a joyous lay,
 And made delightfull musicke all the way,
 Untill they came, where that faire virgin stood;
 As faire Diana in fresh sommers day,
 Beholds her Nymphes enraung'd in shadie wood,
 Some wrestle, some do run, some bathe in christall flood:

VIII

So she beheld those maydens meriment
 With chearefull vew; who when to her they came,

Themselves to ground with gracious humblesse bent,
 And her ador'd by honorable name,
 Lifting to heaven her everlasting fame:
 Then on her head they set a girland greene,
 And crowned her twixt earnest and twixt game;
 Who in her self-resemblance well beseene,
 Did seeme such, as she was, a goodly maiden Queene.

IX

And after, all the raskall many ran,
 Heaped together in rude rablement,
 To see the face of that victorious man:
 Whom all admired, as from heaven sent,
 And gazd upon with gaping wonderment.
 But when they came where that dead Dragon lay,
 Stretcht on the ground in monstrous large extent,
 The sight with idle feare did them dismay,
 Ne durst approach him nigh, to touch, or once assay.

X

Some feard, and fled; some feard and well it faynd;
 One that would wiser seeme then all the rest,
 Warnd him not touch, for yet perhaps remaynd
 Some lingring life within his hollow brest,
 Or in his wombe might lurke some hidden nest
 Of many Dragonets, his fruitfull seed;
 Another said, that in his eyes did rest
 Yet sparckling fire, and bad thereof take heed;
 Another said, he saw him move his eyes indeed.

XI

One mother, when as her foolehardie chyld
 Did come too neare, and with his talants play,
 Halfe dead through feare, her little babe revyld,
 And to her gossips gan in counsell say;
 How can I tell, but that his talants may
 Yet scratch my sonne, or rend his tender hand?
 So diversly themselves in vaine they fray;
 Whiles some more bold, to measure him nigh stand,
 To prove how many acres he did spread of land.

XII

Thus flocked all the folke him round about,
The whiles that hoarie king, with all his traine,
Being arrived where that champion stout
After his foes defeasance did remaine,
Him goodly greetes, and faire does entertaine
With princely gifts of yvorie and gold,
And thousand thanks him yeelds for all his paine.
Then when his daughter deare he does behold,
Her dearely doth imbrace, and kisseth manifold.

XIII

And after to his Pallace he them brings,
With shaumes, and trompets, and with Clarions sweet;
And all the way the joyous people sings,
And with their garments strowes the paved street:
Whence mounting up, they find purveyance meet
Of all that royall Princes court became,
And all the floore was underneath their feet
Bespred with costly scarlot of great name,
On which they lowly sit, and fitting purpose frame.

XIV

What needs me tell their feast and goodly guize,
In which was nothing riotous nor vaine?
What needs of dainty dishes to devize,
Of comely services, or courtly trayne?
My narrow leaves cannot in them containe
The large discourse of royall Princes state.
Yet was their manner then but bare and plaine:
For th' antique world excesse and pride did hate;
Such proud luxurious pompe is swollen up but late.

XV

Then when with meates and drinkes of every kinde
Their fervent appetites they quenched had,
That auncient Lord gan fit occasion finde,
Of straunge adventures, and of perils sad,
Which in his travell him befallen had,
For to demaund of his renowned guest:
Who then with utt'rance grave, and count'nance sad,
From point to point, as is before exprest,
Discourst his voyage long, according his request.

XVI

Great pleasures mixt with pittiful regard,
 That godly King and Queene did passionate,
 Whiles they his pittifull adventures heard,
 That oft they did lament his lucklesse state,
 And often blame the too importune fate,
 That heaped on him so many wrathfull wreakes:
 For never gentle knight, as he of late,
 So tossed was in fortunes cruell freakes;
 And all the while salt teares bedeawd the hearers cheeks.

XVII

Then sayd the royall Pere in sober wise;
 Deare Sonne, great beene the evils which ye bore
 From first to last in your late enterprise,
 That I note whether prayse, or pittie more:
 For never living man, I weene, so sore
 In sea of deadly daungers was distrest;
 But since now safe ye seised have the shore,
 And well arrived are, (high God be blest)
 Let us devize of ease and everlasting rest.

XVIII

Ah, dearest Lord, said then that doughty knight,
 Of ease or rest I may not yet devize,
 For by the faith, which I to armes have plight,
 I bounden am streight after this emprise,
 As that your daughter can ye well advize,
 Backe to returne to that great Faerie Queene,
 And her to serve six yeares in warlike wize,
 Gainst that proud Paynim king that workes her teene
 Therefore I ought crave pardon, till I there have beene.

XIX

Unhappie falles that hard necessitie,
 (Quoth he) the troubler of my happie peace,
 And vowed foe of my felicitie;
 Ne I against the same can justly preace:
 But since that band ye cannot now release,
 Nor doen undo; (for voves may not be vaine,)
 Soone as the terme of those six yeares shall cease,
 Ye then shall hither backe returne againe,
 The marriage to accomplish vovd betwixt you twain.

XX

Which for my part I covet to performe,
 In sort as through the world I did proclame,
 That whoso kild that monster most deforme,
 And him in hardy battaile overcame,
 Should have mine onely daughter to his Dame,
 And of my kingdome heyre apparaunt bee:
 Therefore since now to thee pertaines the same,
 By dew desert of noble chevalree,
 Both daughter and eke kingdome, lo, I yield to thee.

XXI

Then forth he called that his daughter faire,
 The fairest Un' his onely daughter deare,
 His onely daughter, and his onely heyre;
 Who forth proceeding with sad sober cheare,
 As bright as doth the morning starre appeare
 Out of the East, with flaming lockes bedight,
 To tell that dawning day is drawing neare,
 And to the world does bring long wished light:
 So faire and fresh that Lady shewd her selfe in sight.

XXII

So faire and fresh, as freshest flowre in May;
 For she had layd her mournfull stole aside,
 And widow-like sad wimple throwne away,
 Wherewith her heavenly beautie she did hide,
 Whiles on her wearie journey she did ride;
 And on her now a garment she did weare,
 All lilly white, withoutten spot, or pride,
 That seemd like silke and silver woven neare,
 But neither silke nor silver therein did appeare.

XXIII

The blazing brightnesse of her beauties beame,
 And glorious light of her sunshyny face,
 To tell, were as to strive against the streame;
 My ragged rimes are all too rude and bace,
 Her heavenly lineaments for to enchace.
 Ne wonder; for her owne deare loved knight,
 All were she dayly with himselfe in place,
 Did wonder much at her celestiall sight:
 Oft had he seene her faire, but never so faire dight.

XXIV

So fairely dight, when she in presence came,
 She to her Sire made humble reverence,
 And bowed low, that her right well became,
 And added grace unto her excellence:
 Who with great wisdom and grave eloquence
 Thus gan to say. But eare he thus had said,
 With flying speede, and seeming great pretence
 Came running in, much like a man dismaid,
 A Messenger with letters, which his message said.

XXV

All in the open hall amazed stood
 At suddeinnesse of that unwarie sight,
 And wondred at his breathlesse hastie mood.
 But he for nought would stay his passage right,
 Till fast before the king he did alight;
 Where falling flat, great humblesse he did make,
 And kist the ground, whereon his foot was pight;
 Then to his hands that writ he did betake,
 Which he disclosing, red thus, as the paper spake.

XXVI

To thee, most mighty king of Eden faire,
 Her greeting sends in these sad lines adrest,
 The wofull daughter, and forsaken heire
 Of that great Emperour of all the West;
 And bids thee be advized for the best,
 Ere thou thy daughter linck in holy band
 Of wedlocke to that new unknowen guest:
 For he already plighted his right hand
 Unto another love, and to another land.

XXVII

To me sad mayd, or rather widow sad,
 He was affiaunced long time before,
 And sacred pledges he both gave, and had,
 False erraunt knight, infamous, and forswore:
 Witnessse the burning Altars, which he swore,
 And guiltie heavens of his bold perjury,
 Which though he hath polluted oft of yore,
 Yet I to them for judgement just do fly,
 And them conjure t'avenge this shamefull injury.

XXVIII

Therefore since mine he is, or free or bond,
 Or false or trew, or living or else dead,
 Withhold, O souveraine Prince, your hasty hond
 From knitting league with him, I you aread;
 Ne weene my right with strength adowne to tread,
 Through weaknesse of my widowed, or woe;
 For truth is strong her rightfull cause to plead,
 And shall find friends, if need requireth soe.
 So bids thee well to fare, Thy neither friend, nor foe, *Fidessa*.

XXIX

When he these bitter byting wordes had red,
 The tydings straunge did him abashed make,
 That still he sate long time astonished,
 As in great muse, ne word to creature spake.
 At last his solemne silence thus he brake,
 With doubtfull eyes fast fixed on his guest;
 Redoubted knight, that for mine onely sake
 Thy life and honour late adventurst,
 Let nought be hid from me, that ought to be exprest.

XXX

What meane these bloody vowes, and idle threats,
 Throwne out from womanish impatient mind?
 What heavens? what altars? what enraged heates
 Here heaped up with termes of love unkind,
 My conscience cleare with guilty bands would bind?
 High God be wnesse, that I guiltlesse ame.
 But if your selfe, Sir knight, ye faultie find,
 Or wrapped be in loves of former Dame,
 With crime do not it cover, but disclose the same.

XXXI

To whom the Redcrosse knight this answere sent
 My Lord, my King, be nought hereat dismayd,
 Till well ye wote by grave intendiment,
 What woman, and wherefere doth me upbrayd
 With breach of love, and loyalty betrayd.
 It was in my mishaps, as hitherward
 I lately traveild, that unwares I strayd
 Out of my way, through perils straunge and hard;
 That day should faile me, ere I had them all declar'd.

XXXII

There did I find, or rather I was found
Of this false woman, that Fidessa hight,
Fidessa hight the falsest Dame on ground,
Most false Duessa, royall richly dight,
That easy was to invegle weaker sight:
Who by her wicked arts, and wylie skill,
Too false and strong for earthly skill or might,
Unwares me wrought unto her wicked will,
And to my foe betrayd, when least I feared ill.

XXXIII

Then stepped forth the goodly royall Mayd,
And on the ground her selfe prostrating low,
With sober countenance thus to him sayd;
O pardon me, my soveraigne Lord, to show
The secret treasons, which of late I know
To have bene wrought by that false sorceresse.
She onely she it is, that earst did throw
This gentle knight into so great distresse,
That death him did awaite in dayly wretchednesse.

XXXIV

And now it seemes, that she suborned hath
This craftie messenger with letters vaine,
To worke new woe and unprovided scath,
By breaking of the band betwixt us twaine;
Wherein she used hath the practicke paine
Of this false footman, clokt with simplenesse,
Whom if ye please for to discover plaine,
Ye shall him Archimago find, I ghesse,
The falsest man alive; who tries shall find no lesse.

XXXV

The king was greatly moved at her speach,
And, all with suddein indignation fraight,
Bad on that Messenger rude hands to reach.
Eftsoones the Gard, which on his state did wait,
Attacht that faylor false, and bound him strait:
Who seeming sorely chauffed at his band,
As chained Beare, whom cruell dogs do bait,
With idle force did faine them to withstand,
And often semblaunce made to scape out of their hand.

XXXVI

But they him layd full low in dungeon deepe,
And bound him hand and foote with yron chains
And with continual watch did warely keepe:
Who then would thinke, that by his subtile trains
He could escape fowle death or deadly paines?
Thus when that princes wrath was pacifide,
He gan renew the late forbidden bains,
And to the knight his daughter dear he tyde,
With sacred rites and vowes for ever to abyde.

XXXVII

His owne two hands the holy knots did knit,
That none but death for ever can deuide;
His owne two hands, for such a turne most fit,
The housling fire did kindle and provide,
And holy water thereon sprinckled wide;
At which the bushy Teade a groome did light,
And sacred lamp in secret chamber hide,
Where it should not be quenched day nor night,
For feare of evill fates, but burnen ever bright.

XXXVIII

Then gan they sprinckle all the posts with wine,
And made great feast to solemnize that day;
They all perfumde with frankencense divine,
And precious odours fetcht from far away,
That all the house did sweat with great aray:
And all the while sweete Musicke did apply
Her curious skill, the warbling notes to play,
To drive away the dull Melancholy;
The whiles one sung a song of love and jollity.

XXXIX

During the which there was an heavenly noise
Heard sound through all the Pallace pleasantly,
Like as it had bene many an Angels voice
Singing before th' eternall Majesty,
In their trinall triplicities on hye;
Yet wist no creature whence that heavenly sweet
Proceeded, yet eachone felt secretly
Himselfe thereby reft of his senses meet,
And ravished with rare impression in his sprite.

XL

Great joy was made that day of young and old,
 And solemne feast proclaimed throughout the land,
 That their exceeding merrith may not be told:
 Suffice it heare by signes to understand
 The usuall joyes at knitting of loves band.
 Thrise happy man the knight himselfe did hold,
 Possessed of his Ladies hart and hand,
 And ever, when his eye did her behold,
 His heart did seeme to melt in pleasures manifold.

XLI

Her joyous presence, and sweet company
 In full content he there did long enjoy;
 Ne wicked envie, ne vile gealosity,
 His deare delights were able to annoy:
 Yet swimming in that sea of blissfull joy,
 He nought forgot how he whilome had sworne,
 In case he could that monstrous beast destroy,
 Unto his Faerie Queene backe to returne;
 The which he shortly did, and Una left to mourne.

XLII

Now strike your sailes ye jolly Mariners,
 For we be come unto a quiet rode,
 Where we must land some of our passengers,
 And light this wearie vessell of her lode.
 Here she a while may make her safe abode,
 Till she repaired have her tackles spent,
 And wants supplide. And then againe abroad
 On the long voyage whereto she is bent:
 Well may she speede and fairely finish her intent.

Book II**Canto VII**

*Guyon findes Mamon in a delue,
 Sunning his threasure hore:
 Is by him tempted, and led downe,
 To see his secret store.*

I

AS Pilot well expert in perilous waue,
 That to a stedfast starre his course hath bent,

When foggy mistes, or cloudy tempests haue
 The faithfull light of that faire lampe yblent,
 And couer'd heauen with hideous dreriment,
 Vpon his card and compas firmes his eye,
 The maisters of his long experiment,
 And to them does the stedy helme apply,
 Bidding his winged vessell fairely forward fly.

III

So *Guyon* hauing lost his trusty guide,
 Late left beyond that *Ydle lake*, procedes
 Yet on his way, of none accompanide;
 And euermore himselfe with comfort feedes,
 Of his owne vertues, and prayse-worthy deedes.
 So long he yode, yet no aduenture found,
 Which fame of her shrill trompet worthy reedes:
 For still he traueild through wide wastfull ground,
 That nought but desert wilderness shew'd all around.

III

At last he came vnto a gloomy glade,
 Couer'd with boughes and shrubs from heauens light,
 Whereas he sitting found in secret shade
 An vncouth, saluage, and vnciuile wight,
 Of griesly hew, and fowle ill fauour'd sight;
 His face with smoke was tand, and eyes were beard,
 His head and beard with sout were ill bedight,
 His cole-blacke hands did seeme to haue beene seard
 In smithes fire-spitting forge, and nayles like clawes appeard.

IV

His yron coate all ouergrowne with rust,
 Was vnderneath enueloped with gold,
 Whose glistring glosse darkned with filthy dust,
 Well yet appeared, to haue beene of old
 A worke of rich entayle, and curious mould,
 Wouen with antickes and wild Imagery:
 And in his lap a masse of coyne he told,
 And turned vpsidowne, to feede his eye
 And couetous desire with his huge threasury.

V

And round about him lay on euery side
 Great heapes of gold, that neuer could be spent:
 Of which some were rude owre, not purifide
 Of *Mulcibers* deuouring element;
 Some others were new driuen, and distent
 Into great Ingoes, and to wedges square;
 Some in round plates withouten moniment;
 But most were stampt, and in their metall bare
 The antique shapes of kings and kesars straunge and rare.

VI

Soone as he *Guyon* saw, in great affright
 And hast he rose, for to remoue aside
 Those pretious hils from straungers enuious sight,
 And downe them poured through an hole full wide,
 Into the hollow earth, them there to hide.
 But *Guyon* lightly to him leaping, stayd
 His hand, that trembled, as one terrifyde;
 And though him selfe were at the sight dismayd,
 Yet him perforce restraynd, and to him doubtfull sayd.

VII

What art thou man, (if man at all thou art)
 That here in desert hast thine habitaunce,
 And these rich heapes of wealth doest hide apart
 From the worldes eye, and from her right vsaunce?
 Thereat with staring eyes fixed askaunce,
 In great disdain, he answerd; Hardy Elfe,
 That darest vew my direfull countenaunce,
 I read thee rash, and heedlesse of thy selfe,
 To trouble my still seate, and heapes of pretious pelfe.

VIII

God of the world and worldlings I me call,
 Great *Mammon*, greatest god below the skye,
 That of my plenty poure out vnto all,
 And vnto none my graces do enuye:
 Riches, renowme, and principality,
 Honour, estate, and all this worldes good,
 For which men swinck and sweat incessantly,
 Fro me do flow into an ample flood,
 And in the hollow earth haue their eternall brood.

IX

Wherefore if me thou deigne to serue and sew,
 At thy commaund lo all these mountaines bee;
 Or if to thy great mind, or greedy vew
 All these may not suffise, there shall to thee
 Ten times so much be numbred francke and free.
Mammon (said he) thy godheades vaunt is vaine,
 And idle offers of thy golden fee;
 To them, that couet such eye-glutting gaine,
 Proffer thy giftes, and fitter seruauents entertaine.

X

Me ill besits, that in der-doing armes,
 And honours suit my vowed dayes do spend,
 Vnto thy bounteous baytes, and pleasing charmes,
 With which weake men thou witchest, to attend:
 Regard of worldly mucke doth fowly blend,
 And low abase the high heroicke spright,
 That ioyes for crownes and kingdomes to contend;
 Faire shields, gay steedes, bright armes be my delight:
 Those be the riches fit for an aduent'rous knight.

XI

Vaine glorious Elfe (said he) doest not thou weet,
 That money can thy wantes at will supply?
 Sheilds, steedes, and armes, and all things for thee meet
 It can puruay in twinckling of an eye;
 And crownes and kingdomes to thee multiply.
 Do not I kings create, and throw the crowne
 Sometimes to him, that low in dust doth ly?
 And him that raignd, into his rowme thrust downe,
 And whom I lust, do heape with glory and renowne?

XII

All otherwise (said he) I riches read,
 And deeme them roote of all disquietnesse;
 First got with guile, and then preseru'd with dread,
 And after spent with pride and lauishnesse,
 Leauing behind them griefe and heauinesse.
 Infinite mischiefes of them do arize,
 Strife, and debate, bloudshed, and bitternesse,
 Outrageous wrong, and hellish couetize,
 That noble heart as great dishonour doth despize.

XIII

Ne thine be kingdomes, ne the scepters thine;
 But realmes and rulers thou doest both confound,
 And loyall truth to treason doest incline;
 Witnesse the guiltlesse bloud pourd oft on ground,
 The crowned often slaine, the slayer cround,
 The sacred Diademe in peeces rent,
 And purple robe gored with many a wound;
 Castles surprizd, great cities sackt and brent:
 So mak'st thou kings, and gaynest wrongfull gouernement.

XIV

Long were to tell the troublous stormes, that tosse
 The priuate state, and make the life vnsweet:
 Who swelling sayles in Caspian sea doth crosse,
 And in frayle wood on *Adrian* gulfe doth fleet,
 Doth not, I weene, so many euils meet.
 Then *Mammon* wexing wroth, And why then, said,
 Are mortall men so fond and vndiscreet,
 So euill thing to seeke vnto their ayd,
 And hauing not complaine, and hauing it vpbraid?

XV

Indeede (quoth he) through fowle intemperaunce,
 Frayle men are oft captiu'd to couetise:
 But would they thinke, with how small allowaunce
 Vntroubled Nature doth her selfe suffice,
 Such superfluties they would despise,
 Which with sad cares empeach our natiue ioyes:
 At the well head the purest streames arise:
 But mucky filth his braunching armes annoyes,
 And with vncomely weedes the gentle waue accloyes.

XVI

The antique world, in his first flowring youth,
 Found no defect in his Creatours grace,
 But with glad thankes, and vnreproued truth,
 The gifts of soueraigne bountie did embrace:
 Like Angels life was then mens happy cace;
 But later ages pride, like corn-fed steed,
 Abusd her plenty, and fat swolne encrease
 To all licentious lust, and gan exceed
 The measure of her meane, and naturall first need.

XVII

Then gan a cursed hand the quiet wombe
 Of his great Grandmother with steele to wound,
 And the hid treasures in her sacred tombe,
 With Sacriledge to dig. Therein he found
 Fountaines of gold and siluer to abound,
 Of which the matter of his huge desire
 And pompous pride eftsoones he did compound;
 Then auarice gan through his veines inspire
 His greedy flames, and kindled life-deuouring fire.

XVIII

Sonne (said he then) let be thy bitter scorne,
 And leaue the rudenesse of that antique age
 To them, that liu'd therein in state forlorne;
 Thou that doest liue in later times, must wage
 Thy workes for wealth, and life for gold engage.
 If then thee list my offred grace to vse,
 Take what thou please of all this surplusage;
 If thee list not, leaue haue thou to refuse:
 But thing refused, do not afterward accuse.

XIX

Me list not (said the Elfin knight) receaue
 Thing offred, till I know it well be got,
 Ne wote I, but thou didst these goods bereaue
 From rightfull owner by vnrighteous lot,
 Or that bloud guiltinesse or guile them blot.
 Perdy (quoth he) yet neuer eye did vew,
 Ne tounge did tell, ne hand these handled not,
 But safe I haue them kept in secret mew,
 From heauens sight, and powre of all which them pursew.

XX

What secret place (quoth he) can safely hold
 So huge a masse, and hide from heauens eye?
 Or where hast thou thy wonne, that so much gold
 Thou canst preserue from wrong and robbery?
 Come thou (quoth he) and see. So by and by
 Through that thicke couert he him led, and found
 A darkesome way, which no man could descry,
 That deepe descended through the hollow ground,
 And was with dread and horroure compassed around.

XXI

At length they came into a larger space,
 That stretcht it selfe into an ample plaine,
 Through which a beaten broad high way did trace,
 That streight did lead to *Plutoes* griesly raine:
 By that wayes side, there sate infernall Payne,
 And fast beside him sat tumultuous Strife:
 The one in hand an yron whip did straine,
 The other brandished a bloody knife,
 And both did gnash their teeth, and both did threaten life.

XXII

On thother side in one consort there sate,
 Cruell Reuenge, and rancorous Despight,
 Disloyall Treason, and hart-burning Hate,
 But gnawing Gealosie out of their sight
 Sitting alone, his bitter lips did bight,
 And trembling Feare still to and fro did fly,
 And found no place, where safe he shroud him might,
 Lamenting Sorrow did in darknesse lye,
 And Shame his vgly face did hide from liuing eye.

XXIII

And ouer them sad Horrour with grim hew,
 Did alwayes sore, beating his yron wings;
 And after him Owles and Night-rauens flew,
 The hatefull messengers of heauy things,
 Of death and dolour telling sad tidings;
 Whiles sad *Celena*, sitting on a clift,
 A song of bale and bitter sorrow sings,
 That hart of flint a sunder could haue rift:
 Which hauing ended, after him she flyeth swift.

XXIV

All these before the gates of *Pluto* lay,
 By whom they passing, spake vnto them nought.
 But th'Elfin knight with wonder all the way
 Did feed his eyes, and fild his inner thought.
 At last him to a litle dore he brought,
 That to the gate of Hell, which gaped wide,
 Was next adioyning, ne them parted ought:
 Betwixt them both was but a litle stride,
 That did the house of Richesse from hell-mouth diuide.

XXV

Before the dore sat selfe-consuming Care,
 Day and night keeping wary watch and ward,
 For feare least Force or Fraud should vnaware
 Breake in, and spoile the treasure there in gard:
 Ne would he suffer Sleepe once thither-ward
 Approach, albe his drowsie den were next;
 For next to death is Sleepe to be compar'd:
 Therefore his house is vnto his annex;
 Here Sleep, there Richesse, and Hel-gate them both betwext.

XXVI

So soone as *Mammon* there arriu'd, the dore
 To him did open, and affoorded way;
 Him followed eke Sir *Guyon* euermore,
 Ne darkenesse him, ne daunger might dismay.
 Soone as he entred was, the dore streight way
 Did shut, and from behind it forth there lept
 An vgly feend, more fowle then dismall day,
 The which with monstrous stalke behind him stept,
 And euer as he went, dew watch vpon him kept.

XXVII

Well hoped he, ere long that hardy guest,
 If euer couetous hand, or lustfull eye,
 Or lips he layd on thing, that likt him best,
 Or euer sleepe his eye-strings did vntye,
 Should be his pray. And therefore still on hye
 He ouer him did hold his cruell clawes,
 Threatning with greedy gripe to do him dye
 And rend in peeces with his rauenous pawes,
 If euer he transgrest the fatall *Stygian* lawes.

XXVIII

That houses forme within was rude and strong,
 Like an huge caue, hewne out of rocky clift,
 From whose rough vault the ragged breaches hong,
 Embost with massy gold of glorious gift,
 And with rich metall loaded euery rift,
 That heauy ruine they did seeme to threat;
 And ouer them *Arachne* high did lift
 Her cunning web, and spred her subtile net,
 Enwrapped in fowle smoke and clouds more blacke then Iet.

XXIX

Both roofe, and floore, and wals were all of gold,
 But ouergrowne with dust and old decay,
 And hid in darkenesse, that none could behold
 The hew thereof: for vew of chearefull day
 Did neuer in that house it selfe display,
 But a faint shadow of vncertain light;
 Such as a lamp, whose life does fade away:
 Or as the Moone cloathed with cloudy night,
 Does shew to him, that walkes in feare and sad affright.

XXX

In all that rowme was nothing to be seene,
 But huge great yron chests and coffers strong,
 All bard with double bends, that none could weene
 Them to efforce by violence or wrong;
 On euery side they placed were along.
 But all the ground with sculs was scattered,
 And dead mens bones, which round about were flong,
 Whose liues, it seemed, whilome there were shed,
 And their vile carcasses now left vnburied.

XXXI

They forward passe, ne *Guyon* yet spoke word,
 Till that they came vnto an yron dore,
 Which to them opened of his owne accord,
 And shewd of richesse such exceeding store,
 As eye of man did neuer see before;
 Ne euer could within one place be found,
 Though all the wealth, which is, or was of yore,
 Could gathered be through all the world around,
 And that about were added to that vnder ground.

XXXII

The charge thereof vnto a couetous Spright
 Commaunded was, who thereby did attend,
 And warily awaited day and night,
 From other couetous feends it to defend,
 Who it to rob and ransacke did intend.
 Then *Mammon* turning to that warriour, said;
 Loe here the worldes blis, loe here the end,
 To which all men do ayme, rich to be made:
 Such grace now to be happy, is before thee laid.

XXXIII

Certes (said he) I n'll thine offred grace,
 Ne to be made so happy do intend:
 Another blis before mine eyes I place,
 Another happinesse, another end.
 To them, that list, these base regards I lend:
 But I in armes, and in atchieuements braue,
 Do rather choose my flitting houres to spend,
 And to be Lord of those, that riches haue,
 Then them to haue my selfe, and be their seruile sclaue.

XXXIV

Thereat the feend his gnashing teeth did grate,
 And grieu'd, so long to lacke his greedy pray;
 For well he weened, that so glorious bayte
 Would tempt his guest, to take thereof assay:
 Had he so doen, he had him snatcht away,
 More light then Culuer in the Faulcons fist.
 Eternall God thee saue from such decay.
 But whenas *Mammon* saw his purpose mist,
 Him to entrap vnwares another way he wist.

XXXV

Thence forward he him led, and shortly brought
 Vnto another rowme, whose dore forthright,
 To him did open, as it had beene taught:
 Therein an hundred raunges weren pight,
 And hundred fornaces all burning bright;
 By euery fornace many feends did bide,
 Deformed creatures, horrible in sight,
 And euery feend his busie paines applide,
 To melt the golden metall, ready to be tride.

XXXVI

One with great bellowes gathered filling aire,
 And with forst wind the fewell did inflame;
 Another did the dying bronds repaire
 With yron tongs, and sprinckled oft the same
 With liquid waues, fiers *Vulcans* rage to tame,
 Who maistring them, renewd his former heat;
 Some scumd the drosse, that from the metall came;
 Some stird the molten owre with ladles great;
 And euery one did swincke, and euery one did sweat.

XXXVII

But when as earthly wight they present saw,
 Glistring in armes and battailous aray,
 From their whot worke they did themselues withdraw
 To wonder at the sight: for till that day,
 They neuer creature saw, that came that way.
 Their staring eyes sparckling with feruent fire,
 And vgly shapes did nigh the man dismay,
 That were it not for shame, he would retire,
 Till that him thus bespake their soueraigne Lord and sire.

XXXVIII

Behold, thou Faeries sonne, with mortall eye,
 That liuing eye before did neuer see:
 The thing, that thou didst craue so earnestly,
 To weet, whence all the wealth late shewd by mee,
 Proceeded, lo now is reueald to thee.
 Here is the fountaine of the worldes good:
 Now therefore, if thou wilt enriched bee,
 Auise thee well, and chaunge thy wilfull mood,
 Least thou perhaps hereafter wish, and be withstood.

XXXIX

Suffise it then, thou Money God (quoth hee)
 That all thine idle offers I refuse.
 All that I need I haue; what needeth mee
 To couet more, then I haue cause to vse?
 With such vaine shewes thy worldlings vile abuse:
 But giue me leaue to follow mine emprise.
Mammon was much displeasd, yet no'te he chuse,
 But beare the rigour of his bold mesprise,
 And thence him forward led, him further to entise.

XL

He brought him through a darksome narrow strait,
 To a broad gate, all built of beaten gold:
 The gate was open, but therein did wait
 A sturdy villein, striding stiffe and bold,
 As if that highest God defie he would;
 In his right hand an yron club he held,
 But he himselfe was all of golden mould,
 Yet had both life and sence, and well could weld
 That cursed weapon, when his cruell foes he queld.

XLI

Disdayne he called was, and did disdain
 To be so cald, and who so did him call:
 Sterne was his looke, and full of stomacke vaine,
 His portance terrible, and stature tall,
 Far passing th'hight of men terrestriall;
 Like an huge Gyant of the *Titans* race,
 That made him scorne all creatures great and small,
 And with his pride all others powre deface:
 More fit amongst blacke fiendes, then men to haue his place.

XLII

Soone as those glitterand armes he did espye,
 That with their brightnesse made that darknesse light,
 His harmefull club he gan to hurtle hye,
 And threaten batteill to the Faery knight;
 Who likewise gan himselfe to batteill dight,
 Till *Mammon* did his hasty hand withhold,
 And counseld him abstaine from perilous fight:
 For nothing might abash the villein bold,
 Ne mortall steele emperce his miscreated mould.

XLIII

So hauing him with reason pacifide,
 And the fiers Carle commaunding to forbear,
 He brought him in. The rowme was large and wide,
 As it some Gyeld or solemne Temple weare:
 Many great golden pillours did vpbeare
 The massy roofe, and riches huge sustayne,
 And euery pillour decked was full deare
 With crownes and Diademes, and titles vaine,
 Which mortall Princes wore, whiles they on earth did rayne.

XLIV

A route of people there assembled were,
 Of euery sort and nation vnder skye,
 Which with great vprere preaced to draw nere
 To th'vpper part, where was aduaunced hye
 A stately siege of soueraigne maiestye;
 And thereon sat a woman gorgeous gay,
 And richly clad in robes of royaltie,
 That neuer earthly Prince in such aray
 His glory did enhaunce, and pompous pride display.

XLV

Her face right wondrous faire did seeme to bee,
 That her broad beauties beam great brightnes threw
 Through the dim shade, that all men might it see:
 Yet was not that same her owne natiue hew,
 But wrought by art and counterfetted shew,
 Thereby more louers vnto her to call;
 Nath'lesse most heauenly faire in deed and vew
 She by creation was, till she did fall;
 Thenceforth she sought for helps, to cloke her crime withall.

XLVI

There, as in glistring glory she did sit,
 She held a great gold chaine ylincked well,
 Whose vpper end to highest heauen was knit,
 And lower part did reach to lowest Hell;
 And all that preace did round about her swell,
 To catchen hold of that long chaine, thereby
 To clime aloft, and others to excell:
 That was *Ambition*, rash desire to sty,
 And euery lincke thereof a step of dignity.

XLVII

Some thought to raise themselues to high degree,
 By riches and vnrighteous reward,
 Some by close shouldring, some by flatteree;
 Others through friends, others for base regard;
 And all by wrong wayes for themselues prepard.
 Those that were vp themselues, kept others low,
 Those that were low themselues, held others hard,
 Ne suffred them to rise or greater grow,
 But euery one did striue his fellow downe to throw.

XLVIII

Which whenas *Guyon* saw, he gan inquire,
 What meant that preace about that Ladies throne,
 And what she was that did so high aspire.
 Him *Mammon* answered; That goodly one,
 Whom all that folke with such contention,
 Do flocke about, my deare, my daughter is;
 Honour and dignitie from her alone
 Deriued are, and all this worldes blis
 For which ye men do striue: few get, but many mis.

XLIX

And faire *Philotime* she rightly hight,
 The fairest wight that wonneth vnder skye,
 But that this darksome neather world her light
 Doth dim with horroure and deformitie,
 Worthy of heauen and hye felicitie,
 From whence the gods haue her for enuy thrust:
 But sith thou hast found fauour in mine eye,
 Thy spouse I will her make, if that thou lust,
 That she may thee aduance for workes and merites iust.

L

Gramercy *Mammon* (said the gentle knight)
 For so great grace and offred high estate;
 But I, that am fraile flesh and earthly wight,
 Vnworthy match for such immortall mate
 My selfe well wote, and mine vnequall fate;
 And were I not, yet is my trouthe yplight,
 And loue auowd to other Lady late,
 That to remoue the same I haue no might:
 To chaunge loue causelesse is reproch to warlike knight.

LI

Mammon emmoued was with inward wrath;
 Yet forcing it to faine, him forth thence led
 Through griesly shadowes by a beaten path,
 Into a gardin goodly garnished
 With hearbs and fruits, whose kinds mote not be red:
 Not such, as earth out of her fruitfull woomb
 Throwes forth to men, sweet and well sauoured,
 But direfull deadly blacke both leafe and bloom,
 Fit to adorne the dead, and decke the drery toombe.

LII

There mournfull *Cypresse* grew in greatest store,
 And trees of bitter *Gall*, and *Heben* sad,
 Dead sleeping *Poppy*, and blacke *Hellebore*,
 Cold *Coloquintida*, and *Tetra* mad,
 Mortall *Samnitis*, and *Cicuta* bad,
 Which with th'vniust *Atheniens* made to dy
 Wise *Socrates*, who thereof quaffing glad
 Poured out his life, and last Philosophy
 To the faire *Critias* his dearest Belamy.

LIII

The *Gardin of Proserpina* this hight;
 And in the midst thereof a siluer seat,
 With a thicke Arber goodly ouer dight,
 In which she often vsd from open heat
 Her selfe to shroud, and pleasures to entreat.
 Next thereunto did grow a goodly tree,
 With braunches broad dispred and body great,
 Clothed with leaues, that none the wood mote see
 And loaden all with fruit as thicke as it might bee.

LIV

Their fruit were golden apples glistring bright,
 That goodly was their glory to behold,
 On earth like neuer grew, ne liuing wight
 Like euer saw, but they from hence were sold;
 For those, which *Hercules* with conquest bold
 Got from great *Atlas* daughters, hence began,
 And planted there, did bring forth fruit of gold:
 And those with which th'*Eubaeen* young man wan
 Swift *Atalanta*, when through craft he her out ran.

LV

Here also sprong that goodly golden fruit,
 With which *Acontius* got his loue trew,
 Whom he had long time sought with fruitlesse suit:
 Here eke that famous golden Apple grew,
 The which amongst the gods false *Ate* threw;
 For which th'*Idaeen* Ladies disagreed,
 Till partiall *Paris* dempt it *Venus* dew,
 And had of her, faire *Helen* for his meed,
 That many noble *Greekes* and *Troians* made to bleed.

LVI

The warlike Elfe much wondred at this tree,
 So faire and great, that shadowed all the ground,
 And his broad braunches, laden with rich fee,
 Did stretch themselues without the vtmost bound
 Of this great gardin, compast with a mound,
 Which ouer-hanging, they themselues did steepe,
 In a blacke flood which flow'd about it round;
 That is the riuer of *Cocytus* deepe,
 In which full many soules do endlesse waile and weepe.

LVII

Which to behold, he clomb vp to the banke,
 And looking downe, saw many damned wights,
 In those sad waues, which direfull deadly stanke,
 Plonged continually of cruell Sprights,
 That with their pitteous cryes, and yelling shrighs,
 They made the further shore resounden wide:
 Emongst the rest of those same ruefull sights,
 One cursed creature he by chaunce espide,
 That drenched lay full deepe, vnder the Garden side.

LVIII

Deepe was he drenched to the vpmost chin,
 Yet gaped still, as coueting to drinke
 Of the cold liquor, which he waded in,
 And stretching forth his hand, did often thinke
 To reach the fruit, which grew vpon the brincke:
 But both the fruit from hand, and floud from mouth
 Did flie abacke, and made him vainely swinke:
 The whiles he steru'd with hunger and with drouth
 He daily dyde, yet neuer throughly dyen couth.

LIX

The knight him seeing labour so in vaine,
 Askt who he was, and what he ment thereby:
 Who groning deepe, thus answerd him againe;
 Most cursed of all creatures vnder skye,
 Lo *Tantalus*, I here tormented lye:
 Of whom high *Ioue* wont whylome feasted bee,
 Lo here I now for want of food doe dye:
 But if that thou be such, as I thee see,
 Of grace I pray thee, giue to eat and drinke to mee.

LX

Nay, nay, thou greedie *Tantalus* (quoth he)
 Abide the fortune of thy present fate,
 And vnto all that liue in high degree,
 Ensample be of mind intemperate,
 To teach them how to vse their present state.
 Then gan the cursed wretch aloud to cry,
 Accusing highest *Ioue* and gods ingrate,
 And eke blaspheming heauen bitterly,
 As authour of vniustice, there to let him dye.

LXI

He lookt a little further, and espyde
 Another wretch, whose carkasse deepe was drent
 Within the riuier, which the same did hyde:
 But both his hands most filthy feculent,
 Aboue the water were on high extent,
 And faynd to wash themselues incessantly;
 Yet nothing cleaner were for such intent,
 But rather fowler seemed to the eye;
 So lost his labour vaine and idle industry.

LXII

The knight him calling, asked who he was,
 Who lifting vp his head, him answerd thus:
 I *Pilate* am the falsest Iudge, alas,
 And most vniust, that by vnrighteous
 And wicked doome, to Iewes despiteous
 Deliuered vp the Lord of life to die,
 And did acquite a murdrer felonous;
 The whiles my hands I washt in puritie,
 The whiles my soule was soyl'd with foule iniquitie.

LXIII

Infinite moe, tormented in like paine
 He there beheld, too long here to be told:
 Ne *Mammon* would there let him long remaine,
 For terrour of the tortures manifold,
 In which the damned soules he did behold,
 But roughly him bespake. Thou fearefull foole,
 Why takest not of that same fruit of gold,
 Ne sittest downe on that same siluer stoole,
 To rest thy wearie person, in the shadow coole.

LXIV

All which he did, to doe him deadly fall
 In frayle intemperance through sinfull bayt;
 To which if he inclined had at all,
 That dreadfull feend, which did behind him wayt,
 Would him haue rent in thousand peeces strayt:
 But he was warie wise in all his way,
 And well perceiued his deceitfull sleight,
 Ne suffred lust his safetie to betray;
 So goodly did beguile the Guyler of the pray.

LXV

And now he has so long remained there,
 That vitall powres gan wexe both weake and wan,
 For want of food, and sleepe, which two vpbeare,
 Like mightie pillours, this fraile life of man,
 That none without the same enduren can.
 For now three dayes of men were full outwrought,
 Since he this hardie enterprize began:
 For thy great *Mammon* fairely he besought,
 Into the world to guide him backe, as he him brought.

LXVI

The God, though loth, yet was constraind t'obay,
 For lenger time, then that, no liuing wight
 Below the earth, might suffred be to stay:
 So backe againe, him brought to liuing light.
 But all so soone as his enfeebled spright
 Gan sucke this vitall aire into his brest,
 As ouercome with too exceeding might,
 The life did flit away out of her nest,
 And all his senses were with deadly fit opprest.

Canto IX

*The house of Temperance, in which
 doth sober Alma dwell,
 Besiegd of many foes, whom straunger
 knightes to flight compell.*

I

OF all Gods workes, which do this world adorne,
 There is no one more faire and excellent,
 Then is mans body both for powre and forme,
 Whiles it is kept in sober gouernment;
 But none then it, more fowle and indecent,
 Distempred through misrule and passions bace:
 It growes a Monster, and incontinent
 Doth loose his dignitie and natiue grace.
 Behold, who list, both one and other in this place.

II

After the Paynim brethren conquer'd were,
 The *Briton* Prince recou'ring his stolne sword,
 And *Guyon* his lost shield, they both yfere

Forth passed on their way in faire accord,
 Till him the Prince with gentle court did bord;
 Sir knight, mote I of you this curt'sie read,
 To weet why on your shield so goodly scord
 Beare ye the picture of that Ladies head?
 Full liuely is the semblaunt, though the substance dead.

III

Faire Sir (said he) if in that picture dead
 Such life ye read, and vertue in vaine shew,
 What mote ye weene, if the trew liuely-head
 Of that most glorious visage ye did vew?
 But if the beautie of her mind ye knew,
 That is her bountie, and imperiall powre,
 Thousand times fairer then her mortall hew,
 O how great wonder would your thoughts deuoure,
 And infinite desire into your spirite poure!

IV

She is the mighty Queene of *Faerie*,
 Whose faire retrait I in my shield do beare;
 She is the flowre of grace and chastitie,
 Throughout the world renowned far and neare,
 My liefe, my liege, my Soueraigne, my deare,
 Whose glory shineth as the morning starre,
 And with her light the earth enlumines cleare;
 Far reach her mercies, and her prayses farre,
 As well in state of peace, as puissaunce in warre.

V

Thrise happy man, (said then the *Briton* knight)
 Whom gracious lot, and thy great valiaunce
 Haue made thee souldier of that Princesse bright,
 Which with her bounty and glad countenance
 Doth blesse her seruaunts, and them high aduaunce.
 How may straunge knight hope euer to aspire,
 By faithfull seruice, and meet amenance,
 Vnto such blisse? sufficient were that hire
 For losse of thousand liues, to dye at her desire.

VI

Said *Guyon*, Noble Lord, what meed so great,
 Or grace of earthly Prince so soueraigne,

But by your wondrous worth and warlike feat
 Ye well may hope, and easely attaine?
 But were your will, her sold to entertaine,
 And numbred be mongst knights of *Maydenhed*,
 Great guerdon, well I wote, should you remaine,
 And in her fauour high be reckoned,
 As *Arthegall*, and *Sophy* now beene honored.

VII

Certes (then said the Prince) I God auow,
 That sith I armes and knighthood first did plight,
 My whole desire has beene, and yet is now,
 To serue that Queene with all my powre and might.
 Now hath the Sunne with his lamp-burning light,
 Walkt round about the world, and I no lesse,
 Sith of that Goddess I haue sought the sight,
 Yet no where can her find: such happinesse
 Heauen doth to me enuy, and fortune fauourlesse.

VIII

Fortune, the foe of famous cheuisaunce
 Seldome (said *Guyon*) yields to vertue aide,
 But in her way throwes mischief and mischaunce,
 Whereby her course is stopt, and passage staid.
 But you, faire Sir, be not herewith dismaid,
 But constant keepe the way, in which ye stand;
 Which were it not, that I am else delaid
 With hard aduventure, which I haue in hand,
 I labour would to guide you through all Faery land.

IX

Gramercy Sir (said he) but mote I weete,
 What straunge aduventure do ye now pursew?
 Perhaps my succour, or aduizement meete
 Mote stead you much your purpose to subdew.
 Then gan Sir *Guyon* all the story shew
 Of false *Acrasia*, and her wicked wiles,
 Which to auenge, the Palmer him forth drew
 From Faery court. So talked they, the whiles
 They wasted had much way, and measurd many miles.

X

And now faire *Phœbus* gan decline in hast

His weary wagon to the Westerne vale,
 Whenas they spide a goodly castle, plast
 Foreby a riuer in a pleasaunt dale,
 Which choosing for that euenings hospitale,
 They thither marcht: but when they came in sight,
 And from their sweaty Coursers did auale,
 They found the gates fast barred long ere night,
 And euery loup fast lockt, as fearing foes despight.

XI

Which when they saw, they weened fowle reproch
 Was to them doen, their entrance to forstall,
 Till that the Squire gan nigher to approch;
 And wind his horne vnder the castle wall,
 That with the noise it shooke, as it would fall:
 Eftsoones forth looked from the highest spire
 The watch, and lowd vnto the knights did call,
 To weete, what they so rudely did require.
 Who gently answered, They entrance did desire.

XII

Fly, fly, good knights, (said he) fly fast away
 If that your liues ye loue, as meete ye should;
 Fly fast, and saue your selues from neare decay,
 Here may ye not haue entraunce, though we would:
 We would and would againe, if that we could;
 But thousand enemies about vs raue,
 And with long siege vs in this castle hould:
 Seuen yeares this wize they vs besieged haue,
 And many good knights slaine, that haue vs sought to saue.

XIII

Thus as he spoke, loe with outragious cry
 A thousand villeins round about them swarmd
 Out of the rockes and caues adioyning nye,
 Vile caytiue wretches, ragged, rude, deformd,
 All threatning death, all in straunge manner armd,
 Some with vnweldy clubs, some with long speares,
 Some rusty kniues, some staues in fire warmd.
 Sterne was their looke, like wild amazed steares,
 Staring with hollow eyes, and stiffe vpstanding heares.

XIV

Fiersly at first those knights they did assaile,
 And droue them to recoile: but when againe
 They gaue fresh charge, their forces gan to faile,
 Vnhable their encounter to sustaine;
 For with such puissaunce and impetuous maine
 Those Champions broke on them, that forst them fly,
 Like scattered Sheepe, whenas the Shepheards swaine
 A Lyon and a Tigre doth espye,
 With greedy pace forth rushing from the forest nye.

XV

A while they fled, but soone returnd againe
 With greater fury, then before was found;
 And euermore their cruell Captaine
 Sought with his raskall routs t'enclose them round,
 And ouerrun to tread them to the ground.
 But soone the knights with their bright-burning blades
 Broke their rude troupes, and orders did confound,
 Hewing and slashing at their idle shades;
 For though they bodies seeme, yet substance from them fades.

XVI

As when a swarme of Gnats at euentide
 Out of the fennes of Allan do arise,
 Their murmuring small trompets sounden wide,
 Whiles in the aire their clustring army flies,
 That as a cloud doth seeme to dim the skies;
 Ne man nor beast may rest, or take repast,
 For their sharpe wounds, and noyous iniuries,
 Till the fierce Northerne wind with blustring blast
 Doth blow them quite away, and in the *Ocean* cast.

XVII

Thus when they had that troublous rout disperst,
 Vnto the castle gate they come againe,
 And entraunce crau'd, which was denied erst.
 Now when report of that their perilous paine,
 And combrous conflict, which they did sustaine,
 Came to the Ladies eare, which there did dwell,
 She forth issewed with a goodly traine
 Of Squires and Ladies equipaged well,
 And entertained them right fairely, as befell.

XVIII

Alma she called was, a virgin bright;
 That had not yet felt *Cupid*'s wanton rage,
 Yet was she woo'd of many a gentle knight,
 And many a Lord of noble parentage,
 That sought with her to lincke in marriage:
 For she was faire, as faire mote euer bee,
 And in the flowre now of her freshest age;
 Yet full of grace and goodly modestee,
 That euen heauen reioyced her sweete face to see.

XIX

In robe of lilly white she was arayd,
 That from her shoulder to her heele downe raught,
 The traine whereof loose far behind her strayd,
 Braunched with gold and pearle, most richly wrought,
 And borne of two faire Damsels, which were taught
 That seruice well. Her yellow golden heare
 Was trimly wouen, and in tresses wrought,
 Ne other tyre she on her head did weare,
 But crowned with a garland of sweete Rosiere.

XX

Goodly she entertaind those noble knights,
 And brought them vp into her castle hall;
 Where gentle court and gracious delight
 She to them made, with mildnesse virginall,
 Shewing her selfe both wise and liberall:
 There when they rested had a season dew,
 They her besought of fauour speciall,
 Of that faire Castle to affoord them vew;
 She graunted, and them leading forth, the same did shew.

XXI

First she them led vp to the Castle wall,
 That was so high, as foe might not it clime,
 And all so faire, and fensible withall,
 Not built of bricke, ne yet of stone and lime,
 But of thing like to that *Aegyptian* slime,
 Whereof king *Nine* whilome built *Babell* towre;
 But O great pittie, that no lenger time
 So goodly workemanship should not endure:
 Soone it must turne to earth; no earthly thing is sure.

XXII

The frame thereof seemd partly circulare,
 And part triangulare, O worke diuine;
 Those two the first and last proportions are,
 The one imperfect, mortall, fœminine;
 Th'other immortall, perfect, masculine,
 And twixt them both a quadrate was the base,
 Proportioned equally by seuen and nine;
 Nine was the circle set in heauens place,
 All which compacted made a goodly diapase.

XXIII

Therein two gates were placed seemly well:
 The one before, by which all in did pas,
 Did th'other far in workmanship excell;
 For not of wood, nor of enduring bras,
 But of more worthy substance fram'd it was;
 Doubly disparted, it did locke and close,
 That when it locked, none might thorough pas,
 And when it opened, no man might it close,
 Still open to their friends, and closed to their foes.

XXIV

Of hewen stone the porch was fairely wrought,
 Stone more of valew, and more smooth and fine,
 Then Iet or Marble far from Ireland brought;
 Ouer the which was cast a wandring vine,
 Enchaced with a wanton yuie twine.
 And ouer it a faire Portcullis hong,
 Which to the gate directly did incline,
 With comely compasse, and compacture strong,
 Neither vnseemely short, nor yet exceeding long.

XXV

Within the Barbican a Porter sate,
 Day and night duely keeping watch and ward,
 Nor wight, nor word mote passe out of the gate,
 But in good order, and with dew regard;
 Vtterers of secrets he from thence debard,
 Bablers of folly, and blazers of crime.
 His larumbell might lowd and wide be hard,
 When cause requird, but neuer out of time;
 Early and late it rong, at euening and at prime.

XXVI

And round about the porch on euery side
 Twise sixteen warders sat, all armed bright
 In glistring steele, and strongly fortifide:
 Tall yeomen seemed they, and of great might,
 And were enraunged ready, still for fight.
 By them as *Alma* passed with her gwestes,
 They did obeysaunce, as beseemed right,
 And then againe returned to their restes:
 The Porter eke to her did lout with humble gestes.

XXVII

Thence she them brought into a stately Hall,
 Wherein were many tables faire dispred,
 And ready dight with drapets festiuall,
 Against the viaundes should be ministred.
 At th'upper end there sate, yclad in red
 Downe to the ground, a comely personage,
 That in his hand a white rod menaged,
 He Steward was hight *Diet*; rype of age,
 And in demeanure sober, and in counsell sage.

XXVIII

And through the Hall there walked to and fro
 A iolly yeoman, Marshall of the same,
 Whose name was *Appetite*; he did bestow
 Both gwestes and meate, when euer in they came,
 And knew them how to order without blame,
 As him the Steward bad. They both attone
 Did dewty to their Lady, as became;
 Who passing by, forth led her gwestes anone
 Into the kitchin rowme, ne spard for nicenesse none.

XXIX

It was a vault ybuilt for great dispence,
 With many raunges reard along the wall;
 And one great chimney, whose long tonnell thence,
 The smoke forth threw. And in the midst of all
 There placed was a caudron wide and tall,
 Vpon a mighty furnace, burning whot,
 More whot, then *Aetn'*, or flaming *Mongiball*:
 For day and night it brent, ne ceased not,
 So long as any thing it in the caudron got.

XXX

But to delay the heat, least by mischaunce
 It might breake out, and set the whole on fire,
 There added was by goodly ordinaunce,
 An huge great paire of bellowes, which did styre
 Continually, and cooling breath inspyre.
 About the Caudron many Cookes accoyld,
 With hookes and ladles, as need did require;
 The whiles the viandes in the vessell boyld
 They did about their businesse sweat, and sorely toyld.

XXXI

The maister Cooke was cald *Concoction*,
 A carefull man, and full of comely guise:
 The kitchin Clerke, that hight *Digestion*,
 Did order all th'Achates in seemely wise,
 And set them forth, as well he could devise.
 The rest had seuerall offices assind,
 Some to remoue the scum, as it did rise;
 Others to beare the same away did mind;
 And others it to vse according to his kind.

XXXII

But all the liquour, which was fowle and wast,
 Not good nor seruiceable else for ought,
 They in another great round vessell plast,
 Till by a conduit pipe it thence were brought:
 And all the rest, that noyous was, and nought,
 By secret wayes, that none might it espy,
 Was close conuaid, and to the back-gate brought,
 That cleped was *Port Esquiline*, whereby
 It was auoided quite, and throwne out priuily.

XXXIII

Which goodly order, and great workmans skill
 Whenas those knights beheld, with rare delight,
 And gazing wonder they their minds did fill;
 For neuer had they seene so straunge a sight.
 Thence backe againe faire *Alma* led them right,
 And soone into a goodly Parlour brought,
 That was with royall arras richly dight,
 In which was nothing pourtrahed, nor wrought,
 Not wrought, nor pourtrahed, but easie to be thought.

XXXIV

And in the midst thereof vpon the floure,
 A louely beuy of faire Ladies sate,
 Courted of many a iolly Paramoure,
 The which them did in modest wise amate,
 And eachone sought his Lady to aggrate:
 And eke emongst them litle *Cupid* playd
 His wanton sports, being returned late
 From his fierce warres, and hauing from him layd
 His cruell bow, wherewith he thousands hath dismayd.

XXXV

Diuerse delights they found them selues to please;
 Some song in sweet consort, some laught for ioy,
 Some plaid with strawes, some idly sat at ease;
 But other some could not abide to toy,
 All pleasaunce was to them grieffe and annoy:
 This fround, that faund, the third for shame did blush,
 Another seemed enuious, or coy,
 Another in her teeth did gnaw a rush:
 But at these straungers presence euery one did hush.

XXXVI

Soone as the gracious *Alma* came in place,
 They all attonce out of their seates arose,
 And to her homage made, with humble grace:
 Whom when the knights beheld, they gan dispose
 Themselues to court, and each a Damsell chose:
 The Prince by chaunce did on a Lady light,
 That was right faire and fresh as morning rose,
 But somewhat sad, and solemne eke in sight,
 As if some pensiue thought constraind her gentle spright.

XXXVII

In a long purple pall, whose skirt with gold,
 Was fretted all about, she was arayd;
 And in her hand a Poplar braunch did hold:
 To whom the Prince in curteous manner said;
 Gentle Madame, why beene ye thus dismaid,
 And your faire beautie do with sadnesse spill?
 Liues any, that you hath thus ill apaid?
 Or doen you loue, or doen you lacke your will?
 What euer be the cause, it sure beseemes you ill.

XXXVIII

Faire Sir, (said she halfe in disdainefull wise,)
 How is it, that this word in me ye blame,
 And in your selfe do not the same aduise?
 Him ill beseemes, anothers fault to name,
 That may vnwares be blotted with the same:
 Pensiue I yeeld I am, and sad in mind,
 Through great desire of glory and of fame;
 Ne ought I weene are ye therein behind,
 That haue twelue moneths sought one, yet no where can her find.

XXXIX

The Prince was inly moued at her speach,
 Well weeting trew, what she had rashly told;
 Yet with faire semblaunt sought to hide the breach,
 Which chaunge of colour did perforce vnfold,
 Now seeming flaming whot, now stony cold.
 Tho turning soft aside, he did inquire,
 What wight she was, that Poplar braunch did hold:
 It answered was, her name was *Prays-desire*,
 That by well doing sought to honour to aspire.

XL

The whiles, the *Faerie* knight did entertaine
 Another Damsell of that gentle crew,
 That was right faire, and modest of demaine,
 But that too oft she chaung'd her natiue hew:
 Straunge was her tyre, and all her garment blew,
 Close round about her tuckt with many a plight:
 Vpon her fist the bird, which shonneth vew,
 And keepes in couerts close from liuing wight,
 Did sit, as yet ashamd, how rude *Pan* did her dight.

XLI

So long as *Guyon* with her commoned,
 Vnto the ground she cast her modest eye,
 And euer and anone with rosie red
 The bashfull bloud her snowy cheekes did dye,
 That her became, as polisht yuory,
 Which cunning Craftesman hand hath ouerlayd
 With faire vermilion or pure Castory.
 Great wonder had the knight, to see the mayd
 So straungely passioned, and to her gently sayd,

XLII

Faire Damzell, seemeth, by your troubled cheare,
 That either me too bold ye weene, this wise
 You to molest, or other ill to feare
 That in the secret of your hart close lyes,
 From whence it doth, as cloud from sea arise.
 If it be I, of pardon I you pray;
 But if ought else that I mote not deuise,
 I will, if please you it discure, assay,
 To ease you of that ill, so wisely as I may.

XLIII

She answerd nought, but more abasht for shame,
 Held downe her head, the whiles her louely face
 The flashing bloud with blushing did inflame,
 And the strong passion mard her modest grace,
 That *Guyon* meruayld at her vncouth cace:
 Till *Alma* him bespake, why wonder yee
 Faire Sir at that, which ye so much embrace?
 She is the fountaine of your modestee;
 You shamefast are, but *Shamefastnesse* it selfe is shee.

XLIV

Thereat the Elfe did blush in priuitee,
 And turnd his face away; but she the same
 Dissembled faire, and faynd to ouersee.
 Thus they awhile with court and goodly game,
 Themselues did solace each one with his Dame,
 Till that great Ladie thence away them sought,
 To vew her castles other wondrous frame.
 Vp to a stately Turret she them brought,
 Ascending by ten steps of Alablaster wrought.

XLV

That Turrets frame most admirable was,
 Like highest heauen compassed around,
 And lifted high aboue this earthly masse,
 Which it suruew'd, as hils doen lower ground;
 But not on ground mote like to this be found,
 Not that, which antique *Cadmus* whylome built
 In *Thebes*, which *Alexander* did confound;
 Nor that proud towre of *Troy*, though richly guilt,
 From which young *Hectors* bloud by cruell *Greekes* was spilt.

XLVI

The roofe hereof was arched ouer head,
 And deckt with flowers and herbars daintily;
 Two goodly Beacons, set in watches stead,
 Therein gaue light, and flam'd continually:
 For they of liuing fire most subtilly
 Were made, and set in siluer sockets bright,
 Couer'd with lids deuiz'd of substance sly,
 That readily they shut and open might.
 O who can tell the prayes of that makers might!

XLVII

Ne can I tell, ne can I stay to tell
 This parts great workmanship, and wondrous powre,
 That all this other worlds worke doth excell,
 And likest is vnto that heauenly towre,
 That God hath built for his owne blessed bowre.
 Therein were diuerse roomes, and diuerse stages,
 But three the chiefest, and of greatest powre,
 In which there dwelt three honorable sages,
 The wisest men, I weene, that liued in their ages.

XLVIII

Not he, whom *Greece*, the Nourse of all good arts,
 By *Phæbus* doome, the wisest thought aliuie,
 Might be compar'd to these by many parts:
 Nor that sage *Pylian* syre, which did suruiue
 Three ages, such as mortall men contriue,
 By whose aduise old *Priams* cittie fell,
 With these in praise of pollicies mote striue.
 These three in these three roomes did sundry dwell,
 And counselled faire *Alma*, how to gouerne well.

XLIX

The first of them could things to come foresee:
 The next could of things present best aduize;
 The third things past could keepe in memoree,
 So that no time, nor reason could arize,
 But that the same could one of these comprize.
 For thy the first did in the forepart sit,
 That nought mote hinder his quicke preiudize:
 He had a sharpe foresight, and working wit,
 That neuer idle was, ne once could rest a whit.

L

His chamber was dispaigned all within,
 With sundry colours, in the which were writ
 Infinite shapes of things dispersed thin;
 Some such as in the world were neuer yit,
 Ne can deuized be of mortall wit;
 Some daily seene, and knowen by their names,
 Such as in idle fantasies doe flit:
 Infernall Hags, *Centaurs*, feendes, *Hippodames*,
 Apes, Lions, AEGles, Owles, fooles, louers, children, Dames.

LI

And all the chamber filled was with flyes,
 Which buzzed all about, and made such sound,
 That they encombred all mens eares and eyes,
 Like many swarmes of Bees assembled round,
 After their hiues with honny do abound:
 All those were idle thoughts and fantasies,
 Deuices, dreames, opinions vnsound,
 Shewes, visions, sooth-sayes, and prophesies;
 And all that fained is, as leasings, tales, and lies.
 And all the chamber filled was with flies,
 Which buzzed all about, and made such sound,
 That they encumbered all men's ears and eyes,
 Like many swarms of bees assembled round,

LII

Emongst them all sate he, which wonned there,
 That hight *Phantastes* by his nature trew;
 A man of yeares yet fresh, as mote appere,
 Of swarth complexion, and of crabbed hew,
 That him full of melancholy did shew;
 Bent hollow beetle browes, sharpe staring eyes,
 That mad or foolish seemd: one by his vew
 Mote deeme him borne with ill disposed skyes,
 When oblique *Saturne* sate in the house of agonyes.

LIII

Whom *Alma* hauing shewed to her gwestes,
 Thence brought them to the second roome, whose wals
 Were painted faire with memorable gestes,
 Of famous Wisards, and with picturals
 Of Magistrates, of courts, of tribunals,

Of commen wealthes, of states, of pollicy,
 Of lawes, of iudgements, and of decretals;
 All artes, all science, all Philosophy,
 And all that in the world was aye thought wittily.

LIV

Of those that roome was full, and them among
 There sate a man of ripe and perfect age,
 Who did them meditate all his life long,
 That through continuall practise and vsage,
 He now was growne right wise, and wondrous sage.
 Great pleasure had those stranger knights, to see
 His goodly reason, and graue personage,
 That his disciples both desir'd to bee;
 But *Alma* thence them led to th'hindmost roome of three.

LV

That chamber seemed ruinous and old,
 And therefore was remoued farre behind,
 Yet were the wals, that did the same vphold,
 Right firme and strong, though somewhat they declind,
 And therein sate an old oldman, halfe blind,
 And all decrepit in his feeble corse,
 Yet liuely vigour rested in his mind,
 And recompenst him with a better score:
 Weake body well is chang'd for minds redoubled forse.

LVI

This man of infinite remembrance was,
 And things foregone through many ages held,
 Which he recorded still, as they did pas,
 Ne suffred them to perish through long eld,
 As all things else, the which this world doth weld,
 But laid them vp in his immortall scrine,
 Where they for euer incorrupted dweld:
 The warres he well remembered of king *Nine*,
 Of old *Assaracus*, and *Inachus* diuine.

LVII

The yeares of *Nestor* nothing were to his,
 Ne yet *Mathusalem*, though longest liu'd;
 For he remembered both their infancies:
 Ne wonder then, if that he were depriu'd

Of natiue strength now, that he them suruiu'd.
 His chamber all was hangd about with rolles,
 And old records from auncient times deriu'd,
 Some made in books, some in long parchment scrolles,
 That were all worme-eaten, and full of canker holes.

LVIII

Amidst them all he in a chaire was set,
 Tossing and turning them withouten end;
 But for he was vnhabable them to fet,
 A litle boy did on him still attend,
 To reach, when euer he for ought did send;
 And oft when things were lost, or laid amis,
 That boy them sought, and vnto him did lend.
 Therefore he *Anamnestes* cleped is,
 And that old man *Eumnestes*, by their propertis.

LIX

The knights there entring, did him reuerence dew
 And wondred at his endlesse exercise,
 Then as they gan his Librarie to vew,
 And antique Registers for to auise,
 There chaunced to the Princes hand to rize,
 An auncient booke, hight *Briton moniments*,
 That of this lands first conquest did deuize,
 And old diuision into Regiments,
 Till it reduced was to one mans governments.

LX

Sir *Guyon* chaunst eke on another booke,
 That hight *Antiquitie of Faerie lond*,
 In which when as he greedily did looke,
 Th'off-spring of Elues and Faries there he fond,
 As it deliuered was from hond to hond:
 Whereat they burning both with feruent fire,
 Their countries auncestry to vnderstond,
 Crau'd leaue of *Alma*, and that aged sire,
 To read those bookes; who gladly graunted their desire.

Book III**Canto I**

*Guyon encountreth Britomart,
faire Florimell is chaced:
Duessaes traines and Malecastaes
champions are defaced.*

I

THE famous Briton Prince and Faerie knight,
After long wayes and perilous paines endured,
Hauing their wearie limbes to perfect plight
Restord, and sory wounds right well recured,
Of the faire *Alma* greatly were procured,
To make there lenger sojourne and abode;
But when thereto they might not be allured,
From seeking praise, and deeds of armes abrode,
They courteous conge tooke, and forth together yode.

II

But the captiu'd *Acrasia* he sent,
Because of trauell long, a nigher way,
With a strong gard, all reskew to preuent,
And her to Faerie court safe to conuay,
That her for witsesse of his hard assay,
Vnto his *Faerie* Queene he might present:
But he himselfe betooke another way,
To make more triall of his hardiment,
And seeke aduentures, as he with Prince *Arthur* went.

III

Long so they trauelled through wastefull wayes,
Where daungers dwelt, and perils most did wonne,
To hunt for glorie and renownmed praise;
Full many Countries they did ouerronne,
From the vprising to the setting Sunne,
And many hard aduentures did atchieue;
Of all the which they honour euer wonne,
Seeking the weake oppressed to relieue,
And to recouer right for such, as wrong did grieue.

IV

At last as through an open plaine they yode,
They spide a knight, that towards pricked faire,

And him beside an aged Squire there rode,
 That seem'd to couch vnder his shield three-square,
 As if that age had him that burden spare,
 And yield it those, that stouter could it wield:
 He them espying, gan himselfe prepare,
 And on his arme addresse his goodly shield
 That bore a Lion passant in a golden field.

V

Which seeing good Sir *Guyon*, deare besought
 The Prince of grace, to let him runne that turne.
 He graunted: then the Faery quickly raught
 His poinant speare, and sharpely gan to spurne
 His fomy steed, whose fierie feete did burne
 The verdant grasse, as he thereon did tread;
 Ne did the other backe his foot returne,
 But fiercely forward came withouten dread,
 And bent his dreadfull speare against the others head.

VI

They bene ymet, and both their points arriued,
 But *Guyon* droue so furious and fell,
 That seem'd both shield and plate it would haue riued;
 Nathelesse it bore his foe not from his sell,
 But made him stagger, as he were not well:
 But *Guyon* selfe, ere well he was aware,
 Nigh a speares length behind his crouper fell,
 Yet in his fall so well him selfe he bare,
 That mischieuous mischance his life and limbes did spare.

VII

Great shame and sorrow of that fall he tooke;
 For neuer yet, sith warlike armes he bore,
 And shiuering speare in bloudie field first shooke,
 He found himselfe dishonored so sore.
 Ah gentlest knight, that euer armour bore,
 Let not thee grieue dismounted to haue beene,
 And brought to ground, that neuer wast before;
 For not thy fault, but secret powre vnseene,
 That speare enchanted was, which layd thee on the greene.

VIII

But weenedst thou what wight thee ouerthrew,
 Much greater griefe and shamefuller regret
 For thy hard fortune then thou wouldst renew,
 That of a single damzell thou wert met
 On equall plaine, and there so hard beset;
 Euen the famous *Britomart* it was,
 Whom straunge aduventure did from *Britaine* fet,
 To seeke her loue (loue farre sought alas,)
 Whose image she had seene in *Venus* looking glas.

IX

Full of disdainfull wrath, he fierce vprose,
 For to reuenge that foule reprochfull shame,
 And snatching his bright sword began to close
 With her on foot, and stoutly forward came;
 Die rather would he, then endure that same.
 Which when his Palmer saw, he gan to feare
 His toward perill and vntoward blame,
 Which by that new rencounter he should reare:
 For death sate on the point of that enchaunted speare.

X

And hasting towards him gan faire perswade,
 Not to prouoke misfortune, nor to weene
 His speares default to mend with cruell blade;
 For by his mightie Science he had seene
 The secret vertue of that weapon keene,
 That mortall puissance mote not withstond:
 Nothing on earth mote alwaies happie beene.
 Great hazard were it, and aduventure fond,
 To loose long gotten honour with one euill hond.

XI

By such good meanes he him discourselled,
 From prosecuting his reuenging rage;
 And eke the Prince like treaty handeled,
 His wrathfull will with reason to asswage,
 And laid the blame, not to his carriage,
 But to his starting steed, that swaru'd asyde,
 And to the ill purueyance of his page,
 That had his furnitures not firmly tyde:
 So is his angry courage fairely pacifyde.

XII

Thus reconcilment was betweene them knit,
 Through goodly temperance, and affection chaste,
 And either vowd with all their power and wit,
 To let not others honour be defaste,
 Of friend or foe, who euer it embaste,
 Ne armes to beare against the others syde:
 In which accord the Prince was also plaste,
 And with that golden chaine of concord tyde.
 So goodly all agreed, they forth yfere did ryde.

XIII

O goodly vsage of those antique times,
 In which the sword was seruant vnto right;
 When not for malice and contentious crimes,
 But all for praise, and prooffe of manly might,
 The martiall brood accustomed to fight:
 Then honour was the meed of victorie,
 And yet the vanquished had no despight:
 Let later age that noble vse enuie,
 Vile rancour to auoid, and cruell surquedrie.

XIV

Long they thus trauelled in friendly wise,
 Through countries waste, and eke well edifyde,
 Seeking aduentures hard, to exercise
 Their puissance, whylome full dernely tryde:
 At length they came into a forrest wyde,
 Whose hideous horror and sad trembling sound
 Full griesly seem'd: Therein they long did ryde,
 Yet tract of liuing creatures none they found,
 Saue Beares, Lions, and Bulls, which romed them around.

XV

All suddenly out of the thickest brush,
 Vpon a milke-white Palfrey all alone,
 A goodly Ladie did foreby them rush,
 Whose face did seeme as cleare as Christall stone,
 And eke through feare as white as whales bone:
 Her garments all were wrought of beaten gold,
 And all her steed with tinsell trappings shone,
 Which fled so fast, that nothing mote him hold,
 And scarce them leasure gaue, her passing to behold.

XVI

Still as she fled, her eye she backward threw,
 As fearing euill, that pursewd her fast;
 And her faire yellow locks behind her flew,
 Loosely disperst with puffe of euery blast:
 All as a blazing starre doth farre outcast
 His hearie beames, and flaming lockes dispred,
 At sight whereof the people stand aghast:
 But the sage wisard telles, as he has red,
 That it importunes death and dolefull drierihed.

XVII

So as they gazed after her a while,
 Lo where a griesly Foster forth did rush,
 Breathing out beastly lust her to defile:
 His tyreling iade he fiercely forth did push,
 Through thicke and thin, both ouer banke and bush
 In hope her to attaine by hooke or crooke,
 That from his gorie sides the bloud did gush:
 Large were his limbes, and terrible his looke,
 And in his clownish hand a sharp bore speare he shooke.

XVIII

Which outrage when those gentle knights did see,
 Full of great enuie and fell gealosity,
 They stayd not to auise, who first should bee,
 But all spurd after fast, as they mote fly,
 To reskew her from shamefull villany.
 The Prince and *Guyon* equally byliue
 Her selfe pursewd, in hope to win thereby
 Most goodly meede, the fairest Dame aliue:
 But after the foule foster *Timias* did striue.

XIX

The whiles faire *Britomart*, whose constant mind,
 Would not so lightly follow beauties chace,
 Ne rekt of Ladies Loue, did stay behind,
 And them awayted there a certaine space,
 To weet if they would turne backe to that place:
 But when she saw them gone, she forward went,
 As lay her iourney, through that perlous Pace,
 With stedfast courage and stout hardiment;
 Ne euill thing she fear'd, ne euill thing she ment.

XX

At last as nigh out of the wood she came,
 A stately Castle farre away she spyde,
 To which her steps directly she did frame.
 That Castle was most goodly edifyde,
 And plaste for pleasure nigh that forrest syde:
 But faire before the gate a spacious plaine,
 Mantled with greene, it selfe did spredden wyde,
 On which she saw sixe knights, that did darraine
 Fierce battell against one, with cruell might and maine.

XXI

Mainly they all attonce vpon him laid,
 And sore beset on euery side around,
 That nigh he breathlesse grew, yet nought dismaid,
 Ne euer to them yielded foot of ground
 All had he lost much bloud through many a wound,
 But stoutly dealt his blowes, and euery way
 To which he turned in his wrathfull stound,
 Made them recoile, and fly from dred decay,
 That none of all the sixe before, him durst assay.

XXII

Like dastard Cures, that hauing at a bay
 The saluage beast embost in wearie chace,
 Dare not aduenture on the stubborne pray,
 Ne byte before, but rome from place to place,
 To get a snatch, when turned is his face.
 In such distresse and doubtfull ieopardy,
 When *Britomart* him saw, she ran a pace
 Vnto his reskew, and with earnest cry,
 Bad those same sixe forbear that single enemy.

XXIII

But to her cry they list not lenden eare,
 Ne ought the more their mightie strokes surceasse,
 But gathering him round about more neare,
 Their direfull rancour rather did encrease;
 Till that she rushing through the thickest preasse,
 Perforce disparted their compacted gyre,
 And soone compeld to hearken vnto peace:
 Tho gan she myldly of them to inqyre
 The cause of their dissention and outrageous yre.

XXIV

Whereto that single knight did answere frame;
 These sixe would me enforce by oddes of might,
 To chaunge my lief, and loue another Dame,
 That death me liefer were, then such despight,
 So vnto wrong to yield my wrested right:
 For I loue one, the truest one on ground,
 Ne list me chaunge; she th'*Errant Damzell* hight,
 For whose deare sake full many a bitter stownd,
 I haue endur'd, and tasted many a bloody wound.

XXV

Certes (said she) then bene ye sixe to blame,
 To weene your wrong by force to iustifie:
 For knight to leaue his Ladie were great shame,
 That faithfull is, and better were to die.
 All losse is lesse, and lesse the infamie,
 Then losse of loue to him, that loues but one;
 Ne may loue be compeld by maisterie;
 For soone as maisterie comes, sweete loue anone
 Taketh his nimble wings, and soone away is gone.

XXVI

Then spake one of those sixe, There dwelleth here
 Within this castle wall a Ladie faire,
 Whose soueraine beautie hath no liuing pere,
 Thereto so bounteous and so debonaire,
 That neuer any mote with her compaire.
 She hath ordaind this law, which we approue,
 That euery knight, which doth this way repaire,
 In case he haue no Ladie, nor no loue,
 Shall doe vnto her seruice neuer to remoue.

XXVII

But if he haue a Ladie or a Loue,
 Then must he her forgoe with foule defame,
 Or else with vs by dint of sword approue,
 That she is fairer, then our fairest Dame,
 As did this knight, before ye hither came.
 Perdie (said *Britomart*) the choise is hard:
 But what reward had he, that ouercame?
 He should aduanced be to high regard,
 (Said they) and haue our Ladies loue for his reward.

XXVIII

Therefore a read Sir, if thou haue a loue.
 Loue haue I sure, (quoth she) but Lady none;
 Yet will I not fro mine owne loue remoue,
 Ne to your Lady will I seruice done,
 But wreake your wrongs wrought to this knight alone,
 And proue his cause. With that her mortall speare
 She mightily auentred towards one,
 And downe him smot, ere well aware he weare,
 Then to the next she rode, and downe the next did beare.

XXIX

Ne did she stay, till three on ground she layd,
 That none of them himselfe could reare againe;
 The fourth was by that other knight dismayd,
 All were he wearie of his former paine,
 That now there do but two of six remaine;
 Which two did yield, before she did them smight.
 Ah (said she then) now may ye all see plaine,
 That truth is strong, and trew loue most of might,
 That for his trusty seruaunts doth so strongly fight.

XXX

Too well we see, (said they) and proue too well
 Our faulty weaknesse, and your matchlesse might:
 For thy faire Sir, yours be the Damozell,
 Which by her owne law to your lot doth light,
 And we your liege men faith vnto you plight.
 So vnderneath her feet their swords they mard,
 And after her besought, well as they might,
 To enter in, and reape the dew reward:
 She graunted, and then in they all together far'd.

XXXI

Long were it to describe the goodly frame,
 And stately port of *Castle Ioyeous*,
 (For so that Castle hight by commune name)
 Where they were entertaind with curteous
 And comely glee of many gracious
 Faire Ladies, and many a gentle knight,
 Who through a Chamber long and spacious,
 Eftsoones them brought vnto their Ladies sight,
 That of them cleeped was the *Lady of delight*.

XXXII

But for to tell the sumptuous aray
 Of that great chamber, should be labour lost:
 For liuing wit, I weene, cannot display
 The royall riches and exceeding cost,
 Of euery pillour and of euery post;
 Which all of purest bullion framed were,
 And with great pearles and pretious stones embost,
 That the bright glister of their beames cleare
 Did sparckle forth great light, and glorious did appeare.

XXXIII

These straunger knights through passing, forth were led
 Into an inner rowme, whose royaltee
 And rich purueyance might vneath be red;
 Mote Princes place beseeme so deckt to bee.
 Which stately manner when as they did see,
 The image of superfluous riotize,
 Exceeding much the state of meane degree,
 They greatly wondred, whence so sumptuous guize
 Might be maintaynd, and each gan diuersely deuize.

XXXIV

The wals were round about apparelled
 With costly clothes of *Arras* and of *Toure*,
 In which with cunning hand was pourtrahed
 The loue of *Venus* and her Paramoure
 The faire *Adonis*, turned to a flowre,
 A work of rare deuice, and wondrous wit.
 First did it shew the bitter balefull stowre,
 Which her assayd with many a feruent fit,
 When first her tender hart was with his beautie smit.

XXXV

Then with what sleights and sweet allurements she
 Entyst the Boy, as well that art she knew,
 And wooed him her Paramoure to be;
 Now making girlonds of each flowre that grew,
 To crowne his golden lockes with honour dew;
 Now leading him into a secret shade
 From his Beauperes, and from bright heauens vew,
 Where him to sleepe she gently would perswade,
 Or bathe him in a fountaine by some couert glade.

XXXVI

And whilst he slept, she ouer him would spred
 Her mantle, colour'd like the starry skyes,
 And her soft arme lay vnderneath his hed,
 And with ambrosiall kisses bathe his eyes;
 And whilest he bath'd, with her two crafty spyes,
 She secretly would search each daintie lim,
 And throw into the well sweet Rosemaryes,
 And fragrant violets, and Pances trim,
 And euer with sweet Nectar she did sprinkle him.

XXXVII

So did she steale his heedelesse hart away,
 And ioyd his loue in secret vnespyde.
 But for she saw him bent to cruell play,
 To hunt the saluage beast in forrest wyde,
 Dreadfull of daunger, that mote him betyde,
 She oft and oft aduiz'd him to refraine
 From chase of greater beasts, whose brutish pryde
 Mote breede him scath vnwares: but all in vaine;
 For who can shun the chaunce, that dest'ny doth ordaine?

XXXVIII

Lo, where beyond he lyeth languishing,
 Deadly engored of a great wild Bore,
 And by his side the Goddesse groueling
 Makes for him endlesse mone, and euermore
 With her soft garment wipes away the gore,
 Which staines his snowy skin with hatefull hew:
 But when she saw no helpe might him restore,
 Him to a dainty flowre she did transmew,
 Which in that cloth was wrought, as if it liuely grew.

XXXIX

So was that chamber clad in goodly wize,
 And round about it many beds were dight,
 As whilome was the antique worldes guize,
 Some for vntimely ease, some for delight,
 As pleased them to vse, that vse it might:
 And all was full of Damzels, and of Squires,
 Dauncing and reueling both day and night,
 And swimming deepe in sensuall desires,
 And *Cupid* still emongst them kindled lustfull fires.

XL

And all the while sweet Musicke did diuide
 Her looser notes with *Lydian* harmony;
 And all the while sweet birdes thereto applide
 Their daintie layes and dulcet melody,
 Ay caroling of loue and iollity,
 That wonder was to heare their trim consort.
 Which when those knights beheld, with scornefull eye,
 They sdeigned such lasciuious disport,
 And loath'd the loose demeanure of that wanton sort.

XLI

Thence they were brought to that great Ladies vew,
 Whom they found sitting on a sumptuous bed,
 That glistred all with gold and glorious shew,
 As the proud *Persian* Queenes accustomed:
 She seemd a woman of great bountihed,
 And of rare beautie, sauing that askaunce
 Her wanton eyes, ill signes of womanhed,
 Did roll too lightly, and too often glaunce,
 Without regard of grace, or comely amenaunce.

XLII

Long worke it were, and needlesse to deuize
 Their goodly entertainement and great glee:
 She caused them be led in curteous wize
 Into a bowre, disarmed for to bee,
 And cheared well with wine and spiceree:
 The *Redcrosse* Knight was soone disarmed there,
 But the braue Mayd would not disarmed bee,
 But onely vented vp her vmbriere,
 And so did let her goodly visage to appere.

XLIII

As when faire *Cynthia*, in darkesome night,
 Is in a noyous cloud enueloped,
 Where she may find the substaunce thin and light,
 Breakes forth her siluer beames, and her bright hed
 Discouers to the world discomfited;
 Of the poore traoueller, that went astray,
 With thousand blessings she is heried;
 Such was the beautie and the shining ray,
 With which faire *Britomart* gaue light vnto the day.

XLIV

And eke those six, which lately with her fought,
 Now were disarmd, and did them selues present
 Vnto her vew, and company vnsoght;
 For they all seemed curteous and gent,
 And all sixe brethren, borne of one parent,
 Which had them traynd in all ciuillitee,
 And goodly taught to tilt and tournament;
 Now were they liegemen to this Lady free,
 And her knights seruice ought, to hold of her in fee.

XLV

The first of them by name *Gardante* hight,
 A iolly person, and of comely vew;
 The second was *Parlante*, a bold knight,
 And next to him *Iocante* did ensew;
Basciante did him selfe most curteous shew;
 But fierce *Bacchante* seemd too fell and keene;
 And yet in armes *Noctante* greater grew:
 All were faire knights, and goodly well beseene,
 But to faire *Britomart* they all but shadowes beene.

XLVI

For she was full of amiable grace,
 And manly terrour mixed therewithall,
 That as the one stird vp affections bace,
 So th'other did mens rash desires apall,
 And hold them backe, that would in error fall;
 As he, that hath espide a vermeill Rose,
 To which sharpe thornes and breres the way forstall,
 Dare not for dread his hardy hand expose,
 But wishing it far off, his idle wish doth lose.

XLVII

Whom when the Lady saw so faire a wight,
 All ignoraunt of her contrary sex,
 (For she her weend a fresh and lusty knight)
 She greatly gan enamoured to wex,
 And with vaine thoughts her falsed fancy vex:
 Her fickle hart conceiued hasty fire,
 Like sparkes of fire, which fall in sclder flex,
 That shortly brent into extreme desire,
 And ransackt all her veines with passion entire.

XLVIII

Eftsoones she grew to great impatience
 And into termes of open outrage brust,
 That plaine discouered her incontinence,
 Ne rekt she, who her meaning did mistrust;
 For she was giuen all to fleshly lust,
 And poured forth in sensuall delight,
 That all regard of shame she had discust,
 And meet respect of honour put to flight:
 So shamelesse beauty soone becomes a loathly sight.

XLIX

Faire Ladies, that to loue captiued arre,
 And chaste desires do nourish in your mind,
 Let not her fault your sweet affections marre,
 Ne blot the bounty of all womankind;
 <Mongst thousands good one wanton Dame to find:
 Emongst the Roses grow some wicked weeds;
 For this was not to loue, but lust inclind;
 For loue does alwayes bring forth bounteous deeds,
 And in each gentle hart desire of honour breeds.

L

Nought so of loue this looser Dame did skill,
 But as a coale to kindle fleshly flame,
 Giuing the bridle to her wanton will,
 And treading vnder foote her honest name:
 Such loue is hate, and such desire is shame.
 Still did she roue at her with crafty glaunce
 Of her false eyes, that at her hart did ayme,
 And told her meaning in her countenance;
 But *Britomart* dissembled it with ignoraunce.

LI

Supper was shortly dight and downe they sat,
 Where they were serued with all sumptuous fare,
 Whiles fruitfull *Ceres*, and *Lyaeus* fat
 Poured out their plenty, without spight or spare:
 Nought wanted there, that dainty was and rare;
 And aye the cups their bancks did ouerflow,
 And aye betweene the cups, she did prepare
 Way to her loue, and secret darts did throw;
 But *Britomart* would not such guilfull message know.

LII

So when they slaked had the feruent heat
 Of appetite with meates of euery sort,
 The Lady did faire *Britomart* entreat,
 Her to disarme, and with delightfull sport
 To loose her warlike limbs and strong effort,
 But when she mote not thereunto be wonne,
 (For she her sexe vnder that straunge purport
 Did vse to hide, and plaine apparaunce shonne:)
 In plainer wise to tell her griuauance she begonne.

LIII

And all attonce discovered her desire
 With sighes, and sobs, and plaints, and piteous grieffe,
 The outward sparkes of her in burning fire;
 Which spent in vaine, at last she told her briefe,
 That but if she did lend her short reliefe,
 And do her comfort, she mote algates dye.
 But the chaste damzell, that had neuer priefe
 Of such malengine and fine forgerie,
 Did easily beleue her strong extremitie.

LIV

Full easie was for her to haue beliefe,
 Who by self-feeling of her feeble sexe,
 And by long triall of the inward grieffe,
 Wherewith imperious loue her hart did vexe,
 Could iudge what paines do louing harts perplexe.
 Who meanes no guile, be guiled soonest shall,
 And to faire semblaunce doth light faith annexe;
 The bird, that knowes not the false fowlers call,
 Into his hidden net full easily doth fall.

LV

For thy she would not in discourteise wise,
 Scorne the faire offer of good will profest;
 For great rebuke it is, loue to despise,
 Or rudely sdeigne a gentle harts request;
 But with faire countenaunce, as beseemed best,
 Her entertaynd; nath'lesse she inly deemd
 Her loue too light, to wooe a wandring guest:
 Which she misconstruing, thereby esteemd
 That from like inward fire that outward smoke had steemd.

LVI

Therewith a while she her flit fancy fed,
 Till she mote winne fit time for her desire,
 But yet her wound still inward freshly bled,
 And through her bones the false instilled fire
 Did spred it selfe, and venime close inspire.
 Tho were the tables taken all away,
 And euery knight, and euery gentle Squire
 Gan choose his dame with *Basciomani* gay,
 With whom he meant to make his sport and courtly play.

LVII

Some fell to daunce, some fell to hazardry,
 Some to make loue, some to make meriment,
 As diuerse wits to diuers things apply;
 And all the while faire *Malecasta* bent
 Her crafty engins to her close intent.
 By this th'eternall lampes, wherewith high *Ioue*
 Doth light the lower world, were half yspent,
 And the moist daughters of huge *Atlas* stroue
 Into the *Ocean* deepe to driue their weary droue.

LVIII

High time it seemed then for euery wight
 Them to betake vnto their kindly rest;
 Eftsoones long waxen torches weren light,
 Vnto their bowres to guiden euery guest:
 Tho when the Britonesse saw all the rest
 Auoided quite, she gan her selfe despoile,
 And safe commit to her soft fethered nest,
 Where through long watch, and late dayes weary toile,
 She soundly slept, and carefull thoughts did quite assoile.

LIX

Now whenas all the world in silence deepe
 Yshrowded was, and euery mortall wight
 Was drowned in the depth of deadly sleepe,
 Faire *Malecasta*, whose engriued spright
 Could find no rest in such perplexed plight,
 Lightly arose out of her wearie bed,
 And vnder the blacke vele of guilty Night,
 Her with a scarlot mantle couered,
 That was with gold and Ermines faire enueloped.

LX

Then panting soft, and trembling euery ioynt,
 Her fearfull feete towards the bowre she moued;
 Where she for secret purpose did appoynt
 To lodge the warlike mayd vnwisely loued,
 And to her bed approching, first she prooued,
 Whether she slept or wakt, with her soft hand
 She softly felt, if any member mooued,
 And lent her weary eare to vnderstand,
 If any puffe of breath, or signe of sence she fond.

LXI

Which whenas none she fond, with easie shift,
 For feare least her vnwares she should abrayd,
 Th'embroderd quilt she lightly vp did lift,
 And by her side her selfe she softly layd,
 Of euery finest fingers touch affrayd;
 Ne any noise she made, ne word she spake,
 But inly sigh'd. At last the royall Mayd
 Out of her quiet slomber did awake,
 And chaungd her weary side, the better ease to take.

LXII

Where feeling one close couched by her side,
 She lightly lept out of her filed bed,
 And to her weapon ran, in minde to gride
 The loathed leachour. But the Dame halfe ded
 Through suddein feare and ghaftly drerihed,
 Did shrieke aloud, that through the house it rong,
 And the whole family therewith adred,
 Rashly out of their rouzed couches sprong,
 And to the troubled chamber all in armes did throng.

LXIII

And those six Knights that Ladies Champions,
 And eke the *Redcrosse* knight ran to the stownd,
 Halfe armd and halfe vnarmd, with them attons:
 Where when confusedly they came, they fownd
 Their Lady lying on the sencelesse grownd;
 On th'other side, they saw the warlike Mayd
 All in her snow-white smocke, with locks vnbownd,
 Threatning the point of her auenging blade,
 That with so troublous terrour they were all dismayde.

LXIV

About their Lady first they flockt arownd,
 Whom hauing laid in comfortable couch,
 Shortly they reard out of her frosen swownd;
 And afterwards they gan with fowle reproch
 To stirre vp strife, and troublous contecke broch:
 But by ensample of the last dayes losse,
 None of them rashly durst to her approch,
 Ne in so glorious spoile themselues embosse;
 Her succourd eke the Champion of the bloody Crosse.

LXV

But one of those sixe knights, *Gardante* hight,
 Drew out a deadly bow and arrow keene,
 Which forth he sent with felonous despight,
 And fell intent against the virgin sheene:
 The mortall steele stayd not, till it was seene
 To gore her side, yet was the wound not deepe,
 But lightly rased her soft silken skin,
 That drops of purple bloud thereout did weepe,
 Which did her lilly smock with staines of vermeil steepe.

LXVI

Wherewith enrag'd she fiercely at them flew,
 And with her flaming sword about her layd,
 That none of them foule mischief could eschew,
 But with her dreadfull strokes were all dismayd:
 Here, there, and euery where about her swayd
 Her wrathfull steele, that none mote it abide;
 And eke the *Redcrosse* knight gaue her good aid,
 Ay ioyning foot to foot, and side to side,
 That in short space their foes they haue quite terrifide.

LXVII

Tho whenas all were put to shamefull flight,
 The noble *Britomartis* her arayd,
 And her bright armes about her body dight:
 For nothing would she lenger there be stayd,
 Where so loose life, and so vngentle trade
 Was vsd of Knights and Ladies seeming gent:
 So earely ere the grosse Earthes gryesy shade,
 Was all disperst out of the firmament,
 They tooke their steeds, and forth vpon their iourney went.

Canto II

*The Redcrosse knight to Britomart
describeth Artegall:
The wondrous myrrhour, by which she
in loue with him did fall.*

I

HEre haue I cause, in men iust blame to find,
That in their proper prayse too partiall bee,
And not indifferent to woman kind,
To whom no share in armes and cheualrie
They do impart, ne maken memorie
Of their braue gestes and prowesse martiall;
Scarse do they spare to one or two or three,
Rowme in their writs; yet the same writing small
Does all their deeds deface, and dims their glories all.

II

But by record of antique times I find,
That women wont in warres to beare most sway,
And to all great exploits them selues inclind:
Of which they still the girlond bore away,
Till enuious Men fearing their rules decay,
Gan coyne streight lawes to curb their liberty;
Yet sith they warlike armes haue layd away,
They haue exceld in artes and pollicy,
That now we foolish men that prayse gin eke t'enuy.

III

Of warlike puissaunce in ages spent,
Be thou faire *Britomart*, whose prayse I write,
But of all wisdom be thou precedent,
O soueraigne Queene, whose prayse I would endite,
Endite I would as dewtie doth excite;
But ah my rimes too rude and rugged arre,
When in so high an obiect they do lite,
And striuing, fit to make, I feare do marre:
Thy selfe thy prayses tell, and make them knowen farre.

IV

She traueilling with *Guyon* by the way,
Of sundry things faire purpose gan to find,
T'abridg their iourney long, and lingring day;

Mongst which it fell into that Faeries mind,
 To aske this Briton Mayd, what vncouth wind,
 Brought her into those parts, and what inquest
 Made her dissemble her disguised kind:
 Faire Lady she him seemed, like Lady drest,
 But fairest knight aliue, when armed was her brest.

V

Thereat she sighing softly, had no powre
 To speake a while, ne ready answeere make,
 But with hart-thrilling throbs and bitter stowre,
 As if she had a feuer fit, did quake,
 And euery daintie limbe with horroure shake;
 And euer and anone the rosy red,
 Flasht through her face, as it had beene a flake
 Of lightning, through bright heauen fulmined;
 At last the passion past she thus him answered.

VI

Faire Sir, I let you weete, that from the howre
 I taken was from nurses tender pap,
 I haue beene trained vp in warlike stowre,
 To tossen speare and shield, and to affrap
 The warlike ryder to his most mishap;
 Sithence I loathed haue my life to lead,
 As Ladies wont, in pleasures wanton lap,
 To finger the fine needle and nyce thread;
 Me leuer were with point of foemans speare be dead.

VII

All my delight on deedes of armes is set,
 To hunt out perils and aduentures hard,
 By sea, by land, where so they may be met,
 Onely for honour and for high regard,
 Without respect of richesse or reward.
 For such intent into these parts I came,
 Withouten compasse, or withouten card,
 Far fro my natiue soyle, that is by name
 The greater *Britaine*, here to seeke for prayse and fame.

VIII

Fame blazed hath, that here in Faery lond
 Do many famous Knightes and Ladies wonne,

And many straunge aduentures to be fond,
 Of which great worth and worship may be wonne;
 Which I to proue, this voyage haue begonne.
 But mote I weet of you, right curteous knight,
 Tydings of one, that hath vnto me donne
 Late foule dishonour and reprochfull spight,
 The which I seeke to wreake, and *Arthegall* he hight.

IX

The word gone out, she backe againe would call,
 As her repenting so to haue missayd,
 But that he it vp-taking ere the fall,
 Her shortly answered; Faire martiall Mayd
 Certes ye misauised beene, t'vpbrayd
 A gentle knight with so vnknightly blame:
 For weet ye well of all, that euer playd
 At tilt or tourney, or like warlike game,
 The noble *Arthegall* hath euer borne the name.

X

For thy great wonder were it, if such shame
 Should euer enter in his bounteous thought,
 Or euer do, that mote deseruen blame:
 The noble courage neuer weeneth ought,
 That may vnworthy of it selfe be thought.
 Therefore, faire Damzell, be ye well aware,
 Least that too farre ye haue your sorrow sought:
 You and your countrey both I wish welfare,
 And honour both; for each of other worthy are.

XI

The royall Mayd woxe inly wondrous glad,
 To heare her Loue so highly magnifide,
 And ioyd that euer she affixed had,
 Her hart on knight so goodly glorifide,
 How euer finely she it faind to hide:
 The louing mother, that nine monethes did beare,
 In the deare closet of her painefull side,
 Her tender babe, it seeing safe appeare,
 Doth not so much reioyce, as she reioycd there.

XII

But to occasion him to further talke,
 To feed her humour with his pleasing stile,
 Her list in strifull termes with him to balke,
 And thus replide, How euer, Sir, ye file
 Your curteous tongue, his prayeses to compile,
 It ill beseemes a knight of gentle sort,
 Such as ye haue him boasted, to beguile
 A simple mayd, and worke so haynous tort,
 In shame of knighthood, as I largely can report.

XIII

Let be therefore my vengeaunce to dissuade,
 And read, where I that faytour false may find.
 Ah, but if reason faire might you perswade,
 To slake your wrath, and mollifie your mind,
 (Said he) perhaps ye should it better find:
 For hardy thing it is, to weene by might,
 That man to hard conditions to bind,
 Or euer hope to match in equall fight,
 Whose prowesse paragon saw neuer liuing wight.

XIV

Ne soothlich is it easie for to read,
 Where now on earth, or how he may be found;
 For he ne wonneth in one certaine stead,
 But restlesse walketh all the world around,
 Ay doing things, that to his fame redound,
 Defending Ladies cause, and Orphans right,
 Where so he heares, that any doth confound
 Them comfortlesse, through tyranny or might;
 So is his soueraine honour raisde to heauens hight.

XV

His feeling words her feeble sence much pleased,
 And softly sunck into her molten hart;
 Hart that is inly hurt, is greatly eased
 With hope of thing, that may allegge his smart;
 For pleasing words are like to Magick art,
 That doth the charmed Snake in slomber lay:
 Such secret ease felt gentle *Britomart*,
 Yet list the same efforce with faind gainesay;
 So dischord oft in Musick makes the sweeter lay.

XVI

And said, Sir knight, these idle termes forbear,
 And sith it is vneath to find his haunt,
 Tell me some markes, by which he may appeare,
 If chaunce I him encounter parauaunt;
 For perdie one shall other slay, or daunt:
 What shape, what shield, what armes, what steed, what sted,
 And what so else his person most may vaunt?
 All which the *Redcrosse* knight to point ared,
 And him in euery part before her fashioned.

XVII

Yet him in euery part before she knew,
 How euer list her now her knowledge faine,
 Sith him whilome in *Britaine* she did vew,
 To her reuealed in a mirrhour plaine,
 Whereof did grow her first engrafted paine;
 Whose root and stalke so bitter yet did tast,
 That but the fruit more sweetnesse did containe,
 Her wretched dayes in dolour she mote wast,
 And yield the pray of loue to lothsome death at last.

XVIII

By strange occasion she did him behold,
 And much more strangely gan to loue his sight,
 As it in bookes hath written bene of old.
 In *Deheubarth* that now South-wales is hight,
 What time king *Ryence* rain'd, and dealed right,
 The great Magitian *Merlin* had deuiz'd,
 By his deepe science, and hell-dreaded might,
 A looking glasse, right wondrously aguiz'd,
 Whose vertues through the wyde world soone were solemniz'd.

XIX

It vertue had, to shew in perfect sight,
 What euer thing was in the world contaynd,
 Betwixt the lowest earth and heauens hight,
 So that it to the looker appertaynd;
 What euer foe had wrought, or frend had faynd,
 Therein discouered was, ne ought mote pas,
 Ne ought in secret from the same remaynd;
 For thy it round and hollow shaped was,
 Like to the world it selfe, and seem'd a world of glas.

XX

Who wonders not, that reades so wonderous worke?
 But who does wonder, that has red the Towre,
 Wherein th' Egyptian *Phao* long did lurke
 From all mens vew, that none might her discoure,
 Yet she might all men vew out of her bowre?
 Great *Ptolomæe* it for his lemans sake
 Ybuidled all of glasse, by Magicke powre,
 And also it impregnable did make;
 Yet when his loue was false, he with a peaze it brake.

XXI

Such was the glassie globe that *Merlin* made,
 And gaue vnto king *Ryence* for his gard,
 That neuer foes his kingdome might inuade,
 But he it knew at home before he hard
 Tydings thereof, and so them still debar'd.
 It was a famous Present for a Prince,
 And worthy worke of infinite reward,
 That treasons could bewray, and foes conuince;
 Happie this Realme, had it remained euer since.

XXII

One day it fortun'd, faire *Britomart*
 Into her fathers closet to repayre;
 For nothing he from her reseru'd apart,
 Being his onely daughter and his hayre:
 Where when she had espyde that mirrhour fayre,
 Her selfe a while therein she vewd in vaine;
 Tho her auizing of the vertues rare,
 Which thereof spoken were, she gan againe
 Her to bethinke of, that mote to her selfe pertaine.

XXIII

But as it falleth, in the gentlest harts
 Imperious Loue hath highest set his throne,
 And tyrannizeth in the bitter smarts
 Of them, that to him buxome are and prone:
 So thought this Mayd (as maydens vse to done)
 Whom fortune for her husband would allot,
 Not that she lusted after any one;
 For she was pure from blame of sinfull blot,
 Yet wist her life at last must lincke in that same knot.

XXIV

Eftsoones there was presented to her eye
 A comely knight, all arm'd in complete wize,
 Through whose bright ventayle lifted vp on hye
 His manly face, that did his foes agrize,
 And friends to termes of gentle truce entize,
 Lookt foorth, as *Phæbus* face out of the east,
 Betwixt two shadie mountaines doth arize;
 Portly his person was, and much increast
 Through his Heroicke grace, and honorable gest.

XXV

His crest was couered with a couchant Hound,
 And all his armour seem'd of antique mould,
 But wondrous massie and assured sound,
 And round about yfretted all with gold,
 In which there written was with cyphers old,
Achilles armes, which Arthegall did win.
 And on his shield enueloped seuenfold
 He bore a crowned litle Ermilin,
 That deckt the azure field with her faire pouldred skin.

XXVI

The Damzell well did vew his personage,
 And liked well, ne further fastned not,
 But went her way; ne her vnguilty age
 Did weene, vnwares, that her vnlucky lot
 Lay hidden in the bottome of the pot;
 Of hurt vnwist most daunger doth redound:
 But the false Archer, which that arrow shot
 So slyly, that she did not feele the wound,
 Did smyle full smoothly at her weetlesse wofull stound.

XXVII

Thenceforth the feather in her loftie crest,
 Ruffed of loue, gan lowly to auaile,
 And her proud portance, and her princely gest,
 With which she earst triumphed, now did quaile:
 Sad, solemne, sowre, and full of fancies fraile
 She woxe; yet wist she neither how, nor why,
 She wist not, silly Mayd, what she did aile,
 Yet wist, she was not well at ease perdy,
 Yet thought it was not loue, but some melancholy.

XXVIII

So soone as Night had with her pallid hew
 Defast the beautie of the shining sky,
 And reft from men the worlds desired vew,
 She with her Nourse adowne to sleepe did lye;
 But sleepe full farre away from her did fly:
 In stead thereof sad sighes, and sorrowes deepe
 Kept watch and ward about her warily,
 That nought she did but wayle, and often steepe
 Her daintie couch with teares, which closely she did weepe.

XXIX

And if that any drop of slombring rest
 Did chaunce to still into her wearie spright,
 When feeble nature felt her selfe opprest,
 Streight way with dreames, and with fantasticke sight
 Of dreadfull things the same was put to flight,
 That oft out of her bed she did astart,
 As one with vew of ghastly feends affright:
 Tho gan she to renew her former smart,
 And thinke of that faire visage, written in her hart.

XXX

One night, when she was tost with such vnrest,
 Her aged Nurse, whose name was *Glauce* hight,
 Feeling her leape out of her loathed nest,
 Betwixt her feeble armes her quickly keight,
 And downe againe in her warme bed her dight;
 Ah my deare daughter, ah my dearest dread,
 What vncouth fit (said she) what euill plight
 Hath thee opprest, and with sad drearyhead
 Chaunged thy liuely cheare, and liuing made thee dead?

XXXI

For not of nought these suddeine ghastly feares
 All night afflict thy naturall repose,
 And all the day, when as thine equall peares
 Their fit disports with faire delight doe chose,
 Thou in dull corners doest thy selfe inclose,
 Ne tastest Princes pleasures, ne doest spred
 Abroad thy fresh youthes fairest flowre, but lose
 Both leafe and fruit, both too vntimely shed,
 As one in wilfull bale for euer buried.

XXXII

The time, that mortall men their weary cares
 Do lay away, and all wilde beastes do rest,
 And euery riuer eke his course forbears,
 Then doth this wicked euill thee infest,
 And riue with thousand throbs thy thrilled brest;
 Like an huge *Aetn'* of deepe engulfed grieffe,
 Sorrow is heaped in thy hollow chest,
 Whence forth it breakes in sighes and anguish rife,
 As smoke and sulphure mingled with confused strife.

XXXIII

Aye me, how much I feare, least loue it bee;
 But if that loue it be, as sure I read
 By knowen signes and passions, which I see,
 Be it worthy of thy race and royall sead,
 Then I auow by this most sacred head
 Of my deare foster child, to ease thy grieffe,
 And win thy will: Therefore away doe dread;
 For death nor daunger from thy dew reliefe
 Shall me debarre, tell me therefore my liefest lief.

XXXIV

So hauing said, her twixt her armes twaine
 She straightly straynd, and colled tenderly,
 And euery trembling ioynt, and euery vaine
 She softly felt, and rubbed busily,
 To doe the frozen cold away to fly;
 And her faire deawy eies with kisses deare
 She oft did bath, and oft againe did dry;
 And euer her importund, not to feare
 To let the secret of her hart to her appeare.

XXXV

The Damzell pauzd, and then thus fearefully;
 Ah Nurse, what needeth thee to eke my paine?
 Is not enough, that I alone doe dye,
 But it must doubled be with death of twaine?
 For nought for me but death there doth remaine.
 O daughter deare (said she) despaire no whit;
 For neuer sore, but might a salue obtaine:
 That blinded God, which hath ye blindly smit,
 Another arrow hath your louers hart to hit.

XXXVI

But mine is not (quoth she) like others wound;
 For which no reason can find remedy.
 Was neuer such, but mote the like be found,
 (Said she) and though no reason may apply
 Salue to your sore, yet loue can higher stye,
 Then reasons reach, and oft hath wonders donne.
 But neither God of loue, nor God of sky
 Can doe (said she) that, which cannot be donne.
 Things oft impossible (quoth she) seeme, ere begonne.

XXXVII

These idle words (said she) doe nought asswage
 My stubborne smart, but more annoyance breed,
 For no no vsuall fire, no vsuall rage
 It is, O Nurse, which on my life doth feed,
 And suckes the bloud, which from my hart doth bleed.
 But since thy faithfull zeale lets me not hyde
 My crime, (if crime it be) I will it reed.
 Nor Prince, nor pere it is, whose loue hath gryde
 My feeble brest of late, and launched this wound wyde.

XXXVIII

Nor man it is, nor other liuing wight;
 For then some hope I might vnto me draw,
 But th'only shade and semblant of a knight,
 Whose shape or person yet I neuer saw,
 Hath me subiected to louses cruell law:
 The same one day, as me misfortune led,
 I in my fathers wondrous mirrhour saw,
 And pleased with that seeming goodly-hed,
 Vnwares the hidden hooke with baite I swallowed.

XXXIX

Sithens it hath infixd faster hold
 Within my bleeding bowels, and so sore
 Now ranckleth in this same fraile fleshly mould,
 That all mine entrailes flow with poysnous gore,
 And th'vicer groweth daily more and more;
 Ne can my running sore find remedie,
 Other then my hard fortune to deplore,
 And languish as the leafe falne from the tree,
 Till death make one end of my dayes and miserie.

XL

Daughter (said she) what need ye be dismayd,
 Or why make ye such Monster of your mind?
 Of much more vncouth thing I was affrayd;
 Of filthy lust, contrarie vnto kind:
 But this affection nothing straunge I find;
 For who with reason can you aye reprove,
 To loue the semblant pleasing most your mind,
 And yield your heart, whence ye cannot remoue?
 No guilt in you, but in the tyranny of loue.

XLI

Not so th'*Arabian Myrrhe* did set her mind;
 Nor so did *Biblis* spend her pining hart,
 But lou'd their natie flesh against all kind,
 And to their purpose vsed wicked art:
 Yet playd *Pasiphae* a more monstrous part,
 That lou'd a Bull, and learnd a beast to bee;
 Such shamefull lusts who loaths not, which depart
 From course of nature and of modestie?
 Sweet loue such lewdnes bands from his faire companie.

XLII

But thine my Deare (welfare thy heart my deare)
 Though strange beginning had, yet fixed is
 On one, that worthy may perhaps appeare;
 And certes seemes bestowed not amis:
 Ioy thereof haue thou and eternall blis.
 With that vpleaning on her elbow weake,
 Her alablaster brest she soft did kis,
 Which all that while she felt to pant and quake,
 As it an Earth-quake were; at last she thus bespake.

XLIII

Beldame, your words doe worke me litle ease;
 For though my loue be not so lewdly bent,
 As those ye blame, yet may it nought appease
 My raging smart, ne ought my flame relent,
 But rather doth my helpelesse griefe augment.
 For they, how euer shamefull and vnkind,
 Yet did possesse their horrible intent:
 Short end of sorrowes they thereby did find;
 So was their fortune good, though wicked were their mind.

XLIV

But wicked fortune mine, though mind be good,
 Can haue no end, nor hope of my desire,
 But feed on shadowes, whiles I die for food,
 And like a shadow wexe, whiles with entire
 Affection, I doe languish and expire.
 I fonder, then *Cephisus* foolish child,
 Who hauing vewed in a fountaine shere
 His face, was with the loue thereof beguild;
 I fonder loue a shade, the bodie farre exild.

XLV

Nought like (quoth she) for that same wretched boy
 Was of himselfe the idle Paramoure;
 Both loue and louer, without hope of ioy,
 For which he faded to a watry flowre.
 But better fortune thine, and better howre,
 Which lou'st the shadow of a warlike knight;
 No shadow, but a bodie hath in powre:
 That bodie, wheresoeuer that it light,
 May learned be by cyphers, or by Magicke might.

XLVI

But if thou may with reason yet repress
 The growing euill, ere it strength haue got,
 And thee abandond wholly doe possesse,
 Against it strongly striue, and yield thee not,
 Till thou in open field adowne be smot.
 But if the passion mayster thy fraile might,
 So that needs loue or death must be thy lot,
 Then I auow to thee, by wrong or right
 To compasse thy desire, and find that loued knight.

XLVII

Her chearefull words much cheard the feeble spright
 Of the sicke virgin, that her downe she layd
 In her warme bed to sleepe, if that she might;
 And the old-woman carefully displayd
 The clothes about her round with busie ayd;
 So that at last a little creeping sleepe
 Surprisd her sense: She therewith well apayd,
 The drunken lampe downe in the oyle did steepe,
 And set her by to watch, and set her by to weepe.

XLVIII

Earely the morrow next, before that day
 His ioyous face did to the world reueale,
 They both vprose and tooke their readie way
 Vnto the Church, their prayers to appeale,
 With great deuotion, and with litle zeale:
 For the faire Damzell from the holy herse
 Her loue-sicke hart to other thoughts did steale;
 And that old Dame said many an idle verse,
 Out of her daughters hart fond fancies to reuerse.

XLIX

Returned home, the royall Infant fell
 Into her former fit; for why, no powre
 Nor guidance of her selfe in her did dwell.
 But th'aged Nurse her calling to her bowre,
 Had gathered Rew, and Sauine, and the flowre
 Of *Camphora*, and Calamint, and Dill,
 All which she in a earthen Pot did poure,
 And to the brim with Colt wood did it fill,
 And many drops of milke and bloud through it did spill.

L

Then taking thrise three haire from off her head,
 Them trebly breaded in a threefold lace,
 And round about the pots mouth, bound the thread,
 And after hauing whispered a space
 Certaine sad words, with hollow voice and bace,
 She to the virgin said, thrise said she it;
 Come daughter come, come; spit vpon my face,
 Spit thrise vpon me, thrise vpon me spit;
 Th'vneuen number for this businesse is most fit.

LI

That sayd, her round about she from her turnd,
 She turned her contrarie to the Sunne,
 Thrise she her turnd contrary, and returnd,
 All contrary, for she the right did shunne,
 And euer what she did, was streight vndonne.
 So thought she to vndoe her daughters loue:
 But loue, that is in gentle brest begonne,
 No idle charmes so lightly may remoue,
 That well can wnesse, who by triall it does proue.

LII

Ne ought it mote the noble Mayd auayle,
 Ne slake the furie of her cruell flame,
 But that she still did waste, and still did wayle,
 That through long languour, and hart-burning brame
 She shortly like a pyned ghost became,
 Which long hath waited by the Stygian strond.
 That when old *Glauce* saw, for feare least blame
 Of her miscarriage should in her be fond,
 She wist not how t'amend, nor how it to withstond.

Canto III

*Merlin bewrayes to Britomart,
 the state of Artegall.
 And shewes the famous Progeny
 which from them springen shall.*

I

Most sacred fire, that burnest mightily
 In liuing brests, ykindled first aboue,
 Emongst th'eternall spheres and lamping sky,
 And thence poured into men, which men call Loue;
 Not that same, which doth base affections moue
 In brutish minds, and filthy lust inflame,
 But that sweet fit, that doth true beautie loue,
 And choseth vertue for his dearest Dame,
 Whence spring all noble deeds and neuer dying fame:

II

Well did Antiquitie a God thee deeme,
 That ouer mortall minds hast so great might,
 To order them, as best to thee doth seeme,
 And all their actions to direct aright;
 The fatall purpose of diuine foresight,
 Thou doest effect in destined descents,
 Through deepe impression of thy secret might,
 And stirredst vp th'Heroes high intents,
 Which the late world admyres for wondrous monuments.

III

But thy dread darts in none doe triumph more,
 Ne brauer prooffe in any, of thy powre
 Shew'dst thou, then in this royall Maid of yore,

Making her seeke an vnknowne Paramoure,
 From the worlds end, through many a bitter stowre:
 From whose two loynes thou afterwards did rayse
 Most famous fruits of matrimoniall bowre,
 Which through the earth haue spred their liuing prayse,
 That fame in trompe of gold eternally displayes.

IV

Begin then, O my dearest sacred Dame,
 Daughter of *Phæbus* and of *Memorie*,
 That doest ennoble with immortall name
 The warlike Worthies, from antiquitie,
 In thy great volume of Eternitie:
 Begin, O *Clio*, and recount from hence
 My glorious Soueraines goodly auncestrie,
 Till that by dew degrees and long protense,
 Thou haue it lastly brought unto her Excellence.

V

Full many wayes within her troubled mind,
 Old *Glauce* cast, to cure this Ladies grieffe:
 Full many waies she sought, but none could find,
 Nor herbes, nor charmes, nor counsell, that is chiefe
 And choisest med'cine for sicke harts reliefe:
 For thy great care she tooke, and greater feare,
 Least that it should her turne to foule reprehensive,
 And sore reproch, when so her father deare
 Should of his dearest daughters hard misfortune heare.

VI

At last she her auisd, that he, which made
 That mirrhour, wherein the sicke Damosell
 So straungely vewed her straunge louers shade,
 To weet, the learned *Merlin*, well could tell,
 Vnder what coast of heauen the man did dwell,
 And by what meanes his loue might best be wrought:
 For though beyond the *Africk Ismaell*,
 Or th'Indian *Peru* he were, she thought
 Him forth through infinite endeouour to haue sought.

VII

Forthwith themselues disguising both in straunge
 And base attyre, that none might them bewray,

To *Maridunum*, that is now by chaunge
 Of name *Cayr-Merdin* cald, they tooke their way:
 There the wise *Merlin* whylome wont (they say)
 To make his wonne, low vnderneath the ground,
 In a deepe delue, farre from the vew of day,
 That of no liuing wight he mote be found,
 When so he counseld with his sprights encompass round.

VIII

And if thou euer happen that same way
 To trauell, goe to see that dreadfull place:
 It is an hideous hollow caue (they say)
 Vnder a rocke that lyes a litle space
 From the swift *Barry*, tombling downe apace,
 Emongst the woodie hilles of *Dyneuowre*:
 But dare thou not, I charge, in any cace,
 To enter into that same balefull Bowre,
 For fear the cruell Feends should thee vnwares deuowre.

IX

But standing high aloft, low lay thine eare,
 And there such ghastly noise of yron chaines,
 And brasen Caudrons thou shalt rombling heare,
 Which thousand sprights with long enduring paines
 Doe tosse, that it will stonne thy feeble braines,
 And oftentimes great grones, and grieuous stounds,
 When too huge toile and labour them constraines:
 And oftentimes loud strokes, and ringing sounds
 From vnder that deepe Rocke most horribly rebounds.

X

The cause some say is this: A litle while
 Before that *Merlin* dyde, he did intend,
 A brasen wall in compas to compile
 About *Cairmardin*, and did it commend
 Vnto these Sprights, to bring to perfect end.
 During which worke the Ladie of the Lake,
 Whom long he lou'd, for him in hast did send,
 Who thereby forst his workemen to forsake,
 Them bound till his returne, their labour not to slake.

XI

In the meane time through that false Ladies traine,
 He was surprisd, and buried vnder beare,
 Ne euer to his worke returnd againe:
 Nath'lesse those feends may not their worke forbear,
 So greatly his commaundement they feare,
 But there doe toyle and trauell day and night,
 Vntill that brasen wall they vp doe reare:
 For *Merlin* had in Magicke more insight,
 Then euer him before or after liuing wight.

XII

For he by words could call out of the sky
 Both Sunne and Moone, and make them him obey:
 The land to sea, and sea to maineland dry,
 And darkesome night he eke could turne to day:
 Huge hostes of men he could alone dismay,
 And hostes of men of meanest things could frame,
 When so him list his enimies to fray:
 That to this day for terror of his fame,
 The feends do quake, when any him to them does name.

XIII

And sooth, men say that he was not the sonne
 Of mortall Syre, or other liuing wight,
 But wondrously begotten, and begonne
 By false illusion of a guilefull Spright,
 On a faire Ladie Nonne, that whilome hight
Matilda, daughter to *Pubidius*,
 Who was the Lord of *Mathrauall* by right,
 And coosen vnto king *Ambrosius*:
 Whence he indued was with skill so maruellous.

XIV

They here ariuing, staid a while without,
 Ne durst aduenture rashly in to wend,
 But of their first intent gan make new dout
 For dread of daunger, which it might portend:
 Vntill the hardie Mayd (with loue to frend)
 First entering, the dreadfull Mage there found
 Deepe busied bout worke of wondrous end,
 And writing strange characters in the ground,
 With which the stubborn feends he to his seruice bound.

XV

He nought was moued at their entrance bold:
 For of their comming well he wist afore,
 Yet list them bid their businesse to vnfold,
 As if ought in this world in secret store
 Were from him hidden, or vnknowne of yore.
 Then *Glauce* thus, let not it thee offend,
 That we thus rashly through thy darkesome dore,
 Vnwares haue prest: for either fatall end,
 Or other mightie cause vs two did hither send.

XVI

He bad tell on; And then she thus began.
 Now haue three Moones with borrow'd brothers light,
 Thrice shined faire, and thrice seem'd dim and wan,
 Sith a sore euill, which this virgin bright
 Tormenteth, and doth plunge in dolefull plight,
 First rooting tooke; but what thing it mote bee,
 Or whence it sprong, I cannot read aright:
 But this I read, that but if remedee,
 Thou her afford, full shortly I her dead shall see.

XVII

Therewith th'Enchaunter softly gan to smyle
 At her smooth speeches, weeting inly well,
 That she to him dissembled womanish guyle,
 And to her said, Beldame, by that ye tell,
 More need of leach-craft hath your Damozell,
 Then of my skill: who helpe may haue elsewhere,
 In vaine seekes wonders out of Magicke spell.
 Th'old woman wox half blanck, those words to heare;
 And yet was loth to let her purpose plaine appeare.

XVIII

And to him said, If any leaches skill,
 Or other learned meanes could haue redrest
 This my deare daughters deepe engrafted ill,
 Certes I should be loth thee to molest:
 But this sad euill, which doth her infest,
 Doth course of naturall cause farre exceed,
 And housed is within her hollow brest,
 That either seemes some cursed witches deed,
 Or euill spright, that in her doth such torment breed.

XIX

The wisard could no lenger beare her bord,
 But brusting forth in laughter, to her sayd;
Glauce, what needs this colourable word,
 To cloke the cause, that hath it selfe bewrayd?
 Ne ye faire *Britomartis*, thus arayd,
 More hidden are, then Sunne in cloudy vele;
 Whom thy good fortune, hauing fate obeyd,
 Hath hither brought, for succour to appele:
 The which the powres to thee are pleased to reuele.

XX

The doubtfull Mayd, seeing her selfe descryde,
 Was all abasht, and her pure yuory
 Into a cleare Carnation suddene dyde;
 As faire *Aurora* rising hastily,
 Doth by her blushing tell, that she did lye
 All night in old *Tithonus* frosen bed,
 Whereof she seemes ashamed inwardly.
 But her old Nourse was nought dishartened,
 But vantage made of that, which *Merlin* had ared.

XXI

And sayd, Sith then thou knowest all our grieffe,
 (For what doest not thou know?) of grace I pray,
 Pitty our plaint, and yield vs meet relieffe.
 With that the Prophet still awhile did stay,
 And then his spirite thus gan forth display;
 Most noble Virgin, that by fatall lore
 Hast learn'd to loue, let no whit thee dismay
 The hard begin, that meets thee in the dore,
 And with sharpe fits thy tender hart oppresseth sore.

XXII

For so must all things excellent begin,
 And eke enrooted deepe must be that Tree,
 Whose big embodied braunches shall not lin,
 Till they to heauens hight forth stretched bee.
 For from thy wombe a famous Progenie
 Shall spring, out of the auncient *Troian* blood,
 Which shall reuiue the sleeping memorie
 Of those same antique Peres, the heauens brood,
 Which *Greeke* and *Asian* riuers stained with their blood.

XXIII

Renowmed kings, and sacred Emperours,
 Thy fruitfull Ofspring, shall from thee descend;
 Braue Captaines, and most mighty warriours,
 That shall their conquests through all lands extend,
 And their decayed kingdomes shall amend:
 The feeble Britons, broken with long warre,
 They shall vpreare, and mightily defend
 Against their forrein foe, that comes from farre,
 Till vniuersall peace compound all ciuill iarre.

XXIV

It was not, *Britomart*, thy wandring eye,
 Glauncing vnwares in charmed looking glas,
 But the streight course of heauenly destiny,
 Led with eternall prouidence, that has
 Guided thy glaunce, to bring his will to pas:
 Ne is thy fate, ne is thy fortune ill,
 To loue the prowest knight, that euer was.
 Therefore submit thy wayes vnto his will,
 And do by all dew meanes thy destiny fulfill.

XXV

But read (said *Glauce*) thou Magitian
 What meanes shall she out seeke, or what wayes take?
 How shall she know, how shall she find the man?
 Or what needs her to toyle, sith fates can make
 Way for themselues, their purpose to partake?
 Then *Merlin* thus; Indeed the fates are firme,
 And may not shrinck, though all the world do shake:
 Yet ought mens good endeuours them confirme,
 And guide the heauenly causes to their constant terme.

XXVI

The man whom heauens haue ordaynd to bee
 The spouse of *Britomart*, is *Arthegall*:
 He wonneth in the land of *Fayeree*,
 Yet is no *Fary* borne, ne sib at all
 To Elfes, but sprong of seed terrestriall,
 And whilome by false *Faries* stolne away,
 Whiles yet in infant cradle he did crall;
 Ne other to himselfe is knowne this day,
 But that he by an Elfe was gotten of a *Fay*.

XXVII

But sooth he is the sonne of *Gorlois*,
 And brother vnto *Cador* Cornish king,
 And for his warlike feates renowned is,
 From where the day out of the sea doth spring,
 Vntill the closure of the Euening.
 From thence, him firmly bound with faithfull band,
 To this his natie soyle thou backe shalt bring,
 Strongly to aide his countrey, to withstand
 The powre of forrein Paynims, which inuade thy land.

XXVIII

Great aid thereto his mighty puissaunce,
 And dreaded name shall giue in that sad day:
 Where also prooffe of thy prow valiaunce
 Thou then shalt make, t'increase thy louers pray.
 Long time ye both in armes shall beare great sway,
 Till thy wombes burden thee from them do call,
 And his last fate him from thee take away,
 Too rathe cut off by practise criminall
 Of secret foes, that him shall make in mischief fall.

XXIX

With thee yet shall he leaue for memory
 Of his late puissaunce, his Image dead,
 That liuing him in all actiuity
 To thee shall represent. He from the head
 Of his coosin *Constantius* without dread
 Shall take the crowne, that was his fathers right,
 And therewith crowne himselfe in th'others stead:
 Then shall he issew forth with dreadfull might,
 Against his Saxon foes in bloody field to fight.

XXX

Like as a Lyon, that in drowsie caue
 Hath long time slept, himselfe so shall he shake,
 And comming forth, shall spred his banner braue
 Ouer the troubled South, that it shall make
 The warlike *Mertians* for feare to quake:
 Thrise shall he fight with them, and wise shall win,
 But the third time shall faire accordaunce make:
 And if he then with victorie can lin,
 He shall his dayes with peace bring to his earthly In.

XXXI

His sonne, hight *Vortipore*, shall him succede
 In kingdome, but not in felicity;
 Yet shall he long time warre with happy speed,
 And with great honour many battels try:
 But at the last to th'importunity
 Of froward fortune shall be forst to yield.
 But his sonne *Malgo* shall full mightily
 Auenge his fathers losse, with speare and shield,
 And his proud foes discomfit in victorious field.

XXXII

Behold the man, and tell me *Britomart*,
 If ay more goodly creature thou didst see;
 How like a Gyaunt in each manly part
 Beares he himselfe with portly maiestee,
 That one of th'old *Heroes* seemes to bee:
 He the six Islands, comprouinciall
 In auncient times vnto great Britainee,
 Shall to the same reduce, and to him call
 Their sundry kings to do their homage seuerall.

XXXIII

All which his sonne *Careticus* awhile
 Shall well defend, and *Saxons* powre suppresses,
 Vntill a straunger king from vnknowne soyle
 Arriuing, him with multitude oppresse;
 Great *Gormond*, hauing with huge mightinesse
 Ireland subdewd, and therein fixt his throne,
 Like a swift Otter, fell through emptinesse,
 Shall ouerswim the sea with many one
 Of his Norueyses, to assist the Britons fone.

XXXIV

He in his furie all shall ouerrunne,
 And holy Church with faithlesse hands deface,
 That thy sad people vtterly fordonne,
 Shall to the vtmost mountaines fly apace:
 Was neuer so great wast in any place,
 Nor so fowle outrage doen by liuing men:
 For all thy Cities they shall sacke and race,
 And the greene grasse, that groweth, they shall bren,
 That euen the wild beast shall dy in starued den.

XXXV

Whiles thus thy Britons do in languour pine,
 Proud *Etheldred* shall from the North arise,
 Seruing th'ambitious will of *Augustine*,
 And passing *Dee* with hardy enterprise,
 Shall backe repulse the valiaunt *Brockwell* twise,
 And *Bangor* with massacred Martyrs fill;
 But the third time shall rew his foolhardise:
 For *Cadwan* pittying his peoples ill,
 Shall stoutly him defeat, and thousand *Saxons* kill.

XXXVI

But after him, *Cadwallin* mightily
 On his sonne *Edwin* all those wrongs shall wreake;
 Ne shall auaille the wicked sorcery
 Of false *Pellite*, his purposes to breake,
 But him shall slay, and on a gallowes bleake
 Shall giue th'enchaunter his vnhappy hire;
 Then shall the Britons, late dismayd and weake,
 From their long vassalage gin to respire,
 And on their Paynim foes auenge their ranckled ire.

XXXVII

Ne shall he yet his wrath so mitigate,
 Till both the sonnes of *Edwin* he haue slaine,
Offricke and *Osricke*, twinnes vnfortunate,
 Both slaine in battell vpon Layburne plaine,
 Together with the king of *Louthiane*,
 Hight *Adin*, and the king of *Orkeny*,
 Both ioynt partakers of their fatall paine:
 But *Penda*, fearefull of like desteny,
 Shall yield him selfe his liegeman, and sweare fealty.

XXXVIII

Him shall he make his fatall Instrument,
 T'afflict the other *Saxons* vnsubdewd;
 He marching forth with fury insolent
 Against the good king *Oswald*, who indewd
 With heauenly powre, and by Angels reskewd,
 All holding crosses in their hands on hye,
 Shall him defeate withouten bloud imbrewd:
 Of which, that field for endlesse memory,
 Shall *Heuenfield* be cald to all posterity.

XXXIX

Whereat *Cadwallin* wroth, shall forth issew,
 And an huge hoste into Northumber lead,
 With which he godly *Oswald* shall subdew,
 And crowne with martyrdome his sacred head.
 Whose brother *Oswin*, daunted with like dread,
 With price of siluer shall his kingdome buy,
 And *Penda*, seeking him adowne to tread,
 Shall tread adowne, and do him fowly dye,
 But shall with gifts his Lord *Cadwallin* pacify.

XL

Then shall *Cadwallin* dye, and then the raine
 Of *Britons* eke with him attonce shall dye;
 Ne shall the good *Cadwallader* with paine,
 Or powre, be hable it to remedy,
 When the full time prefixt by destiny,
 Shallbe expird of *Britons* regiment.
 For heauen it selfe shall their successe enuy,
 And them with plagues and murrins pestilent
 Consume, till all their warlike puissaunce be spent.

XLI

Yet after all these sorrowes, and huge hills
 Of dying people, during eight yeares space,
Cadwallader not yielding to his ills,
 From *Armoricke*, where long in wretched cace
 He liu'd, returning to his natiue place,
 Shallbe by vision staid from his intent:
 For th'heauens haue decreed, to displace
 The *Britons*, for their sinnes dew punishment,
 And to the *Saxons* ouer-giue their gouernment.

XLII

Then woe, and woe, and euerlasting woe,
 Be to the Briton babe, that shalbe borne,
 To liue in thraldome of his fathers foe;
 Late King, now captiue, late Lord, now forlorne,
 The worlds reproch, the cruell victours scorne,
 Banisht from Princely bowre to wastfull wood:
 O who shall helpe me to lament, and mourne
 The royall seed, the antique *Troian* blood,
 Whose Empire lenger here, then euer any stood.

XLIII

The Damzell was full deepe empasioned,
 Both for his griefe, and for her peoples sake,
 Whose future woes so plaine he fashioned,
 And sighing sore, at length him thus bespake;
 Ah but will heauens fury neuer slake,
 Nor vengeaunce huge relent it selfe at last?
 Will not long misery late mercy make,
 But shall their name for euer be defast,
 And quite from of the earth their memory be rast?

XLIV

Nay but the terme (said he) is limited,
 That in this thraldome *Britons* shall abide,
 And the iust reuolution measured,
 That they as Straungers shalbe notifide.
 For twise foure hundredth yeares shalbe supplide,
 Ere they to former rule restor'd shalbee,
 And their importune fates all satisfide:
 Yet during this their most obscuritee,
 Their beames shall oft breake forth, that men them faire may see.

XLV

For *Rhodoricke*, whose surname shalbe Great,
 Shall of him selfe a braue ensample shew,
 That Saxon kings his friendship shall intreat;
 And *Howell Dha* shall goodly well indew
 The saluage minds with skill of iust and trew;
 Then *Griffyth Conan* also shall vp reare
 His dreaded head, and the old sparkes renew
 Of natiue courage, that his foes shall feare,
 Least backe againe the kingdome he from them should beare.

XLVI

Ne shall the Saxons selues all peaceably
 Enjoy the crowne, which they from Britons wonne
 First ill, and after ruled wickedly:
 For ere two hundred yeares be full outronne,
 There shall a Rauen far from rising Sunne,
 With his wide wings vpon them fiercely fly,
 And bid his faithlesse chickens ouerronne
 The fruitfull plaines, and with fell cruelty,
 In their auenge, tread downe the victours surquedry.

XLVII

Yet shall a third both these, and thine subdew;
 There shall a Lyon from the sea-bord wood
 Of *Neustria* come roring, with a crew
 Of hungry whelpes, his battailous bold brood,
 Whose clawes were newly dipt in cruddy blood,
 That from the Daniske Tyrants head shall rend
 Th'vsurped crowne, as if that he were wood,
 And the spoile of the countrey conquered
 Emongst his young ones shall diuide with bountyhed.

XLVIII

Tho when the terme is full accomplishid,
 There shall a sparke of fire, which hath long-while
 Bene in his ashes raked vp, and hid,
 Be freshly kindled in the fruitfull Ile
 Of *Mona*, where it lurked in exile;
 Which shall breake forth into bright burning flame,
 And reach into the house, that beares the stile
 Of royall maiesty and soueraigne name;
 So shall the Briton bloud their crowne againe reclame.

XLIX

Thenceforth eternall vnion shall be made
 Betweene the nations different afore,
 And sacred Peace shall louingly perswade
 The warlike minds, to learne her goodly lore,
 And ciuile armes to exercise no more:
 Then shall a royall virgin raine, which shall
 Stretch her white rod ouer the *Belgicke* shore,
 And the great Castle smite so sore with all,
 That it shall make him shake, and shortly learne to fall.

L

But yet the end is not. There *Merlin* stayd,
 As ouercomen of the spirites powre,
 Or other ghastly spectacle dismayd,
 That secretly he saw, yet note discoure:
 Which suddein fit, and halfe extatick stoure
 When the two fearefull women saw, they grew
 Greatly confused in behaiouire;
 At last the fury past, to former hew
 Hee turnd againe, and chearefull looks as earst did shew.

LI

Then, when them selues they well instructed had
 Of all, that needed them to be inquired,
 They both conceiuing hope of comfort glad,
 With lighter hearts vnto their home retir'd;
 Where they in secret counsell close conspir'd,
 How to effect so hard an enterprize,
 And to possesse the purpose they desird:
 Now this, now that twixt them they did deuise,
 And diuerse plots did frame, to maske in strange disguise.

LII

At last the Nourse in her foolhardy wit
 Conceiu'd a bold deuise, and thus bespake;
 Daughter, I deeme that counsell aye most fit,
 That of the time doth dew aduauntage take;
 Ye see that good king *Vther* now doth make
 Strong warre vpon the Paynim brethren, hight
Octa and *Oza*, whom he lately brake
 Beside *Cayr Verolame*, in victorious fight,
 That now all *Britanie* doth burne in armes bright.

LIII

That therefore nought our passage may empeach,
 Let vs in feigned armes our selues disguise,
 And our weake hands (whom need new strength shall teach)
 The dreadfull speare and shield to exercize:
 Ne certes daughter that same warlike wize
 I weene, would you misseeme; for ye bene tall,
 And large of limbe, t'atchieue an hard emprize,
 Ne ought ye want, but skill, which practize small
 Will bring, and shortly make you a mayd Martiall.

LIV

And sooth, it ought your courage much inflame,
 To heare so often, in that royall hous,
 From whence to none inferiour ye came:
 Bards tell of many women valorous
 Which haue full many feats aduenturous
 Performd, in paragone of proudest men:
 The bold *Bunduca*, whose victorious
 Exploits made *Rome* to quake, stout *Guendolen*,
 Renowmed *Martia*, and redoubted *Emmilen*.

LV

And that, which more then all the rest may sway,
 Late dayes ensample, which these eyes beheld,
 In the last field before *Meneuia*
 Which *Vther* with those forrein Pagans held,
 I saw a *Saxon* Virgin, the which feld
 Great *Vlfin* thrise vpon the bloody plaine,
 And had not *Carados* her hand withheld
 From rash reuenge, she had him surely slaine,
 Yet *Carados* himselve from her escapt with paine.

LVI

Ah read, (quoth *Britomart*) how is she hight?
 Faire *Angela* (quoth she) men do her call,
 No whit lesse faire, then terrible in fight:
 She hath the leading of a Martiall
 And mighty people, dreaded more then all
 The other *Saxons*, which do for her sake
 And loue, themselues of her name *Angles* call.
 Therefore faire Infant her ensample make
 Vnto thy selfe, and equall courage to thee take.

LVII

Her harty words so deepe into the mynd
 Of the young Damzell sunke, that great desire
 Of warlike armes in her forthwith they tynd,
 And generous stout courage did inspire,
 That she resolu'd, vnweeting to her Sire,
 Aduent'rous knighthood on her selfe to don,
 And counseld with her Nourse, her Maides attire
 To turne into a massy habergeon,
 And bad her all things put in readinesse anon.

LVIII

Th' old woman nought, that needed, did omit;
 But all things did conueniently puruay:
 It fortun'd (so time their turne did fit)
 A band of Britons ryding on forray
 Few dayes before, had gotten a great pray
 Of Saxon goods, emongst the which was seene
 A goodly Armour, and full rich aray,
 Which long'd to *Angela*, the Saxon Queene,
 All fretted round with gold, and goodly well beseene.

LIX

The same, with all the other ornaments,
 King *Ryence* caused to be hanged by
 In his chiefe Church, for endlesse monuments
 Of his successe and gladfull victory:
 Of which her selfe auising readily,
 In th'euening late old *Glauce* thither led
 Faire *Britomart*, and that same Armory
 Downe taking, her therein appareled,
 Well as she might, and with braue bauldrick garnished.

LX

Beside those armes there stood a mighty speare,
 Which *Bladud* made by Magick art of yore,
 And vsd the same in battell aye to beare;
 Sith which it had bin here preseru'd in store,
 For his great vertues proued long afore:
 For neuer wight so fast in sell could sit,
 But him perforce vnto the ground it bore:
 Both speare she tooke, and shield, which hong by it:
 Both speare and shield of great powre, for her purpose fit.

LXI

Thus when she had the virgin all arayd,
 Another harnesse, which did hang thereby,
 About her selfe she dight, that the young Mayd
 She might in equall armes accompany,
 And as her Squire attend her carefully:
 Tho to their ready Steeds they clombe full light,
 And through back wayes, that none might them espy,
 Couered with secret cloud of silent night,
 Themselues they forth conuayd, and passed forward right.

LXII

Ne rested they, till that to Faery lond
 They came, as *Merlin* them directed late:
 Where meeting with this *Redcrosse* knight, she fond
 Of diuerse things discourses to dilate,
 But most of *Arthegall*, and his estate.
 At last their wayes so fell, that they mote part:
 Then each to other well affectionate,
 Friendship professed with vnfained hart,
 The *Redcrosse* knight diuerst, but forth rode *Britomart*.

Canto IV

*Bold Marinell of Britomart,
Is throwne on the Rich strond:
Faire Florimell of Arthur is
Long followed, but not fond.*

I

Where is the Antique glory now become,
That whilome wont in women to appeare?
Where be the braue atchieuements doen by some?
Where be the battels, where the shield and speare,
And all the conquests, which them high did reare,
That matter made for famous Poets verse,
And boastfull men so oft abasht to heare?
Bene they all dead, and laid in dolefull herse?
Or doen they onely sleepe, and shall againe reuerse?

II

If they be dead, then woe is me therefore:
But if they sleepe, O let them soone awake:
For all too long I burne with enuy sore,
To heare the warlike feates, which *Homere* spake
Of bold *Pænthesilee*, which made a lake
Of *Greekish* bloud so oft in *Troian* plaine;
But when I read, how stout *Debora* strake
Proud *Sisera*, and how *Camill'* hath slaine
The huge *Orsilochus*, I swell with great disdain.

III

Yet these, and all that else had puissaunce,
Cannot with noble *Britomart* compare,
Aswell for glory of great valiaunce,
As for pure chastitie and vertue rare,
That all her goodly deeds do well declare.
Well worthy stock, from which the branches sprong,
That in late yeares so faire a blossome bare,
As thee, O Queene, the matter of my song,
Whose lignage from this Lady I deriue along.

IV

Who when through speaches with the *Redcrosse* knight,
She learned had th'estate of *Arthegall*,
And in each point her selfe informd aright,

A friendly league of loue perpetuall
 She with him bound, and *Congé* tooke withall.
 Then he forth on his iourney did proceede,
 To seeke aduentures, which mote him befall,
 And win him worship through his warlike deed,
 Which alwayes of his paines he made the chiefest meed.

V

But *Britomart* kept on her former course,
 Ne euer dofte her armes, but all the way
 Grew pensiue through that amorous discourse,
 By which the *Redcrosse* knight did earst display
 Her louers shape, and cheualrous aray;
 A thousand thoughts she fashioned in her mind,
 And in her feigning fancie did pourtray
 Him such, as fittest she for loue could find,
 Wise, warlike, personable, curteous, and kind.

VI

With such selfe-pleasing thoughts her wound she fed,
 And thought so to beguile her grieuous smart;
 But so her smart was much more grieuous bred,
 And the deepe wound more deepe engord her hart,
 That nought but death her dolour mote depart.
 So forth she rode without repose or rest,
 Searching all lands and each remotest part,
 Following the guidaunce of her blinded guest,
 Till that to the sea-coast at length she her addrest.

VII

There she alighted from her light-foot beast,
 And sitting downe vpon the rocky shore,
 Bad her old Squire vnlace her lofty creast;
 Tho hauing vewd a while the surges hore,
 That gainst the craggy clifts did loudly rore,
 And in their raging surquedry disdaynd,
 That the fast earth affronted them so sore,
 And their deuouring couetize restraynd,
 Thereat she sighed deepe, and after thus complaynd.

VIII

Huge sea of sorrow, and tempestuous grieffe,
 Wherein my feeble barke is tossed long,

Far from the hoped haven of reliefe,
 Why do thy cruell billowes beat so strong,
 And thy moyst mountaines each on others throng,
 Threatning to swallow vp my fearefull life?
 O do thy cruell wrath and spightfull wrong
 At length allay, and stint thy stormy strife,
 Which in these troubled bowels raignes, and rageth rife.

IX

For else my feeble vessell crazd, and crackt
 Through thy strong buffets and outrageous blowes,
 Cannot endure, but needs it must be wrackt
 On the rough rocks, or on the sandy shallowes,
 The whiles that loue it steres, and fortune rowes;
 Loue my lewd Pilot hath a restlesse mind
 And fortune Boteswaine no assuraunce knowes,
 But saile withouten starres, gainst tide and wind:
 How can they other do, sith both are bold and blind?

X

Thou God of winds, that raignest in the seas,
 That raignest also in the Continent,
 At last blow vp some gentle gale of ease,
 The which may bring my ship, ere it be rent,
 Vnto the gladsome port of her intent:
 Then when I shall my selfe in safety see,
 A table for eternall moniment
 Of thy great grace, and my great ieopardie,
 Great *Neptune*, I auow to hallow vnto thee.

XI

Then sighing softly sore, and inly deepe,
 She shut vp all her plaint in priuy grieffe;
 For her great courage would not let her weepe,
 Till that old *Glauce* gan with sharpe reprieffe,
 Her to restraine, and giue her good relieffe,
 Through hope of those, which *Merlin* had her told
 Should of her name and nation be chiefe,
 And fetch their being from the sacred mould
 Of her immortall wombe, to be in heauen enrolld.

XII

Thus as she her recomforted, she spyde,
 Where farre away one all in armour bright,
 With hastie gallop towards her did ryde;
 Her dolour soone she ceast, and on her dight
 Her Helmet, to her Courser mounting light:
 Her former sorrow into suddein wrath,
 Both coosen passions of distroubled spright,
 Conuerting, forth she beates the dustie path;
 Loue and despight attonce her courage kindled hath.

XIII

As when a foggy mist hath ouercast
 The face of heauen, and the cleare aire engrost,
 The world in darkenesse dwels, till that at last
 The watry Southwinde from the seabord cost
 Vpblowing, doth disperse the vapour lo'st,
 And poures it selfe forth in a stormy showre;
 So the faire *Britomart* hauing disclo'st
 Her cloudy care into a wrathfull stowre,
 The mist of grieffe dissolu'd, did into vengeance powre.

XIV

Eftsoones her goodly shield addressing faire,
 That mortall speare she in her hand did take,
 And vnto battell did her selfe prepaire.
 The knight approching, sternely her bespake;
 Sir knight, that doest thy voyage rashly make
 By this forbidden way in my despight,
 Ne doest by others death ensample take,
 I read thee soone retyre, whiles thou hast might,
 Least afterwards it be too late to take thy flight.

XV

Ythrild with deepe disdaine of his proud threat,
 She shortly thus; Fly they, that need to fly;
 Words fearen babes. I meane not thee entreat
 To passe; but maugre thee will passe or dy.
 Ne lenger stayd for th'other to reply,
 But with sharpe speare the rest made dearly knowne.
 Strongly the straunge knight ran, and sturdily
 Strooke her full on the brest, that made her downe
 Decline her head, and touch her crouper with her crowne.

XVI

But she againe him in the shield did smite
 With so fierce furie and great puissaunce,
 That through his threesquare scuchin percing quite,
 And through his mayled hauberque, by mischaunce
 The wicked steele through his left side did glaunce;
 Him so transfixed she before her bore
 Beyond his croupe, the length of all her launce,
 Till sadly soucing on the sandie shore,
 He tumbled on an heape, and wallowd in his gore.

XVII

Like as the sacred Oxe, that carelesse stands,
 With gilden hornes, and flowry girlonds crownd,
 Proud of his dying honor and deare bands,
 Whiles th'altars fume with frankincense arownd,
 All suddenly with mortall stroke astownd,
 Doth groueling fall, and with his streaming gore
 Distaines the pillours, and the holy grownd,
 And the faire flowres, that decked him afore;
 So fell proud *Marinell* vpon the pretious shore.

XVIII

The martiall Mayd stayd not him to lament,
 But forward rode, and kept her readie way
 Along the strond, which as she ouer-went,
 She saw bestrowed all with rich aray
 Of pearles and pretious stones of great assay,
 And all the grauell mixt with golden owre;
 Whereat she wondred much, but would not stay
 For gold, or perles, or pretious stones an howre,
 But them despised all; for all was in her powre.

XIX

Whiles thus he lay in deadly stonishment,
 Tydings hereof came to his mothers eare;
 His mother was the blacke-browd *Cymoent*,
 The daughter of great *Nereus*, which did beare
 This warlike sonne vnto an earthly peare,
 The famous *Dumarin*; who on a day
 Finding the Nymph a sleepe in secret wheare,
 As he by chaunce did wander that same way,
 Was taken with her loue, and by her closely lay.

XX

There he this knight of her begot, whom borne
 She of his father *Marinell* did name,
 And in a rocky caue as wight forlorne,
 Long time she fostred vp, till he became
 A mightie man at armes, and mickle fame
 Did get through great aduentures by him donne:
 For neuer man he suffred by that same
Rich strond to trauell, whereas he did wonne,
 But that he must do battell with the Sea-nymphes sonne.

XXI

An hundred knights of honorable name
 He had subdew'd, and them his vassals made,
 That through all Farie lond his noble fame
 Now blazed was, and feare did all inuade,
 That none durst passen through that perilous glade.
 And to aduance his name and glorie more,
 Her Sea-god syre she dearely did perswade,
 T'endow her sonne with threasure and rich store,
 Boue all the sonnes, that were of earthly wombes ybore.

XXII

The God did graunt his daughters deare demaund,
 To doen his Nephew in all riches flow;
 Eftsoones his heaped waues he did commaund,
 Out of their hollow bosome forth to throw
 All the huge threasure, which the sea below
 Had in his greedie gulfe deuoured deepe,
 And him enriched through the ouerthrow
 And wreckes of many wretches, which did weepe,
 And often waile their wealth, which he from them did keepe.

XXIII

Shortly vpon that shore there heaped was,
 Exceeding riches and all pretious things,
 The spoyle of all the world, that it did pas
 The wealth of th'East, and pompe of *Persian* kings;
 Gold, amber, yuorie, perles, owches, rings,
 And all that else was pretious and deare,
 The sea vnto him voluntary brings,
 That shortly he a great Lord did appeare,
 As was in all the lond of Faery, or elsewheare.

XXIV

Thereto he was a doughtie dreaded knight,
 Tryde often to the scath of many deare,
 That none in equall armes him matchen might,
 The which his mother seeing, gan to feare
 Least his too haughtie hardines might reare
 Some hard mishap, in hazard of his life:
 For thy she oft him counseld to forbear
 The bloudie battell, and to stirre vp strife,
 But after all his warre, to rest his wearie knife.

XXV

And for his more assurance, she inquir'd
 One day of *Proteus* by his mightie spell,
 (For *Proteus* was with prophecie inspir'd)
 Her deare sonnes destinie to her to tell,
 And the sad end of her sweet *Marinell*.
 Who through foresight of his eternall skill,
 Bad her from womankind to keepe him well:
 For of a woman he should haue much ill,
 A virgin strange and stout him should dismay, or kill.

XXVI

For thy she gaue him warning euery day,
 The loue of women not to entertaine;
 A lesson too too hard for liuing clay,
 From loue in course of nature to refraine:
 Yet he his mothers lore did well retaine,
 And euer from faire Ladies loue did fly;
 Yet many Ladies faire did oft complaine,
 That they for loue of him would algates dy:
 Dy, who so list for him, he was loues enemy.

XXVII

But ah, who can deceiue his destiny,
 Or weene by warning to auoyd his fate?
 That when he sleepes in most security,
 And safest seemes, him soonest doth amate,
 And findeth dew effect or soone or late.
 So feeble is the powre of fleshly arme.
 His mother bad him womens loue to hate,
 For she of womans force did feare no harme;
 So weening to haue arm'd him, she did quite disarme.

XXVIII

This was that woman, this that deadly wound,
 That *Proteus* prophecide should him dismay,
 The which his mother vainely did expound,
 To be hart-wounding loue, which should assay
 To bring her sonne vnto his last decay.
 So tickle be the termes of mortall state,
 And full of subtile sophismes, which do play
 With double senses, and with false debate,
 T'approue the vnknownen purpose of eternall fate.

XXIX

Too true the famous *Marinell* it fownd,
 Who through late triall, on that wealthy Strond
 Inglorious now lies in senselesse swownd,
 Through heauy stroke of *Britomartis* hond.
 Which when his mother deare did vnderstond,
 And heauy tydings heard, whereas she playd
 Amongst her watry sisters by a pond,
 Gathering sweet daffadillyes, to haue made
 Gay girlonds, from the Sun their forheads faire to shade.

XXX

Eftsoones both flowres and girlonds farre away
 She flong, and her faire deawy lockes yrent,
 To sorrow huge she turnd her former play,
 And gamesom merth to grieuous dreriment:
 She threw her selfe downe on the Continent,
 Ne word did speake, but lay as in a swowne,
 Whiles all her sisters did for her lament,
 With yelling outcries, and with shrieking sowne;
 And euery one did teare her girlond from her crowne.

XXXI

Soone as she vp out of her deadly fit
 Arose, she bad her charet to be brought,
 And all her sisters, that with her did sit,
 Bad eke attonce their charets to be sought;
 Tho full of bitter griefe and pensiue thought,
 She to her wagon clombe; clombe all the rest,
 And forth together went, with sorrow fraught.
 The waues obedient to their beheast,
 Them yielded readie passage, and their rage surceast.

XXXII

Great *Neptune* stood amazed at their sight,
 Whiles on his broad round backe they softly slid
 And eke himselfe mournd at their mournfull plight,
 Yet wist not what their wailing ment, yet did
 For great compassion of their sorrow, bid
 His mightie waters to them buxome bee:
 Eftsoones the roaring billowes still abid,
 And all the griesly Monsters of the See
 Stood gaping at their gate, and wondred them to see.

XXXIII

A teme of Dolphins raunged in aray,
 Drew the smooth charet of sad *Cymoent*;
 They were all taught by *Triton*, to obay
 To the long raynes, at her commaundement:
 As swift as swallowes, on the waues they went,
 That their broad flaggie finnes no fome did reare,
 Ne bubbling roundell they behind them sent;
 The rest of other fishes drawen weare,
 Which with their finny oars the swelling sea did sheare.

XXXIV

Soone as they bene arriu'd vpon the brim
 Of the *Rich strond*, their charets they forlore,
 And let their temed fishes softly swim
 Along the margent of the fomy shore,
 Least they their finnes should bruze, and surbate sore
 Their tender feet vpon the stony ground:
 And coming to the place, where all in gore
 And cruddy bloud enwallowed they found
 The lucklesse *Marinell*, lying in deadly swound;

XXXV

His mother swowned thrise, and the third time
 Could scarce recouered be out of her paine;
 Had she not bene deuoyd of mortall slime,
 She should not then haue bene reliu'd againe,
 But soone as life recouered had the raine,
 She made so piteous mone and deare wayment,
 That the hard rocks could scarce from teares refraine,
 And all her sister Nymphes with one consent
 Supplide her sobbing breaches with sad complement.

XXXVI

Deare image of my selfe (she said) that is,
 The wretched sonne of wretched mother borne,
 Is this thine high aduancement, O is this
 Th'immortall name, with which thee yet vnborne
 Thy Gransire *Nereus* promist to adorne?
 Now lyst thou of life and honor reft;
 Now lyst thou a lumpe of earth forlorne,
 Ne of thy late life memory is left,
 Ne can thy irreuocable destiny be weft?

XXXVII

Fond *Proteus*, father of false prophecis,
 And they more fond, that credit to thee giue,
 Not this the worke of womans hand ywis,
 That so deepe wound through these deare members driue.
 I feared loue: but they that loue do liue,
 But they that die, doe neither loue nor hate.
 Nath'lesse to thee thy folly I forgiue,
 And to my selfe, and to accursed fate
 The guilt I doe ascribe: deare wisdome bought too late.

XXXVIII

O what auailles it of immortall seed
 To beene ybred and neuer borne to die?
 Farre better I it deeme to die with speed,
 Then waste in woe and wailefull miserie.
 Who dyes the vtmost dolour doth aby, e,
 But who that liues, is left to waile his losse:
 So life is losse, and death felicitie.
 Sad life worse then glad death: and greater crosse
 To see friends graue, then dead the graue selfe to engrosse.

XXXIX

But if the heauens did his dayes enuie,
 And my short blisse maligne, yet mote they well
 Thus much afford me, ere that he did die
 That the dim eyes of my deare *Marinell*
 I mote haue closed, and him bed farewell,
 Sith other offices for mother meet
 They would not graunt.
 Yet maulgre them farewell, my sweetest sweet;
 Farewell my sweetest sonne, sith we no more shall meet.

XL

Thus when they all had sorrowed their fill,
 They softly gan to search his griesly wound:
 And that they might him handle more at will,
 They him disarm'd, and spredding on the ground
 Their watchet mantles frindgd with siluer round,
 They softly wipt away the gelly blood
 From th'orifice; which hauing well vpbound,
 They poured in soueraine balme, and Nectar good,
 Good both for earthly med'cine, and for heauenly food.

XLI

Tho when the lilly handed *Liagore*,
 (This *Liagore* whylome had learned skill
 In leaches craft, by great *Appolloes* lore,
 Sith her whylome vpon the high *Pindus* hill,
 He loued, and at last her wombe did fill
 With heauenly seed, whereof wise *Paeon* sprong)
 Did feele his pulse, she knew there staid still
 Some litle life his feeble sprites emong;
 Which to his mother told, despeire she from her flong.

XLII

Tho vp him taking in their tender hands,
 They easily vnto her charet beare:
 Her teme at her commaundement quiet stands,
 Whiles they the corse into her wagon reare,
 And strow with flowres the lamentable beare:
 Then all the rest into their coches clim,
 And through the brackish waues their passage sheare;
 Vpon great *Neptunes* necke they softly swim,
 And to her watry chamber swiftly carry him.

XLIII

Deepe in the bottome of the sea, her bowre
 Is built of hollow billowes heaped hye,
 Like to thicke cloudes, that threat a stormy showre,
 And vaulted all within, like to the sky,
 In which the Gods do dwell eternally:
 There they him laid in easie couch well dight;
 And sent in haste for *Tryphon*, to apply
 Salues to his wounds, and medicines of might:
 For *Tryphon* of sea gods the soueraine leach is hight.

XLIV

The whiles the *Nymphes* sit all about him round,
 Lamenting his mishap and heauy plight;
 And oft his mother vewing his wide wound,
 Cursed the hand, that did so deadly smight
 Her dearest sonne, her dearest harts delight.
 But none of all those curses ouertooke
 The warlike Maid, th'ensample of that might,
 But fairely well she thriu'd, and well did brooke
 Her noble deeds, ne her right course for ought forsooke.

XLV

Yet did false *Archimage* her still pursew,
 To bring to passe his mischieuous intent,
 Now that he had her singled from the crew
 Of courteous knights, the Prince, and Faery gent,
 Whom late in chace of beautie excellent
 She left, pursewing that same foster strong;
 Of whose foule outrage they impatient,
 And full of fiery zeale, him followed long,
 To reskew her from shame, and to reuenge her wrong.

XLVI

Through thick and thin, through mountaines and through plains,
 Those two great champions did attonce pursew
 The fearefull damzell, with incessant paines:
 Who from them fled, as light-foot hare from vew
 Of hunter swift, and sent of houndes trew.
 At last they came vnto a double way,
 Where, doubtfull which to take, her to reskew,
 Themselues they did dispart, each to assay,
 Whether more happie were, to win so goodly pray.

XLVII

But *Timias*, the Princes gentle Squire,
 That Ladies loue vnto his Lord forlent,
 And with proud enuy, and indignant ire,
 After that wicked foster fiercely went.
 So beene they three three sundry wayes ybent.
 But fairest fortune to the Prince befell,
 Whose chaunce it was, that soone he did repent,
 To take that way, in which that Damozell
 Was fled afore, affraid of him, as feend of hell.

XLVIII

At last of her farre off he gained vew:
 Then gan he freshly pricke his fomy steed,
 And euer as he nigher to her drew,
 So euermore he did increase his speed,
 And of each turning still kept warie heed:
 Aloud to her he oftentimes did call,
 To doe away vaine doubt, and needlesse dreed:
 Full myld to her he spake, and oft let fall
 Many meeke wordes, to stay and comfort her withall.

XLIX

But nothing might relent her hastie flight;
 So deepe the deadly feare of that foule swaine
 Was earst impressed in her gentle spright:
 Like as a fearefull Doue, which through the raine,
 Of the wide aire her way does cut amaine,
 Hauing farre off espyde a Tassell gent,
 Which after her his nimble wings doth straine,
 Doubleth her haste for feare to be for-hent,
 And with her pineons cleaues the liquid firmament.

L

With no lesse haste, and eke with no lesse dreed,
 That fearefull Ladie fled from him, that ment
 To her no euill thought, nor euill deed;
 Yet former feare of being fowly shent,
 Carried her forward with her first intent:
 And though oft looking backward, well she vewd,
 Her selfe freed from that foster insolent,
 And that it was a knight, which now her sewd,
 Yet she no lesse the knight feard, then that villein rude.

LI

His vncouth shield and straunge armes her dismayd,
 Whose like in Faery lond were seldome seene,
 That fast she from him fled, no lesse affrayd,
 Then of wild beastes if she had chased beene:
 Yet he her followd still with courage keene,
 So long that now the golden *Hesperus*
 Was mounted high in top of heauen sheene,
 And warnd his other brethren ioyeous,
 To light their blessed lamps in *Ioues* eternall hous.

LII

All suddenly dim woxe the dampish ayre,
 And griesly shadowes couered heauen bright,
 That now with thousand starres was decked fayre;
 Which when the Prince beheld, a lothfull sight,
 And that perforce, for want of lenger light,
 He mote surcease his suit, and lose the hope
 Of his long labour, he gan fowly wyte
 His wicked fortune, that had turnd aslope,
 And cursed night, that reft from him so goodly scope.

LIII

Tho when her wayes he could no more descry,
 But to and fro at disauenture strayd;
 Like as a ship, whose Lodestarre suddenly
 Couered with cloudes, her Pilot hath dismayd;
 His wearisome pursuit perforce he stayd,
 And from his loftie steed dismounting low,
 Did let him forage. Downe himselfe he layd
 Vpon the grassie ground, to sleepe a throw;
 The cold earth was his couch, the hard steele his pillow.

LIV

But gentle Sleepe enuyde him any rest;
 In stead thereof sad sorrow, and disdain
 Of his hard hap did vexe his noble brest,
 And thousand fancies bet his idle braine
 With their light wings, the sights of semblants vaine:
 Oft did he wish, that Lady faire mote bee
 His Faery Queene, for whom he did complaine:
 Or that his Faery Queene were such, as shee:
 And euer hastie Night he blamed bitterlie.

LV

Night thou foule Mother of annoyance sad,
 Sister of heauie death, and nurse of woe,
 Which wast begot in heauen, but for thy bad
 And brutish shape thrust downe to hell below,
 Where by the grim floud of *Cocytus* slow
 Thy dwelling is, in *Herebus* blacke hous,
 (Blacke *Herebus* thy husband is the foe
 Of all the Gods) where thou vngratious,
 Halfe of thy dayes doest lead in horroure hideous.

LVI

What had th'eternall Maker need of thee,
 The world in his continuall course to keepe,
 That doest all things deface, ne lettest see
 The beautie of his worke? Indeed in sleepe
 The slouthfull bodie, that doth loue to steepe
 His lustlesse limbes, and drowne his baser mind,
 Doth praise thee oft, and oft from *Stygian* deepe
 Calles thee, his goddesse in his error blind,
 And great Dame Natures handmaide, chearing euery kind.

LVII

But well I wote, that to an heauy hart
 Thou art the root and nurse of bitter cares,
 Breeder of new, renewer of old smarts:
 In stead of rest thou lendest rayling teares,
 In stead of sleepe thou sendest troublous feares,
 And dreadfull visions, in the which aliue
 The drearie image of sad death appeares:
 So from the wearie spirit thou doest driue
 Desired rest, and men of happinesse depriue.

LVIII

Vnder thy mantle blacke there hidden lye,
 Light-shonning theft, and traiterous intent,
 Abhorred bloudshed, and vile felony,
 Shamefull deceipt, and daunger imminent;
 Foule horror, and eke hellish dreriment:
 All these I wote in thy protection bee,
 And light doe shonne, for feare of being shent:
 For light ylike is loth'd of them and thee,
 And all that lewdnesse loue, doe hate the light to see.

LIX

For day discouers all dishonest wayes,
 And sheweth each thing, as it is indeed:
 The prayes of high God he faire displayes,
 And his large bountie rightly doth areed.
 Dayes dearest children be the blessed seed,
 Which darknesse shall subdew, and heauen win:
 Truth is his daughter; he her first did breed,
 Most sacred virgin, without spot of sin.
 Our life is day, but death with darknesse doth begin.

LX

O when will day then turne to me againe,
 And bring with him his long expected light?
 O *Titan*, haste to reare thy ioyous waine:
 Speed thee to spread abroad thy beames bright,
 And chase away this too long lingring night,
 Chase her away, from whence she came, to hell.
 She, she it is, that hath me done despight:
 There let her with the damned spirits dwell,
 And yeeld her roome to day, that can it gouerne well.

LXI

Thus did the Prince that wearie night outweare,
 In restlesse anguish and vnquiet paine:
 And earely, ere the morrow did vpreare
 His deawy head out of the *Ocean* maine,
 He vp arose, as halfe in great disdaine,
 And clombe vnto his steed. So forth he went,
 With heauie looke and lumpish pace, that plaine
 In him bewraid great grudge and maltalent:
 His steed eke seem'd t'apply his steps to his intent.

Canto V

*Prince Arthur heares of Florimell:
 three fosters Timias wound,
 Belphebe finds him almost dead,
 and reareth out of sound.*

I

Wonder it is to see, in diuerse minds,
 How diuersly loue doth his pageants play,
 And shewes his powre in variable kinds:
 The baser wit, whose idle thoughts alway
 Are wont to cleaue vnto the lowly clay,
 It stirreth vp to sensuall desire,
 And in lewd slouth to wast his carelesse day:
 But in braue sprite it kindles goodly fire,
 That to all high desert and honour doth aspire.

II

Ne suffereth it vncomely idlenesse,
 In his free thought to build her sluggish nest:
 Ne suffereth it thought of vngentlenesse,

Euer to creepe into his noble brest,
 But to the highest and the worthiest
 Lifteth it vp, that else would lowly fall:
 It lets not fall, it lets it not to rest:
 It lets not scarce this Prince to breath at all,
 But to his first poursuit him forward still doth call.

III

Who long time wandred through the forrest wyde,
 To finde some issue thence, till that at last
 He met a Dwarfe, that seemed terrifyde
 With some late perill, which he hardly past,
 Or other accident, which him aghast;
 Of whom he asked, whence he lately came,
 And whither now he trauelled so fast:
 For sore he swat, and running through that same
 Thicke forest, was bescratcht, and both his feet nigh lame.

IV

Panting for breath, and almost out of hart,
 The Dwarfe him answerd, Sir, ill mote I stay
 To tell the same. I lately did depart
 From Faery court, where I haue many a day
 Serued a gentle Lady of great sway,
 And high accompt though out all Elfin land,
 Who lately left the same, and tooke this way:
 Her now I seeke, and if ye vnderstand
 Which way she fared hath, good Sir tell out of hand.

V

What mister wight (said he) and how arayd?
 Royally clad (quoth he) in cloth of gold,
 As meetest may beseeme a noble mayd;
 Her faire lockes in rich circlet be enrold,
 A fairer wight did neuer Sunne behold,
 And on a Palfrey rides more white then snow,
 Yet she her selfe is whiter manifold:
 The surest signe, whereby ye may her know,
 Is, that she is the fairest wight aliue, I trow.

VI

Now certes swaine (said he) such one I weene,
 Fast flying through this forest from her fo,

A foule ill fauoured foster, I haue seene;
 Her selfe, well as I might, I reskewd tho,
 But could not stay; so fast she did foregoe,
 Carried away with wings of speedy feare.
 Ah dearest God (quoth he) that is great woe,
 And wondrous ruth to all, that shall it heare.
 But can ye read Sir, how I may her find, or where?

VII

Perdy me leuer were to weeten that,
 (Said he) then ransome of the richest knight,
 Or all the good that euer yet I gat:
 But froward fortune, and too forward Night
 Such happinesse did, maulgre, to me spight,
 And fro me reft both life and light attone.
 But Dwarfe aread, what is that Lady bright,
 That through this forest wandreth thus alone;
 For of her errorr straunge I haue great ruth and mone.

VIII

That Lady is (quoth he) where so she bee,
 The bountiest virgin, and most debonaire,
 That euer liuing eye I weene did see;
 Liues none this day, that may with her compare
 In stedfast chastitie and vertue rare,
 The goodly ornaments of beautie bright;
 And is ycleped *Florimell* the faire,
 Faire *Florimell* belou'd of many a knight,
 Yet she loues none but one, that *Marinell* is hight.

IX

A Sea-nymphes sonne, that *Marinell* is hight,
 Of my deare Dame is loued dearely well;
 In other none, but him, she sets delight,
 All her delight is set on *Marinell*;
 But he sets nought at all by *Florimell*:
 For Ladies loue his mother long ygoe
 Did him, they say, forwarne through sacred spell.
 But fame now flies, that of a forreine foe
 He is ysleine, which is the ground of all our woe.

X

Fiue dayes there be, since he (they say) was slaine,
 And foure, since *Florimell* the Court for-went,
 And vowed neuer to returne againe,
 Till him aliue or dead she did inuent.
 Therefore, faire Sir, for loue of knighthood gent,
 And honour of trew Ladies, if ye may
 By your good counsell, or bold hardiment,
 Or succour her, or me direct the way;
 Do one, or other good, I you most humbly pray.

XI

So may you gaine to you full great renowme,
 Of all good Ladies through the world so wide,
 And haply in her hart find highest rowme,
 Of whom ye seeke to be most magnifide:
 At least eternall meede shall you abide.
 To whom the Prince; Dwarfe, comfort to thee take,
 For till thou tidings learne, what her betide,
 I here auow thee neuer to forsake.
 Ill weares he armes, that nill them vse for Ladies sake.

XII

So with the Dwarfe he backe return'd againe,
 To seeke his Lady, where he mote her find;
 But by the way he greatly gan complaine
 The want of his good Squire late left behind,
 For whom he wondrous pensiuie grew in mind,
 For doubt of daunger, which mote him betide;
 For him he loued aboue all mankind,
 Hauing him trew and faithfull euer tride,
 And bold, as euer Squire that waited by knights side.

XIII

Who all this while full hardly was assayd
 Of deadly daunger, which to him betid;
 For whiles his Lord pursewd that noble Mayd,
 After that foster fowle he fiercely rid,
 To bene auenged of the shame, he did
 To that faire Damzell: Him he chaced long
 Through the thicke woods, wherein he would haue hid
 His shamefull head from his auengement strong,
 And oft him threatned death for his outrageous wrong.

XIV

Nathlesse the villen sped himselfe so well,
 Whether through swiftnesse of his speedy beast;
 Or knowledge of those woods, where he did dwell,
 That shortly he from daunger was releast,
 And out of sight escaped at the least;
 Yet not escaped from the dew reward
 Of his bad deeds, which dayly he increast,
 Ne ceased not, till him oppressed hard
 The heauy plague, that for such leachours is prepard.

XV

For soone as he was vanisht out of sight,
 His coward courage gan emboldned bee,
 And cast t'auenge him of that fowle despight,
 Which he had borne of his bold enimee.
 Tho to his brethren came: for they were three
 Vngratious children of one gracelesse sire,
 And vnto them complained, how that he
 Had vsed bene of that foolehardy Squire;
 So them with bitter words he stird to bloody ire.

XVI

Forthwith themselues with their sad instruments
 Of spoyle and murder they gan arme byliue,
 And with him forth into the forest went,
 To wreake the wrath, which he did earst reuiue
 In their sterne brests, on him which late did driue
 Their brother to reproch and shamefull flight:
 For they had vow'd, that neuer he aliue
 Out of that forest should escape their might;
 Vile rancour their rude harts had fild with such despight.

XVII

Within that wood there was a couert glade,
 Foreby a narrow foord, to them well knowne,
 Through which it was vneath for wight to wade;
 And now by fortune it was ouerflowne:
 By that same way they knew that Squire vnknowne
 Mote algates passe; for thy themselues they set
 There in await, with thicke woods ouer growne,
 And all the while their malice they did whet
 With cruell threats, his passage through the ford to let.

XVIII

It fortun'd, as they deuiz'd had,
 The gentle Squire came ryding that same way,
 Vnweeting of their wile and treason bad,
 And through the ford to passen did assay;
 But that fierce foster, which late fled away,
 Stoutly forth stepping on the further shore,
 Him boldly bad his passage there to stay,
 Till he had made amends, and full restore
 For all the damage, which he had him doen afore.

XIX

With that at him a quiu'ring dart he threw,
 With so fell force and villeanous despighte,
 That through his haberieon the forkehead flew,
 And through the linked mayles empierced quite,
 But had no powre in his soft flesh to bite:
 That stroke the hardy Squire did sore displease,
 But more that him he could not come to smite;
 For by no meanes the high banke he could sease,
 But labour'd long in that deepe ford with vaine disease.

XX

And still the foster with his long bore-speare
 Him kept from landing at his wished will;
 Anone one sent out of the thicket neare
 A cruell shaft, headed with deadly ill,
 And fethered with an vn lucky quill;
 The wicked steele stayd not, till it did light
 In his left thigh, and deepely did it thrill:
 Exceeding grieffe that wound in him empight,
 But more that with his foes he could not come to fight.

XXI

At last through wrath and vengeaunce making way,
 He on the bancke arriu'd with mickle paine,
 Where the third brother did him sore assay,
 And droue at him with all his might and maine
 A forrest bill, which both his hands did straine;
 But warily he did auoide the blow,
 And with his speare requited him againe,
 That both his sides were thrilled with the throw,
 And a large streame of bloud out of the wound did flow.

XXII

He tombling downe, with gnashing teeth did bite
 The bitter earth, and bad to let him in
 Into the balefull house of endlesse night,
 Where wicked ghosts do waile their former sin.
 Tho gan the battell freshly to begin;
 For nathemore for that spectacle bad,
 Did th'other two their cruell vengeaunce blin,
 But both attonce on both sides him bestad,
 And load vpon him layd, his life for to haue had.

XXIII

Tho when that villain he auiz'd, which late
 Affrighted had the fairest *Florimell*,
 Full of fiers fury, and indignant hate,
 To him he turned, and with rigour fell
 Smote him so rudely on the Pannikell,
 That to the chin he cleft his head in twaine:
 Downe on the ground his carkas groueling fell;
 His sinfull soule with desperate disdaine,
 Out of her fleshly ferme fled to the place of paine.

XXIV

That seeing now the onely last of three,
 Who with that wicked shaft him wounded had,
 Trembling with horroure, as that did foresee
 The fearefull end of his auengement sad,
 Through which he follow should his brethren bad,
 His bootelesse bow in feeble hand vpcought,
 And therewith shot an arrow at the lad;
 Which faintly fluttring, scarce his helmet raught,
 And glauncing fell to ground, but him annoyed naught.

XXV

With that he would haue fled into the wood;
 But *Timias* him lightly ouerhent,
 Right as he entring was into the flood,
 And strooke at him with force so violent,
 That headlesse him into the foord he sent:
 The carkas with the streame was carried downe,
 But th'head fell backward on the Continent.
 So mischief fel vpon the meaners crowne;
 They three be dead with shame, the Squire liues with renowne.

XXVI

He liues, but takes small ioy of his renowne;
 For of that cruell wound he bled so sore,
 That from his steed he fell in deadly swowne;
 Yet still the bloud forth gusht in so great store,
 That he lay wallowd all in his owne gore.
 Now God thee keepe, thou gentlest Squire aliue,
 Else shall thy louing Lord thee see no more,
 But both of comfort him thou shalt depriue,
 And eke thy selfe of honour, which thou didst atchiue.

XXVII

Prouidence heauenly passeth liuing thought,
 And doth for wretched mens reliefe make way;
 For loe great grace or fortune thither brought
 Comfort to him, that comfortlesse now lay.
 In those same woods, ye well remember may,
 How that a noble hunteresse did wonne,
 She, that base *Braggadochio* did affray,
 And made him fast out of the forrest runne;
Belphoebe was her name, as faire as *Phoebus* sunne.

XXVIII

She on a day, as she pursewd the chace
 Of some wild beast, which with her arrowes keene
 She wounded had, the same along did trace
 By tract of bloud, which she had freshly seene,
 To haue besprinckled all the grassy greene;
 By the great persue, which she there perceau'd,
 Well hoped she the beast engor'd had beene,
 And made more hast, the life to haue bereau'd:
 But ah, her expectation greatly was deceau'd.

XXIX

Shortly she came, whereas that woefull Squire
 With bloud deformed, lay in deadly swownd:
 In whose faire eyes, like lamps of quenched fire,
 The Christall humour stood congealed rownd;
 His locks, like faded leaues fallen to grownd,
 Knotted with bloud, in bounces rudely ran,
 And his sweete lips, on which before that stownd
 The bud of youth to blossome faire began,
 Spoild of their rosie red, were woxen pale and wan.

XXX

Saw neuer liuing eye more heauy sight,
 That could haue made a rocke of stone to rew,
 Or riue in twaine: which when that Lady bright
 Besides all hope with melting eyes did vew,
 All suddeinly abasht she chaunged hew,
 And with sterne horroure backward gan to start:
 But when she better him beheld, she grew
 Full of soft passion and vnwonted smart:
 The point of pittie perced through her tender hart.

XXXI

Meekely she bowed downe, to weete if life
 Yet in his frosen members did remaine,
 And feeling by his pulses beating rife,
 That the weake soule her seat did yet retaine,
 She cast to comfort him with busie paine:
 His double folded necke she reard vpright,
 And rubd his temples, and each trembling vaine;
 His mayled haberieon she did vndight,
 And from his head his heauy burganet did light.

XXXII

Into the woods thenceforth in hast she went,
 To seeke for hearbes, that mote him remedy;
 For she of hearbes had great intendiment,
 Taught of the Nymphe, which from her infancy
 Her nourced had in trew Nobility:
 There, whether it diuine *Tobacco* were,
 Or *Panachaea*, or *Polygony*,
 She found, and brought it to her patient deare
 Who al this while lay bleeding out his hart-bloud neare.

XXXIII

The soueraigne weede betwixt two marbles plaine
 She pownded small, and did in peeces bruze,
 And then atweene her lilly handes twaine,
 Into his wound the iuyce thereof did scruze,
 And round about, as she could well it vze,
 The flesh therewith she suppld and did steepe,
 T'abate all spasme, and soke the swelling bruze,
 And after hauing searcht the intuse deepe,
 She with her scarfe did bind the wound from cold to keepe.

XXXIV

By this he had sweet life recur'd againe,
 And groning inly deepe, at last his eyes,
 His watry eyes, drizzling like deawy raine,
 He vp gan lift toward the azure skies,
 From whence descend all hopelesse remedies:
 Therewith he sigh'd, and turning him aside,
 The goodly Mayd full of diuinities,
 And gifts of heauenly grace he by him spide,
 Her bow and gilden quiuer lying him beside.

XXXV

Mercy deare Lord (said he) what grace is this,
 That thou hast shewed to me sinfull wight,
 To send thine Angell from her bowre of blis,
 To comfort me in my distressed plight?
 Angell, or Goddesse do I call thee right?
 What seruice may I do vnto thee meete,
 That hast from darkenesse me returnd to light,
 And with thy heauenly salues and med'cines sweete,
 Hast drest my sinfull wounds? I kisse thy blessed feete.

XXXVI

Thereat she blushing said, Ah gentle Squire,
 Nor Goddesse I, nor Angell, but the Mayd,
 And daughter of a woody Nymph, desire
 No seruice, but thy safety and ayd;
 Which if thou gaine, I shalbe well apayd.
 We mortall wights, whose liues and fortunes bee
 To commun accidents still open layd,
 Are bound with commun bond of frailtee,
 To succour wretched wights, whom we captiued see.

XXXVII

By this her Damzels, which the former chace
 Had vndertaken after her, arriu'd,
 As did *Belphæbe*, in the bloody place,
 And thereby deemd the beast had bene depriu'd
 Of life, whom late their Ladies arrow ryu'd:
 For thy the bloody tract they followd fast,
 And euery one to runne the swiftest stryu'd;
 But two of them the rest far ouerpast,
 And where their Lady was, arriued at the last.

XXXVIII

Where when they saw that goodly boy, with blood
 Defowled, and their Lady dresse his wownd,
 They wondred much, and shortly vnderstood,
 How him in deadly case their Lady fownd,
 And reskewed out of the heauy stownd.
 Eftsoones his warlike courser, which was strayd
 Farre in the woods, whiles that he lay in swownd,
 She made those Damzels search, which being stayd,
 They did him set thereon, and forth with them conuayd.

XXXIX

Into that forest farre they thence him led,
 Where was their dwelling, in a pleasant glade,
 With mountaines round about enuironed,
 And mighty woods, which did the valley shade,
 And like a stately Theatre it made,
 Spreading it selfe into a spacious plaine.
 And in the midst a little riuer plaide
 Amongst the pumy stones, which seemd to plaine
 With gentle murmure, that his course they did restraine.

XL

Beside the same a dainty place there lay,
 Planted with mirtle trees and laurels greene,
 In which the birds song many a louely lay
 Of gods high prayse, and of their lous sweet teene,
 As it an earthly Paradize had beene:
 In whose enclosed shadow there was pight
 A faire Paultion, scarcely to be seene,
 The which was all within most richly dight,
 That greatest Princes liuing it mote well delight.

XLI

Thither they brought that wounded Squire, and layd
 In easie couch his feeble limbes to rest,
 He rested him a while, and then the Mayd
 His ready wound with better salues new drest;
 Dayly she dressed him, and did the best
 His grieuous hurt to garish, that she might,
 That shortly she his dolour hath redrest,
 And his foule sore reduced to faire plight:
 It she reduced, but himselfe destroyed quight.

XLII

O foolish Physick, and vnfruitfull paine,
 That heales vp one and makes another wound:
 She his hurt thigh to him recur'd againe,
 But hurt his hart, the which before was sound,
 Through an vnwary dart, which did rebound
 From her faire eyes and gracious countenance.
 What bootes it him from death to be vnbound,
 To be captiued in endlesse duraunce
 Of sorrow and despaire without aleggeaunce?

XLIII

Still as his wound did gather, and grow hole,
 So still his hart woxe sore, and health decayd:
 Madnesse to saue a part, and lose the whole.
 Still whenas he beheld the heauenly Mayd,
 Whiles dayly plaisters to his wound she layd,
 So still his Malady the more increast,
 The whiles her matchlesse beautie him dismayd.
 Ah God, what other could he do at least,
 But loue so faire a Lady, that his life releast?

XLIV

Long while he stroue in his courageous brest,
 With reason dew the passion to subdew,
 And loue for to dislodge out of his nest:
 Still when her excellencies he did vew,
 Her soueraigne bounty, and celestiall hew,
 The same to loue he strongly was constraind:
 But when his meane estate he did reuew,
 He from such hardy boldnesse was restraind,
 And of his lucklesse lot and cruell loue thus plaind.

XLV

Vnthankfull wretch (said he) is this the meed,
 With which her soueraigne mercy thou doest quight?
 Thy life she saued by her gracious deed,
 But thou doest weene with villeinous despight,
 To blot her honour, and her heauenly light.
 Dye rather, dye, then so disloyally
 Deeme of her high desert, or seeme so light:
 Faire death it is to shonne more shame, to dy:
 Dye rather, dy, then euer loue disloyally.

XLVI

But if to loue disloyalty it bee,
 Shall I then hate her, that from deathes dore
 Me brought? ah farre be such reproch fro mee.
 What can I lesse do, then her loue therefore,
 Sith I her dew reward cannot restore:
 Dye rather, dye, and dying do her serue,
 Dying her serue, and liuing her adore;
 Thy life she gaue, thy life she doth deserue:
 Dye rather, dye, then euer from her seruice swerue.

XLVII

But foolish boy, what bootes thy seruice bace
 To her, to whom the heauens do serue and sew?
 Thou a meane Squire, of meeke and lowly place,
 She heauenly borne, and of celestially hew.
 How then? of all loue taketh equall vew:
 And doth not highest God vouchsafe to take
 The loue and seruice of the basest crew?
 If she will not, dye meekly for her sake;
 Dye rather, dye, then euer so faire loue forsake.

XLVIII

Thus warreid he long time against his will,
 Till that through weaknesse he was forst at last,
 To yield himselfe vnto the mighty ill:
 Which as a victour proud, gan ransack fast
 His inward parts, and all his entrayles wast,
 That neither bloud in face, nor life in hart
 It left, but both did quite drye vp, and blast;
 As percing leuin, which the inner part
 Of euery thing consumes, and calcineth by art.

XLIX

Which seeing faire *Belphæbe*, gan to feare,
 Least that his wound were inly well not healed,
 Or that the wicked steele empoynsned were:
 Litle she weend, that loue he close concealed;
 Yet still he wasted, as the snow congealed,
 When the bright sunne his beams thereon doth beat;
 Yet neuer he his hart to her reuealed,
 But rather chose to dye for sorrow great,
 Then with dishonorable termes her to entreat.

L

She gracious Lady, yet no paines did spare,
 To do him ease, or do him remedy:
 Many Restoratiues of vertues rare,
 And costly Cordialles she did apply,
 To mitigate his stubborne mallady:
 But that sweet Cordiall, which can restore
 A loue-sick hart, she did to him enuy;
 To him, and to all th'vnworthy world forlore
 She did enuy that soueraigne salue, in secret store.

LI

That dainty Rose, the daughter of her Morne,
 More deare then life she tendered, whose flowre
 The girlond of her honour did adorne:
 Ne suffred she the Middayes scorching powre,
 Ne the sharp Northerne wind thereon to showre,
 But lapped vp her silken leaues most chaire,
 When so the froward skye began to lowre:
 But soone as calmed was the Christall aire,
 She did it faire dispred, and let to flourish faire.

LII

Eternall God in his almighty powre,
 To make ensample of his heauenly grace,
 In Paradize whilome did plant this flowre,
 Whence he it fetcht out of her natiue place,
 And did in stocke of earthly flesh enrace,
 That mortall men her glory should admire:
 In gentle Ladies brest, and bounteous race
 Of woman kind it fairest flowre doth spire,
 And beareth fruit of honour and all chast desire.

LIII

Faire ympes of beautie, whose bright shining beames
 Adorne the world with like to heauenly light,
 And to your willes both royalties and Realmes
 Subdew, through conquest of your wondrous might,
 With this faire flowre your goodly girlonds dight,
 Of chastity and vertue virginall,
 That shall embellish more your beautie bright,
 And crowne your heades with heauenly coronall,
 Such as the Angels weare before Gods tribunall.

LIV

To your faire selues a faire ensample frame,
 Of this faire virgin, this *Belphœbe* faire,
 To whom in perfect loue, and spotlesse fame
 Of chastitie, none liuing may compaire:
 Ne poysnous Enuy iustly can empaire
 The prayse of her fresh flowring Maidenhead;
 For thy she standeth on the highest staire
 Of th'honorable stage of womanhead,
 That Ladies all may follow her ensample dead.

LV

In so great prayse of stedfast chastity,
 Nathlesse she was so curteous and kind,
 Tempred with grace, and goodly modesty,
 That seemed those two vertues stroue to find
 The higher place in her Heroick mind:
 So striuing each did other more augment,
 And both encreast the prayse of woman kind,
 And both encreast her beautie excellent;
 So all did make in her a perfect complement.

Canto VI

*The birth of faire Belphœbe and
 Of Amoret is told.
 The Gardins of Adonis fraught
 With pleasures manifold.*

I

Well may I weene, faire Ladies, all this while
 Ye wonder, how this noble Damozell
 So great perfections did in her compile,
 Sith that in saluage forests she did dwell,
 So farre from court and royall Citadell,
 The great schoolmistresse of all curtesy:
 Seemeth that such wild woods should far expell
 All ciuill vsage and gentility,
 And gentle sprite deforme with rude rusticity.

II

But to this faire *Belphœbe* in her berth
 The heauens so fauourable were and free,
 Looking with myld aspect vpon the earth,

In th'*Horoscope* of her natiuitee,
 That all the gifts of grace and chastitee
 On her they poured forth of plenteous horne;
Ioue laught on *Venus* from his soueraigne see,
 And *Phœbus* with faire beames did her adorne,
 And all the *Graces* rockt her cradle being borne.

III

Her berth was of the wombe of Morning dew,
 And her conception of the ioyous Prime,
 And all her whole creation did her shew
 Pure and vnspotted from all loathly crime,
 That is ingenerate in fleshly slime.
 So was this virgin borne, so was she bred,
 So was she trayned vp from time to time,
 In all chast vertue, and true bounti-hed
 Till to her dew perfection she was ripened.

IV

Her mother was the faire *Chrysogonee*,
 The daughter of *Amphisa*, who by race
 A Faerie was, yborne of high degree,
 She bore *Belphaebe*, she bore in like cace
 Faire *Amoretta* in the second place:
 These two were twinnes, and twixt them two did share
 The heritage of all celestiall grace.
 That all the rest it seem'd they robbed bare
 Of bountie, and of beautie, and all vertues rare.

V

It were a goodly storie, to declare,
 By what straunge accident faire *Chrysogone*
 Conceiu'd these infants, and how she them bare,
 In this wild forrest wandring all alone,
 After she had nine moneths fulfilled and gone:
 For not as other wemens commune brood,
 They were enwombed in the sacred throne
 Of her chaste bodie, nor with commune food,
 As other wemens babes, they sucked vitall blood.

VI

But wondrously they were begot, and bred
 Through influence of th'heauens fruitfull ray,

As it in antique bookes is mentioned.
 It was vpon a Sommers shynie day,
 When *Titan* faire his beames did display,
 In a fresh fountaine, farre from all mens vew,
 She bath'd her brest, the boyling heat t'allay;
 She bath'd with roses red, and violets blew,
 And all the sweetest flowres, that in the forrest grew.

VII

Till faint through irkesome wearinesse, adowne
 Vpon the grassie ground her selfe she layd
 To sleepe, the whiles a gentle slombring swowne
 Vpon her fell all naked bare displayd;
 The sunne-beames bright vpon her body playd,
 Being through former bathing mollifide,
 And pierst into her wombe, where they embayd
 With so sweet sence and secret power vnspide,
 That in her pregnant flesh they shortly fructifide.

VIII

Miraculous may seeme to him, that reades
 So straunge ensample of conception;
 But reason teacheth that the fruitfull seades
 Of all things liuing, through impression
 Of the sunbeames in moyst complexion,
 Doe life conceiue and quickned are by kynd:
 So after *Nilus* invndation,
 Infinite shapes of creatures men do fynd,
 Informed in the mud, on which the Sunne hath shynd.

IX

Miraculous may seeme to him, that reades
 So straunge ensample of conception;
 But reason teacheth that the fruitfull seades
 Of all things liuing, through impression
 Of the sunbeames in moyst complexion,
 Doe life conceiue and quickned are by kynd:
 So after *Nilus* invndation,
 Infinite shapes of creatures men do fynd,
 Informed in the mud, on which the Sunne hath shynd.

X

Whereof conceiuing shame and foule disgrace,
 Albe her guiltlesse conscience her cleard,
 She fled into the wildernesse a space,
 Till that vnweeldy burden she had reard,
 And shund dishonor, which as death she feard:
 Where wearie of long trauell, downe to rest
 Her selfe she set, and comfortably cheard;
 There a sad cloud of sleepe her ouerkest,
 And seized euery sense with sorrow sore opprest.

XI

It fortun'd, faire *Venus* hauing lost
 Her little sonne, the winged god of loue,
 Who for some light displeasure, which him crost,
 Was from her fled, as flit as ayerie Doue,
 And left her blisfull bowre of ioy aboue,
 (So from her often he had fled away,
 When she for ought him sharpely did reprove,
 And wandred in the world in strange aray,
 Disguiz'd in thousand shapes, that none might him bewray.)

XII

Him for to seeke, she left her heauenly hous,
 The house of goodly formes and faire aspects,
 Whence all the world deriues the glorious
 Features of beautie, and all shapes select,
 With which high God his workmanship hath deckt;
 And searched euery way, through which his wings
 Had borne him, or his tract she mote detect:
 She promist kisses sweet, and sweeter things
 Vnto the man, that of him tydings to her brings.

XIII

First she him sought in Court, where most he vsed
 Whylome to haunt, but there she found him not;
 But many there she found, which sore accused
 His falsehood, and with foule infamous blot
 His cruell deedes and wicked wyles did spot:
 Ladies and Lords she euery where mote heare
 Complaining, how with his empoynsed shot
 Their wofull harts he wounded had whyleare,
 And so had left them languishing twixt hope and feare.

XIV

She then the Citties sought from gate to gate,
 And euery one did aske, did he him see;
 And euery one her answerd, that too late
 He had him seene, and felt the crueltie
 Of his sharpe darts and whot artillerie;
 And euery one threw forth reproches rife
 Of his mischieuous deedes, and said, That hee
 Was the disturber of all ciuill life,
 The enemy of peace, and author of all strife.

XV

Then in the countrey she abroad him sought,
 And in the rurall cottages inquired,
 Where also many plaints to her were brought,
 How he their heedlesse harts with loue had fyred,
 And his false venim through their veines inspyred;
 And eke the gentle shepheard swaynes, which sat
 Keeping their fleecie flockes, as they were hyred,
 She sweetly heard complaine, both how and what
 Her sonne had to them doen; yet she did smile thereat.

XVI

But when in none of all these she him got,
 She gan auize, where else he mote him hyde:
 At last she her bethought, that she had not
 Yet sought the saluage woods and forrests wyde,
 In which full many louely Nymphes abyde,
 Mongst whom might be, that he did closely lye,
 Or that the loue of some of them him tyde:
 For thy she thither cast her course t'apply,
 To search the secret haunts of *Dianes* company.

XVII

Shortly vnto the wastefull woods she came,
 Whereas she found the Goddesses with her crew,
 After late chace of their embrewed game,
 Sitting beside a fountaine in a rew,
 Some of them washing with the liquid dew
 From off their dainty limbes the dustie sweat,
 And soyle which did deforme their liuely hew;
 Others lay shaded from the scorching heat;
 The rest vpon her person gaue attendance great.

XVIII

She hauing hong vpon a bough on high
 Her bow and painted quiuer, had vnlaste
 Her siluer buskins from her nimble thigh,
 And her lancke loynes vngirt, and brests vnbraste,
 After her heat the breathing cold to taste;
 Her golden lockes, that late in tresses bright
 Embreaded were for hindring of her haste,
 Now loose about her shoulders hong vndight,
 And were with sweet *Ambrosia* all besprinckled light.

XIX

Soone as she *Venus* saw behind her backe,
 She was asham'd to be so loose surprized
 And woxe halfe wroth against her damzels slacke,
 That had not her thereof before auized,
 But suffred her so carelesly disguised
 Be ouertaken. Soone her garments loose
 Vpgath'ring, in her bosome she comprized,
 Well as she might, and to the Goddess rose,
 Whiles all her Nymphes did like a girlond her enclose.

XX

Goodly she gan faire *Cytherea* greet,
 And shortly asked her, what cause her brought
 Into that wilderness for her vnmeet,
 From her sweet bowres, and beds with pleasures fraught:
 That suddein change she strange aduenture thought.
 To whom halfe weeping, she thus answered,
 That she her dearest sonne *Cupido* sought,
 Who in his frowardnesse from her was fled;
 That she repented sore, to haue him angered.

XXI

Thereat *Diana* gan to smile, in scorne
 Of her vaine plaint, and to her scoffing sayd;
 Great pittie sure, that ye be so forlorne
 Of your gay sonne, that giues ye so good ayd
 To your disports: ill mote ye bene apayd.
 But she was more engrieued, and replide;
 Faire sister, ill beseemes it to vpbrayd
 A dolefull heart with so disdainfull pride;
 The like that mine, may be your paine another tide.

XXII

As you in woods and wanton wilderness
 Your glory set, to chace the saluage beasts,
 So my delight is all in ioyfulnesse,
 In beds, in bowres, in banckets, and in feasts:
 And ill becomes you with your loftie creasts,
 To scorne the ioy, that *Ioue* is glad to seeke;
 We both are bound to follow heauens beheasts,
 And tend our charges with obeisance meeke:
 Spare, gentle sister, with reproch my paine to eeke.

XXIII

And tell me, if that ye my sonne haue heard,
 To lurke emongst your Nymphes in secret wize;
 Or keepe their cabins: much I am affeard,
 Least he like one of them him selfe disguise,
 And turne his arrowes to their exercize:
 So may he long himselfe full easie hide:
 For he is faire and fresh in face and guize,
 As any Nymph (let not it be enuyde.)
 So saying euery Nymph full narrowly she eyde.

XXIV

But *Phæbe* therewith sore was angered,
 And sharply said; Goe Dame, goe seeke your boy,
 Where you him lately left, in *Mars* his bed;
 He comes not here, we scorne his foolish ioy,
 Ne lend we leisure to his idle toy:
 But if I catch him in this company,
 By *Stygian* lake I vow, whose sad annoy
 The Gods doe dread, he dearely shall abyde:
 Ile clip his wanton wings, that he no more shall fly.

XXV

Whom when as *Venus* saw so sore displeas'd,
 She inly sory was, and gan relent,
 What she had said: so her she soone appeas'd,
 With sugred words and gentle blandishment,
 Which as a fountaine from her sweet lips went,
 And welled goodly forth, that in short space
 She was well pleas'd, and forth her damzels sent,
 Through all the woods, to search from place to place,
 If any tract of him or tydings they mote trace.

XXVI

To search the God of loue, her Nymphes she sent
 Throughout the wandring forrest euery where:
 And after them her selfe eke with her went
 To seeke the fugitiue, both farre and nere,
 So long they sought, till they arriued were
 In that same shadie couert, whereas lay
 Faire *Crysgone* in slombry traunce whilere:
 Who in her sleepe (a wondrous thing to say)
 Vnwares had borne two babes, as faire as springing day.

XXVII

Vnwares she them conceiu'd, vnwares she bore:
 She bore withouten paine, that she conceiued
 Withouten pleasure: ne her need implore
Lucinaes aide: which when they both perceiued,
 They were through wonder nigh of sense bereaued,
 And gazing each on other, nought bespake:
 At last they both agreed, her seeming griued
 Out of her heauy swowne not to awake,
 But from her louing side the tender babes to take.

XXVIII

Vp they them tooke, each one a babe vptooke,
 And with them carried, to be fostered;
 Dame *Phaebe* to a Nymph her babe betooke,
 To be vpbrought in perfect Maydenhed,
 And of her selfe her name *Belphœbe* red:
 But *Venus* hers thence farre away conuayd,
 To be vpbrought in goodly womanhed,
 And in her litle loues stead, which was strayd,
 Her *Amoretta* cald, to comfort her dismayd.

XXIX

She brought her to her ioyous Paradize,
 Where most she wonnes, when she on earth does dwel.
 So faire a place, as Nature can deuize:
 Whether in *Paphos*, or *Cytheron* hill,
 Or it in *Gnidus* be, I wote not well;
 But well I wote by tryall, that this same
 All other pleasant places doth excell,
 And called is by her lost louers name,
 The *Gardin* of *Adonis*, farre renownd by fame.

XXX

In that same Gardin all the goodly flowres,
 Wherewith dame Nature doth her beautifie,
 And decks the girlonds of her paramoures,
 Are fetcht: there is the first seminarie
 Of all things, that are borne to liue and die,
 According to their kindes. Long worke it were,
 Here to account the endlesse progenie
 Of all the weedes, that bud and blossome there;
 But so much as doth need, must needs be counted here.

XXXI

It sited was in fruitfull soyle of old,
 And girt in with two walles on either side;
 The one of yron, the other of bright gold,
 That none might thorough breake, nor ouer-stride:
 And double gates it had, which opened wide,
 By which both in and out men moten pas;
 Th'one faire and fresh, the other old and dride:
 Old *Genius* the porter of them was,
 Old *Genius*, the which a double nature has.

XXXII

He letteth in, he letteth out to wend,
 All that to come into the world desire;
 A thousand thousand naked babes attend
 About him day and night, which doe require,
 That he with fleshly weedes would them attire:
 Such as him list, such as eternall fate
 Ordained hath, he clothes with sinfull mire,
 And sendeth forth to liue in mortall state,
 Till they againe returne backe by the hinder gate.

XXXIII

After that they againe returned beene,
 They in that Gardin planted be againe;
 And grow afresh, as they had neuer seene
 Fleshly corruption, nor mortall paine.
 Some thousand yeares so doen they there remaine;
 And then of him are clad with other hew,
 Or sent into the chaungefull world againe,
 Till thither they returne, where first they grew:
 So like a wheele around they runne from old to new.

XXXIV

Ne needs there Gardiner to set, or sow,
 To plant or prune: for of their owne accord
 All things, as they created were, doe grow,
 And yet remember well the mightie word,
 Which first was spoken by th'Almightie lord,
 That bad them to increase and multiply:
 Ne doe they need with water of the ford,
 Or of the clouds to moysten their roots dry;
 For in themselues eternall moisture they imply.

XXXV

Infinite shapes of creatures there are bred,
 And vncouth formes, which none yet euer knew,
 And euery sort is in a sundry bed
 Set by it selfe, and ranckt in comely rew:
 Some fit for reasonable soules t'indew,
 Some made for beasts, some made for birds to weare,
 And all the fruitfull spawne of fishes hew
 In endlesse rancks along enraunged were,
 That seem'd the *Ocean* could not containe them there.

XXXVI

Daily they grow, and daily forth are sent
 Into the world, it to replenish more;
 Yet is the stocke not lessened, nor spent,
 But still remaines in euerlasting store,
 As it at first created was of yore.
 For in the wide wombe of the world there lyes,
 In hatefull darkenesse and in deepe horrore,
 An huge eternall *Chaos*, which supplyes
 The substances of natures fruitfull progenyes.

XXXVII

All things from thence doe their first being fetch,
 And borrow matter, whereof they are made,
 Which when as forme and feature it does ketch,
 Becomes a bodie, and doth then inuade
 The state of life, out of the griesly shade.
 That substance is eterne, and bideth so,
 Ne when the life decayes, and forme does fade,
 Doth it consume, and into nothing go,
 But chaunged is, and often altred to and fro.

XXXVIII

The substance is not chaunged, nor altered,
 But th'only forme and outward fashion;
 For euery substance is conditioned
 To change her hew, and sundry formes to don,
 Meet for her temper and complexion:
 For formes are variable and decay,
 By course of kind, and by occasion;
 And that faire flowre of beautie fades away,
 As doth the lilly fresh before the sunny ray.

XXXIX

Great enimy to it, and to all the rest,
 That in the *Gardin of Adonis* springs,
 Is wicked *Time*, who with his scyth adrest,
 Does mow the flowring herbes and goodly things,
 And all their glory to the ground downe flings,
 Where they doe wither, and are fowly mard:
 He flies about, and with his flaggy wings
 Beates downe both leaues and buds without regard,
 Ne euer pittie may relent his malice hard.

XL

Yet pittie often did the gods relent,
 To see so faire things mard, and spoyled quight:
 And their great mother *Venus* did lament
 The losse of her deare brood, her deare delight;
 Her hart was pierst with pittie at the sight,
 When walking through the *Gardin*, them she spyde,
 Yet no'te she find redresse for such despight.
 For all that liues, is subiect to that law:
 All things decay in time, and to their end do draw.

XLI

But were it not, that *Time* their troubler is,
 All that in this delightfull *Gardin* growes,
 Should happie be, and haue immortall blis:
 For here all plentie, and all pleasure flowes,
 And sweet loue gentle fits emongst them throwes,
 Without fell rancor, or fond gealosie;
 Franckly each paramour his leman knowes,
 Each bird his mate, ne any does enuie
 Their goodly meriment, and gay felicitie.

XLII

There is continuall spring, and haruest there
 Continuall, both meeting at one time:
 For both the boughes doe laughing blossomes beare,
 And with fresh colours decke the wanton Prime,
 And eke attonce the heauy trees they clime,
 Which seeme to labour vnder their fruits lode:
 The whiles the ioyous birdes make their pastime
 Emongst the shadie leaues, their sweet abode,
 And their true loues without suspition tell abode.

XLIII

Right in the middest of that Paradise,
 There stood a stately Mount, on whose round top
 A gloomy groue of mirtle trees did rise,
 Whose shadie boughes sharpe steele did neuer lop,
 Nor wicked beasts their tender buds did crop,
 But like a girlond compassed the hight,
 And from their fruitfull sides sweet gum did drop,
 That all the ground with precious deaw bedight,
 Threw forth most dainty odours, and most sweet delight.

XLIV

And in the thickest couert of that shade,
 There was a pleasant arbour, not by art,
 But of the trees owne inclination made,
 Which knitting their rancke braunches part to part,
 With wanton yuie twyne entrayld athwart,
 And Eglantine, and Caprifole emong,
 Fashiond aboue within their inmost part,
 That nether *Phæbus* beams could through them throng,
 Nor *Aeolus* sharp blast could worke them any wrong.

XLV

And all about grew euery sort of flowre,
 To which sad louers were transformd of yore;
 Fresh *Hyacinthus*, *Phæbus* paramoure,
 Foolish *Narcisse*, that likes the watry shore,
 Sad *Amaranthus*, made a flowre but late,
 Sad *Amaranthus*, in whose purple gore
 Me seemes I see *Amintas* wretched fate,
 To whom sweet Poets verse hath giuen endlesse date.

XLVI

There wont faire *Venus* often to enioy
 Her deare *Adonis* ioyous company,
 And reape sweet pleasure of the wanton boy;
 There yet, some say, in secret he does ly,
 Lapped in flowres and pretious spycery,
 By her hid from the world, and from the skill
 Of *Stygian* Gods, which doe her loue enuy;
 But she her selfe, when euer that she will,
 Possesseth him, and of his sweetnesse takes her fill.

XLVII

And sooth it seemes they say: for he may not
 For euer die, and euer buried bee
 In balefull night, where all things are forgot;
 All be he subiect to mortalitie,
 Yet is eterne in mutabilitie,
 And by succession made perpetuall,
 Transformed oft, and chaunged diuerslie:
 For him the Father of all formes they call;
 Therefore needs mote he liue, that liuing giues to all.

XLVIII

There now he liueth in eternall blis,
 Ioying his goddesse, and of her enioyd:
 Ne feareth he henceforth that foe of his,
 Which with his cruell tuske him deadly cloyd:
 For that wilde Bore, the which him once annoyd,
 She firmly hath emprisoned for ay,
 That her sweet loue his malice mote auoyd,
 In a strong rocky Caue, which is they say,
 Hewen vnderneath that Mount, that none him losen may.

XLIX

There now he liues in euerlasting ioy,
 With many of the Gods in company,
 Which thither haunt, and with the winged boy
 Sporting himselfe in safe felicity:
 Who when he hath with spoiles and cruelty
 Ransackt the world, and in the wofull harts
 Of many wretches set his triumphes hye,
 Thither resorts, and laying his sad darts
 Aside, with faire *Adonis* playes his wanton parts.

L

And his true loue faire *Psyche* with him playes,
 Faire *Psyche* to him lately reconcyld,
 After long troubles and vnmeet vpbrayes,
 With which his mother *Venus* her reuyld,
 And eke himselfe her cruelly exyld:
 But now in stedfast loue and happy state
 She with him liues, and hath him borne a chyld,
Pleasure, that doth both gods and men aggrate,
Pleasure, the daughter of *Cupid* and *Psyche* late.

LI

Hither great *Venus* brought this infant faire,
 The younger daughter of *Chrysogonee*,
 And vnto *Psyche* with great trust and care
 Committed her, yfostered to bee,
 And trained vp in true feminitee:
 Who no lesse carefully her tendered,
 Then her owne daughter *Pleasure*, to whom shee
 Made her companion, and her lessoned
 In all the lore of loue, and goodly womanhead.

LII

In which when she to perfect ripenesse grew,
 Of grace and beautie noble Paragone,
 She brought her forth into the worldes vew,
 To be th'ensample of true loue alone,
 And Lodestarre of all chaste affectione,
 To all faire Ladies, that doe liue on ground.
 To Faery court she came, where many one
 Admyrd her goodly haueour, and found
 His feeble hart wide launched with loues cruell wound.

LIII

But she to none of them her loue did cast,
 Saue to the noble knight Sir *Scudamore*,
 To whom her louing hart she linked fast
 In faithfull loue, t'abide for euermore,
 And for his dearest sake endured sore,
 Sore trouble of an hainous enemy;
 Who her would forced haue to haue forlore
 Her former loue, and stedfast loialty,
 As ye may elsewhere read that ruefull history.

LIV

But well I weene, ye first desire to learne,
 What end vnto that fearefull Damozell,
 Which fled so fast from that same foster stearne,
 Whom with his brethren *Timias* slew, befell:
 That was to weet, the goodly *Florimell*;
 Who wandring for to seeke her louer deare,
 Her louer deare, her dearest *Marinell*,
 Into misfortune fell, as ye did heare,
 And from Prince *Arthur* fled with wings of idle feare.

Canto VII

*The witches sonne loues Florimell:
 she flyes, he faines to die.
 Satyrane saues the Squire of Dames
 from Gyants tyrannie.*

I

Like as an Hynd forth singled from the heard,
 That hath escaped from a rauinous beast,
 Yet flyes away of her owne feet affeard,
 And euery leafe, that shaketh with the least
 Murmure of winde, her terror hath encreast;
 So fled faire *Florimell* from her vaine feare,
 Long after she from perill was releast:
 Each shade she saw, and each noyse she did heare,
 Did seeme to be the same, which she escapt whyleare.

II

All that same euening she in flying spent,
 And all that night her course continewd:
 Ne did she let dull sleepe once to relent,
 Nor wearinesse to slacke her hast, but fled
 Euer alike, as if her former dred
 Were hard behind, her readie to arrest:
 And her white Palfrey hauing conquered
 The maistring raines out of her weary wrest,
 Perforce her carried, where euer he thought best.

III

So long as breath, and hable puissance
 Did natiue courage vnto him supply,
 His pace he freshly forward did aduaunce,

And carried her beyond all ieopardy,
 But nought that wanteth rest, can long aby.
 He hauing through incessant trauell spent
 His force, at last perforce a downe did ly,
 Ne foot could further moue: The Lady gent
 Thereat was suddein strooke with great astonishment.

IV

And forst t'alight, on foot mote algates fare,
 A traueller vnwonted to such way:
 Need teacheth her this lesson hard and rare,
 That fortune all in equall launce doth sway,
 And mortall miseries doth make her play.
 So long she trauelled, till at length she came
 To an hilles side, which did to her bewray
 A little valley, subiect to the same,
 All couerd with thick woods, that quite it ouercame.

V

Through the tops of the high trees she did descry
 A litle smoke, whose vapour thin and light,
 Reeking aloft, vprolled to the sky:
 Which, chearefull signe did send vnto her sight,
 That in the same did wonne some liuing wight.
 Eftsoones her steps she thereunto applyde,
 And came at last in weary wretched plight
 Vnto the place, to which her hope did guyde,
 To find some refuge there, and rest her weary syde.

VI

There in a gloomy hollow glen she found
 A little cottage, built of stickes and reedes
 In homely wize, and wald with sods around,
 In which a witch did dwell, in loathly weedes,
 And wilfull want, all carelesse of her needes;
 So choosing solitarie to abide,
 Far from all neighbours, that her deuilish deedes
 And hellish arts from people she might hide,
 And hurt far off vnknowne, whom euer she enuide.

VII

The Damzell there arriuing entred in;
 Where sitting on the flore the Hag she found,

Busie (as seem'd) about some wicked gin:
 Who soone as she beheld that suddein stound,
 Lightly vpstarted from the dustie ground,
 And with fell looke and hollow deadly gaze
 Stared on her awhile, as one astound,
 Ne had one word to speake, for great amaze,
 But shewd by outward signes, that dread her sence did daze.

VIII

At last turning her feare to foolish wrath,
 She askt, what deuill had her thither brought,
 And who she was, and what vnwonted path
 Had guided her, vnwelcomed, vnsought?
 To which the Damzell full of doubtfull thought,
 Her mildly answer'd; Beldame be not wroth
 With silly Virgin by aduenture brought
 Vnto your dwelling, ignorant and loth,
 That craue but rowme to rest, while tempest ouerblo'th.

IX

With that adowne out of her Christall eyne
 Few trickling teares she softly forth let fall,
 That like two Orient pearles, did purely shyne
 Vpon her snowy cheeke; and therewithall
 She sighed soft, that none so bestiall,
 Nor saluage hart, but ruth of her sad plight
 Would make to melt, or pitteously appall;
 And that vile Hag, all were her whole delight
 In mischiefe, was much moued at so pitteous sight.

X

And gan recomfort her in her rude wyse,
 With womanish compassion of her plaint,
 Wiping the teares from her suffused eyes,
 And bidding her sit downe, to rest her faint
 And wearie limbes a while. She nothing quaint
 Nor s'deignfull of so homely fashion,
 Sith brought she was now to so hard constraint,
 Sate downe vpon the dusty ground anon,
 As glad of that small rest, as Bird of tempest gon.

XI

Tho gan she gather vp her garments rent,
 And her loose lockes to dight in order dew,
 With golden wreath and gorgeous ornament;
 Whom such whenas the wicked Hag did vew,
 She was astonisht at her heauenly hew,
 And doubted her to deeme an earthly wight,
 But or some Goddesse, or of *Dianes* crew,
 And thought her to adore with humble spright;
 T'adore thing so diuine as beauty, were but right.

XII

This wicked woman had a wicked sonne,
 The comfort of her age and weary dayes,
 A laesie loord, for nothing good to donne,
 But stretched forth in idlenesse alwayes,
 Ne euer cast his mind to couet prayse,
 Or ply him selfe to any honest trade,
 But all the day before the sunny rayes
 He vs'd to slug, or sleepe in slothfull shade:
 Such laesinesse both lewd and poore attonce him made.

XIII

He comming home at vndertime, there found
 The fairest creature, that he euer saw,
 Sitting beside his mother on the ground;
 The sight whereof did greatly him adaw,
 And his base thought with terrour and with aw
 So inly smot, that as one, which had gazed
 On the bright Sunne vnwares, doth soone withdraw
 His feeble eyne, with too much brightnesse dazed;
 So stared he on her, and stood long while amazed.

XIV

Softly at last he gan his mother aske,
 What mister wight that was, and whence deriued,
 That in so straunge disguizement there did maske,
 And by what accident she there arriued:
 But she, as one nigh of her wits depriued,
 With nought but ghastly lookes him answered,
 Like to a ghost, that lately is reuiued
 From *Stygian* shores, where late it wandered;
 So both at her, and each at other wondered.

XV

But the faire Virgin was so meeke and mild,
 That she to them vouchsafed to embrace
 Her goodly port, and to their senses vild,
 Her gentle speach applide, that in short space
 She grew familiare in that desert place.
 During which time, the Chorle through her so kind
 And curteise vse conceiu'd affection bace,
 And cast to loue her in his brutish mind;
 No loue, but brutish lust, that was so beastly tind.

XVI

Closely the wicked flame his bowels brent,
 And shortly grew into outrageous fire;
 Yet had he not the hart, nor hardiment,
 As vnto her to vtter his desire;
 His caytiue thought durst not so high aspire,
 But with soft sighes, and louely semblaunces,
 He ween'd that his affection entire
 She should aread; many resembraunces
 To her he made, and many kind remembraunces.

XVII

Oft from the forrest wildings he did bring,
 Whose sides empurpled were with smiling red,
 And oft young birds, which he had taught to sing
 His mistresse prayses, sweetly caroled,
 Girmonds of flowres sometimes for her faire hed
 He fine would dight; sometimes the squirell wild
 He brought to her in bands, as conquered
 To be her thrall, his fellow seruant vild;
 All which, she of him tooke with countenance meeke and mild.

XVIII

But past awhile, when she fit season saw
 To leaue that desert mansion, she cast
 In secret wize her selfe thence to withdraw,
 For feare of mischief, which she did forecast
 Might by the witch or by her sonne compast:
 Her wearie Palfrey closely, as she might,
 Now well recouered after long repast,
 In his proud furnitures she freshly dight,
 His late miswandred wayes now to remeasure right.

XIX

And earely ere the dawning day appeard,
 She forth issewed, and on her iourney went;
 She went in perill, of each noyse affeard,
 And of each shade, that did it selfe present;
 For still she feared to be ouerhent,
 Of that vile hag, or her vnciuile sonne:
 Who when too late awaking, well they kent,
 That their faire guest was gone, they both begonne
 To make exceeding mone, as they had bene vndonne.

XX

But that lewd loue did the most lament
 For her depart, that euer man did heare;
 He knockt his brest with desperate intent,
 And scratcht his face, and with his teeth did teare
 His rugged flesh, and rent his ragged heare:
 That his sad mother seeing his sore plight,
 Was greatly woe begon, and gan to feare,
 Least his fraile senses were emperisht quight,
 And loue to frenzy turnd, sith loue is franticke hight.

XXI

All wayes she sought, him to restore to plight,
 With herbs, with charms, with counsell, and with teares,
 But tears, nor charms, nor herbs, nor counsell might
 Asswage the fury, which his entrails teares:
 So strong is passion, that no reason heares.
 Tho when all other helps she saw to faile,
 She turnd her selfe backe to her wicked leares
 And by her deuilish arts thought to preuaile,
 To bring her backe againe, or worke her finall bale.

XXII

Eftsoones out of her hidden caue she cald
 An hideous beast, of horrible aspect,
 That could the stoutest courage haue appald;
 Monstrous mishapt, and his backe was spect
 With thousand spots of colours queint elect,
 Thereto so swift, that it all beasts did pas:
 Like neuer yet did liuing eye detect;
 But likest it to an *Hyena* was,
 That feeds on womens flesh, as others feede on gras.

XXIII

It forth she cald, and gaue it streight in charge,
 Through thicke and thin her to pursew apace,
 Ne once to stay to rest, or breath at large,
 Till her he had attaind, and brought in place,
 Or quite deuourd her beauties scornefull grace.
 The Monster swift as word, that from her went,
 Went forth in hast, and did her footing trace
 So sure and swiftly, through his perfect sent,
 And passing speede, that shortly he her ouerhent.

XXIV

Whom when the fearefull Damzell nigh espide,
 No need to bid her fast away to flie;
 That vgly shape so sore her terrifide,
 That it she shund no lesse, then dread to die,
 And her flit Palfrey did so well apply
 His nimble feet to her conceiued feare,
 That whilest his breath did strength to him supply,
 From perill free he her away did beare:
 But when his force gan faile, his pace gan wex areare.

XXV

Which whenas she perceiu'd, she was dismayd
 At that same last extremitie full sore,
 And of her safetie greatly grew afraid;
 And now she gan approach to the sea shore,
 As it befell, that she could flie no more,
 But yield her selfe to spoile of greedinesse.
 Lightly she leaped, as a wight forlore,
 From her dull horse, in desperate distresse,
 And to her feet betooke her doubtfull sickernesse.

XXVI

Not halfe so fast the wicked *Myrrha* fled
 From dread of her reuenging fathers hond:
 Nor halfe so fast to saue her maidenhed,
 Fled fearefull *Daphne* on th'*AEgean* strond,
 As *Florimell* fled from that Monster yond,
 To reach the sea, ere she of him were raught:
 For in the sea to drowne her selfe she fond,
 Rather then of the tyrant to be caught:
 Thereto feare gaue her wings, and neede her courage taught.

XXVII

It fortun'd (high God did so ordaine)
 As she arriued on the roring shore,
 In minde to leape into the mighty maine,
 A little boate lay houing her before,
 In which there slept a fisher old and pore,
 The whiles his nets were drying on the sand:
 Into the same she leapt, and with the ore
 Did thrust the shallop from the floting strand:
 So safetie found at sea, which she found not at land.

XXVIII

The Monster ready on the pray to sease,
 Was of his forward hope deceiued quight;
 Ne durst assay to wade the perlous seas,
 But greedily long gaping at the sight,
 At last in vaine was forst to turne his flight,
 And tell the idle tidings to his Dame:
 Yet to auenge his deuilish despight,
 He set vpon her Palfrey tired lame,
 And slew him cruelly, ere any reskew came.

XXIX

And after hauing him embowelled,
 To fill his hellish gorge, it chaunst a knight
 To passe that way, as forth he trauelled;
 It was a goodly Swaine, and of great might,
 As euer man that bloody field did fight;
 But in vaine sheows, that wont yong knights bewitch,
 And courtly seruices tooke no delight,
 But rather ioyd to be, then seemen sich:
 For both to be and seeme to him was labour lich.

XXX

It was to weete the good Sir *Satyrane*,
 That raungd abroad to seeke aduentures wilde,
 As was his wont in forrest, and in plaine;
 He was all armd in rugged steele vnfilde,
 As in the smoky forge it was compilde,
 And in his Scutchin bore a Satyres hed:
 He coming present, where the Monster vilde
 Vpon that milke-white Palfreyes carkas fed,
 Vnto his reskew ran, and greedily him sped.

XXXI

There well perceiu'd he, that it was the horse,
 Whereon faire *Florimell* was wont to ride,
 That of that feend was rent without remorse:
 Much feared he, least ought did ill betide
 To that faire Mayd, the flowre of womens pride;
 For her he dearely loued, and in all
 His famous conquests highly magnifide:
 Besides her golden girdle, which did fall
 From her in flight, he found, that did him sore apall.

XXXII

Full of sad feare, and doubtfull agony,
 Fiercely he flew vpon that wicked feend,
 And with huge strokes, and cruell battery
 Him forst to leaue his pray, for to attend
 Him selfe from deadly daunger to defend:
 Full many wounds in his corrupted flesh
 He did engraue, and muchell bloud did spend,
 Yet might not do him dye, but aye more fresh
 And fierce he still appeard, the more he did him thresh.

XXXIII

He wist not, how him to despoile of life,
 Ne how to win the wished victory,
 Sith him he saw still stronger grow through strife,
 And him selfe weaker through infirmity;
 Greatly he grew enrag'd, and furiously
 Hurling his sword away, he lightly lept
 Vpon the beast, that with great cruelty
 Rored, and raged to be vnder-kept:
 Yet he perforce him held, and strokes vpon him hept.

XXXIV

As he that striues to stop a suddein flood,
 And in strong banckes his violence enclose,
 Forceth it swell aboue his wonted mood,
 And largely ouerflow the fruitfull plaine,
 That all the countrey seemes to be a Maine,
 And the rich furrowes flote, all quite fordonne:
 The wofull husbandman doth lowd complaine,
 To see his whole yeares labour lost so soone,
 For which to God he made so many an idle boone.

XXXV

So him he held, and did through might amate:
 So long he held him, and him bet so long,
 That at the last his fiercenesse gan abate,
 And meekely stoup vnto the victour strong:
 Who to auenge the implacable wrong,
 Which he supposed donne to *Florimell*,
 Sought by all meanes his dolour to prolong,
 Sith dint of steele his carcas could not quell:
 His maker with her charmes had framed him so well.

XXXVI

The golden ribband, which that virgin wore
 About her sclender wast, he tooke in hand,
 And with it bound the beast, that lowd did rore
 For great despight of that vnwonted band,
 Yet dared not his victour to withstand,
 But trembled like a lambe, fled from the pray,
 And all the way him followd on the strand,
 As he had long bene learned to obay;
 Yet neuer learned he such seruice, till that day.

XXXVII

Thus as he led the Beast along the way,
 He spide far off a mighty Giauntesse,
 Fast flying on a Courser dapled gray,
 From a bold knight, that with great hardinesse
 Her hard pursewd, and sought for to suppressse;
 She bore before her lap a dolefull Squire,
 Lying athwart her horse in great distresse,
 Fast bounden hand and foote with cords of wire,
 Whom she did meane to make the thrall of her desire.

XXXVIII

Which whenas *Satyrane* beheld, in hast
 He left his captiue Beast at liberty,
 And crost the nearest way, by which he cast
 Her to encounter, ere she passed by:
 But she the way shund nathemore for thy,
 But forward gallopt fast; which when he spyde,
 His mighty speare he couched warily,
 And at her ran: she hauing him descryde,
 Her selfe to fight addrest, and threw her lode aside.

XXXIX

Like as a Goshauke, that in foote doth beare
 A trembling Culuer, hauing spied on hight
 An Egle, that with plummy wings doth sheare
 The subtile ayre, stouping with all his might,
 The quarrey throwes to ground with fell despight,
 And to the battell doth her selfe prepare:
 So ran the Geauntesse vnto the fight;
 Her firie eyes with furious sparkes did stare,
 And with blasphemous bannes high God in peeeces tare.

XL

She caught in hand an huge great yron mace,
 Wherewith she many had of life depriued,
 But ere the stroke could seize his aymed place,
 His speare amidst her sun-broad shield arriued;
 Yet nathemore the steele a sunder riued,
 All were the beame in bignesse like a mast,
 Ne her out of the stedfast sadle driued,
 But glauncing on the tempred mettall, brast
 In thousand shiuers, and so forth beside her past.

XLI

Her Steed did stagger with that puissaunt strooke;
 But she no more was moued with that might,
 Then it had lighted on an aged Oke;
 Or on the marble Pillour, that is pight
 Vpon the top of Mount *Olympus* hight,
 For the braue youthly Champions to assay,
 With burning charet wheelles it nigh to smite:
 But who that smites it, mars his ioyous play,
 And is the spectacle of ruinous decay.

XLII

Yet therewith sore enrag'd, with sterne regard
 Her dreadfull weapon she to him address,
 Which on his helmet martelled so hard,
 That made him low incline his lofty crest,
 And bowd his battred visour to his brest:
 Wherewith he was so stund, that he n'ote ryde,
 But reeled to and fro from East to West:
 Which when his cruell enemy espyde,
 She lightly vnto him adioyned side to syde;

XLIII

And on his collar laying puissant hand,
 Out of his wauering seat him pluckt perforce,
 Perforce him pluckt, vnable to withstand,
 Or helpe himselfe, and laying thwart her horse,
 In loathly wise like to a carion corse,
 She bore him fast away. Which when the knight,
 That her pursewed, saw with great remorse,
 He neare was touched in his noble spright,
 And gan encrease his speed, as she encreast her flight.

XLIV

Whom when as nigh approching she espyde,
 She threw away her burden angrily;
 For she list not the battell to abide,
 But made her selfe more light, away to fly:
 Yet her the hardy knight pursewd so nye,
 That almost in the backe he oft her strake:
 But still when him at hand she did espy,
 She turnd, and semblaunce of faire fight did make;
 But when he stayd, to flight againe she did her take.

XLV

By this the good Sir *Satyrane* gan wake
 Out of his dreame, that did him long entraunce,
 And seeing none in place, he gan to make
 Exceeding mone, and curst that cruell chaunce,
 Which reft from him so faire a cheuisaunce:
 At length he spide, whereas that wofull Squire,
 Whom he had reskewed from captiuaunce
 Of his strong foe, lay tumbled in the myre,
 Vnable to arise, or foot or hand to styre.

XLVI

To whom approching, well he mote perceiue
 In that foule plight a comely personage,
 And louely face, made fit for to deceiue
 Fraile Ladies hart with loues consuming rage,
 Now in the blossome of his freshest age:
 He reard him vp, and loosd his yron bands,
 And after gan inquire his parentage,
 And how he fell into that Gyaunts hands,
 And who that was, which chaced her along the lands.

XLVII

Then trembling yet through feare, the Squire bespake,
 That Geantesse *Argante* is behight,
 A daughter of the *Titans* which did make
 Warre against heauen, and heaped hils on hight,
 To scale the skyes, and put *Ioue* from his right:
 Her sire *Typhæus* was, who mad through merth,
 And drunke with bloud of men, slaine by his might,
 Through incest, her of his owne mother Earth
 Whilome begot, being but halfe twin of that berth.

XLVIII

For at that berth another Babe she bore,
 To weet the mighty *Ollyphant*, that wrought
 Great wreake to many errant knights of yore,
 And many hath to foule confusion brought.
 These twinnes, men say, (a thing far passing thought)
 Whiles in their mothers wombe enclosed they were,
 Ere they into the lightsome world were brought,
 In fleshly lust were mingled both yfere,
 And in that monstrous wise did to the world appere.

XLIX

So liu'd they euer after in like sin,
 Gainst natures law, and good behaiouere:
 But greatest shame was to that maiden twin,
 Who not content so fowly to deuoure
 Her natiue flesh, and staine her brothers bowre,
 Did wallow in all other fleshly myre,
 And suffred beasts her body to deflowre:
 So whot she burned in that lustfull fyre,
 Yet all that might not slake her sensuall desyre.

L

But ouer all the countrey she did raunge,
 To seeke young men, to quench her flaming thurst,
 And feed her fancy with delightfull chaunge:
 Whom so she fittest finds to serue her lust,
 Through her maine strength, in which she most doth trust,
 She with her brings into a secret Ile,
 Where in eternall bondage dye he must,
 Or be the vassall of her pleasures vile,
 And in all shamefull sort him selfe with her defile.

LI

Me seely wretch she so at vauntage caught,
 After she long in waite for me did lye,
 And meant vnto her prison to haue brought,
 Her lothsome pleasure there to satisfye;
 That thousand deathes me leuer were to dye,
 Then breake the vow, that to faire *Columbell*
 I plighted haue, and yet keepe stedfastly:
 As for my name, it mistreth not to tell;
 Call me the *Squyre of Dames* that me beseemeth well.

LII

But that bold knight, whom ye pursuing saw
 That Geauntesse, is not such, as she seemed,
 But a faire virgin, that in martiall law,
 And deedes of armes about all Dames is deemed,
 And about many knights is eke esteemed,
 For her great worth; She *Palladine* is hight:
 She you from death, you me from dread redeemed.
 Ne any may that Monster match in fight,
 But she, or such as she, that is so chaste a wight.

LIII

Her well beseemes that Quest (quoth *Satyrane*)
 But read, thou *Squyre of Dames*, what vow is this,
 Which thou vpon thy selfe hast lately ta'ne?
 That shall I you recount (quoth he) ywis,
 So be ye pleasd to pardon all amis.
 That gentle Lady, whom I loue and serue,
 After long suit and weary seruicis,
 Did aske me, how I could her loue deserue,
 And how she might be sure, that I would neuer swerue.

LIV

I glad by any meanes her grace to gaine,
 Bad her commaund my life to saue, or spill.
 Eftsoones she bad me, with incessaunt paine
 To wander through the world abroad at will,
 And euery where, where with my power or skill
 I might do seruice vnto gentle Dames,
 That I the same should faithfully fulfill,
 And at the twelue monethes end should bring their names
 And pledges; as the spoiles of my victorious games.

LV

So well I to faire Ladies seruice did,
 And found such fauour in their louing hartes,
 That ere the yeare his course had compassid,
 Three hundred pledges for my good desartes,
 And thrise three hundred thanks for my good partes
 I with me brought, and did to her present:
 Which when she saw, more bent to eke my smartes,
 Then to reward my trusty true intent,
 She gan for me devise a grieuous punishment.

LVI

To weet, that I my trauell should resume,
 And with like labour walke the world around,
 Ne euer to her presence should presume,
 Till I so many other Dames had found,
 The which, for all the suit I could propound,
 Would me refuse their pledges to afford,
 But did abide for euer chast and sound.
 Ah gentle Squire (quoth he) tell at one word,
 How many foundst thou such to put in thy record?

LVII

In deed Sir knight (said he) one word may tell
 All, that I euer found so wisely stayd;
 For onely three they were disposd so well,
 And yet three yeares I now abroad haue strayd,
 To find them out. Mote I (then laughing sayd
 The knight) inquire of thee, what were those three,
 The which thy proffred curtesie denayd?
 Or ill they seemed sure auizd to bee,
 Or brutishly brought vp, that neu'r did fashions see.

LVIII

The first which then refused me (said hee)
 Certes was but a common Courtisane,
 Yet flat refusd to haue a do with mee,
 Because I could not giue her many a Iane.
 (Thereat full hartely laughed *Satyrane*)
 The second was an holy Nunne to chose,
 Which would not let me be her Chappellane,
 Because she knew, she said, I would disclose
 Her counsell, if she should her trust in me repose.

LIX

The third a Damzell was of low degree,
 Whom I in countrey cottage found by chaunce;
 Full little weened I, that chastitee
 Had lodging in so meane a maintenaunce,
 Yet was she faire, and in her countenance
 Dwelt simple truth in seemely fashion.
 Long thus I woo'd her with dew obseruance,
 In hope vnto my pleasure to haue won;
 But was as farre at last, as when I first begon.

LX

Safe her, I neuer any woman found,
 That chastity did for it selfe embrace,
 But were for other causes firme and sound;
 Either for want of handsome time and place,
 Or else for feare of shame and fowle disgrace.
 Thus am I hopelesse euer to attaine
 My Ladies loue, in such a desperate case,
 But all my dayes am like to wast in vaine,
 Seeking to match the chaste with th'vnchaste Ladies traine.

LXI

Perdy, (said *Satyrane*) thou *Squire of Dames*,
 Great labour fondly hast thou hent in hand,
 To get small thanks, and therewith many blames,
 That may emongst *Alcides* labours stand.
 Thence backe returning to the former land,
 Where late he left the Beast, he ouercame,
 He found him not; for he had broke his band,
 And was return'd againe vnto his Dame,
 To tell what tydings of faire *Florimell* became.

Canto VIII

*The Witch creates a snowy Lady,
 like to Florimell,
 Who wrongd by Carle by Proteus sau'd,
 is sought by Paridell.*

I

SO oft as I this history record,
 My hart doth melt with meere compassion,
 To thinke, how causelesse of her owne accord

This gentle Damzell, whom I write vpon,
 Should plunged be in such affliction,
 Without all hope of comfort or reliefe,
 That sure I weene, the hardest hart of stone,
 Would hardly find to aggrauate her griefe;
 For misery craues rather mercie, then repriefe.

II

But that accursed Hag, her hostesse late,
 Had so enranckled her malitious hart,
 That she desyrd th'abridgement of her fate,
 Or long enlargement of her painefull smart.
 Now when the Beast, which by her wicked art
 Late forth she sent, she backe returning spyde,
 Tyde with her broken girdle, it a part
 Of her rich spoyles, whom he had earst destroyd,
 She weend, and wondrous gladnesse to her hart applyde.

III

And with it running hast'ly to her sonne,
 Thought with that sight him much to haue reliued;
 Who thereby deeming sure the thing as donne,
 His former griefe with furie fresh reuiued,
 Much more then earst, and would haue algates riued
 The hart out of his brest: for sith her ded
 He surely dempt, himselfe he thought depriued
 Quite of all hope, wherewith he long had fed
 His foolish maladie, and long time had misled.

IV

With thought whereof, exceeding mad he grew,
 And in his rage his mother would haue slaine,
 Had she not fled into a secret mew,
 Where she was wont her Sprights to entertaine
 The maisters of her art: there was she faine
 To call them all in order to her ayde,
 And them coniure vpon eternall paine,
 To counsell her so carefully dismayd,
 How she might heale her sonne, whose senses were decayd.

V

By their aduise, and her owne wicked wit,
 She there deuiz'd a wondrous worke to frame,

Whose like on earth was neuer framed yit,
 That euen Nature selfe enuide the same,
 And grudg'd to see the counterfet should shame
 The thing it selfe. In hand she boldly tooke
 To make another like the former Dame,
 Another *Florimell*, in shape and looke
 So liuely and so like, that many it mistooke.

VI

The substance, whereof she the bodie made,
 Was purest snow in massie mould congeald,
 Which she had gathered in a shadie glade
 Of the *Riphæan* hils, to her reueald
 By errant Sprights, but from all men conceald:
 The same she tempred with fine Mercury,
 And virgin wex, that neuer yet was seald,
 And mingled them with perfect vermily,
 That like a liuely sanguine it seem'd to the eye.

VII

In stead of eyes two burning lampes she set
 In siluer sockets, shyning like the skyes,
 And a quicke mouing Spirit did arret
 To stirre and roll them, like a womans eyes;
 In stead of yellow lockes she did deuise,
 With golden wyre to weaue her curled head;
 Yet golden wyre was not so yellow thrise
 As *Florimells* faire haire: and in the stead
 Of life, she put a Spright to rule the carkasse dead.

VIII

A wicked Spright yfraught with fawning guile,
 And faire resemblance aboue all the rest,
 Which with the Prince of Darknesse fell somewhile,
 From heauens blisse and euerlasting rest;
 Him needed not instruct, which way were best
 Himselfe to fashion likest *Florimell*,
 Ne how to speake, ne how to vse his gest,
 For he in counterfeisance did excell,
 And all the wyles of wemens wits knew passing well.

IX

Him shaped thus, she deckt in garments gay,
 Which *Florimell* had left behind her late,
 That who so then her saw, would surely say,
 It was her selfe, whom it did imitate,
 Or fairer then her selfe, if ought algate
 Might fairer be. And then she forth her brought
 Vnto her sonne, that lay in feeble state;
 Who seeing her gan streight vpstart, and thought
 She was the Lady selfe, whom he so long had sought.

X

Tho fast her clipping twixt his armes twaine,
 Extremely ioyed in so happie sight,
 And soone forgot his former sickly paine;
 But she, the more to seeme such as she hight,
 Coyly rebutted his embracement light;
 Yet still with gentle countenance retained,
 Enough to hold a foole in vaine delight:
 Him long she so with shadowes entertained,
 As her Creatresse had in charge to her ordained.

XI

Till on a day, as he disposed was
 To walke the woods with that his Idole faire,
 Her to disport, and idle time to pas,
 In th'open freshnesse of the gentle aire,
 A knight that way there chaunced to repaire;
 Yet knight he was not, but a boastfull swaine,
 That deedes of armes had euer in despaire,
 Proud *Braggadocchio*, that in vaunting vaine
 His glory did repose, and credit did maintaine.

XII

He seeing with that Chorle so faire a wight,
 Decked with many a costly ornament,
 Much merueiled thereat, as well he might,
 And thought that match a fowle disparagement:
 His bloudie speare eftsoones he boldly bent
 Against the silly clowne, who dead through feare,
 Fell streight to ground in great astonishment;
 Villein (said he) this Ladie is my deare,
 Dy, if thou it gainesay: I will away her beare.

XIII

The fearefull Chorle durst not gainesay, nor dooe,
 But trembling stood, and yielded him the pray;
 Who finding litle leasure her to wooe,
 On *Tromparts* steed her mounted without stay,
 And without reskew led her quite away.
 Proud man himselfe then *Braggadocchio* deemed,
 And next to none, after that happie day,
 Being possessed of that spoyle, which seemed
 The fairest wight on ground, and most of men esteemed.

XIV

But when he saw himselfe free from poursute,
 He gan make gentle purpose to his Dame,
 With termes of loue and lewdnesse dissolute;
 For he could well his glozing speaches frame
 To such vaine vses, that him best became:
 But she thereto would lend but light regard,
 As seeming sory, that she euer came
 Into his powre, that vsed her so hard,
 To reauue her honor, which she more then life prefard.

XV

Thus as they two of kindnesse treated long,
 There them by chaunce encountred on the way
 An armed knight, vpon a courser strong,
 Whose trampling feet vpon the hollow lay
 Seemed to thunder, and did nigh affray
 That Capons courage: yet he looked grim,
 And fain'd to cheare his Ladie in dismay;
 Who seem'd for feare to quake in euery lim,
 And her to saue from outrage, meekely prayed him.

XVI

Fiercely that stranger forward came, and nigh
 Approching, with bold words and bitter threat,
 Bad that same boaster, as he mote, on high
 To leaue to him that Lady for excheat,
 Or bide him battell without further treat.
 That challenge did too peremptory seeme,
 And fild his senses with abashment great;
 Yet seeing nigh him ieopardy extreme,
 He it dissembled well, and light seem'd to esteeme.

XVII

Saying, Thou foolish knight, that weenst with words
 To steale away, that I with blowes haue wonne,
 And brought throught points of many perilous swords:
 But if thee list to see thy Courser ronne,
 Or proue thy selfe, this sad encounter shonne,
 And seeke else without hazard of thy hed.
 At those proud words that other knight begonne
 To wexe exceeding wroth, and him ared
 To turne his steede about, or sure he should be ded.

XVIII

Sith then (said *Braggadocchio*) needes thou wilt
 Thy dayes abridge, through prooffe of puissance,
 Turne we our steedes, that both in equall tilt
 May meet againe, and each take happie chance.
 This said, they both a furlongs mountenance
 Retyrd their steeds, to ronne in euen race:
 But *Braggadocchio* with his bloudie lance
 Once hauing turnd, no more returnd his face,
 But left his loue to losse, and fled himselfe apace.

XIX

The knight him seeing fly, had no regard
 Him to poursew, but to the Ladie rode,
 And hauing her from *Trompart* lightly reard,
 Vpon his Courser set the louely lode,
 And with her fled away without abode.
 Well weened he, that fairest *Florimell*
 It was, with whom in company he yode,
 And so her selfe did alwaies to him tell;
 So made him thinke him selfe in heauen, that was in hell.

XX

But *Florimell* her selfe was farre away,
 Driuen to great distresse by Fortune straunge,
 And taught the carefull Mariner to play,
 Sith late mischaunce had her compeld to chaunge
 The land for sea, at randon there to raunge:
 Yet there that cruell Queene auengeresse,
 Not satisfide so farre her to estraunge
 From courtly blisse and wonted happinesse,
 Did heape on her new waues of weary wretchednesse.

XXI

For being fled into the fishers bote,
 For refuge from the Monsters crueltie,
 Long so she on the mightie maine did flote,
 And with the tide droue forward careleslie;
 For th'aire was milde, and cleared was the skie,
 And all his windes *Dan Aeolus* did keepe,
 From stirring vp their stormy enmitie,
 As pittying to see her waile and weepe;
 But all the while the fisher did securely sleepe.

XXII

At last when droncke with drowsinesse, he woke,
 And saw his drouer driue along the streame,
 He was dismayd, and thrise his breast he stroke,
 For maruell of that accident extreame;
 But when he saw that blazing beauties beame,
 Which with rare light his bote did beautifie,
 He marueild more, and thought he yet did dreame
 Not well awakt, or that some extasie
 Assotted had his sense, or dazed was his eie.

XXIII

But when her well auizing, he perceiued
 To be no vision, nor fantasticke sight,
 Great comfort of her presence he conceiued,
 And felt in his old courage new delight
 To gin awake, and stirre his frozen spright:
 Tho rudely askt her, how she thither came.
 Ah (said she) father, I note read aright,
 What hard misfortune brought me to the same;
 Yet am I glad that here I now in safety am.

XXIV

But thou good man, sith farre in sea we bee,
 And the great waters gin apace to swell,
 That now no more we can the maine-land see,
 Haue care, I pray, to guide the cock-bote well,
 Least worse on sea then vs on land befell.
 Thereat th'old man did nought but fondly grin,
 And said, his boat the way could wisely tell:
 But his deceptfull eyes did neuer lin,
 To looke on her faire face, and marke her snowy skin.

XXV

The sight whereof in his congealed flesh,
 Infixt such secret sting of greedy lust,
 That the drie withered stocke it gan refresh,
 And kindled heat, that soone in flame forth Brust:
 The driest wood is soonest burnt to dust.
 Rudely to her he lept, and his rough hand
 Where ill became him, rashly would haue thrust,
 But she with angry scorne him did withstond,
 And shamefully reprov'd for his rudenesse fond.

XXVI

But he, that neuer good nor maners knew,
 Her sharpe rebuke full litle did esteeme;
 Hard is to teach an old horse amble trew.
 The inward smoke, that did before but steeme,
 Broke into open fire and rage extreme,
 And now he strength gan adde vnto his will,
 Forcing to doe, that did him fowle misseeme:
 Beastly he threw her downe, ne car'd to spill
 Her garments gay with scales of fish, that all did fill.

XXVII

The silly virgin stroue him to withstand,
 All that she might, and him in vaine reuild:
 She struggled strongly both with foot and hand,
 To saue her honor from that villaine vild,
 And cride to heauen, from humane helpe exild.
 O ye braue knights, that boast this Ladies loue,
 Where be ye now, when she is nigh defild
 Of filthy wretch? well may shee you reprove
 Of falshood or of slouth, when most it may behoue.

XXVIII

But if that thou, Sir *Satyran*, didst weete,
 Or thou, Sir *Peridure*, her sorie state,
 How soone would yee assemble many a fleete,
 To fetch from sea, that ye at land lost late;
 Towres, Cities, Kingdomes ye would ruinate,
 In your auengement and dispiteous rage,
 Ne ought your burning fury mote abate;
 But if Sir *Calidore* could it presage,
 No liuing creature could his cruelty asswage.

XXIX

But sith that none of all her knights is nye,
 See how the heauens of voluntary grace,
 And soueraine fauour towards chastity,
 Doe succour send to her distressed cace:
 So much high God doth innocence embrace.
 It fortun'd, whilest thus she stifly stroue,
 And the wide sea importuned long space
 With shrilling shriekes, *Proteus* abroad did roue,
 Along the fomy waues driuing his finny droue.

XXX

Proteus is Shepheard of the seas of yore,
 And hath the charge of *Neptunes* mightie heard;
 An aged sire with head all frory hore,
 And sprinckled frost vpon his deawy beard:
 Who when those pittifull outcries he heard,
 Through all the seas so ruefully resound,
 His charet swift in haste he thither steard,
 Which with a teeme of scaly *Phocas* bound
 Was drawne vpon the waues, that fomed him around.

XXXI

And comming to that Fishers wandring bote,
 That went at will, withouten carde or sayle,
 He therein saw that yrkesome sight, which smote
 Deepe indignation and compassion frayle
 Into his hart attonce: streight did he hayle
 The greedy villein from his hoped pray,
 Of which he now did very litle fayle,
 And with his staffe, that driues his Heard astray,
 Him bet so sore, that life and sense did much dismay.

XXXII

The whiles the pitteous Ladie vp did ryse,
 Ruffled and fowly raid with filthy soyle,
 And blubbred face with teares of her faire eyes:
 Her heart nigh broken was with weary toyle,
 To saue her selfe from that outrageous spoyle,
 But when she looked vp, to weet, what wight
 Had her from so infamous fact assoyld,
 For shame, but more for feare of his grim sight,
 Downe in her lap she hid her face, and loudly shrigh.

XXXIII

Her selfe not saued yet from daunger dred
 She thought, but chaung'd from one to other feare;
 Like as a fearefull Partridge, that is fled
 From the sharpe Hauke, which her attached neare,
 And fals to ground, to seeke for succour theare,
 Whereas the hungry Spaniels she does spy,
 With greedy iawes her readie for to teare;
 In such distresse and sad perplexity
 Was *Florimell*, when *Proteus* she did see thereby.

XXXIV

But he endeoured with speeches milde
 Her to recomfort, and accourage bold,
 Bidding her feare no more her foeman vilde,
 Nor doubt himselfe; and who he was, her told.
 Yet all that could not from affright her hold,
 Ne to recomfort her at all preuayld;
 For her faint heart was with the frozen cold
 Benumbd so inly, that her wits nigh fayld,
 And all her senses with abashment quite were quayld.

XXXV

Her vp betwixt his rugged hands he reard,
 And with his frory lips full softly kist,
 Whiles the cold ysickles from his rough beard,
 Dropped adowne vpon her yuorie brest:
 Yet he himselfe so busily addrest,
 That her out of astonishment he wrought,
 And out of that same fishers filthy nest
 Remouing her, into his charet brought,
 And there with many gentle termes her faire besought.

XXXVI

But that old leachour, which with bold assault
 That beautie durst presume to violate,
 He cast to punish for his hainous fault;
 Then tooke he him yet trembling sith of late,
 And tyde behind his charet, to aggrate
 The virgin, whom he had abusde so sore:
 So drag'd him through the waues in scornefull state,
 And after cast him vp, vpon the shore;
 But *Florimell* with him vnto his bowre he bore.

XXXVII

His bowre is in the bottome of the maine,
 Vnder a mightie rocke, gainst which do raue
 The roaring billowes in their proud disdaine,
 That with the angry working of the waue,
 Therein is eaten out an hollow caue,
 That seemes rough Masons hand with engines keene
 Had long while laboured it to engraue:
 There was his wonne, ne liuing wight was seene,
 Saue one old *Nymph*, hight *Panope* to keepe it cleane.

XXXVIII

Thither he brought the sory *Florimell*,
 And entertained her the best he might
 And *Panope* her entertaind eke well,
 As an immortall mote a mortall wight,
 To winne her liking vnto his delight:
 With flattering words he sweetly wooed her,
 And offered faire gifts t'allure her sight,
 But she both offers and the offerer
 Despysde, and all the fawning of the flatterer.

XXXIX

Daily he tempted her with this or that,
 And neuer suffred her to be at rest:
 But euermore she him refused flat,
 And all his fained kindnesse did detest,
 So firmly she had sealed vp her brest.
 Sometimes he boasted, that a God he hight:
 But she a mortall creature loued best:
 Then he would make himselfe a mortall wight;
 But then she said she lou'd none, but a Faerie knight.

XL

Then like a Faerie knight himselfe he drest;
 For euery shape on him he could endew:
 Then like a king he was to her exprest,
 And offred kingdomes vnto her in vew,
 To be his Leman and his Ladie trew:
 But when all this he nothing saw preuaile,
 With harder meanes he cast her to subdew,
 And with sharpe threatates her often did assaile,
 So thinking for to make her stubborne courage quaile.

XLI

To dreadfull shapes he did himselfe transforme,
 Now like a Gyant, now like to a feend,
 Then like a Centaure, then like to a storme,
 Raging within the waues: thereby he weend
 Her will to win vnto his wished end.
 But when with feare, nor fauour, nor with all
 He else could doe, he saw himselfe esteemd,
 Downe in a Dongeon deepe he let her fall,
 And threatned there to make her his eternall thrall.

XLII

Eternall thraldome was to her more liefе,
 Then losse of chastitie, or chaunge of loue:
 Die had she rather in tormenting grieffe,
 Then any should of falsenesse her reprove,
 Or loosenesse, that she lightly did remoue.
 Most vertuous virgin, glory be thy meed,
 And crowne of heauenly praise with Saints aboue,
 Where most sweet hymmes of this thy famous deed
 Are still amongst them song, that far my rymes exceed.

XLIII

Fit song of Angels caroled to bee;
 But yet what so my feeble Muse can frame,
 Shall be t'aduance thy goodly chastitee,
 And to enroll thy memorable name,
 In th'heart of euery honourable Dame,
 That they thy vertuous deedes may imitate,
 And be partakers of thy endlesse fame.
 It yrkes me, leaue thee in this wofull state,
 To tell of *Satyrane*, where I him left of late.

XLIV

Who hauing ended with that *Squire of Dames*
 A long discourse of his aduentures vaine,
 The which himselfe, then Ladies more defames,
 And finding not th'*Hyena* to be slaine,
 With that same *Squire*, returned backe againe
 To his first way. And as they forward went,
 They spyde a knight faire pricking on the plaine,
 As if he were on some aduenture bent,
 And in his port appeared manly hardiment.

XLV

Sir *Satyrane* him towards did addresse,
 To weet, what wight he was, and what his quest:
 And comming nigh, eftsoones he gan to gesse
 Both by the burning hart, which on his brest
 He bare, and by the colours in his crest,
 That *Paridell* it was. Tho to him yode,
 And him saluting, as beseemed best,
 Gan first inquire of tydings farre abrode;
 And afterwarde, on what aduerture now he rode.

XLVI

Who thereto answering, said; The tydings bad,
 Which now in Faerie court all men do tell,
 Which turned hath great mirth, to mourning sad,
 Is the late ruine of proud *Marinell*,
 And suddein parture of faire *Florimell*,
 To find him forth: and after her are gone
 All the braue knights, that doen in armes excell,
 To sauegard her, ywandred all alone;
 Emongst the rest my lot (vnworthy) is to be one.

XLVII

Ah gentle knight (said then Sir *Satyrane*)
 Thy labour all is lost, I greatly dread,
 That hast a thanklesse seruice on thee ta'ne,
 And offrest sacrifice vnto the dead:
 For dead, I surely doubt, thou maist ahead
 Henceforth for euer *Florimell* to be,
 That all the noble knights of *Maydenhead*,
 Which her ador'd, may sore repent with me,
 And all faire Ladies may for euer sory be.

XLVIII

Which words when *Paridell* had heard, his hew
 Gan greatly chaunge, and seem'd dismayd to bee;
 Then said, Faire Sir, how may I weene it trew,
 That ye doe tell in such vncertaintee?
 Or speake ye of report, or did ye see
 Iust cause of dread, that makes ye doubt so sore?
 For perdie else how mote it euer bee,
 That euer hand should dare for to engore
 Her noble bloud? the heauens such crueltie abhore.

XLIX

These eyes did see, that they will euer rew
 T'haue seene, (quoth he) when as a monstrous beast
 The Palfrey, whereon she did trauell, slew,
 And of his bowels made his bloudie feast:
 Which speaking token sheweth at the least
 Her certaine losse, if not her sure decay:
 Besides, that more suspition encreast,
 I found her golden girdle cast astray,
 Distaynd with durt and bloud, as relique of the pray.

L

Aye me, (said *Paridell*) the signes be sad,
 And but God turne the same to good soothsay,
 That Ladies safetie is sore to be drad:
 Yet will I not forsake my forward way,
 Till triall doe more certaine truth bewray.
 Faire Sir (quoth he) well may it you succeed,
 Ne long shall *Satyrane* behind you stay,
 But to the rest, which in this Quest proceed
 My labour adde, and be partaker of their speed.

LI

Ye noble knights (said then the *Squire of Dames*)
 Well may ye speed in so praiseworthy paine:
 But sith the Sunne now ginnes to slake his beames,
 In deawy vapours of the westerne maine,
 And lose the teme out of his weary waine,
 Mote not mislike you also to abate
 Your zealous hast, till morrow next againe
 Both light of heauen, and strength of men relate:
 Which if ye please, to yonder castle turne your gate.

LII

That counsell pleased well; so all yfere
 Forth marched to a Castle them before,
 Where soone arriuing, they restrained were
 Of readie entrance, which ought euermore
 To errant knights be comun: wondrous sore
 Thereat displeasd they were, till that young Squire
 Gan them informe the cause, why that same dore
 Was shut to all, which lodging did desire:
 The which to let you weet, will further time require.

Canto IX

*Malbecco will no straunge knights host,
For peeuish gealosie:
Paridell giusts with Britomart:
Both shew their auncestrie.*

I

REdoubted knights, and honorable Dames,
To whom I leuell all my labours end,
Right sore I feare, least with vnworthy blames
This odious argument my rimes should shend,
Or ought your goodly patience offend,
Whiles of a wanton Lady I do write,
Which with her loose incontinence doth blend
The shyning glory of your soueraigne light,
And knighthood fowle defaced by a faithlesse knight.

II

But neuer let th'ensample of the bad
Offend the good: for good by paragone
Of euill, may more notably be rad,
As white seemes fairer, macht with blacke attone;
Ne all are shamed by the fault of one:
For lo in heauen, whereas all goodnesse is,
Emongst the Angels, a whole legione
Of wicked Sprights did fall from happy blis;
What wonder then, if one of women all did mis?

III

Then listen Lordings, if ye list to weet
The cause, why *Satyrane* and *Paridell*
Mote not be entertaynd, as seemed meet,
Into that Castle (as that Squire does tell.)
Therein a cancred crabbed Carle does dwell,
That has no skill of Court nor courtesie,
Ne cares, what men say of him ill or well;
For all his dayes he drownes in priuitie,
Yet has full large to liue, and spend at libertie.

IV

But all his mind is set on mucky pelfe,
To hoord vp heapes of euill gotten masse,
For which he others wrongs, and wreckes himselfe;

Yet he is lincked to a louely lasse,
 Whose beauty doth her bounty far surpasses,
 The which to him both far vnequall yeares,
 And also far vnlike conditions has;
 For she does ioy to play emongst her peares,
 And to be free from hard restraint and gealous feares.

V

But he is old, and withered like hay,
 Vnfit faire Ladies seruice to supply;
 The priuie guilt whereof makes him alway
 Suspect her truth, and keepe continuall spy
 Vpon her with his other blinkt eye;
 Ne suffreth he resort of liuing wight
 Approach to her, ne keepe her company,
 But in close bowre her mewes from all mens sight,
 Depriu'd of kindly ioy and naturall delight.

VI

Malbecco he, and *Hellenore* she hight,
 Vnfitly yokt together in one teeme,
 That is the cause, why neuer any knight
 Is suffred here to enter, but he seeme
 Such, as no doubt of him he neede misdeeme.
 Thereat Sir *Satyrane* gan smile, and say;
 Extremely mad the man I surely deeme,
 That weenes with watch and hard restraint to stay
 A womans will, which is disposd to go astray.

VII

In vaine he feares that, which he cannot shonne:
 For who wotes not, that womans subtiltyes
 Can guilen *Argus*, when she list misdonne?
 It is not yron bandes, nor hundred eyes,
 Nor brasen walls, nor many wakefull spyes,
 That can withhold her wilfull wandring feet;
 But fast good will with gentle curtesyes,
 And timely seruice to her pleasures meet
 May her perhaps containe, that else would algates fleet.

VIII

Then is he not more mad (said *Paridell*)
 That hath himselfe vnto such seruice sold,

In dolefull thraldome all his dayes to dwell?
 For sure a foole I do him firmly hold,
 That loues his fetters, though they were of gold.
 But why do we deuise of others ill,
 Whiles thus we suffer this same dotard old,
 To keepe vs out, in scorne of his owne will,
 And rather do not ransack all, and him selfe kill?

IX

Nay let vs first (said *Satyrane*) entreat
 The man by gentle meanes, to let vs in,
 And afterwarde affray with cruell threat,
 Ere that we to efforce it do begin:
 Then if all fayle, we will by force it win,
 And eke reward the wretch for his mesprise,
 As may be worthy of his haynous sin.
 That counsell pleasd: then *Paridell* did rise,
 And to the Castle gate approcht in quiet wise.

X

Whereat soft knocking, entrance he desyrd.
 The good man selfe, which then the Porter playd,
 Him answered, that all were now retyrd
 Vnto their rest, and all the keyes conuayd
 Vnto their maister, who in bed was layd,
 That none him durst awake out of his dreame;
 And therefore them of patience gently prayd.
 Then *Paridell* began to chaunge his theme,
 And threatned him with force and punishment extreme.

XI

But all in vaine; for nought mote him relent,
 And now so long before the wicket fast
 They wayted, that the night was forward spent,
 And the faire welkin fowly ouercast,
 Gan blownen vp a bitter stormy blast,
 With shoure and hayle so horrible and dred,
 That this faire many were compeld at last,
 To fly for succour to a little shed,
 The which beside the gate for swine was ordered.

XII

It fortun'd, soone after they were gone,
 Another knight, whom the tempest thither brought,
 Came to that Castle, and with earnest mone,
 Like as the rest, late entrance deare besought;
 But like so as the rest he prayd for nought,
 For flatly he of entrance was refusd,
 Sorely thereat he was displeas'd, and thought
 How to auenge himselfe so sore abusd,
 And euermore the Carle of curtesie accusd.

XIII

But to auoyde th'intollerable stowre,
 He was compeld to seeke some refuge neare,
 And to that shed, to shrowd him from the showre,
 He came, which full of guests he found whyleare,
 So as he was not let to enter there:
 Whereat he gan to wex exceeding wroth,
 And swore, that he would lodge with them yfere,
 Or them dislodge, all were they lief or loth;
 And so defide them each, and so defide them both.

XIV

Both were full loth to leaue that needfull tent,
 And both full loth in darkenesse to debate;
 Yet both full lief him lodging to haue lent,
 And both full lief his boasting to abate;
 But chiefly *Paridell* his hart did grate,
 To heare him threaten so despightfully,
 As if he did a dogge to kenell rate,
 That durst not barke; and rather had he dy,
 Then when he was defide, in coward corner ly.

XV

Tho hastily remounting to his steed,
 He forth issew'd; like as a boistrous wind,
 Which in th'earth's hollow caues hath long bin hid,
 And shut vp fast within her prisons blind,
 Makes the huge element against her kind
 To moue, and tremble as it were agast,
 Vntill that it an issew forth may find;
 Then forth it breakes, and with his furious blast
 Confounds both land and seas, and skyes doth ouercast.

XVI

Their steel-hed speares they strongly coucht, and met
 Together with impetuous rage and forse,
 That with the terrour of their fierce affret,
 They rudely droue to ground both man and horse,
 That each awhile lay like a sencelesse corse.
 But *Paridell* sore brused with the blow,
 Could not arise, the counterchaunge to scorse,
 Till that young Squire him reared from below;
 Then drew he his bright sword, and gan about him throw.

XVII

But *Satyrane* forth stepping, did them stay
 And with faire treatie pacifide their ire,
 Then when they were accorded from the fray,
 Against that Castles Lord they gan conspire,
 To heape on him dew vengeance for his hire.
 They bene agreed, and to the gates they goe
 To burne the same with vnquenchable fire,
 And that vncurteous Carle their commune foe
 To do fowle death to dye, or wrap in grieuous woe.

XVIII

Malbecco seeing them resolu'd in deed
 To flame the gates, and hearing them to call
 For fire in earnest, ran with fearefull speed,
 And to them calling from the castle wall,
 Besought them humbly, him to beare with all,
 As ignoraunt of seruants bad abuse,
 And slacke attendaunce vnto straungers call.
 The knights were willing all things to excuse,
 Though nought beleu'd, and entraunce late did not refuse.

XIX

They bene ybrought into a comely bowre,
 And seru'd of all things that mote needfull bee;
 Yet secretly their hoste did on them lowre,
 And welcomde more for feare, then charitee;
 But they dissembled, what they did not see,
 And welcomed themselues. Each gan vndight
 Their garments wet, and weary armour free,
 To dry them selues by *Vulcanes* flaming light,
 And eke their lately brused parts to bring in plight.

XX

And eke that straunger knight emongst the rest,
 Was for like need enforst to disaray:
 Tho whenas vailed was her loftie crest,
 Her golden locks, that were in tramels gay
 Vpbounden, did them selues adowne display,
 And raught vnto her heeles; like sunny beames,
 That in a cloud their light did long time stay,
 Their vapour vaded, shew their golden gleames,
 And through the persant aire shoote forth their azure streames.

XXI

She also dofte her heauy haberieon,
 Which the faire feature of her limbs did hyde,
 And her well plighted frock, which she did won
 To tucke about her short, when she did ryde,
 She low let fall, that flowd from her lanck syde
 Downe to her foot, with carelesse modestee.
 Then of them all she plainly was espyde,
 To be a woman wight, vnwist to bee,
 The fairest woman wight, that euer eye did see.

XXII

Like as *Minerua*, being late returnd
 From slaughter of the Giaunts conquered;
 Where proud *Encelade*, whose wide nosethrils burnd
 With breathed flames, like to a furnace red,
 Transfixed with the speare, downe tumbled ded
 From top of *Hemus*, by him heaped hye;
 Hath loosd her helmet from her lofty hed,
 And her *Gorgonian* shield gins to vntye
 From her left arme, to rest in glorious victorye.

XXIII

Which whenas they beheld, they smitten were
 With great amazement of so wondrous sight,
 And each on other, and they all on her
 Stood gazing, as if suddein great affright
 Had them surprised. At last auizing right,
 Her goodly personage and glorious hew,
 Which they so much mistooke, they tooke delight
 In their first errour, and yet still anew
 With wonder of her beauty fed their hungry vew.

XXIV

Yet note their hungry vew be satisfide,
 But seeing still the more desir'd to see,
 And euer firmly fixed did abide
 In contemplation of diuinitie:
 But most they meruaild at her cheualree,
 And noble prowesse, which they had approued,
 That much they faynd to know, who she mote bee;
 Yet none of all them her thereof amoued,
 Yet euery one her likte, and euery one her loued.

XXV

And *Paridell* though partly discontent
 With his late fall, and fowle indignity,
 Yet was soone wonne his malice to relent,
 Through gracious regard of her faire eye,
 And knightly worth, which he too late did try,
 Yet tried did adore. Supper was dight;
 Then they *Malbecco* prayd of curtesy,
 That of his Lady they might haue the sight,
 And company at meat, to do them more delight.

XXVI

But he to shift their curious request,
 Gan causen, why she could not come in place;
 Her crased health, her late recourse to rest,
 And humid euening ill for sicke folkes cace:
 But none of those excuses could take place;
 Ne would they eate, till she in presence came.
 She came in presence with right comely grace,
 And fairely them saluted, as became,
 And shewd her selfe in all a gentle curteous Dame.

XXVII

They sate to meat, and *Satyrane* his chaunce
 Was her before, and *Paridell* besyde;
 But he him selfe sate looking still askaunce,
 Gainst *Britomart*, and euer closely eyde
 Sir *Satyrane*, that glaunces might not glyde:
 But his blind eye, that syded *Paridell*,
 All his demeasnure from his sight did hyde:
 On her faire face so did he feede his fill,
 And sent close messages of loue to her at will.

XXVIII

And euer and anone, when none was ware,
 With speaking lookes, that close embassage bore,
 He rou'd at her, and told his secret care:
 For all that art he learned had of yore.
 Ne was she ignoraunt of that lewd lore,
 But in his eye his meaning wisely red,
 And with the like him answerd euermore:
 She sent at him one firie dart, whose hed
 Empoisoned was with priuy lust, and gealous dred.

XXIX

He from that deadly throw made no defence,
 But to the wound his weake hart opened wyde;
 The wicked engine through false influence,
 Past through his eyes, and secretly did glyde
 Into his hart, which it did sorely gryde.
 But nothing new to him was that same paine,
 Ne paine at all; for he so oft had tryde
 The powre thereof, and lou'd so oft in vaine,
 That thing of course he counted, loue to entertaine.

XXX

Thenceforth to her he sought to intimate
 His inward grieffe, by meanes to him well knowne,
 Now *Bacchus* fruit out of the siluer plate
 He on the table dasht, as ouerthrowne,
 Or of the fruitfull liquor ouerflowne,
 And by the dauncing bubbles did diuine,
 Or therein write to let his loue be showne;
 Which well she red out of the learned line,
 A sacrament prophane in mistery of wine.

XXXI

And when so of his hand the pledge she raught,
 The guilty cup she fained to mistake,
 And in her lap did shed her idle draught,
 Shewing desire her inward flame to slake:
 By such close signes they secret way did make
 Vnto their wils, and one eyes watch escape;
 Two eyes him needeth, for to watch and wake,
 Who louers will deceiue. Thus was the ape,
 By their faire handling, put into *Malbeccoes* cape.

XXXII

Now when of meats and drinks they had their fill,
 Purpose was moued by that gentle Dame,
 Vnto those knights aduenturous, to tell
 Of deeds of armes, which vnto them became,
 And euery one his kindred, and his name.
 Then *Paridell*, in whom a kindly pryde
 Of gracious speach, and skill his words to frame
 Abounded, being glad of so fit tyde
 Him to commend to her, thus spake, of all well eyde.

XXXIII

Troy, that art now nought, but an idle name,
 And in thine ashes buried low dost lie,
 Though whilome far much greater then thy fame,
 Before that angry Gods, and cruell skye
 Vpon thee heapt a direfull destinie,
 What boots it boast thy glorious descent,
 And fetch from heauen thy great Genealogie,
 Sith all thy worthy prayses being blent,
 Their of-spring hath embaste, and later glory shent.

XXXIV

Most famous Worthy of the world, by whome
 That warre was kindled, which did *Troy* inflame,
 And stately towres of *Ilion* whilome
 Brought vnto balefull ruine, was by name
 Sir *Paris* far renowmd through noble fame,
 Who through great prowesse and bold hardinesse,
 From *Lacedaemon* fetcht the fairest Dame,
 That euer *Greece* did boast, or knight possesse,
 Whom *Venus* to him gaue for meed of worthinesse.

XXXV

Faire *Helene*, flowre of beautie excellent,
 And girlond of the mighty Conquerours,
 That madest many Ladies deare lament
 The heauie losse of their braue Paramours,
 Which they far off beheld from *Troian* toures,
 And saw the fieldes of faire *Scamander* strowne
 With carcasses of noble warrioures,
 Whose fruitlesse liues were vnder furrow sowne,
 And *Xanthus* sandy bankes with bloud all ouerflowne.

XXXVI

From him my linage I deriue aright,
 Who long before the ten yeares siege of *Troy*,
 Whiles yet on *Ida* he a shepheard hight,
 On faire *Oenone* got a louely boy,
 Whom for remembraunce of her passed ioy,
 She of his Father *Parius* did name;
 Who, after *Greekes* did *Priams* realme destroy,
 Gathred the *Troian* reliques sau'd from flame,
 And with them sayling thence, to th'Isle of *Paros* came.

XXXVII

That was by him cald *Paros*, which before
 Hight *Nausa*, there he many yeares did raine,
 And built *Nausicle* by the *Pontick* shore,
 The which he dying left next in remaine
 To *Paridas* his sonne.
 From whom I *Paridell* by kin descend;
 But for faire Ladies loue, and glories gaine,
 My natiue soile haue left, my dayes to spend
 In sewing deeds of armes, my liues and labours end.

XXXVIII

Whenas the noble *Britomart* heard tell
 Of *Troian* warres, and *Priams* Citie sackt,
 The ruefull story of Sir *Paridell*,
 She was empassiond at that piteous act,
 With zelous enuy of *Greekes* cruell fact,
 Against that nation, from whose race of old
 She heard, that she was lineally extract:
 For noble *Britons* sprong from *Troians* bold,
 And *Troynouant* was built of old *Troyes* ashes cold.

XXXIX

Then sighing soft awhile, at last she thus:
 O lamentable fall of famous towne,
 Which raignd so many yeares victorious,
 And of all *Asie* bore the soueraigne crowne,
 In one sad night consumd, and throwen downe:
 What stony hart, that heares thy haplesse fate,
 Is not empierst with deepe compassiowne,
 And makes ensample of mans wretched state,
 That floures so fresh at morne, and fades at euening late?

XL

Behold, Sir, how your pitifull complaint
 Hath found another partner of your payne:
 For nothing may impresse so deare constraint,
 As countries cause, and commune foes disdayne.
 But if it should not grieue you, backe agayne
 To turne your course, I would to heare desyre,
 What to *Aeneas* fell; sith that men sayne
 He was not in the Cities wofull fyre
 Consum'd, but did him selfe to safetie retyre.

XLI

Anchyses sonne begot of *Venus* faire,
 (Said he,) out of the flames for safegard fled,
 And with a remnant did to sea repaire,
 Where he through fatall error long was led
 Full many yeares, and weetlesse wandered
 From shore to shore, emongst the Lybicke sands,
 Ere rest he found. Much there he suffered,
 And many perils past in forreine lands,
 To saue his people sad from victours vengefull hands.

XLII

At last in *Latium* he did arriue,
 Where he with cruell warre was entertaind
 Of th'inland folke, which sought him backe to driue,
 Till he with old *Latinus* was constraind,
 To contract wedlock: (so the fates ordaind.)
 Wedlock contract in bloud, and eke in blood
 Accomplished, that many deare complaind:
 The riual slaine, the victour through the flood
 Escaped hardly, hardly praisd his wedlock good.

XLIII

Yet after all, he victour did suruiue,
 And with *Latinus* did the kingdome part.
 But after, when both nations gan to striue,
 Into their names the title to conuart,
 His sonne *Iu"lus* did from thence depart,
 With all the warlike youth of *Troians* bloud,
 And in long *Alba* plast his throne apart,
 Where faire it florished, and long time stoud,
 Till *Romulus* renewing it, to *Rome* remoud.

XLIV

There there (said *Britomart*) a fresh appeared
 The glory of the later world to spring,
 And *Troy* againe out of her dust was reard,
 To sit in second seat of soueraigne king,
 Of all the world vnder her gouerning.
 But a third kingdome yet is to arise,
 Out of the *Troians* scattered of-spring,
 That in all glory and great enterprise,
 Both first and second *Troy* shall dare to equalise.

XLV

It *Troynouant* is hight, that with the waues
 Of wealthy *Thamis* washed is along,
 Vpon whose stubborne neck, whereat he raues
 With roring rage, and sore him selfe does throng,
 That all men feare to tempt his billowes strong,
 She fastned hath her foot, which standes so hy,
 That it a wonder of the world is song
 In forreine landes, and all which passen by,
 Beholding it from far, do thinke it threates the skye.

XLVI

The *Troian Brute* did first that Citie found,
 And Hygate made the meare thereof by West,
 And *Ouert* gate by North: that is the bound
 Toward the land; two riuers bound the rest.
 So huge a scope at first him seemed best,
 To be the compasse of his kingdomes seat:
 So huge a mind could not in lesser rest,
 Ne in small meares containe his glory great,
 That *Albion* had conquered first by warlike feat.

XLVII

Ah fairest Lady knight, (said *Paridell*)
 Pardon I pray my heedlesse ouersight,
 Who had forgot, that whilome I heard tell
 From aged *Mnemon*; for my wits bene light.
 Indeed he said (if I remember right,
 That of the antique *Troian* stocke, there grew
 Another plant, that raught to wondrous hight,
 And far abroad his mighty branches threw,
 Into the vtmost Angle of the world he knew.

XLVIII

For that same *Brute*, whom much he did aduance
 In all his speach, was *Syluius* his sonne,
 Whom hauing slaine, through luckles arrowes glaunce
 He fled for feare of that he had misdonne,
 Or else for shame, so fowle reproch to shonne,
 And with him led to sea an youthly trayne,
 Where wearie wandring they long time did wonne,
 And many fortunes prou'd in th'*Ocean* mayne,
 And great aduentures found, that now were long to sayne.

XLIX

At last by fatall course they driuen were
 Into an Island spacious and brode,
 The furthest North, that did to them appeare:
 Which after rest they seeking far abode,
 Found it the fittest soyle for their abode,
 Fruitfull of all things fit for liuing foode,
 But wholly wast, and void of peoples trode,
 Saue an huge nation of the Geaunts broode,
 That fed on liuing flesh, and druncke mens vitall blood.

L

Whom he through wearie wars and labours long,
 Subdewd with losse of many *Britons* bold:
 In which the great *Goemagot* of strong
Corineus, and *Coulin* of *Debon* old
 Were ouerthrowne, and layd on th'earth full cold,
 Which quaked vnder their so hideous masse,
 A famous history to be enrold
 In euerlasting moniments of brasse,
 That all the antique Worthies merits far did passe.

LI

His worke great *Troynouant*, his worke is eke
 Faire *Lincolne*, both renowned far away,
 That who from East to West will endlong seeke,
 Cannot two fairer Cities find this day,
 Except *Cleopolis*: so heard I say
 Old *Mnemon*. Therefore Sir, I greet you well
 Your countrey kin, and you entirely pray
 Of pardon for the strife, which late befell
 Betwixt vs both vnknowne. So ended *Paridell*.

LII

But all the while, that he these speaches spent,
 Vpon his lips hong faire Dame *Hellenore*,
 With vigilant regard, and dew attent,
 Fashioning worlds of fancies euermore
 In her fraile wit, that now her quite forlore:
 The whiles vnwares away her wondring eye,
 And greedy eares her weake hart from her bore:
 Which he perceiuing, euer priuily
 In speaking, many false belgardes at her let fly.

LIII

So long these knights discoursed diuersly,
 Of straunge affaires, and noble hardiment,
 Which they had past with mickle ieopardy,
 That now the humid night was farforth spent,
 And heauenly lampes were halfendeale ybrent:
 Which th'old man seeing well, who too long thought
 Euery discourse and euery argument,
 Which by the houres he measured, besought
 Them go to rest. So all vnto their bowres were brought.

Canto X

*Paridell rapeth Hellenore:
 Malbecco her pursewes:
 Findes emongst Satyres, whence with him
 To turne she doth refuse.*

I

THE morow next, so soone as *Phæbus* Lamp
 Bewrayed had the world with early light,
 And fresh *Aurora* had the shady damp
 Out of the goodly heauen amoued quight,
 Faire *Britomart* and that same *Faerie* knight
 Vprose, forth on their iourney for to wend:
 But *Paridell* complaynd, that his late fight
 With *Britomart*, so sore did him offend,
 That ryde he could not, till his hurts he did amend.

II

So forth they far'd, but he behind them stayd,
 Maulgre his host, who grudged grieuously,
 To house a guest, that would be needes obayd,

And of his owne him left not liberty:
 Might wanting measure moueth surquedry.
 Two things he feared, but the third was death;
 That fierce youngmans vnruely maistry;
 His money, which he lou'd as liuing breath;
 And his faire wife, whom honest long he kept vneath.

III

But patience perforce he must abie,
 What fortune and his fate on him will lay,
 Fond is the feare, that findes no remedie;
 Yet warily he watcheth euery way,
 By which he feareth euill happen may:
 So th'euell thinkes by watching to preuent;
 Ne doth he suffer her, nor night, nor day,
 Out of his sight her selfe once to absent.
 So doth he punish her and eke himselfe torment.

IV

But *Paridell* kept better watch, then hee,
 A fit occasion for his turne to find:
 False loue, why do men say, thou canst not see,
 And in their foolish fancie feigne thee blind,
 That with thy charmes the sharpest sight doest bind,
 And to thy will abuse? Thou walkest free,
 And seest euery secret of the mind;
 Thou seest all, yet none at all sees thee;
 All that is by the working of thy Deitee.

V

So perfect in that art was *Paridell*,
 That he *Melbeccoes* halfen eye did wyle,
 His halfen eye he wiled wondrous well,
 And *Hellenors* both eyes did eke beguyle,
 Both eyes and hart attonce, during the whyle
 That he there soiourned his wounds to heale;
 That *Cupid* selfe it seeing, close did smyle,
 To weet how he her loue away did steale,
 And bad, that none their ioyous treason should reueale.

VI

The learned louer lost no time nor tyde,
 That least auantage mote to him afford,

Yet bore so faire a saile, that none espyde
 His secret drift, till he her layd aboard.
 When so in open place, and commune bord,
 He fortun'd her to meet, with commune speach
 Her courted her, yet bayted euery word,
 That his vngentle hoste n'ote him appeach
 Of vile vngentlenesse, or hospitages breach.

VII

But when apart (if euer her apart)
 He found, then his false engins fast he plyde,
 And all the sleights vnbosomd in his hart;
 He sigh'd, he sobd, he swownd, he perdy dyde,
 And cast himselfe on ground her fast besyde:
 Tho when againe he him bethought to liue,
 He wept, and wayld, and false laments belyde,
 Saying, but if she Mercie would him giue
 That he mote algates dye, yet did his death forgiue.

VIII

And otherwhiles with amorous delights,
 And pleasing toyes he would her entertaine,
 Now singing sweetly, to surprise her sprights,
 Now making layes of loue and louers paine,
 Bransles, Ballads, virelayes, and verses vaine;
 Oft purposes, oft riddles he deuysd,
 And thousands like, which flowed in his braine,
 With which he fed her fancie, and entysd
 To take to his new loue, and leaue her old despysd.

IX

And euery where he might, and euery while
 He did her seruice dewtifull, and sewed
 At hand with humble pride, and pleasing guile,
 So closely yet, that none but she it vewed,
 Who well perceiued all, and all indewed.
 Thus finely did he his false nets dispred,
 With which he many weake harts had subdewed
 Of yore, and many had ylike misled:
 What wonder then, if she were likewise carried?

X

No fort so fensible, no wals so strong,
 But that continuall battery will riue,
 Or daily siege through dispuruayance long,
 And lacke of reskewes will to parley driue;
 And Peece, that vnto parley eare will giue,
 Will shortly yeeld it selfe, and will be made
 The vassall of the victors will byliue:
 That stratageme had oftentimes assayd
 This crafty Paramoure, and now it plaine displayd.

XI

For through his traines he her intrapped hath,
 That she her loue and hart hath wholly sold
 To him, without regard of gaine, or scath,
 Or care of credite, or of husband old,
 Whom she hath vow'd to dub a faire Cucquold.
 Nought wants but time and place, which shortly shee
 Deuized hath, and to her louer told.
 It pleased well. So well they both agree;
 So readie rype to ill, ill wemens counsels bee.

XII

Darke was the Euening, fit for louers stealth,
 When chaunst *Melbecco* busie be elsewhere,
 She to his closet went, where all his wealth
 Lay hid: thereof she countlesse summes did reare,
 The which she meant away with her to beare;
 The rest she fyr'd for sport, or for despight;
 As *Hellene*, when she saw aloft appeare
 The *Troiane* flames, and reach to heauens hight
 Did clap her hands, and ioyed at that dolefull sight.

XIII

This second *Hellene*, faire Dame *Hellenore*,
 The whiles her husband ranne with sory haste,
 To quench the flames which she had tyn'd before,
 Laught at his foolish labour spent in waste;
 And ranne into her louers armes right fast;
 Where streight embraced, she to him did cry,
 And call aloud for helpe, ere helpe were past;
 For loe that Guest would beare her forcibly,
 And meant to rauish her, that rather had to dy.

XIV

The wretched man hearing her call for ayd,
 And readie seeing him with her to fly,
 In his disquiet mind was much dismayd:
 But when againe he backward cast his eye,
 And saw the wicked fire so furiously
 Consume his hart, and scorch his Idoles face,
 He was therewith distressed diuersly,
 Ne wist he how to turne, nor to what place;
 Was neuer wretched man in such a wofull cace.

XV

Ay when to him she cryde, to her he turnd,
 And left the fire; loue money ouercame:
 But when he marked, how his money burnd,
 He left his wife; money did loue disclame:
 Both was he loth to loose his loued Dame,
 And loth to leaue his liefest pelfe behind,
 Yet sith he n'ote saue both, he sau'd that same,
 Which was the dearest to his donghill mind,
 The God of his desire, the ioy of misers blind.

XVI

Thus whilst all things in troublous vprore were,
 And all men busie to suppress the flame,
 The louing couple need no reskew feare,
 But leasure had, and libertie to frame
 Their purpost flight, free from all mens reclame;
 And Night, the patronesse of loue-stealth faire,
 Gaued them safe conduct, till to end they came:
 So bene they gone yfeare, a wanton paire
 Of louers loosely knit, where list them to repaire.

XVII

Soone as the cruell flames yslaked were,
Malbecco seeing, how his losse did lye,
 Out of the flames, which he had quencht whylere
 Into huge waues of griefe and gealosye
 Full deepe emplonged was, and drowned nye,
 Twixt inward doole and felonous despight;
 He rau'd, he wept, he stamp, he lowd did cry,
 And all the passions, that in man may light,
 Did him attonce oppresse, and vex his caytiue spright.

XVIII

Long thus he chawd the cud of inward grieffe,
 And did consume his gall with anguish sore,
 Still when he mused on his late mischief,
 Then still the smart thereof increased more,
 And seem'd more grievous, then it was before:
 At last when sorrow he saw booted nought,
 Ne grieffe might not his loue to him restore,
 He gan deuise, how her he reskew mought,
 Ten thousand wayes he cast in his confused thought.

XIX

At last resolving, like a pilgrim pore,
 To search her forth, where so she might be fond,
 And bearing with him treasure in close store,
 The rest he leaues in ground: So takes in hond
 To seeke her endlong, both by sea and lond.
 Long he her sought, he sought her farre and nere,
 And euery where that he mote vnderstond,
 Of knights and ladies any meetings were,
 And of eachone he met, he tydings did inquere.

XX

But all in vaine, his woman was too wise,
 Euer to come into his clouch againe,
 And he too simple euer to surprise
 The iolly *Paridell*, for all his paine.
 One day, as he forpassed by the plaine
 With weary pace, he farre away espide
 A couple, seeming well to be his twaine,
 Which houed close vnder a forrest side,
 As if they lay in wait, or else themselues did hide.

XXI

Well weened he, that those the same mote bee,
 And as he better did their shape auize,
 Him seemed more their manner did agree;
 For th'one was armed all in warlike wize,
 Whom, to be *Paridell* he did deuize;
 And th'other all yclad in garments light,
 Discolour'd like to womanish disguise,
 He did resemble to his Ladie bright;
 And euer his faint hart much earned at the sight.

XXII

And euer faine he towards them would goe,
 But yet durst not for dread approchen nie,
 But stood aloofe, vnweeting what to doe;
 Till that prickt forth with loues extremitie,
 That is the father of foule gealosity,
 He closely nearer crept, the truth to weet:
 But, as he nigher drew, he easily
 Might scerne, that it was not his sweetest sweet,
 Ne yet her Belamour, the partner of his sheet.

XXIII

But it was scornefull *Braggadocchio*,
 That with his seruant *Trompart* houerd there,
 Sith late he fled from his too earnest foe:
 Whom such when as *Malbecco* spyed clere,
 He turned backe, and would haue fled arere;
 Till *Trompart* ronning hastily, him did stay,
 And bad before his soueraine Lord appere:
 That was him loth, yet durst he not gainesay,
 And comming him before, low louted on the lay.

XXIV

The Boaster at him sternely bent his browe,
 As if he could haue kild him with his looke,
 That to the ground him meekely made to bowe,
 And awfull terror deepe into him strooke,
 That euery member of his bodie quooke.
 Said he, thou man of nought, what doest thou here,
 Vnfitly furnisht with thy bag and booke,
 Where I expected one with shield and spere,
 To proue some deedes of armes vpon an equall pere.

XXV

The wretched man at his imperious speach,
 Was all abasht, and low prostrating, said;
 Good Sir, let not my rudenesse be no breach
 Vnto your patience, ne be ill ypaid;
 For I vnwares this way by fortune straid,
 A silly Pilgrim driuen to distresse,
 That seeke a Lady, There he suddein staid,
 And did the rest with grieuous sighes suppressse,
 While teares stood in his eies, few drops of bitternesse.

XXVI

What Ladie, man? (said *Trompart*) take good hart,
 And tell thy griefe, if any hidden lye;
 Was neuer better time to shew thy smart,
 Then now, that noble succour is thee by,
 That is the whole worlds commune remedy.
 That chearefull word his weake hart much did cheare,
 And with vaine hope his spirits faint supply,
 That bold he said; O most redoubted Pere,
 Vouchsafe with mild regard a wretches cace to heare.

XXVII

Then sighing sore, It is not long (said hee)
 Sith I enioyd the gentlest Dame aliue;
 Of whom a knight, no knight at all perdee,
 But shame of all, that doe for honor striue,
 By treacherous deceipt did me depriue;
 Through open outrage he her bore away,
 And with fowle force vnto his will did driue,
 Which all good knights, that armes do beare this day,
 Are bound for to reuenge, and punish if they may.

XXVIII

And you most noble Lord, that can and dare
 Redresse the wrong of miserable wight,
 Cannot employ your most victorious speare
 In better quarrell, then defence of right,
 And for a Ladie gainst a faithlesse knight;
 So shall your glory be aduaunced much,
 And all faire Ladies magnifie your might,
 And eke my selfe, albe I simple such,
 Your worthy paine shall well reward with guerdon rich.

XXIX

With that out of his bouget forth he drew
 Great store of treasure, therewith him to tempt;
 But he on it lookt scornefully askew,
 As much disdeigning to be so misdempt,
 Or a war-monger to be basely nempt;
 And said; thy offers base I greatly loth,
 And eke thy words vncourteous and vnkempt;
 I tread in dust thee and thy money both,
 That, were it not for shame, So turned from him wroth.

XXX

But *Trompart*, that his maisters humor knew,
 In lofty lookes to hide an humble mind,
 Was inly tickled with that golden vew,
 And in his eare him rounded close behind:
 Yet stoupt he not, but lay still in the wind,
 Waiting aduauntage on the pray to sease;
 Till *Trompart* lowly to the ground inclind,
 Besought him his great courage to appease,
 And pardon simple man, that rash did him displease.

XXXI

Bigge looking like a doughtie Doucepere,
 At last he thus; Thou clod of vilest clay,
 I pardon yield, and with thy rudenesse beare;
 But weete henceforth, that all that golden pray,
 And all that else the vaine world vaunten may,
 I loath as dounge, ne deeme my dew reward:
 Fame is my meed, and glory vertues pray.
 But minds of mortall men are muchell mard,
 And mou'd amisse with massie mucks vnmeet regard.

XXXII

And more, I graunt to thy great miserie
 Gracious respect, thy wife shall backe be sent,
 And that vile knight, who euer that he bee,
 Which hath thy Lady reft, and knighthood shent,
 By *Sanglamort* my sword, whose deadly dent
 The bloud hath of so many thousands shed,
 I sweare, ere long shall dearely it repent;
 Ne he twixt heauen and earth shall hide his hed,
 But soone he shall be found, and shortly doen be ded.

XXXIII

The foolish man thereat woxe wondrous blith,
 As if the word so spoken, were halfe donne,
 And humbly thanked him a thousand sith,
 That had from death to life him newly wonne.
 Tho forth the Boaster marching, braue begonne
 His stolen steed to thunder furiously,
 As if he heauen and hell would ouerronne,
 And all the world confound with cruelty,
 That much *Malbecco* ioyed in his iollity.

XXXIV

Thus long they three together traueiled,
 Through many a wood, and many an vncouth way,
 To seeke his wife, that was farre wandered:
 But those two sought nought, but the present pray,
 To weete the treasure, which he did bewray,
 On which their eies and harts were wholly set,
 With purpose, how they might it best betray;
 For sith the houre, that first he did them let
 The same behold, therewith their keene desires were whet.

XXXV

It fortun'd as they together far'd,
 They spide, where *Paridell* came pricking fast
 Vpon the plaine, the which himselfe prepar'd
 To giust with that braue straunger knight a cast,
 As on aduventure by the way he past:
 Alone he rode without his Paragone;
 For hauing filcht her bels, her vp he cast
 To the wide world, and let her fly alone,
 He nould be clogd. So had he serued many one.

XXXVI

The gentle Lady, loose at randon left,
 The greene-wood long did walke, and wander wide
 At wilde aduventure, like a forlorne weft,
 Till on a day the *Satyres* her espide
 Straying alone withouten groome or guide;
 Her vp they tooke, and with them home her led,
 With them as housewife euer to abide,
 To milke their gotes, and make them cheese and bred,
 And euery one as commune good her handeled.

XXXVII

That shortly she *Malbecco* has forgot,
 And eke Sir *Paridell*, all were he deare;
 Who from her went to seeke another lot,
 And now by fortune was arriued here,
 Where those two guilers with *Malbecco* were:
 Soone as the oldman saw Sir *Paridell*,
 He fainted, and was almost dead with feare,
 Ne word he had to speake, his griefe to tell,
 But to him louted low, and greeted goodly well.

XXXVIII

And after asked him for *Hellenore*,
 I take no keepe of her (said *Paridell*)
 She wonneth in the forrest there before.
 So forth he rode, as his aduventure fell;
 The whiles the Boaster from his loftie sell
 Faynd to alight, something amisse to mend;
 But the fresh Swayne would not his leasure dwell,
 But went his way; whom when he passed kend,
 He vp remounted light, and after faind to wend.

XXXIX

Perdy nay (said *Malbecco*) shall ye not:
 But let him passe as lightly, as he came:
 For litle good of him is to be got,
 And mickle perill to be put to shame.
 But let vs go to seeke my dearest Dame,
 Whom he hath left in yonder forrest wyld:
 For of her safety in great doubt I am,
 Least saluage beastes her person haue despoild:
 Then all the world is lost, and we in vaine haue toyld.

XL

They all agree, and forward them adress:
 Ah but (said craftie *Trompart*) weete ye well,
 That yonder in that wastefull wilderness
 Huge monsters haunt, and many dangers dwell;
 Dragons, and Minotaures, and feendes of hell,
 And many wilde woodmen, which robbe and rend
 All trauellers; therefore aduise ye well,
 Before ye enterprise that way to wend:
 One may his iourney bring too soone to euill end.

XLI

Malbecco stopt in great astonishment,
 And with pale eyes fast fixed on the rest,
 Their counsell crau'd, in daunger imminent.
 Said *Trompart*, you that are the most opprest
 With burden of great treasure, I thinke best
 Here for to stay in safetie behind;
 My Lord and I will search the wide forrest.
 That counsell pleased not *Malbeccoes* mind;
 For he was much affraid, himselfe alone to find.

XLII

Then is it best (said he) that ye doe leaue
 Your treasure here in some securitie,
 Either fast closed in some hollow greaue,
 Or buried in the ground from ieopardie,
 Till we returne againe in safetie:
 As for vs two, least doubt of vs ye haue,
 Hence farre away we will blindfolded lie,
 Ne priuie be vnto your treasures graue.
 It pleased: so he did. Then they march forward braue.

XLIII

Now when amid the thickest woods they were,
 They heard a noyse of many bagpipes shrill,
 And shrieking Hububs them approching nere,
 Which all the forrest did with horror fill:
 That dreadfull sound the boasters hart did thrill,
 With such amazement, that in haste he fled,
 Ne euer looked backe for good or ill,
 And after him eke fearefull *Trompart* sped;
 The old man could not fly, but fell to ground halfe ded.

XLIV

Yet afterwards close creeping, as he might,
 He in a bush did hide his fearefull hed,
 The iolly *Satyres* full of fresh delight,
 Came dauncing forth, and with them nimbly led
 Faire *Helenore*, with girlonds all bespred,
 Whom their May-lady they had newly made:
 She proud of that new honour, which they red,
 And of their louely fellowship full glade,
 Daunst liuely, and her face did with a Lawrell shade.

XLV

The silly man that in the thicket lay
 Saw all this goodly sport, and grieued sore,
 Yet durst he not against it doe or say,
 But did his hart with bitter thoughts engore,
 To see th'vnkindnesse of his *Hellenore*.
 All day they daunced with great lustihed,
 And with their horned feet the greene grasse wore,
 The whiles their Gotes vpon the brouzes fed,
 Till drouping *Phæbus* gan to hide his golden hed.

XLVI

Tho vp they gan their merry pypes to trusse,
 And all their goodly heards did gather round,
 But euery *Satyre* first did giue a busse
 To *Hellenore*: so busses did abound.
 Now gan the humid vapour shed the ground
 With perly deaw, and th'Earthes gloomy shade
 Did dim the brightnesse of the welkin round,
 That euery bird and beast awarned made,
 To shrowd themselues, whiles sleepe their senses did inuade.

XLVII

Which when *Melbecco* saw, out of his bush
 Vpon his hands and feete he crept full light,
 And like a Gote emongst the Gotes did rush,
 That through the helpe of his faire hornes on hight,
 And misty dampe of misconceiuing night,
 And eke through likenesse of his gotish beard,
 He did the better counterfeite aright:
 So home he marcht emongst the horned heard,
 That none of all the *Satyres* him espyde or heard.

XLVIII

At night, when all they went to sleepe, he vewd,
 Whereas his louely wife emongst them lay,
 Embraced of a *Satyre* rough and rude,
 Who all the night did minde his ioyous play:
 Nine times he heard him come aloft ere day,
 That all his hart with gealosié did swell;
 But yet that nights ensample did bewray,
 That not for nought his wife them loued so well,
 When one so oft a night did ring his matins bell.

XLIX

So closely as he could, he to them crept,
 When wearie of their sport to sleepe they fell,
 And to his wife, that now full soundly slept,
 He whispered in her eare, and did her tell,
 That it was he, which by her side did dwell,
 And therefore prayd her wake, to heare him plaine.
 As one out of a dreame not waked well,
 She turned her, and returned backe againe:
 Yet her for to awake he did the more constraîne.

L

At last with irkesome trouble she abrayd;
 And then perceiuing, that it was indeed
 Her old *Malbecco*, which did her vpbrayd,
 With loosenesse of her loue, and loathly deed,
 She was astonisht with exceeding dreed,
 And would haue wakt the *Satyre* by her syde;
 But he her prayd, for mercy, or for meed,
 To saue his life, ne let him be descryde,
 But hearken to his lore, and all his counsell hyde.

LI

Tho gan he her perswade, to leaue that lewd
 And loathsome life, of God and man abhord,
 And home returne, where all should be renewd
 With perfect peace, and bandes of fresh accord,
 And she receiu'd againe to bed and bord,
 As if no trespasse euer had bene donne:
 But she it all refused at one word,
 And by no meanes would to his will be wonne,
 But chose emongst the iolly *Satyres* still to wonne.

LII

He wooed her, till day spring he espyde;
 But all in vaine: and then turnd to the heard,
 Who butted him with hornes on euery syde,
 And trode downe in the durt, where his hore beard
 Was fowly dight, and he of death afeard.
 Early before the heauens fairest light
 Out of the ruddy East was fully reard,
 The heardes out of their foldes were loosed quight,
 And he emongst the rest crept forth in sory plight.

LIII

So soone as he the Prison dore did pas,
 He ran as fast, as both his feete could beare,
 And neuer looked, who behind him was,
 Ne scarsely who before: like as a Beare
 That creeping close, amongst the hiues to reare
 An hony combe, the wakefull dogs espy,
 And him assayling, sore his carkasse teare,
 That hardly he with life away does fly,
 Ne staves, till safe himselfe he see from ieopardy.

LIV

Ne stayd he, till he came vnto the place,
 Where late his treasure he entombed had,
 Where when he found it not (for *Trompart* bace
 Had it purloyned for his maister bad:)
 With extreme fury he became quite mad,
 And ran away, ran with himselfe away:
 That who so straungely had him seene bestad,
 With vpstart haire, and staring eyes dismay,
 From Limbo lake him late escaped sure would say.

LV

High ouer hilles and ouer dales he fled,
 As if the wind him on his winges had borne,
 Ne banck nor bush could stay him, when he sped
 His nimble feet, as treading still on thorne:
 Griefe, and despight, and gealosie, and scorne
 Did all the way him follow hard behind,
 And he himselfe himselfe loath'd so forlorne,
 So shamefully forlorne of womankind;
 That as a Snake, still lurked in his wounded mind.

LVI

Still fled he forward, looking backward still,
 Ne stayd his flight, nor fearefull agony,
 Till that he came vnto a rockie hill,
 Ouer the sea, suspended dreadfully,
 That liuing creature it would terrify,
 To looke adowne, or vpward to the hight:
 From thence he threw himselfe dispiteously,
 All desperate of his fore-damned spright,
 That seem'd no helpe for him was left in liuing sight.

LVII

But through long anguish, and selfe-murdring thought
 He was so wasted and forpined quight,
 That all his substance was consum'd to nought,
 And nothing left, but like an aery Spright,
 That on the rockes he fell so flit and light,
 That he thereby receiu'd no hurt at all,
 But chanced on a craggy cliff to light;
 Whence he with crooked clawes so long did crall,
 That at the last he found a caue with entrance small.

LVIII

Into the same he creepes, and thenceforth there
 Resolu'd to build his balefull mansion,
 In drery darkenesse, and continuall feare
 Of that rockes fall, which euer and anon
 Threates with huge ruine him to fall vpon,
 That he dare neuer sleepe, but that one eye
 Still ope he keeps for that occasion;
 Ne euer rests he in tranquillity,
 The roring billowes beat his bowre so boystrouslly.

LIX

Ne euer is he wont on ought to feed,
 But toades and frogs, his pasture poysonous,
 Which in his cold complexion do breed
 A filthy bloud, or humour rancorous,
 Matter of doubt and dread suspitious,
 That doth with curelesse care consume the hart,
 Corrupts the stomacke with gall vitious,
 Croscuts the liuer with internall smart,
 And doth transfixe the soule with deathes eternall dart.

LX

Yet can he neuer dye, but dying liues,
 And doth himselfe with sorrow new sustaine,
 That death and life attonce vnto him giues.
 And painefull pleasure turnes to pleasing paine.
 There dwels he euer, miserable swaine,
 Hatefull both to him selfe, and euery wight;
 Where he through priuy griefe, and horrour vaine,
 Is woxen so deform'd, that he has quight
 Forgot he was a man, and *Gealosie* is hight.

Canto XI

*Britomart chaceth Ollyphant,
 findes Scudamour distrest:
 Assayes the house of Busyrane,
 where Loues spoyles are exprest.*

I

O Hatefull hellish Snake, what furie furst
 Brought thee from balefull house of *Proserpine*,
 Where in her bosome she thee long had nurst,

And fostred vp with bitter milke of tine,
 Fowle Gealosie, that turnest loue diuine
 To ioylesse dread, and mak'st the louing hart
 With hatefull thoughts to languish and to pine,
 And feed it selfe with selfe-consuming smart?
 Of all the passions in the mind thou vilest art.

II

O let him far be banished away,
 And in his stead let Loue for euer dwell,
 Sweet Loue, that doth his golden wings embay
 In blessed Nectar, and pure Pleasures well,
 Vntroubled of vile feare, or bitter fell.
 And ye faire Ladies, that your kingdomes make
 In th'harts of men, them gouerne wisely well,
 And of faire *Britomart* ensample take,
 That was as trew in loue, as Turtle to her make.

III

Who with Sir *Satyrane*, as earst ye red,
 Forth ryding from *Malbeccoes* hostlesse hous,
 Farr off aspyde a young man, the which fled
 From an huge Geaunt, that with hideous
 And hatefull outrage long him chaced thus;
 It was that *Ollyphant*, the brother deare
 Of that *Argante* vile and vitious,
 From whom the *Squire of Dames* was reft whylere;
 This all as bad as she, and worse, if worse ought were.

IV

For as the sister did in feminine
 And filthy lust exceede all woman kind,
 So he surpassed his sex masculine,
 In beastly vse that I did euer find;
 Whom when as *Britomart* beheld behind
 The fearefull boy so greedily pursew,
 She was emmoued in her noble mind,
 T'employ her puissaunce to his reskew,
 And pricked fiercely forward, where she him did vew.

V

Ne was Sir *Satyrane* her far behinde,
 But with like fiercenesse did ensew the chace:

Whom when the Gyaunt saw, he soone resinde
 His former suit, and from them fled apace;
 They after both, and boldly bad him bace,
 And each did striue the other to out-goe,
 But he them both outran a wondrous space,
 For he was long, and swift as any Roe,
 And now made better speed, t'escape his feared foe.

VI

It was not *Satyrane*, whom he did feare,
 But *Britomart* the flowre of chastity;
 For he the powre of chast hands might not beare,
 But alwayes did their dread encounter fly:
 And now so fast his feet he did apply,
 That he has gotten to a forrest neare,
 Where he is shrowded in security.
 The wood they enter, and search euery where,
 They searched diuersely, so both diuided were.

VII

Faire *Britomart* so long him followed,
 That she at last came to a fountaine sheare,
 By which there lay a knight all wallowed
 Vpon the grassy ground, and by him neare
 His haberieon, his helmet, and his speare;
 A little off, his shield was rudely throwne,
 On which the winged boy in colours cleare
 Depeinted was, full easie to be knowne,
 And he thereby, where euer it in field was showne.

VIII

His face vpon the ground did groueling ly,
 As if he had bene slombring in the shade,
 That the braue Mayd would not for courtesy,
 Out of his quiet slomber him abrade,
 Nor seeme too suddeinly him to inuade:
 Still as she stood, she heard with grieuous throb
 Him grone, as if his hart were peeces made,
 And with most painefull pangs to sigh and sob,
 That pittie did the Virgins hart of patience rob.

IX

At last forth breaking into bitter plaintes
 He said; O soueraigne Lord that sit'st on hye,
 And raignt in blis emongst thy blessed Saintes,
 How suffrest thou such shamefull cruelty,
 So long vnwreaked of thine enemy?
 Or hast thou, Lord, of good mens cause no heed?
 Or doth thy iustice sleepe, and silent ly?
 What booteth then the good and righteous deed,
 If goodnesse find no grace, nor righteousnesse no meed?

X

If good find grace, and righteousnesse reward,
 Why then is *Amoret* in caytiue band,
 Sith that more bounteous creature neuer far'd
 On foot, vpon the face of liuing land?
 Or if that heauenly iustice may withstand
 The wrongfull outrage of vnrighteous men,
 Why then is *Busirane* with wicked hand
 Suffred, these seuen monethes day in secret den
 My Lady and my loue so cruelly to pen?

XI

My Lady and my loue is cruelly pend
 In dolefull darkenesse from the vew of day,
 Whilest deadly torments do her chast brest rend,
 And the sharpe steele doth riue her hart in tway,
 All for she *Scudamore* will not denay.
 Yet thou vile man, vile *Scudamore* art sound,
 Ne canst her ayde, ne canst her foe dismay;
 Vnworthy wretch to tread vpon the ground,
 For whom so faire a Lady feeles so sore a wound.

XII

There an huge heape of singults did oppresse
 His strugling soule, and swelling throbs empeach
 His foltring toung with pangs of drerinesse,
 Choking the remnant of his plaintife speach,
 As if his dayes were come to their last reach.
 Which when she heard, and saw the ghastly fit,
 Threatning into his life to make a breach,
 Both with great ruth and terrour she was smit,
 Fearing least from her cage the wearie soule would flit.

XIII

Tho stooping downe she him amoued light;
 Who therewith somewhat starting, vp gan looke,
 And seeing him behind a straunger knight,
 Whereas no liuing creature he mistooke,
 With great indignaunce he that sight forsooke,
 And downe againe himselfe disdainefully
 Abiecting, th'earth with his faire forehead strooke:
 Which the bold Virgin seeing, gan apply
 Fit medicine to his grieffe, and spake thus courtesly.

XIV

Ah gentle knight, whose deepe conceiued grieffe
 Well seemes t'exceede the powre of patience,
 Yet if that heauenly grace some good reliefe
 You send, submit you to high prouidence,
 And euer in your noble hart prepense,
 That all the sorrow in the world is lesse,
 Then vertues might, and values confidence,
 For who nill bide the burden of distresse,
 Must not here thinke to liue: for life is wretchednesse.

XV

Therefore, faire Sir, do comfort to you take,
 And freely read, what wicked felon so
 Hath outrag'd you, and thrald your gentle make.
 Perhaps this hand may helpe to ease your woe,
 And wreake your sorrow on your cruell foe,
 At least it faire endeuour will apply.
 Those feeling wordes so neare the quicke did goe,
 That vp his head he reared easily,
 And leaning on his elbow, these few wordes let fly.

XVI

What boots it plaine, that cannot be redrest,
 And sow vaine sorrow in a fruitlesse eare,
 Sith powre of hand, nor skill of learned brest,
 Ne worldly price cannot redeeme my deare,
 Out of her thraldome and continuall feare?
 For he the tyraunt, which her hath in ward
 By strong enchauntments and blacke Magicke leare,
 Hath in a dungeon deepe her close embard,
 And many dreadfull feends hath pointed to her gard.

XVII

There he tormenteth her most terribly,
 And day and night afflicts with mortall paine,
 Because to yield him loue she doth deny,
 Once to me yold, not to be yold againe:
 But yet by torture he would her constraine
 Loue to conceiue in her disdainfull brest,
 Till so she do, she must in doole remaine,
 Ne may by liuing meanes be thence relest:
 What boots it then to plaine, that cannot be redrest?

XVIII

With this sad hersall of his heauy stresse,
 The warlike Damzell was empassiond sore,
 And said; Sir knight, your cause is nothing lesse,
 Then is your sorrow, certes if not more;
 For nothing so much pittie doth implore,
 As gentle Ladies helplesse misery.
 But yet, if please ye listen to my lore,
 I will with prooffe of last extremity,
 Deliuer her fro thence, or with her for you dy.

XIX

Ah gentlest knight aliue, (said *Scudamore*)
 What huge heroicke magnanimity
 Dwels in thy bounteous brest? what couldst thou more,
 If she were thine, and thou as now am I?
 O spare thy happy dayes, and them apply
 To better boot, but let me dye, that ought;
 More is more losse: one is enough to dy.
 Life is not lost, (said she) for which is bought
 Endlesse renownm, that more then death is to be sought.

XX

Thus she at length perswaded him to rise,
 And with her wend, to see what new successe
 Mote him befall vpon new enterprise;
 His armes, which he had vowed to disprofesse,
 She gathered vp and did about him dresse,
 And his forwandred steed vnto him got:
 So forth they both yfere make their progresse,
 And march not past the mountenaunce of a shot,
 Till they arriu'd, whereas their purpose they did plot.

XXI

There they dismounting, drew their weapons bold
 And stoutly came vnto the Castle gate;
 Whereas no gate they found, them to withhold,
 Nor ward to wait at morne and euening late,
 But in the Porch, that did them sore amate,
 A flaming fire, ymixt with smouldry smoke,
 And stinking Sulphure, that with griesly hate
 And dreadfull horroure did all entraunce choke,
 Enforced them their forward footing to reuoke.

XXII

Greatly thereat was *Britomart* dismayd,
 Ne in that stownd wist, how her selfe to beare;
 For daunger vaine it were, to haue assayd
 That cruell element, which all things feare,
 Ne none can suffer to approchen neare:
 And turning backe to *Scudamour*, thus sayd;
 What monstrous enmity prouoke we heare,
 Foolhardy as th'Earthes children, the which made
 Battell against the Gods? so we a God inuade.

XXIII

Daunger without discretion to attempt,
 Inglorious and beastlike is: therefore Sir knight,
 Aread what course of you is safest dempt,
 And how we with our foe may come to fight.
 This is (quoth he) the dolorous despight,
 Which earst to you I playnd: for neither may
 This fire be quencht by any wit or might,
 Ne yet by any meanes remou'd away,
 So mighty be th'enchautments, which the same do stay.

XXIV

What is there else, but cease these fruitlesse paines,
 And leaue me to my former languishing?
 Faire *Amoret* must dwell in wicked chaines,
 And *Scudamore* here dye with sorrowing.
 Perdy not so; (said she) for shamefull thing
 It were t'abandon noble cheuisaunce,
 For shew of perill, without venturing:
 Rather let try extremities of chaunce,
 Then enterprised prayse for dread to disauaunce.

XXV

Therewith resolu'd to proue her vtmost might,
 Her ample shield she threw before her face,
 And her swords point directing forward right,
 Assayld the flame, the which eftsoones gaue place,
 And did it selfe diuide with equall space,
 That through she passed; as a thunder bolt
 Perceth the yielding ayre, and doth displace
 The soring cloudes into sad showres ymolt;
 So to her yold the flames, and did their force reuolt.

XXVI

Whom whenas *Scudamour* saw past the fire,
 Safe and vntoucht, he likewise gan assay,
 With greedy will, and enuious desire,
 And bad the stubborne flames to yield him way:
 But cruell *Mulciber* would not obay
 His threatfull pride, but did the more augment
 His mighty rage, and with imperious sway
 Him forst (maulgre) his fiercenesse to relent,
 And backe retire, all scorcht and pitifully brent.

XXVII

With huge impatience he inly swelt,
 More for great sorrow, that he could not pas,
 Then for the burning torment, which he felt,
 That with fell woodnesse he effierced was,
 And wilfully him throwing on the gras,
 Did beat and bounse his head and brest full sore;
 The whiles the Championesse now entred has
 The vtmost rowme, and past the formest dore,
 The vtmost rowme, abounding with all precious store.

XXVIII

For round about, the wals yclothed were
 With goodly arras of great maiesty,
 Wouen with gold and silke so close and nere,
 That the rich metall lurked priuily,
 As faining to be hid from enuious eye;
 Yet here, and there, and euery where vnwares
 It shewd it selfe, and shone vnwillingly;
 Like a discolourd Snake, whose hidden snares
 Through the greene gras his long bright burnisht backe declares.

XXIX

And in those Tapets weren fashioned
 Many faire pourtraicts, and many a faire feate,
 And all of loue, and all of lusty-hed,
 As seemed by their semblaunt did entreat;
 And eke all *Cupids* warres they did repeate,
 And cruell battels, which he whilome fought
 Gainst all the Gods, to make his empire great;
 Besides the huge massacres, which he wrought
 On mighty kings and kesars, into thraldome brought.

XXX

Therein was writ, how often thundring *Ioue*
 Had felt the point of his hart-percing dart,
 And leauing heauens kingdome, here did roue
 In straunge disguise, to slake his scalding smart;
 Now like a Ram, faire *Helle* to peruart,
 Now like a Bull, *Europa* to withdraw:
 Ah, how the fearefull Ladies tender hart
 Did liuely seeme to tremble, when she saw
 The huge seas vnder her t'obay her seruaunts law.

XXXI

Soone after that into a golden showre
 Him selfe he chaung'd faire *Danae* to vew,
 And through the roofe of her strong brasen towre
 Did raine into her lap an hony dew,
 The whiles her foolish garde, that little knew
 Of such deceit, kept th'yron dore fast bard,
 And watcht, that none should enter nor issew;
 Vaine was the watch, and bootlesse all the ward,
 Whenas the God to golden hew him selfe transfard.

XXXII

Then was he turnd into a snowy Swan,
 To win faire *Leda* to his louely trade:
 O wondrous skill, and sweet wit of the man,
 That her in daffadillies sleeping made,
 From scorching heat her daintie limbes to shade:
 Whiles the proud Bird ruffing his fethers wyde,
 And brushing his faire brest, did her inuade;
 She slept, yet twixt her eyelids closely spyde,
 How towards her he rusht, and smiled at his pryde.

XXXIII

Then shewd it, how the *Thebane Semelee*
 Deceiu'd of gealous *Iuno*, did require
 To see him in his soueraigne maiestee,
 Armd with his thunderbolts and lightning fire,
 Whence dearely she with death bought her desire.
 But faire *Alcmena* better match did make,
 Ioying his loue in likenesse more entire;
 Three nights in one, they say, that for her sake
 He then did put, her pleasures lenger to partake.

XXXIV

Twise was he seene in soaring Eagles shape,
 And with wide wings to beat the buxome ayre,
 Once, when he with *Asterie* did scape,
 Againe, when as the *Troiane* boy so faire
 He snatcht from *Ida* hill, and with him bare:
 Wondrous delight it was, there to behould,
 How the rude Shepheards after him did stare,
 Trembling through feare, least down he fallen should
 And often to him calling, to take surer hould.

XXXV

In *Satyres* shape *Antiopa* he snatcht:
 And like a fire, when he *Aegin'* assayd:
 A shepheard, when *Mnemosyne* he catcht:
 And like a Serpent to the *Thracian* mayd.
 Whiles thus on earth great *Ioue* these pageaunts playd,
 The winged boy did thrust into his throne,
 And scoffing, thus vnto his mother sayd,
 Lo now the heauens obey to me alone,
 And take me for their *Ioue*, whiles *Ioue* to earth is gone.

XXXVI

And thou, faire *Phæbus*, in thy colours bright
 Wast there enwouen, and the sad distresse,
 In which that boy thee plonged, for despight,
 That thou bewray'dst his mothers wantonnesse,
 When she with *Mars* was meynt in ioyfulnessse:
 For thy he thrild thee with a leaden dart,
 To loue faire *Daphne*, which thee loued lesse:
 Lesse she thee lou'd, then was thy iust desart,
 Yet was thy loue her death, and her death was thy smart.

XXXVII

So louedst thou the lusty *Hyacinth*,
 So louedst thou the faire *Coronis* deare:
 Yet both are of thy haplesse hand extinct,
 Yet both in flowres do liue, and loue thee beare,
 The one a Paunce, the other a sweet breare:
 For griefe whereof, ye mote haue liuely seene
 The God himselfe rending his golden heare,
 And breaking quite his gyrlond euer greene,
 With other signes of sorrow and impatient teene.

XXXVIII

Both for those two, and for his owne deare sonne,
 The sonne of *Climene* he did repent,
 Who bold to guide the charet of the Sunne,
 Himselfe in thousand peeces fondly rent,
 And all the world with flashing fier brent,
 So like, that all the walles did seeme to flame.
 Yet cruell *Cupid*, not herewith content,
 Forst him eftsoones to follow other game,
 And loue a Shepherds daughter for his dearest Dame.

XXXIX

He loued *Isse* for his dearest Dame,
 And for her sake her cattell fed a while,
 And for her sake a cowheard vile became,
 The seruant of *Admetus* cowheard vile,
 Whiles that from heauen he suffered exile.
 Long were to tell each other louely fit,
 Now like a Lyon, hunting after spoile,
 Now like a Hag, now like a faulcon flit:
 All which in that faire arras was most liuely writ.

XL

Next vnto him was *Neptune* pictured,
 In his diuine resemblance wondrous lyke:
 His face was rugged, and his hoarie hed
 Dropped with brackish deaw; his three-forkt Pyke
 He stearnly shooke, and therewith fierce did stryke
 The raging billowes, that on euery syde
 They trembling stood, and made a long broad dyke,
 That his swift charet might haue passage wyde,
 Which foure great *Hippodames* did draw in temewise tyde.

XLI

His sea-horses did seeme to snort amayne,
 And from their nosethrilles blow the brynie streame,
 That made the sparckling waues to smoke agayne,
 And flame with gold, but the white fomy creame,
 Did shine with siluer, and shoot forth his beame.
 The God himselfe did pensiuie seeme and sad,
 And hong adowne his head, as he did dreame:
 For priuy loue his brest empierced had,
 Ne ought but deare *Bisaltis* ay could make him glad.

XLII

He loued eke *Iphimedia* deare,
 And *Aeolus* faire daughter *Arne* hight,
 For whom he turnd him selfe into a Steare,
 And fed on fodder, to beguile her sight.
 Also to win *Deucalions* daughter bright,
 He turnd him selfe into a Dolphin fayre;
 And like a winged horse he tooke his flight,
 To snaky-locke *Medusa* to repayre,
 On whom he got faire *Pegasus*, that flitteth in the ayre.

XLIII

Next *Saturne* was, (but who would euer weene,
 That sullein *Saturne* euer weend to loue?
 Yet loue is sullein, and *Saturnlike* seene,
 As he did for *Erigone* it proue,)
 That to a *Centaure* did him selfe transmoue.
 So proou'd it eke that gracious God of wine,
 When for to compasse *Philliras* hard loue,
 He turnd himselfe into a fruitfull vine,
 And into her faire bosome made his grapes decline.

XLIV

Long were to tell the amorous assayes,
 And gentle pangues, with which he maked meeke
 The mighty *Mars*, to learne his wanton playes:
 How oft for *Venus*, and how often eek
 For many other Nymphes he sore did shreek,
 With womanish teares, and with vnwarlike smarts,
 Priuily moystening his horrid cheek.
 There was he painted full of burning darts,
 And many wide woundes launched through his inner parts.

XLV

Ne did he spare (so cruell was the Elfe)
 His owne deare mother, (ah why should he so?)
 Ne did he spare sometime to pricke himselfe,
 That he might tast the sweet consuming woe,
 Which he had wrought to many others moe.
 But to declare the mournfull Tragedyes,
 And spoiles, wherewith he all the ground did strow,
 More eath to number, with how many eyes
 High heauen beholds sad louers nightly theeueres.

XLVI

Kings Queenes, Lords Ladies, Knights and Damzels gent
 Were heap'd together with the vulgar sort,
 And mingled with the raskall rablement,
 Without respect of person or of port,
 To shew Dan *Cupids* powre and great effort:
 And round about a border was entrayld,
 Of broken bowes and arrowes shiuered short,
 And a long bloody riuer through them rayld,
 So liuely and so like, that liuing sence it fayld.

XLVII

And at the vpper end of that faire rowme,
 There was an Altar built of pretious stone,
 Of passing valew, and of great renowme,
 On which there stood an Image all alone,
 Of massy gold, which with his owne light shone;
 And wings it had with sundry colours dight,
 More sundry colours, then the proud *Pauone*
 Beares in his boasted fan, or *Iris* bright,
 When her discoloured bow she spreads through heauen bright.

XLVIII

Blindfold he was, and in his cruell fist
 A mortall bow and arrowes keene did hold,
 With which he shot at randon, when him list,
 Some headed with sad lead, some with pure gold;
 (Ah man beware, how thou those darts behold)
 A wounded Dragon vnder him did ly,
 Whose hideous tayle his left foot did enfold,
 And with a shaft was shot through either eye,
 That no man forth might draw, ne no man remedye.

XLIX

And vnderneath his feet was written thus,
Vnto the Victor of the Gods this bee:
 And all the people in that ample hous
 Did to that image bow their humble knee,
 And oft committed fowle Idolatree.
 That wondrous sight faire *Britomart* amazed,
 Ne seeing could her wonder satisfie,
 But euermore and more vpon it gazed,
 The whiles the passing brightnes her fraile sences dazed.

L

Tho as she backward cast her busie eye,
 To search each secret of that goodly sted
 Ouer the dore thus written she did spye
Be bold: she oft and oft it ouer-red,
 Yet could not find what sence it figured:
 But what so were therein or writ or ment,
 She was no whit thereby discouraged
 From prosecuting of her first intent,
 But forward with bold steps into the next roome went.

LI

Much fairer, then the former, was that roome,
 And richlier by many partes arayd:
 For not with arras made in painefull loome,
 But with pure gold it all was ouerlayd,
 Wrought with wilde Antickes, which their follies playd,
 In the rich metall, as they liuing were:
 A thousand monstrous formes therein were made,
 Such as false loue doth oft vpon him weare,
 For loue in thousand monstrous formes doth oft appeare.

LII

And all about, the glistring walles were hong
 With warlike spoiles, and with victorious prayes,
 Of mighty Conquerours and Captaines strong,
 Which were whilome captiued in their dayes
 To cruell loue, and wrought their owne decayes:
 Their swerds and speres were broke, and hauberques rent;
 And their proud girlonds of tryumphant bayes
 Troden in dust with fury insolent,
 To shew the victors might and mercilesse intent.

LIII

The warlike Mayde beholding earnestly
 The goodly ordinance of this rich place,
 Did greatly wonder, ne could satisfie
 Her greedy eyes with gazing a long space,
 But more she meruaild that no footings trace,
 Nor wight appear'd, but wastefull emptinesse,
 And solemne silence ouer all that place:
 Straunge thing it seem'd, that none was to possesse
 So rich purueyance, ne them keepe with carefulnesse.

LIV

And as she lookt about, she did behold,
 How ouer that same dore was likewise writ,
Be bold, be bold, and euery where *Be bold*,
 That much she muz'd, yet could not construe it
 By any ridling skill, or commune wit.
 At last she spyde at that roomes vpper end,
 Another yron dore, on which was writ,
Be not too bold; whereto though she did bend
 Her earnest mind, yet wist not what it might intend.

LV

Thus she there waited vntill euentide,
 Yet liuing creature none she saw appeare:
 And now sad shadowes gan the world to hyde,
 From mortall vew, and wrap in darkenesse dreare;
 Yet nould she d'off her weary armes, for feare
 Of secret daunger, ne let sleepe oppresse
 Her heauy eyes with natures burdein deare,
 But drew her selfe aside in sickernesse,
 And her welpointed weapons did about her dresse.

Canto XII

*The maske of Cupid, and th'enchanted
 Chamber are displayd,
 Whence Britomart redeemes faire
 Amoret, through charmes decayd.*

I

THo when as chearlesse Night ycouered had
 Faire heauen with an vniuersall cloud,
 That euery wight dismayd with darknesse sad,

In silence and in sleepe themselues did shroud,
 She heard a shrilling Trompet sound aloud,
 Signe of nigh battell, or got victory;
 Nought therewith daunted was her courage proud,
 But rather stird to cruell enmity,
 Expecting euer, when some foe she might descry.

II

With that, an hideous storme of winde arose,
 With dreadfull thunder and lightning atwixt,
 And an earth-quake, as if it streight would lose
 The worlds foundations from his centre fixt;
 A direfull stench of smoke and sulphure mixt
 Ensewd, whose noyance fild the fearefull sted,
 From the fourth houre of night vntill the sixt;
 Yet the bold *Britonesse* was nought ydred,
 Though much emmou'd, but stedfast still perseuered.

III

All suddenly a stormy whirlwind blew
 Throughout the house, that clapped eury dore,
 With which that yron wicket open flew,
 As it with mightie leuers had bene tore:
 And forth issewd, as on the ready flore
 Of some Theatre, a graue personage,
 That in his hand a branch of laurell bore,
 With comely haueour and count'nance sage,
 Yclad in costly garments, fit for tragicke Stage.

IV

Proceeding to the midst, he still did stand,
 As if in mind he somewhat had to say,
 And to the vulgar beckning with his hand,
 In signe of silence, as to heare a play,
 By liuely actions he gan bewray
 Some argument of matter passioned;
 Which doen, he backe retyred soft away,
 And passing by, his name discovered,
Ease, on his robe in golden letters cyphered.

V

The noble Mayd, still standing all this vewd,
 And merueild at his strange intendiment;

With that a ioyous fellowship issewd
 Of Minstrals, making goodly meriment,
 With wanton Bardes, and Rymers impudent,
 All which together sung full chearefully
 A lay of loues delight, with sweet concent:
 After whom marcht a iolly company,
 In manner of a maske, enranged orderly.

VI

The whiles a most delitious harmony,
 In full straunge notes was sweetly heard to sound,
 That the rare sweetnesse of the melody
 The feeble senses wholly did confound,
 And the fraile soule in deepe delight nigh dround:
 And when it ceast, shrill trompets loud did bray,
 That their report did farre away rebound,
 And when they ceast, it gan againe to play,
 The whiles the maskers marched forth in trim aray.

VII

The first was *Fancy*, like a louely boy,
 Of rare aspect, and beautie without peare;
 Matchable either to that ympe of *Troy*,
 Whom *Ioue* did loue, and chose his cup to beare,
 Or that same daintie lad, which was so deare
 To great *Alcides*, that when as he dyde,
 He wailed womanlike with many a teare,
 And euery wood, and euery valley wyde
 He fild with *Hylas* name; the Nymphes eke *Hylas* cryde.

VIII

His garment neither was of silke nor say,
 But painted plumes, in goodly order dight,
 Like as the sunburnt *Indians* do aray
 Their tawney bodies, in their proudest plight:
 As those same plumes, so seemd he vaine and light,
 That by his gate might easily appeare;
 For still he far'd as dauncing in delight,
 And in his hand a windy fan did beare,
 That in the idle aire he mou'd still here and there.

IX

And him beside marcht amorous *Desyre*,
 Who seemd of riper yeares, then th'other Swaine,
 Yet was that other swayne this elders syre,
 And gaue him being, commune to them twaine:
 His garment was disguised very vaine,
 And his embrodered Bonet sat awry;
 Twixt both his hands few sparkes he close did straine,
 Which still he blew, and kindled busily,
 That soone they life conceiu'd, and forth in flames did fly.

X

Next after him went *Doubt*, who was yclad
 In a discolour'd cote, of straunge disguyse,
 That at his backe a brode Capuccio had,
 And sleeues dependant *Albanese*-wyse:
 He lookt askew with his mistrustfull eyes,
 And nicely trode, as thornes lay in his way,
 Or that the flore to shrinke he did auyse,
 And on a broken reed he still did stay
 His feeble steps, which shrunke, when hard theron he lay.

XI

With him went *Daunger*, cloth'd in ragged weed,
 Made of Beares skin, that him more dreadfull made,
 Yet his owne face was dreadfull, ne did need
 Straunge horrour, to deforme his griesly shade;
 A net in th'one hand, and rustie blade
 In th'other was, this Mischiefe, that Mishap;
 With th'one his foes he threatned to inuade,
 With th'other he his friends ment to enwrap:
 For whom he could not kill, he practizd to entrap.

XII

Next him was *Feare*, all arm'd from top to toe,
 Yet thought himselfe not safe enough thereby,
 But feard each shadow mouing to and fro,
 And his owne armes when glittering he did spy,
 Or clashing heard, he fast away did fly,
 As ashes pale of hew, and wingyheeld;
 And euermore on daunger fixt his eye,
 Gainst whom he alwaies bent a brasen shield,
 Which his right hand vnarmed fearefully did wield.

XIII

With him went *Hope* in rancke, a handsome Mayd,
 Of chearefull looke and louely to behold;
 In silken samite she was light arayd,
 And her faire lockes were wouen vp in gold;
 She alway smyld, and in her hand did hold
 An holy water Sprinkle, dipt in deowe,
 With which she sprinckled faouours manifold,
 On whom she list, and did great liking sheowe,
 Great liking vnto many, but true loue to feowe.

XIV

And after them *Dissemblance*, and *Suspect*
 Marcht in one rancke, yet an vnequall paire:
 For she was gentle, and of milde aspect,
 Courteous to all, and seeming debonaire,
 Goodly adorned, and exceeding faire:
 Yet was that all but painted, and purloynd,
 And her bright browes were dect with borrowed haire:
 Her deedes were forged, and her words false coynd,
 And alwaies in her hand two clewes of silke she twynd.

XV

But he was foule, ill faouered, and grim,
 Vnder his eyebrowes looking still askaunce;
 And euer as *Dissemblance* laught on him,
 He lowrd on her with daungerous eyeglaunce;
 Shewing his nature in his countenance;
 His rolling eyes did neuer rest in place,
 But walkt each where, for feare of hid mischaunce,
 Holding a lattice still before his face,
 Through which he still did peepe, as forward he did pace.

XVI

Next him went *Griefe*, and *Fury* matched yfere;
Griefe all in sable sorrowfully clad,
 Downe hanging his dull head, with heauy chere,
 Yet inly being more, then seeming sad:
 A paire of Pincers in his hand he had,
 With which he pinched people to the hart,
 That from thenceforth a wretched life they lad,
 In wilfull languor and consuming smart,
 Dying each day with inward wounds of dolours dart.

XVII

But *Fury* was full ill appareiled
 In rags, that naked nigh she did appeare,
 With ghastly lookes and dreadfull drerihed;
 For from her backe her garments she did teare,
 And from her head oft rent her snarled heare:
 In her right hand a firebrand she did tosse
 About her head, still roming here and there;
 As a dismayed Deare in chace embost,
 Forgetfull of his safety, hath his right way lost.

XVIII

After them went *Displeasure* and *Pleasance*,
 He looking lompish and full sullein sad,
 And hanging downe his heauy countenance;
 She chearefull fresh and full of ioyance glad,
 As if no sorrow she ne felt ne drad;
 That euill matched paire they seemd to bee:
 An angry Waspe th'one in a viall had
 Th'other in hers an hony-lady Bee;
 Thus marched these sixe couples forth in faire degree.

XIX

After all these there marcht a most faire Dame,
 Led of two grysie villeins, th'one *Despight*,
 The other cleped *Cruelty* by name:
 She dolefull Lady, like a dreary Spright,
 Cald by strong charmes out of eternall night,
 Had deathes owne image figurd in her face,
 Full of sad signes, fearefull to liuing sight;
 Yet in that horror shewd a seemely grace,
 And with her feeble feet did moue a comely pace.

XX

Her brest all naked, as net iuory,
 Without adorne of gold or siluer bright,
 Wherewith the Craftesman wonts it beautify,
 Of her dew honour was despoyled quight,
 And a wide wound therein (O ruefull sight)
 Entrenched deepe with knife accursed keene,
 Yet freshly bleeding forth her fainting spright,
 (The worke of cruell hand) was to be seene,
 That dyde in sanguine red her skin all snowy cleene.

XXI

At that wide orifice her trembling hart
 Was drawne forth, and in siluer basin layd,
 Quite through transfixed with a deadly dart,
 And in her bloud yet steeming fresh embayd:
 And those two villeins, which her steps vpstayd,
 When her weake feete could scarcely her sustaine,
 And fading vitall powers gan to fade,
 Her forward still with torture did constraine,
 And euermore encreased her consuming paine.

XXII

Next after her the winged God himselfe
 Came riding on a Lion rauenuous,
 Taught to obey the menage of that Elfe,
 That man and beast with powre imperious
 Subdeweth to his kingdome tyrannous:
 His blindfold eyes he bad a while vnbind,
 That his proud spoyle of that same dolorous
 Faire Dame he might behold in perfect kind;
 Which seene, he much reioyced in his cruell mind.

XXIII

Of which full proud, himselfe vp rearing hye,
 He looked round about with sterne disdain;
 And did suruay his goodly company:
 And marshalling the euill ordered traine,
 With that the darts which his right hand did straine,
 Full dreadfully he shooke that all did quake,
 And clapt on hie his coulourd winges twaine,
 That all his many it affraide did make:
 Tho blinding him againe, his way he forth did take.

XXIV

Behinde him was *Reproch*, *Repentance*, *Shame*;
Reproch the first, *Shame* next, *Repent* behind:
Repentance feeble, sorrowfull, and lame:
Reproch despightfull, carelesse, and vnkind;
Shame most ill fauour'd, bestiall, and blind:
Shame lowrd, *Repentance* sigh'd, *Reproch* did scould;
Reproch sharpe stings, *Repentance* whips entwind,
Shame burning brond-yrons in her hand did hold:
 All three to each vnlike, yet all made in one mould.

XXV

And after them a rude confused rout
 Of persons flockt, whose name is hard to read:
 Amongst them was sterne *Strife*, and *Anger* stout,
 Vnquiet *Care*, and fond *Vnthriftihead*,
 Lewd *Losse of Time*, and *Sorrow* seeming dead,
 Inconstant *Chaunge*, and false *Disloyaltie*,
 Consuming *Riotise*, and guilty *Dread*
 Of heauenly vengeance, faint *Infirmities*,
 Vile *Pouertie*, and lastly *Death* with infamie.

XXVI

There were full many moe like maladies,
 Whose names and natures I note readen well;
 So many moe, as there be phantasies
 In wauering wemens wit, that none can tell,
 Or paines in loue, or punishments in hell;
 All which disguised marcht in masking wise,
 About the chamber with that Damozell,
 And then returned, hauing marched thrise,
 Into the inner roome, from whence they first did rise.

XXVII

So soone as they were in, the dore streight way
 Fast locked, driuen with that stormy blast,
 Which first it opened; and bore all away.
 Then the braue Maid, which all this while was plast,
 In secret shade, and saw both first and last,
 Issewed forth, and went vnto the dore,
 To enter in, but found it locked fast:
 It vaine she thought with rigorous vprore
 For to efforce, when charmes had closed it afore.

XXVIII

Where force might not auaile, there sleights and art
 She cast to vse, both fit for hard emprize;
 For thy from that same roome not to depart
 Till morrow next, she did her selfe auize,
 When that same Maske againe should forth arize.
 The morrow next appeared with ioyous cheare,
 Calling men to their daily exercize,
 Then she, as morrow fresh, her selfe did reare
 Out of her secret stand, that day for to out weare.

XXIX

All that day she outwore in wandering,
 And gazing on that Chambers ornament,
 Till that againe the second euening
 Her couered with her sable vestiment,
 Wherewith the worlds faire beautie she hath blent:
 Then when the second watch was almost past,
 That brasen dore flew open, and in went
 Bold *Britomart*, as she had late forecast,
 Neither of idle shewes, nor of false charmes aghast.

XXX

So soone as she was entred, round about
 She cast her eies, to see what was become
 Of all those persons, which she saw without:
 But lo, they streight were vanisht all and some,
 Ne liuing wight she saw in all that roome,
 Saue that same woefull Ladie, both whose hands
 Were bounden fast, that did her ill become,
 And her small wast girt round with yron bands,
 Vnto a brasen pillour, by the which she stands.

XXXI

And her before the vile Enchaunter sate,
 Figuring straunge characters of his art,
 With liuing bloud he those characters wrate,
 Dreadfully dropping from her dying hart,
 Seeming transfixed with a cruell dart,
 And all perforce to make her him to loue.
 Ah who can loue the worker of her smart?
 A thousand charmes he formerly did proue;
 Yet thousand charmes could not her stedfast heart remoue.

XXXII

Soone as that virgin knight he saw in place,
 His wicked bookes in hast he ouerthrew,
 Not caring his long labours to deface,
 And fiercely ronning to that Lady trew,
 A murdrous knife out of his pocket drew,
 The which he thought, for villeinous despight,
 In her tormented bodie to embrew:
 But the stout Damzell to him leaping light,
 His cursed hand withheld, and maistered his might.

XXXIII

From her, to whom his fury first he ment,
 The wicked weapon rashly he did wrest,
 And turning to her selfe his fell intent,
 Vnwares it strooke into her snowie chest,
 That little drops empurpled her faire brest.
 Exceeding wroth therewith the virgin grew,
 Albe the wound were nothing deepe imprest,
 And fiercely forth her mortall blade she drew,
 To giue him the reward for such vile outrage dew.

XXXIV

So mightily she smote him, that to ground
 He fell halfe dead; next stroke him should haue slaine,
 Had not the Lady, which by him stood bound,
 Dernely vnto her called to abstaine,
 From doing him to dy. For else her paine
 Should be remedillesse, sith none but hee,
 Which wrought it, could the same recure againe.
 Therewith she stayd her hand, loth stayd to bee;
 For life she him enuyde, and long'd reuenge to see.

XXXV

And to him said, Thou wicked man, whose meed
 For so huge mischief, and vile villany
 Is death, or if that ought do death exceed,
 Be sure, that nought may saue thee from to dy,
 But if that thou this Dame doe presently
 Restore vnto her health, and former state;
 This doe and liue, else die vndoubtedly.
 He glad of life, that lookt for death but late,
 Did yield himselfe right willing to prolong his date.

XXXVI

And rising vp, gan streight to ouerlooke
 Those cursed leaues, his charmes backe to reuerse;
 Full dreadfull things out of that balefull booke
 He red, and measur'd many a sad verse,
 That horror gan the virgins hart to perse,
 And her faire lockes vp stared stiffe on end,
 Hearing him those same bloody lines reherse;
 And all the while he red, she did extend
 Her sword high ouer him, if ought he did offend.

XXXVII

Anon she gan perceiue the house to quake,
 And all the dores to rattle round about;
 Yet all that did not her dismaied make,
 Nor slacke her threatfull hand for daungers dout,
 But still with stedfast eye and courage stout
 Abode, to weet what end would come of all.
 At last that mightie chaine, which round about
 Her tender waste was wound, adowne gan fall,
 And that great brasen pillour broke in peeeces small.

XXXVIII

The cruell steele, which thirld her dying hart,
 Fell softly forth, as of his owne accord,
 And the wyde wound, which lately did dispart
 Her bleeding brest, and riuen bowels gor'd,
 Was closed vp, as it had not bene bor'd,
 And euery part to safety full sound,
 As she were neuer hurt, was soone restor'd:
 Tho when she felt her selfe to be vnbound,
 And perfect hole, prostrate she fell vnto the ground.

XXXIX

Before faire *Britomart*, she fell prostrate,
 Saying, Ah noble knight, what worthy meed
 Can wretched Lady, quit from wofull state,
 Yield you in lieu of this your gracious deed?
 Your vertue selfe her owne reward shall breed,
 Euen immortall praise, and glory wyde,
 Which I your vassall, by your prowesse freed,
 Shall through the world make to be notifyde,
 And goodly well aduance, that goodly well was tryde.

XL

But *Britomart* vprearing her from ground,
 Said, Gentle Dame, reward enough I weene
 For many labours more, then I haue found,
 This, that in safety now I haue you seene,
 And meane of your deliuerance haue beene:
 Henceforth faire Lady comfort to you take,
 And put away remembrance of late teene;
 In stead thereof know, that your louing Make,
 Hath no lesse grieffe endured for your gentle sake.

XLI

She was much cheard to heare him mentiond,
 Whom of all liuing wights she loued best.
 Then laid the noble Championesse strong hond
 Vpon th'enchauter, which had her distrest
 So sore, and with foule outrages opprest:
 With that great chaine, wherewith not long ygo
 He bound that pitteous Lady prisoner, now relest,
 Himselfe she bound, more worthy to be so,
 And captiue with her led to wretchednesse and wo.

XLII

Returning backe, those goodly roomes, which erst
 She saw so rich and royally arayd,
 Now vanisht vtterly, and cleane subuerst
 She found, and all their glory quite decayd,
 That sight of such a chaunge her much dismayd.
 Thence forth descending to that perlous Porch,
 Those dreadfull flames she also found delayd,
 And quenched quite, like a consumed torch,
 That erst all entres wont so cruelly to scorch.

XLIII

More easie issew now, then entrance late
 She found: for now that fained dreadfull flame,
 Which chokt the porch of that enchaunted gate,
 And passage bard to all, that thither came,
 Was vanisht quite, as it were not the same,
 And gaue her leaue at pleasure forth to passe.
 Th'Enchaunter selfe, which all that fraud did frame,
 To haue efforst the loue of that faire lasse,
 Seeing his worke now wasted deepe engriued was.

XLIV

But when the victoresse arriued there,
 Where late she left the pensife *Scudamore*,
 With her owne trusty Squire, both full of feare,
 Neither of them she found where she them lore:
 Thereat her noble hart was stonisht sore;
 But most faire *Amoret*, whose gentle spright
 Now gan to feede on hope, which she before
 Conceiued had, to see her owne deare knight,
 Being thereof beguyld was fild with new affright.

XLV

But he sad man, when he had long in drede
 Awayted there for *Britomarts* returne,
 Yet saw her not nor signe of her good speed,
 His expectation to despaire did turne,
 Mismeeming sure that her those flames did burne;
 And therefore gan aduize with her old Squire,
 Who her deare nourslings losse no lesse did mourne,
 Thence to depart for further aide t'enquire:
 Where let them wend at will, whilst here I doe respire.

XLVI

At last she came vnto the place, where late
 She left Sir *Scudamour* in great distresse,
 Twixt dolour and despight halfe desperate,
 Of his loues succour, of his owne redresse,
 And of the hardie *Britomarts* successe:
 There on the cold earth him now thrown she found,
 In wilfull anguish, and dead heauinesse,
 And to him cald; whose voices knowen sound
 Soone as he heard, himself he reared light from ground.

2.8.2 Reading and Review Questions

1. How, in what ways, and why does Spenser identify the Redcrosse Knight with/as St. George?
2. Archimago seems to act as an artist figure, as representing the imagination's power to recreate images. What does he suggest about art, about the power of art? How does Spenser's comments on the uses and abuses of art compare with Chaucer's?
3. How does the House of Pride hearken back to medieval allegory, and why? How does it compare with that of *Everyman* or *Gawain and the Green Knight*, for example?
4. Unlike holiness, temperance is a physical virtue. How does the landscape in Book II reflect this physicality?
5. Britomart, a female, is the Knight of Chastity. Yet her story is seminal, genealogical, in that she figures as a mother (of Elizabeth I) of a multitude through the dynasty that leads from Brutus to Arthur to Artegall (Arthur's brother by Igrain) to Elizabeth. What does Spenser's art suggest about sexuality here? Why does sex and subterfuge go so often together? How does sexuality become a virtue?

2.9 SIR WALTER RALEIGH

(1552-1618)

A soldier, explorer, scholar, and courtier, Walter Raleigh fought on the side of the French Protestants, the Huguenots, possibly in the Battle of Jarnac during the French Wars of Religion (1562-1598). He also participated in the massacre at Smerwick, brutally suppressing Irish rebels and slaughtering papal troops. He was tutored by the vicar John Ford, enrolled at Oriel College, Oxford University, and studied at one of the Inns of Court, the Middle Temple. Family connections probably won him a place in Elizabeth I's court, as Esquire of the Body Extraordinary.

His own charisma won him many favors from Elizabeth I, including a license to tax vintners for retailing wine in England, Durham House, a knighthood, the title of Lord and Governor of Virginia, thousands of acres of land in Ireland, and an appointment as Captain of the Guard. He also was elected to Parliament and appointed Lord Warden of the Stanneries, Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall, and Vice-Admiral of Cornwall and Devon. He used his wealth to fund voyages to Roanoke Island in hopes of settling a colony there and instead mysteriously losing the colonists. Although he did not introduce the potato and tobacco in Virginia, as he is often credited for doing, he did popularize smoking at Court.

He lost Elizabeth I's favor when he secretly married one of her maids of honor, Elizabeth Throckmorton (1565-1647), who as a royal attendant could only marry with the Queen's permission. She briefly imprisoned them both in the Tower of London. He soon continued his colonizing efforts by exploring Guiana in South America and futilely searching for El Dorado, the so-called Lost City of Gold.

Much of what he gained from Elizabeth Raleigh lost when she was succeeded by James I. Raleigh was implicated in two conspiracies against James I, the Bye and the Main Plots, for which he was condemned of treason and imprisoned for over ten years in the Tower. Upon his release, he courted James I's favor by again voyaging to Guiana in search of gold. He failed in this intention and, worse, disobeyed James I's injunction not to violate Spanish rights when his men destroyed the village of Santo Tome de Guyana. For endangering England's peace with Spain, Raleigh was beheaded.

Raleigh's writing records the fierce, cynical, plausible voice of the man and his many exploits. His love poetry wooed and "won" Elizabeth I; his book *The*

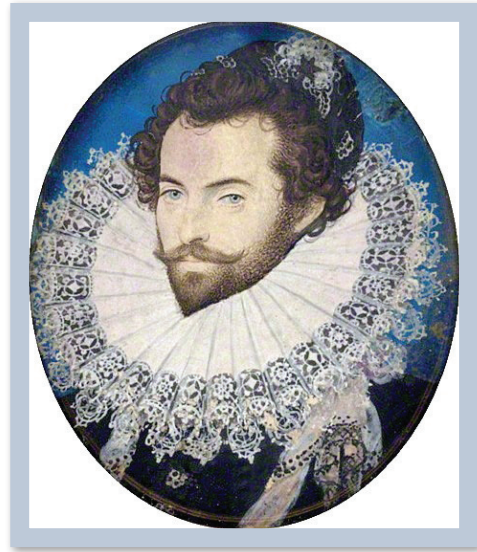


Image 2.9 | Sir Walter Raleigh

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Discoverie of the large and beautiful Empire of Guiana mythologized El Dorado; and his *History of the World* educated James I's son, whom Raleigh befriended during his imprisonment. His pastoral poetry both repeats and renews that classical genre, with his reply to Marlowe's *Passionate Shepherd* gaining much attention. His poem *The Lie*, with its all-encompassing attacks on the Court, Church, Men of High Condition, faith, wit, and learning, provoked several answering, often defensive, poems. His travelogue, like many that follow, blends fiction with "fact." And his *History* recovers the past in an attempt to shape the future.

2.9.1 "Farewell, False Love"

(1588)

Farewell, false love, the oracle of lies,
 A mortal foe and enemy to rest,
 An envious boy, from whom all cares arise,
 A bastard vile, a beast with rage possessed,
 A way of error, a temple full of treason,
 In all effects contrary unto reason.

A poisoned serpent covered all with flowers,
 Mother of sighs, and murderer of repose,
 A sea of sorrows whence are drawn such showers
 As moisture lend to every grief that grows;
 A school of guile, a net of deep deceit,
 A gilded hook that holds a poisoned bait.

A fortress foiled, which reason did defend,
 A siren song, a fever of the mind,
 A maze wherein affection finds no end,
 A raging cloud that runs before the wind,
 A substance like the shadow of the sun,
 A goal of grief for which the wisest run.

A quenchless fire, a nurse of trembling fear,
 A path that leads to peril and mishap,
 A true retreat of sorrow and despair,
 An idle boy that sleeps in pleasure's lap,
 A deep mistrust of that which certain seems,
 A hope of that which reason doubtful deems.

Sith then thy trains my younger years betrayed,
 And for my faith ingratitude I find;
 And sith repentance hath my wrongs bewrayed,

Whose course was ever contrary to kind:
 False love, desire, and beauty frail, adieu!
 Dead is the root whence all these fancies grew.

2.9.2 "If Cynthia Be a Queen, a Princess, and Supreme"

(1604/1618?)

If Cynthia be a queen, a princess, and supreme,
 Keep these among the rest, or say it was a dream,
 For those that like, expound, and those that loathe express
 Meanings according as their minds are moved more or less;
 For writing what thou art, or showing what thou were,
 Adds to the one disdain, to the other but despair,
 Thy mind of neither needs, in both seeing it exceeds.

2.9.3 "The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd"

(1600)

If all the world and love were young,
 And truth in every Shepherd's tongue,
 These pretty pleasures might me move,
 To live with thee, and be thy love.

Time drives the flocks from field to fold,
 When Rivers rage and Rocks grow cold,
 And *Philomel* becometh dumb,
 The rest complains of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields,
 To wayward winter reckoning yields,
 A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
 Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of Roses,
 Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies
 Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten:
 In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw and Ivy buds,
 The Coral clasps and amber studs,
 All these in me no means can move
 To come to thee and be thy love.

But could youth last, and love still breed,
Had joys no date, nor age no need,
Then these delights my mind might move
To live with thee, and be thy love.

2.9.4 "The Lie"

(1608)

Go, soul, the body's guest,
Upon a thankless errand;
Fear not to touch the best;
The truth shall be thy warrant.
Go, since I needs must die,
And give the world the lie.

Say to the court, it glows
And shines like rotten wood;
Say to the church, it shows
What's good, and doth no good.
If church and court reply,
Then give them both the lie.

Tell potentates, they live
Acting by others' action;
Not loved unless they give,
Not strong but by a faction.
If potentates reply,
Give potentates the lie.

Tell men of high condition,
That manage the estate,
Their purpose is ambition,
Their practice only hate.
And if they once reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell them that brave it most,
They beg for more by spending,
Who, in their greatest cost,
Seek nothing but commending.
And if they make reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell zeal it wants devotion;
Tell love it is but lust;
Tell time it is but motion;
Tell flesh it is but dust.
And wish them not reply,
For thou must give the lie.

Tell age it daily wasteth;
Tell honor how it alters;
Tell beauty how she blasteth;
Tell favor how it falters.
And as they shall reply,
Give every one the lie.

Tell wit how much it wrangles
In tickle points of niceness;
Tell wisdom she entangles
Herself in overwiseness.
And when they do reply,
Straight give them both the lie.

Tell physic of her boldness;
Tell skill it is pretension;
Tell charity of coldness;
Tell law it is contention.
And as they do reply,
So give them still the lie.

Tell fortune of her blindness;
Tell nature of decay;
Tell friendship of unkindness;
Tell justice of delay.
And if they will reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell arts they have no soundness,
But vary by esteeming;
Tell schools they want profoundness,
And stand too much on seeming.
If arts and schools reply,
Give arts and schools the lie.

Tell faith it's fled the city;
 Tell how the country erreth;
 Tell manhood shakes off pity;
 Tell virtue least preferreth.
 And if they do reply,
 Spare not to give the lie.

So when thou hast, as I
 Commanded thee, done blabbing—
 Although to give the lie
 Deserves no less than stabbing—
 Stab at thee he that will,
 No stab the soul can kill.

2.9.5 "Nature, That Washed Her Hands in Milk"

(Published in 1902)

Nature, that washed her hands in milk,
 And had forgot to dry them,
 Instead of earth took snow and silk,
 At love's request to try them,
 If she a mistress could compose
 To please love's fancy out of those.

Her eyes he would should be of light,
 A violet breath, and lips of jelly;
 Her hair not black, nor overbright,
 And of the softest down her belly;
 As for her inside he'd have it
 Only of wantonness and wit.

At love's entreaty such a one
 Nature made, but with her beauty
 She hath framed a heart of stone;
 So as love, by ill destiny,
 Must die for her whom nature gave him,
 Because her darling would not save him.

But time (which nature doth despise,
 And rudely gives her love the lie,
 Makes hope a fool, and sorrow wise)
 His hands do neither wash nor dry;

But being made of steel and rust,
Turns snow and silk and milk to dust.

The light, the belly, lips, and breath,
He dims, discolors, and destroys;
With those he feeds but fills not death,
Which sometimes were the food of joys.
Yea, time doth dull each lively wit,
And dries all wantonness with it.

Oh, cruel time! which takes in trust
Our youth, our joys, and all we have,
And pays us but with age and dust;
Who in the dark and silent grave
When we have wandered all our ways
Shuts up the story of our days.

2.9.6 From *The Discovery of the Large, Rich, and Beautiful Empire of Guiana*

(1599)

The next morning we also left the port, and sailed westward up to the river, to view the famous river called Caroli, as well because it was marvelous of itself, as also for that I understood it led to the strongest nations of all the frontiers, that were enemies to the Epuremei, which are subjects to Inga, emperor of Guiana and Manoa. And that night we anchored at another island called Caiama, of some five or six miles in length; and the next day arrived at the mouth of Caroli. When we were short of it as low or further down as the port of Morequito, we heard the great roar and fall of the river. But when we came to enter with our barge and wherries, thinking to have gone up some forty miles to the nations of the Cassipagotos, we were not able with a barge of eight oars to row one stone's cast in an hour; and yet the river is as broad as the Thames at Woolwich, and we tried both sides, and the middle, and every part of the river. So as we encamped upon the banks adjoining, and sent off our Orenoquepone which came with us from Morequito to give knowledge to the nations upon the river of our being there, and that we desired to see the lords of Canuria, which dwelt within the province upon that river, making them know that we were enemies to the Spaniards; for it was on this river side that Morequito slew the friar, and those nine Spaniards which came from Manoa, the city of Inga, and took from them 14,000 pesos of gold. So as the next day there came down a lord or cacique, called Wanuretona, with many people with him, and brought all store of provisions to entertain us, as the rest had done. And as I had before made my coming known to Topiawari, so did I acquaint this cacique therewith, and how I was sent by her Majesty for the purpose aforesaid,

and gathered also what I could of him touching the estate of Guiana. And I found that those also of Caroli were not only enemies to the Spaniards, but most of all to the Epuremei, which abound in gold. And by this Wanuretona I had knowledge that on the head of this river were three mighty nations, which were seated on a great lake, from whence this river descended, and were called Cassipagotos, Eparegotos, and Arawagotos; and that all those either against the Spaniards or the Epuremei would join with us, and that if we entered the land over the mountains of Curaa we should satisfy ourselves with gold and all other good things. He told us farther of a nation called Iwarawaqueri, before spoken of, that held daily war with the Epuremei that inhabited Macureguarai, and first civil town of Guiana, of the subjects of Inga, the emperor.

Upon this river one Captain George, that I took with Berreo, told me that there was a great silver mine, and that it was near the banks of the said river. But by this time as well Orenoque, Caroli, as all the rest of the rivers were risen four or five feet in height, so as it was not possible by the strength of any men, or with any boat whatsoever, to row into the river against the stream. I therefore sent Captain Thyn, Captain Greenville, my nephew John Gilbert, my cousin Butthead Gorges, Captain Clarke, and some thirty shot more to coast the river by land, and to go to a town some twenty miles over the valley called Amnatapoi; and they found guides there to go farther towards the mountain foot to another great town called Capurepana, belonging to a cacique called Haharacoa, that was a nephew to old Topiawari, king of Aromaia, our chiefest friend, because this town and province of Capurepana adjoined to Macureguarai, which was a frontier town of the empire. And the meanwhile myself with Captain Gifford, Captain Caulfield, Edward Hancock, and some half-a-dozen shot marched overland to view the strange overfalls of the river of Caroli, which roared so far off; and also to see the plains adjoining, and the rest of the province of Canuri. I sent also Captain Whiddon, William Connock, and some eight shot with them, to see if they could find any mineral stone amongst the river's side. When we were come to the tops of the first hills of the plains adjoining to the river, we beheld that wonderful breach of waters which ran down Caroli; and might from that mountain see the river how it ran in three parts, above twenty miles off, and there appeared some ten or twelve overfalls in sight, every one as high over the other as a church tower, which fell with that fury, that the rebound of water made it seem as if it had been all covered over with a great shower of rain; and in some places we took it at the first for a smoke that had risen over some great town. For mine own part I was well persuaded from thence to have returned, being a very ill footman; but the rest were all so desirous to go near the said strange thunder of waters, as they drew me on by little and little, till we came into the next valley, where we might better discern the same. I never saw a more beautiful country, nor more lively prospects; hills so raised here and there over the valley; the river winding into divers branches; the plains adjoining without bush or stubble, all fair green grass; the ground of hard sand, easy to march on, either for horse or foot; the deer crossing in every path; the birds towards the evening

singing on every tree with a thousand several tunes; cranes and herons of white, crimson, and carnation, perching in the river's side; the air fresh with a gentle easterly wind; and every stone that we stooped to take up promised either gold or silver by his complexion. Your Lordship shall see of many sorts, and I hope some of them cannot be bettered under the sun; and yet we had no means but with our daggers and fingers to tear them out here and there, the rocks being most hard of that mineral spar aforesaid, which is like a flint, and is altogether as hard or harder, and besides the veins lie a fathom or two deep in the rocks. But we wanted all things requisite save only our desires and good will to have performed more if it had pleased God. To be short, when both our companies returned, each of them brought also several sorts of stones that appeared very fair, but were such as they found loose on the ground, and were for the most part but coloured, and had not any gold fixed in them. Yet such as had no judgment or experience kept all that glistered, and would not be persuaded but it was rich because of the lustre; and brought of those, and of marcasite withal, from Trinidad, and have delivered of those stones to be tried in many places, and have thereby bred an opinion that all the rest is of the same. Yet some of these stones I shewed afterward to a Spaniard of the Caracas, who told me that it was El Madre del Oro, that is, the mother of gold, and that the mine was farther in the ground. . . .

For the rest, which myself have seen, I will promise these things that follow, which I know to be true. Those that are desirous to discover and to see many nations may be satisfied within this river, which bringeth forth so many arms and branches leading to several countries and provinces, above 2,000 miles east and west and 800 miles south and north, and of these the most either rich in gold or in other merchandises. The common soldier shall here fight for gold, and pay himself, instead of pence, with plates of half-a-foot broad, whereas he breaketh his bones in other wars for provant and penury. Those commanders and chieftains that shoot at honour and abundance shall find there more rich and beautiful cities, more temples adorned with golden images, more sepulchres filled with treasure, than either Cortes found in Mexico or Pizarro in Peru. And the shining glory of this conquest will eclipse all those so far-extended beams of the Spanish nation. There is no country which yieldeth more pleasure to the inhabitants, either for those common delights of hunting, hawking, fishing, fowling, and the rest, than Guiana doth; it hath so many plains, clear rivers, and abundance of pheasants, partridges, quails, rails, cranes, herons, and all other fowl; deer of all sorts, porks, hares, lions, tigers, leopards, and divers other sorts of beasts, either for chase or food. It hath a kind of beast called cama or anta, as big as an English beef, and in great plenty. To speak of the several sorts of every kind I fear would be troublesome to the reader, and therefore I will omit them, and conclude that both for health, good air, pleasure, and riches, I am resolved it cannot be equalled by any region either in the east or west. Moreover the country is so healthful, as of an hundred persons and more, which lay without shift most sluttishly, and were every day almost melted with heat in rowing and marching, and suddenly wet again with

great showers, and did eat of all sorts of corrupt fruits, and made meals of fresh fish without seasoning, of tortugas, of lagartos or crocodiles, and of all sorts good and bad, without either order or measure, and besides lodged in the open air every night, we lost not any one, nor had one ill-disposed to my knowledge; nor found any calentura or other of those pestilent diseases which dwell in all hot regions, and so near the equinoctial line. . . .

To conclude, Guiana is a country that hath yet her maidenhead, never sacked, turned, nor wrought; the face of the earth hath not been torn, nor the virtue and salt of the soil spent by manurance. The graves have not been opened for gold, the mines not broken with sledges, nor their images pulled down out of their temples. It hath never been entered by any army of strength, and never conquered or possessed by any Christian prince. It is besides so defensible, that if two forts be builded in one of the provinces which I have seen, the flood setteth in so near the bank, where the channel also lieth, that no ship can pass up but within a pike's length of the artillery, first of the one, and afterwards of the other. Which two forts will be a sufficient guard both to the empire of Inga, and to an hundred other several kingdoms, lying within the said river, even to the city of Quito in Peru.

There is therefore great difference between the easiness of the conquest of Guiana, and the defence of it being conquered, and the West or East Indies. Guiana hath but one entrance by the sea, if it hath that, for any vessels of burden. So as whosoever shall first possess it, it shall be found unaccessible for any enemy, except he come in wherries, barges, or canoas, or else in flat-bottomed boats; and if he do offer to enter it in that manner, the woods are so thick 200 miles together upon the rivers of such entrance, as a mouse cannot sit in a boat unhit from the bank. By land it is more impossible to approach; for it hath the strongest situation of any region under the sun, and it is so environed with impassable mountains on every side, as it is impossible to victual any company in the passage. Which hath been well proved by the Spanish nation, who since the conquest of Peru have never left five years free from attempting this empire, or discovering some way into it; and yet of three-and-twenty several gentlemen, knights, and noblemen, there was never any that knew which way to lead an army by land, or to conduct ships by sea, anything near the said country. Orellana, of whom the river of Amazons taketh name, was the first, and Don Antonio de Berreo, whom we displanted, the last: and I doubt much whether he himself or any of his yet know the best way into the said empire. It can therefore hardly be regained, if any strength be formerly set down, but in one or two places, and but two or three crumsters or galleys built and furnished upon the river within. The West Indies have many ports, watering places, and landings; and nearer than 300 miles to Guiana, no man can harbour a ship, except he know one only place, which is not learned in haste, and which I will undertake there is not any one of my companies that knoweth, whosoever hearkened most after it.

Besides, by keeping one good fort, or building one town of strength, the whole empire is guarded; and whatsoever companies shall be afterwards planted within

the land, although in twenty several provinces, those shall be able all to reunite themselves upon any occasion either by the way of one river, or be able to march by land without either wood, bog, or mountain. Whereas in the West Indies there are few towns or provinces that can succour or relieve one the other by land or sea. By land the countries are either desert, mountainous, or strong enemies. By sea, if any man invade to the eastward, those to the west cannot in many months turn against the breeze and eastern wind. Besides, the Spaniards are therein so dispersed as they are nowhere strong, but in Nueva Espana only; the sharp mountains, the thorns, and poisoned prickles, the sandy and deep ways in the valleys, the smothering heat and air, and want of water in other places are their only and best defence; which, because those nations that invade them are not victualled or provided to stay, neither have any place to friend adjoining, do serve them instead of good arms and great multitudes.

The West Indies were first offered her Majesty's grandfather by Columbus, a stranger, in whom there might be doubt of deceit; and besides it was then thought incredible that there were such and so many lands and regions never written of before. This Empire is made known to her Majesty by her own vassal, and by him that oweth to her more duty than an ordinary subject; so that it shall ill sort with the many graces and benefits which I have received to abuse her Highness, either with fables or imaginations. The country is already discovered, many nations won to her Majesty's love and obedience, and those Spaniards which have latest and longest laboured about the conquest, beaten out, discouraged, and disgraced, which among these nations were thought invincible. Her Majesty may in this enterprise employ all those soldiers and gentlemen that are younger brethren, and all captains and chieftains that want employment, and the charge will be only the first setting out in victualling and arming them; for after the first or second year I doubt not but to see in London a Contractation-House of more receipt for Guiana than there is now in Seville for the West Indies.

And I am resolved that if there were but a small army afoot in Guiana, marching towards Manoa, the chief city of Inga, he would yield to her Majesty by composition so many hundred thousand pounds yearly as should both defend all enemies abroad, and defray all expenses at home; and that he would besides pay a garrison of three or four thousand soldiers very royally to defend him against other nations. For he cannot but know how his predecessors, yea, how his own great uncles, Guascar and Atabalipa, sons to Guiana-Capac, emperor of Peru, were, while they contended for the empire, beaten out by the Spaniards, and that both of late years and ever since the said conquest, the Spaniards have sought the passages and entry of his country; and of their cruelties used to the borderers he cannot be ignorant. In which respects no doubt but he will be brought to tribute with great gladness; if not, he hath neither shot nor iron weapon in all his empire, and therefore may easily be conquered.

And I further remember that Berreo confessed to me and others, which I protest before the Majesty of God to be true, that there was found among the prophecies

in Peru, at such time as the empire was reduced to the Spanish obedience, in their chiefest temples, amongst divers others which foreshadowed the loss of the said empire, that from Inglatierra those Ingas should be again in time to come restored, and delivered from the servitude of the said conquerors. And I hope, as we with these few hands have displanted the first garrison, and driven them out of the said country, so her Majesty will give order for the rest, and either defend it, and hold it as tributary, or conquer and keep it as empress of the same. For whatsoever prince shall possess it, shall be greatest; and if the king of Spain enjoy it, he will become unresistible. Her Majesty hereby shall confirm and strengthen the opinions of all nations as touching her great and princely actions. And where the south border of Guiana reacheth to the dominion and empire of the Amazons, those women shall hereby hear the name of a virgin, which is not only able to defend her own territories and her neighbours, but also to invade and conquer so great empires and so far removed.

To speak more at this time I fear would be but troublesome: I trust in God, this being true, will suffice, and that he which is King of all Kings, and Lord of Lords, will put it into her heart which is Lady of Ladies to possess it. If not, I will judge those men worthy to be kings thereof, that by her grace and leave will undertake it of themselves.

2.9.7 Reading and Review Questions

1. To what degree, if any, do you see Raleigh expressing his society's values in his poetry and prose, and how? To what degree, if any, do you see Raleigh expressing personal values in his poetry and prose, and how? How do these expressions compare to More's or Spenser's?
2. What attitude towards the pastoral tradition in literature does "The Nymph's Reply" convey, and how?
3. Considering Raleigh's determined pursuit of glory, fame, courtly influence, and wealth, how seriously, if at all, do you think he intends his readers to take the condemnations in "The Lie?"
4. In "To Cynthia," how, if at all, does Raleigh obliquely refer to Elizabeth I, and why? What relationship, if any, between the two might we infer from this poem, and why? How does his reference to Elizabeth I compare to Spenser's?
5. In "The Discoverie," how, if at all, does Raleigh persuade his readers of the truth of what he is describing? What rhetorical devices, if any, does he use? What appeals to logic, if any, does he use? With what detail does Raleigh describe the native peoples, and why?

2.10 SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

(1554-1586)

From his early youth, Sir Philip Sidney, whose parents were companions to monarchs, demonstrated remarkable erudition and intellect. He was enrolled in Shrewsbury School where he studied under Thomas Ashton before entering Christ Church, Oxford. He perfected his knowledge of modern languages and rhetoric through two years of travel on the Continent, particularly Germany, Italy, and France. While in Paris, he witnessed the events culminating in the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, the slaughter of French Protestants, or Huguenots, that ensued after the attempted assassination of Gaspard de Coligny (1519-1572), advisor to the Huguenot King Henry III of Navarre (1553-1610).

Upon his return to England, Sidney sought to use his knowledge of the Continent to good effect through political appointments by Elizabeth I. He eventually was chosen to lead an embassy ostensibly of condolence to the family of Maximilian II of Austria (1527-1576) but actually of political intent to create a Protestant League in Europe. This intent continued upon his return to England during negotiations with William I of Orange (1533-1584). These political aspirations were frustrated by Elizabeth I's defensive strategies of playing Spain off against France, a strategy that a Protestant League might upset. His estrangement from Elizabeth I and her court was further exacerbated by his publicly discouraging her possible marriage to the Catholic Duke of Anjou.

Turning away from politics, Sidney then turned his considerable talents to writing. As a poet, Sidney experimented in new metrics in his pastoral romances *Old Arcadia* (1581) and *New Arcadia* (1590) and the Petrarchan sonnet cycle in *Astrophil and Stella* (1591). This sonnet sequence is particularly Petrarchan in its conventional depiction of unrequited love, in its aloof Stella and suffering Astrophil. Sidney wrote his important work of literary criticism, *The Defense of Poesy*, probably in response to *The School of Abuse* (1579), a work by Stephen Gosson (1554-1624) that deplored the immorality fostered by poetry that was dedicated to Sidney. The *Defense* demonstrates Sidney's extraordinary knowledge of the



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classics as well as modern authors, including Dante (c. 1265-1321), Jacopo Sannazaro (1458-1530)—whose humanist *Arcadia* (1504) directly influenced Sidney’s versions—Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533), and Petrarch. And countering Gosson’s allegations against poetry, Sidney’s *Defense* takes up the gauntlet that Plato (c. 428-c. 348 BCE) threw down when he banished poets from the ideal Republic for their potential to lead citizens into immorality. Sidney shapes his *Defense* according to the seven-part classical structure: an introduction, proposition, division, examination, refutation, peroration, and digression. Thus, he not only demonstrates

but also lauds poetry’s ability to teach, to give light to darkness through its beauty and sweet delight.

As the *Defense* asserts, right thought leads to right action. Sidney turned to action when Elizabeth I appointed him as governor of Vlissingen in the Netherlands, still in the throes of its rebellion against Catholic Spain. Sidney’s uncle Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, the Governor-General of the Netherlands, supported the Dutch rebels. With an English army that included Sidney, Leicester besieged the town of Zutphen. During battle, Sidney received a leg wound that later turned gangrenous. Legend has it that when close to death Sidney—always the consummate courtly gentleman—refused a cup of water in favor of another wounded soldier, saying “Thy necessity is yet greater than mine.” After his death, Mary (Sidney) Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, became Sidney’s literary executor and the many elegies for Sidney she encouraged, including Spenser’s and her own, give some sense of Sidney’s impact from his era up to our own.

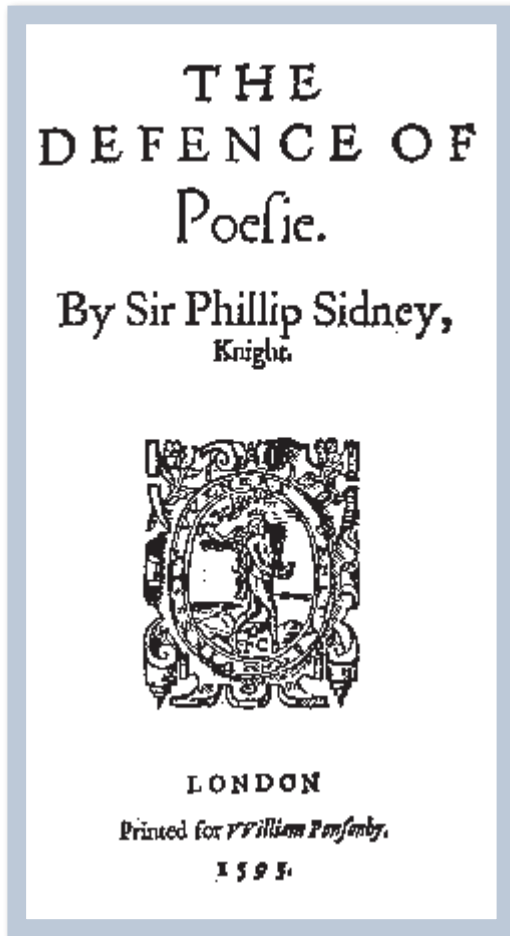


Image 2.11 | *The Defence of Poesie*

Artist | Sir Phillip Sidney

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2.10.1 *The Defence of Poesy*

(1595)

When the right virtuous Edward Wotton and I were at the Emperor’s [Maximilian II] court together, we gave ourselves to learn horsemanship of John Pietro Pugliano, one that with great commendation had the place of an esquire

in his stable; and he, according to the fertility of the Italian wit, did not only afford us the demonstration of his practice, but sought to enrich our minds with the contemplations therein which he thought most precious. But with none I remember mine ears were at any time more loaded, than when—either angered with slow payment, or moved with our learner-like admiration—he exercised his speech in the praise of his faculty. He said soldiers were the noblest estate of mankind, and horsemen the noblest of soldiers. He said they were the masters of war and ornaments of peace, speedy goers and strong abiders, triumphers both in camps and courts. Nay, to so unbelievably a point he proceeded, as that no earthly thing bred such wonder to a prince as to be a good horseman; skill of government was but a *pedanteria* [pedantry—ed.] in comparison. Then would he add certain praises, by telling what a peerless beast the horse was, the only serviceable courtier without flattery, the beast of most beauty, faithfulness, courage, and such more, that if I had not been a piece of a logician before I came to him, I think he would have persuaded me to have wished myself a horse. But thus much at least with his no few words he drove into me, that self-love is better than any gilding to make that seem gorgeous wherein ourselves be parties.

Wherein if Pugliano's strong affection and weak arguments will not satisfy you, I will give you a nearer example of myself, who, I know not by what mischance, in these my not old years and idlest times, having slipped into the title of a poet, am provoked to say something unto you in the defense of that my unelected vocation, which if I handle with more good will than good reasons, bear with me, since the scholar is to be pardoned that follows the steps of his master. And yet I must say that, as I have just cause to make a pitiful defense of poor poetry, which from almost the highest estimation of learning is fallen to be the laughing-stock of children, so have I need to bring some more available proofs, since the former is by no man barred of his deserved credit, the silly [weak—ed] latter has had even the names of philosophers used to the defacing of it, with great danger of civil war among the Muses.

And first, truly, to all them that, professing learning, inveigh against poetry, may justly be objected that they go very near to ungratefulness, to seek to deface that which, in the noblest nations and languages that are known, has been the first light-giver to ignorance, and first nurse, whose milk by little and little enabled them to feed afterwards of tougher knowledges. And will they now play the hedgehog, that, being received into the den, drove out his host? Or rather the vipers, that with their birth kill their parents? Let learned Greece in any of her manifold sciences be able to show me one book before Musæus, Homer, and Hesiod, all three nothing else but poets. Nay, let any history be brought that can say any writers were there before them, if they were not men of the same skill, as Orpheus, Linus, and some other are named, who, having been the first of that country that made pens deliver of their knowledge to their posterity, may justly challenge to be called their fathers in learning. For not only in time they had this priority—although in itself antiquity be venerable—but went before them as causes, to draw with their charming

sweetness the wild untamed wits to an admiration of knowledge. So as Amphion was said to move stones with his poetry to build Thebes, and Orpheus to be listened to by beasts,—indeed stony and beastly people. So among the Romans were Livius Andronicus and Ennius; so in the Italian language the first that made it aspire to be a treasure-house of science were the poets Dante, Boccace, and Petrarch; so in our English were Gower and Chaucer, after whom, encouraged and delighted with their excellent foregoing, others have followed to beautify our mother-tongue, as well in the same kind as in other arts.

This did so notably show itself, that the philosophers of Greece durst not a long time appear to the world but under the masks of poets. So Thales, Empedocles, and Parmenides sang their natural philosophy in verses; so did Pythagoras and Phocylides their moral counsels; so did Tyrtaeus in war matters, and Solon in matters of policy; or rather they, being poets; did exercise their delightful vein in those points of highest knowledge which before them lay hidden to the world. For that wise Solon was directly a poet it is manifest, having written in verse the notable fable of the Atlantic Island which was continued by Plato. And truly even Plato whosoever well considers, shall find that in the body of his work though the inside and strength were philosophy, the skin as it were and beauty depended most of poetry. For all stands upon dialogues; wherein he feigns many honest burgesses of Athens to speak of such matters that, if they had been set on the rack, they would never have confessed them; besides his poetical describing the circumstances of their meetings, as the well-ordering of a banquet, the delicacy of a walk, with interlacing mere tales, as Gyges' Ring and others, which who knows not to be flowers of poetry did never walk into Apollo's garden.

And even historiographers, although their lips sound of things done, and verity be written in their foreheads, have been glad to borrow both fashion and perchance weight of the poets. So Herodotus entitled [the various books of—ed.] his history by the name of the nine Muses; and both he and all the rest that followed him either stole or usurped of poetry their passionate describing of passions, the many particularities of battles which no man could affirm, or, if that be denied me, long orations put in the mouths of great kings and captains, which it is certain they never pronounced.

So that truly neither philosopher nor historiographer could at the first have entered into the gates of popular judgments, if they had not taken a great passport of poetry, which in all nations at this day, where learning flourishes not, is plain to be seen; in all which they have some feeling of poetry. In Turkey, besides their lawgiving divines they have no other writers but poets. In our neighbor country Ireland, where truly learning goes very bare, yet are their poets held in a devout reverence. Even among the most barbarous and simple Indians, where no writing is, yet have they their poets, who make and sing songs (which they call *areytos*), both of their ancestors' deeds and praises of their gods,—a sufficient probability that, if ever learning come among them, it must be by having their hard dull wits softened and sharpened with the sweet delights of poetry; for until they find a

pleasure in the exercise of the mind, great promises of much knowledge will little persuade them that know not the fruits of knowledge. In Wales, the true remnant of the ancient Britons, as there are good authorities to show the long time they had poets which they called bards, so through all the conquests of Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans, some of whom did seek to ruin all memory of learning from among them, yet do their poets even to this day last; so as it is not more notable in soon beginning, than in long continuing.

But since the authors of most of our sciences were the Romans, and before them the Greeks, let us a little stand upon their authorities, but even [only—ed.] so far as to see what names they have given unto this now scorned skill. Among the Romans a poet was called *vates*, which is as much as a diviner, foreseer, or prophet, as by his conjoined words, *vaticinium* and *vaticinari*, is manifest; so heavenly a title did that excellent people bestow upon this heart-ravishing knowledge. And so far were they carried into the admiration thereof, that they thought in the chanceable hitting upon any such verses great fore-tokens of their following fortunes were placed; whereupon grew the word of *Sortes Virgilianæ*, when by sudden opening Virgil's book they lighted upon some verse of his making. Whereof the histories of the Emperors' lives are full: as of Albinus, the governor of our island, who in his childhood met with this verse,

Arma amens capio, nec sat rationis in armis,
[Angered, I take up arms, but reason does not lie in arms—ed.]

and in his age performed it. Although it were a very vain and godless superstition, as also it was to think that spirits were commanded by such verses—whereupon this word charms, derived of *carmina*, comes—so yet serves it to show the great reverence those wits were held in, and altogether not [not altogether—ed] without ground, since both the oracles of Delphos and Sibylla's prophecies were wholly delivered in verses; for that same exquisite observing of number and measure in words, and that high-flying liberty of conceit [concept, invention—ed.], proper to the poet, did seem to have some divine force in it.

And may not I presume a little further to show the reasonableness of this word *Vates*, and say that the holy David's Psalms are a divine poem? If I do, I shall not do it without the testimony of great learned men, both ancient and modern. But even the name of Psalms will speak for me, which, being interpreted, is nothing but Songs; then, that it is fully written in metre, as all learned Hebricians agree, although the rules be not yet fully found; lastly and principally, his handling his prophecy, which is merely poetical. For what else is the awaking his musical instruments, the often and free changing of persons, his notable prosopopoeias, when he makes you, as it were, see God coming in His majesty, his telling of the beasts' joyfulness and hills' leaping, but a heavenly poesy, wherein almost he shows himself a passionate lover of that unspeakable and everlasting beauty to be seen by the eyes of the mind, only cleared by faith? But truly now having named him, I fear

I seem to profane that holy name, applying it to poetry, which is among us thrown down to so ridiculous an estimation. But they that with quiet judgments will look a little deeper into it, shall find the end and working of it such as, being rightly applied, deserves not to be scourged out of the church of God.

But now let us see how the Greeks named it and how they deemed of it. The Greeks called him “a poet,” which name has, as the most excellent, gone through other languages. It comes of this word *poiein*, which is “to make”; wherein I know not whether by luck or wisdom we Englishmen have met with the Greeks in calling him “a maker.” Which name how high and incomparable a title it is, I had rather were known by marking the scope of other sciences than by any partial allegation. There is no art delivered unto mankind that has not the works of nature for his principal object, without which they could not consist, and on which they so depend as they become actors and players, as it were, of what nature will have set forth. So doth the astronomer look upon the stars, and, by that he sees, set down what order nature has taken therein. So do the geometrician and arithmetician in their divers sorts of quantities. So doth the musician in times tell you which by nature agree, which not. The natural philosopher thereon has his name, and the moral philosopher stands upon the natural virtues, vices, and passions of man; and “follow nature,” says he, “therein, and thou shalt not err.” The lawyer says what men have determined, the historian what men have done. The grammarian speaks only of the rules of speech, and the rhetorician and logician, considering what in nature will soonest prove and persuade, thereon give artificial rules, which still are compassed within the circle of a question, according to the proposed matter. The physician weighs the nature of man’s body, and the nature of things helpful or hurtful unto it. And the metaphysic, though it be in the second and abstract notions, and therefore be counted supernatural, yet doth he, indeed, build upon the depth of nature.

Only the poet, disdainful to be tied to any such subjection, lifted up with the vigor of his own invention, doth grow, in effect, into another nature, in making things either better than nature brings forth, or, quite anew, forms such as never were in nature, as the heroes, demi-gods, cyclops, chimeras, furies, and such like; so as he goes hand in hand with nature, not enclosed within the narrow warrant of her gifts, but freely ranging within the zodiac of his own wit. Nature never set forth the earth in so rich tapestry as divers poets have done; neither with pleasant rivers, fruitful trees, sweet-smelling flowers, nor whatsoever else may make the too-much-loved earth more lovely; her world is brazen, the poets only deliver a golden.

But let those things alone, and go to man—for whom as the other things are, so it seems in him her uttermost cunning is employed—and know whether she have brought forth so true a lover as Theagenes; so constant a friend as Pylades; so valiant a man as Orlando; so right a prince as Xenophon’s Cyrus; so excellent a man every way as Virgil’s Æneas? Neither let this be jestingly conceived, because the works of the one be essential, the other in imitation or fiction; for any understanding knows the skill of each artificer stands in that idea, or fore-conceit of the work, and not in the work itself. And that the poet has that idea is manifest, by delivering them

forth in such excellency as he has imagined them. Which delivering forth, also, is not wholly imaginative, as we are wont to say by them that build castles in the air; but so far substantially it works, not only to make a Cyrus, which had been but a particular excellency, as nature might have done, but to bestow a Cyrus upon the world to make many Cyruces, if they will learn aright why and how that maker made him. Neither let it be deemed too saucy a comparison to balance the highest point of man's wit with the efficacy of nature; but rather give right honor to the Heavenly Maker of that maker, who, having made man to His own likeness, set him beyond and over all the works of that second nature. Which in nothing he shows so much as in poetry, when with the force of a divine breath he brings things forth far surpassing her doings, with no small argument to the incredulous of that first accursed fall of Adam,—since our erected wit makes us know what perfection is, and yet our infected will keeps us from reaching unto it. But these arguments will by few be understood, and by fewer granted; thus much I hope will be given me, that the Greeks with some probability of reason gave him the name above all names of learning.

Now let us go to a more ordinary opening of him, that the truth may be the more palpable; and so, I hope, though we get not so unmatched a praise as the etymology of his names will grant, yet his very description, which no man will deny, shall not justly be barred from a principal commendation.

Poesy, therefore, is an art of imitation, for so Aristotle terms it in his word *mimēsis*, that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth; to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture, with this end,—to teach and delight.

Of this have been three general kinds. The chief, both in antiquity and excellency, were they that did imitate the inconceivable excellencies of God. Such were David in his Psalms; Solomon in his Song of Songs, in his Ecclesiastes and Proverbs; Moses and Deborah in their Hymns; and the writer of Job; which, beside other, the learned Emanuel Tremellius and Franciscus Junius do entitle the poetical part of the Scripture. Against these none will speak that has the Holy Ghost in due holy reverence. In this kind, though in a full wrong divinity, were Orpheus, Amphion, Homer in his Hymns, and many other, both Greeks and Romans. And this poesy must be used by whosoever will follow St. James' counsel in singing psalms when they are merry; and I know is used with the fruit of comfort by some, when, in sorrowful pangs of their death-bringing sins, they find the consolation of the never-leaving goodness.

The second kind is of them that deal with matters philosophical, either moral, as Tyrtaeus, Phocylides, and Cato; or natural, as Lucretius and Virgil's Georgics; or astronomical, as Manilius and Pontanus; or historical, as Lucan; which who mislike, the fault is in their judgment quite out of taste, and not in the sweet food of sweetly uttered knowledge.

But because this second sort is wrapped within the fold of the proposed subject, and takes not the free course of his own invention, whether they properly be poets or no, let grammarians dispute, and go to the third, indeed right poets, of whom chiefly this question arises. Betwixt whom and these second is such a kind

of difference as betwixt the meaner sort of painters, who counterfeit only such faces as are set before them, and the more excellent, who having no law but wit, bestow that in colors upon you which is fittest for the eye to see,—as the constant though lamenting look of Lucretia, when she punished in herself another's fault; wherein he paints not Lucretia, whom he never saw, but paints the outward beauty of such a virtue. For these third be they which most properly do imitate to teach and delight; and to imitate borrow nothing of what is, has been, or shall be; but range, only reined with learned discretion, into the divine consideration of what may be and should be. These be they that, as the first and most noble sort may justly be termed vates, so these are waited on in the excellentest languages and best understandings with the fore-described name of poets. For these, indeed, do merely make to imitate, and imitate both to delight and teach, and delight to move men to take that goodness in hand, which without delight they would fly as from a stranger; and teach to make them know that goodness whereunto they are moved:—which being the noblest scope to which ever any learning was directed, yet want there not idle tongues to bark at them.

These be subdivided into sundry more special denominations. The most notable be the heroic, lyric, tragic, comic, satiric, iambic, elegiac, pastoral, and certain others, some of these being termed according to the matter they deal with, some by the sort of verse they liked best to write in,—for indeed the greatest part of poets have appareled their poetical inventions in that numerous kind of writing which is called verse. Indeed but appareled, verse being but an ornament and no cause to poetry, since there have been many most excellent poets that never versified, and now swarm many versifiers that need never answer to the name of poets. For Xenophon, who did imitate so excellently as to give us *effigiem justi imperii*—the portraiture of a just empire under the name of Cyrus (as Cicero says of him)—made therein an absolute heroical poem; so did Heliodorus in his sugared invention of that picture of love in Theagenes and Chariclea; and yet both these wrote in prose. Which I speak to show that it is not riming and versing that makes a poet—no more than a long gown makes an advocate, who, though he pleaded in armor, should be an advocate and no soldier—but it is that feigning notable images of virtues, vices, or what else, with that delightful teaching, which must be the right describing note to know a poet by. Although indeed the senate of poets has chosen verse as their fittest raiment, meaning, as in matter they passed all in all, so in manner to go beyond them; not speaking, table-talk fashion, or like men in a dream, words as they chanceably fall from the mouth, but peizing [weighing—ed.] each syllable of each word by just proportion, according to the dignity of the subject.

Now, therefore, it shall not be amiss, first to weigh this latter sort of poetry by his works, and then by his parts; and if in neither of these anatomies he be condemnable, I hope we shall obtain a more favorable sentence. This purifying of wit, this enriching of memory, enabling of judgment, and enlarging of conceit, which commonly we call learning, under what name soever it come forth or to what immediate end soever it be directed, the final end is to lead and draw us to

as high a perfection as our degenerate souls, made worse by their clay lodgings, can be capable of. This, according to the inclination of man, bred many-formed impressions. For some that thought this felicity principally to be gotten by knowledge, and no knowledge to be so high or heavenly as acquaintance with the stars, gave themselves to astronomy; others, persuading themselves to be demi-gods if they knew the causes of things, became natural and supernatural philosophers. Some an admirable delight drew to music, and some the certainty of demonstration to the mathematics; but all, one and other, having this scope:—to know, and by knowledge to lift up the mind from the dungeon of the body to the enjoying his own divine essence. But when by the balance of experience it was found that the astronomer, looking to the stars, might fall into a ditch, that the inquiring philosopher might be blind in himself, and the mathematician might draw forth a straight line with a crooked heart; then lo! did proof, the overruler of opinions, make manifest, that all these are but serving sciences, which, as they have each a private end in themselves, so yet are they all directed to the highest end of the mistress knowledge, by the Greeks called *architektonikē*, which stands, as I think, in the knowledge of a man's self, in the ethic and politic consideration, with the end of well-doing, and not of well-knowing only:—even as the saddler's next end is to make a good saddle, but his further end to serve a nobler faculty, which is horsemanship; so the horseman's to soldiery; and the soldier not only to have the skill, but to perform the practice of a soldier. So that the ending end of all earthly learning being virtuous action, those skills that most serve to bring forth that have a most just title to be princes over all the rest; wherein, if we can show, the poet is worthy to have it before any other competitors.

Among whom as principal challengers step forth the moral philosophers; whom, me thinks, I see coming toward me with a sullen gravity, as though they could not abide vice by daylight; rudely clothed, for to witness outwardly their contempt of outward things; with books in their hands against glory, whereto they set their names; sophistically speaking against subtlety; and angry with any man in whom they see the foul fault of anger. These men, casting largess as they go of definitions, divisions, and distinctions, with a scornful interrogative do soberly ask whether it be possible to find any path so ready to lead a man to virtue, as that which teaches what virtue is, and teaches it not only by delivering forth his very being, his causes and effects, but also by making known his enemy, vice, which must be destroyed, and his cumbersome servant, passion, which must be mastered; by showing the generalities that contain it, and the specialities that are derived from it; lastly, by plain setting down how it extends itself out of the limits of a man's own little world, to the government of families, and maintaining of public societies?

The historian scarcely gives leisure to the moralist to say so much, but that he, loaded with old mouse-eaten records, authorizing himself for the most part upon other histories, whose greatest authorities are built upon the notable foundation of hearsay; having much ado to accord differing writers, and to pick truth out of partiality; better acquainted with a thousand years ago than with the present age,

and yet better knowing how this world goes than how his own wit runs; curious for antiquities and inquisitive of novelties, a wonder to young folks and a tyrant in table-talk; denies, in a great chafe [agitation—ed.], that any man for teaching of virtue and virtuous actions is comparable to him “I am *testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriæ, magistra vitæ, nuntia vetustatis* [the witness of the times, the light of truth, the life of memory, the directress of life, the messenger of antiquity—ed.]. The philosopher,” says he, “teaches a disputative virtue, but I do an active. His virtue is excellent in the dangerless Academy of Plato, but mine shows forth her honorable face in the battles of Marathon, Pharsalia, Poitiers, and Agincourt. He teaches virtue by certain abstract considerations, but I only bid you follow the footing of them that have gone before you Old-aged experience goes beyond the fine-witted philosopher; but I give the experience of many ages. Lastly, if he make the songbook, I put the learner’s hand to the lute; and if he be the guide, I am the light.” Then would he allege you innumerable examples, confirming story by story, how much the wisest senators and princes have been directed by the credit of history, as Brutus, Alphonsus of Aragon—and who not, if need be? At length the long line of their disputation makes [comes to—ed] a point in this,—that the one gives the precept, and the other the example.

Now whom shall we find, since the question stands for the highest form in the school of learning, to be moderator? Truly, as me seems, the poet; and if not a moderator, even the man that ought to carry the title from them both, and much more from all other serving sciences. Therefore compare we the poet with the historian and with the moral philosopher; and if he go beyond them both, no other human skill can match him. For as for the divine, with all reverence it is ever to be excepted, not only for having his scope as far beyond any of these as eternity exceeds a moment, but even for passing each of these in themselves. And for the lawyer, though *Jus* be the daughter of Justice, and Justice the chief of virtues, yet because he seeks to make men good rather *formidine poeænæ* [fear of punishment] than *virtutis amore* [love of virtue—ed.] or, to say righter, doth not endeavor to make men good, but that their evil hurt not others; having no care, so he be a good citizen, how bad a man he be; therefore, as our wickedness makes him necessary, and necessity makes him honorable, so is he not in the deepest truth to stand in rank with these, who all endeavor to take naughtiness away, and plant goodness even in the secretest cabinet of our souls. And these four are all that any way deal in that consideration of men’s manners, which being the supreme knowledge, they that best breed it deserve the best commendation.

The philosopher therefore and the historian are they which would win the goal, the one by precept, the other by example; but both not having both, do both halt. For the philosopher, setting down with thorny arguments the bare rule, is so hard of utterance and so misty to be conceived, that one that has no other guide but him shall wade in him till he be old, before he shall find sufficient cause to be honest. For his knowledge stands so upon the abstract and general that happy is that man who may understand him, and more happy that can apply what he doth understand. On the

other side, the historian, wanting the precept, is so tied, not to what should be but to what is, to the particular truth of things, and not to the general reason of things, that his example draws no necessary consequence, and therefore a less fruitful doctrine.

Now doth the peerless poet perform both; for whatsoever the philosopher says should be done, he gives a perfect picture of it in some one by whom he presupposes it was done, he gives a perfect picture of it in in some one by whom he presupposes it was done, so as he couples the general notion with the particular example. A perfect picture, I say; for he yields to the powers of the mind an image of that whereof the philosopher bestows but a wordish description, which doth neither strike, pierce, nor possess the sight of the soul so much as that other doth. For as, in outward things, to a man that had never seen an elephant or a rhinoceros, who should tell him most exquisitely all their shapes, color, bigness, and particular marks; or of a gorgeous palace, an architector, with declaring the full beauties, might well make the hearer able to repeat, as it were by rote, all he had heard, yet should never satisfy his inward conceit with being witness to itself of a true lively [vital—ed.] knowledge; but the same man, as soon as he might see those beasts well painted, or that house well in model, should straightway grow, without need of any description, to a judicial comprehending of them; so no doubt the philosopher, with his learned definitions, be it of virtues or vices, matters of public policy or private government, replenishes the memory with many infallible grounds of wisdom, which notwithstanding lie dark before the imaginative and judging power, if they be not illuminated or figured forth by the speaking picture of poesy.

Tully takes much pains, and many times not without poetical helps, to make us know the force love of our country has in us. Let us but hear old Anchises speaking in the midst of Troy's flames, or see Ulysses, in the fullness of all Calypso's delights, bewail his absence from barren and beggarly Ithaca. Anger, the Stoics said, was a short madness. Let but Sophocles bring you Ajax on a stage, killing and whipping sheep and oxen, thinking them the army of Greeks, with their chieftains Agamemnon and Menelaus, and tell me if you have not a more familiar insight into anger, than finding in the schoolmen his genus and difference. See whether wisdom and temperance in Ulysses and Diomedes, valor in Achilles, friendship in Nisus and Euryalus, even to an ignorant man carry not an apparent shining. And, contrarily, the remorse of conscience, in Oedipus; the soon-repenting pride of Agamemnon; the self-devouring cruelty in his father Atreus; the violence of ambition in the two Theban brothers; the sour sweetness of revenge in Medea; and, to fall lower, the Terentian Gnatho and our Chaucer's Pandar so expressed that we now use their names to signify their trades; and finally, all virtues, vices, and passions so in their own natural states laid to the view, that we seem not to hear of them, but clearly to see through them.

But even in the most excellent determination of goodness, what philosopher's counsel can so readily direct a prince, as the feigned Cyrus in Xenophon? Or a virtuous man in all fortunes, as Æneas in Virgil? Or a whole commonwealth, as the way of Sir Thomas More's Utopia? I say the way, because where Sir Thomas More

erred, it was the fault of the man, and not of the poet; for that way of patterning a commonwealth was most absolute, though he, perchance, has not so absolutely performed it. For the question is, whether the feigned image of poesy, or the regular instruction of philosophy, has the more force in teaching. Wherein if the philosophers have more rightly showed themselves philosophers than the poets have attained to the high top of their profession,—as in truth,

Mediocribus esse poetis

Non Dii, non homines, non concessere columnæ—

[Not gods nor men nor booksellers allow poets to be mediocre—ed.]

it is, I say again, not the fault of the art, but that by few men that art can be accomplished.

Certainly, even our Savior Christ could as well have given the moral commonplaces of uncharitableness and humbleness as the divine narration of Dives and Lazarus; or of disobedience and mercy, as that heavenly discourse of the lost child and the gracious father; but that his thorough-searching wisdom knew the estate of Dives burning in hell, and of Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, would more constantly, as it were, inhabit both the memory and judgment. Truly, for myself, me seems I see before mine eyes the lost child's disdainful prodigality, turned to envy a swine's dinner; which by the learned divines are thought not historical acts, but instructing parables.

For conclusion, I say the philosopher teaches, but he teaches obscurely, so as the learned only can understand him; that is to say, he teaches them that are already taught. But the poet is the food for the tenderest stomachs; the poet is indeed the right popular philosopher. Whereof Æsop's tales give good proof; whose pretty allegories, stealing under the formal tales of beasts, make many, more beastly than beasts, begin to hear the sound of virtue from those dumb speakers.

But now it may be alleged that if this imagining of matters be so fit for the imagination, then must the historian needs surpass, who brings you images of true matters, such as indeed were done, and not such as fantastically [fancifully—ed.] or falsely may be suggested to have been done. Truly, Aristotle himself, in his Discourse of Poesy, plainly determines this question, saying that poetry is *philosophoteron* and *spoudaioteron*, that is to say, it is more philosophical and more studiously serious than history. His reason is, because poesy deals with *katholou*, that is to say with the universal consideration, and the history with *kathekaston*, the particular.

“Now,” says he, “the universal weighs what is fit to be said or done, either in likelihood or necessity—which the poesy considers in his imposed names; and the particular only marks whether Alcibiades did, or suffered, this or that.” Thus far Aristotle. Which reason of his, as all his, is most full of reason.

For, indeed, if the question were whether it were better to have a particular act truly or falsely set down, there is no doubt which is to be chosen, no more than

whether you had rather have Vespasian's picture right as he was, or, at the painter's pleasure, nothing resembling. But if the question be for your own use and learning, whether it be better to have it set down as it should be or as it was, then certainly is more doctrinable [instructive—ed.] the feigned Cyrus in Xenophon than the true Cyrus in Justin; and the feigned Æneas in Virgil than the right Æneas in Dares Phrygius; as to a lady that desired to fashion her countenance to the best grace, a painter should more benefit her to portrait a most sweet face, writing Canidia upon it, than to paint Canidia as she was, who, Horace swears, was foul and ill-favored.

If the poet do his part aright, he will show you in Tantalus, Atreus, and such like, nothing that is not to be shunned; in Cyrus, Æneas, Ulysses, each thing to be followed. Where the historian, bound to tell things as things were, cannot be liberal—without he will be poetical—of a perfect pattern; but, as in Alexander, or Scipio himself, show doings, some to be liked, some to be disliked; and then how will you discern what to follow but by your own discretion, which you had without reading Quintus Curtius? And whereas a man may say, though in universal consideration of doctrine the poet prevails, yet that the history, in his saying such a thing was done, doth warrant a man more in that he shall follow,—the answer is manifest: that if he stand upon that *was*, as if he should argue, because it rained yesterday therefore it should rain to-day, then indeed it has some advantage to a gross conceit. But if he know an example only informs a conjectured likelihood, and so go by reason, the poet doth so far exceed him as he is to frame his example to that which is most reasonable, be it in warlike, politic, or private matters; where the historian in his bare *was* has many times that which we call fortune to overrule the best wisdom. Many times he must tell events whereof he can yield no cause; or if he do, it must be poetically.

For, that a feigned example has as much force to teach as a true example—for as for to move, it is clear, since the feigned may be tuned to the highest key of passion—let us take one example wherein a poet and a historian do concur Herodotus and Justin do both testify that Zopyrus, king Darius' faithful servant, seeing his master long resisted by the rebellious Babylonians, feigned himself in extreme disgrace of his king; for verifying of which he caused his own nose and ears to be cut off, and so flying to the Babylonians, was received, and for his known valor so far credited, that he did find means to deliver them over to Darius. Muchlike matter doth Livy record of Tarquinius and his son. Xenophon excellently feigns such another stratagem, performed by Abradatas in Cyrus' behalf. Now would I fain know, if occasion be presented unto you to serve your prince by such an honest dissimulation, why do you not as well learn it of Xenophon's fiction as of the other's verity? and, truly, so much the better, as you shall save your nose by the bargain; for Abradatas did not counterfeit so far.

So, then, the best of the historian is subject to the poet; for whatsoever action or faction, whatsoever counsel, policy, or war-stratagem the historian is bound to recite, that may the poet, if he list, with his imitation make his own, beautifying it both for further teaching and more delighting, as it pleases him; having all, from

Dante's Heaven to his Hell, under the authority of his pen. Which if I be asked what poets have done? so as I might well name some, yet say I, and say again, I speak of the art, and not of the artificer.

Now, to that which is commonly attributed to the praise of history, in respect of the notable learning is gotten by marking the success, as though therein a man should see virtue exalted and vice punished,—truly that commendation is peculiar to poetry and far off from history. For, indeed, poetry ever sets virtue so out in her best colors, making Fortune her well-waiting handmaid, that one must needs be enamored of her. Well may you see. Ulysses in a storm, and in other hard plights; but they are but exercises of patience and magnanimity, to make them shine the more in the near following prosperity. And, of the contrary part, if evil men come to the stage, they ever go out—as the tragedy writer answered to one that disliked the show of such persons—so manacled as they little animate folks to follow them. But the historian, being captived to the truth of a foolish world, is many times a terror from well-doing, and an encouragement to unbridled wickedness. For see we not valiant Miltiades rot in his fetters? The just Phocion and the accomplished Socrates put to death like traitors? The cruel Severus live prosperously? The excellent Severus miserably murdered? Sylla and Marius dying in their beds? Pompey and Cicero slain then, when they would have thought exile a happiness? See we not virtuous Cato driven to kill himself, and rebel Cæsar so advanced that his name yet, after sixteen hundred years, lasts in the highest honor? And mark but even Cæsar's own words of the forenamed Sylla—who in that only did honestly, to put down his dishonest tyranny—*litteras nescivit*, [he was without learning—ed.] as if want of learning caused him to do well. He meant it not by poetry, which, not content with earthly plagues, devises new punishments in hell for tyrants; nor yet by philosophy, which teaches *occidendos esse* [that they are to be killed—ed.] but, no doubt, by skill in history, for that indeed can afford you Cypselus, Periander, Phalaris, Dionysius, and I know not how many more of the same kennel, that speed well enough in their abominable injustice or usurpation.

I conclude, therefore, that he excels history, not only in furnishing the mind with knowledge, but in setting it forward to that which deserves to be called and accounted good; which setting forward, and moving to well-doing, indeed sets the laurel crown upon the poet as victorious, not only of the historian, but over the philosopher, howsoever in teaching it may be questionable. For suppose it be granted—that which I suppose with great reason may be denied—that the philosopher, in respect of his methodical proceeding, teach more perfectly than the poet, yet do I think that no man is so much *Philophilosophos* [a friend to the philosopher—ed.] as to compare the philosopher in moving with the poet. And that moving is of a higher degree than teaching, it may by this appear, that it is well nigh both the cause and the effect of teaching; for who will be taught, if he be not moved with desire to be taught? And what so much good doth that teaching bring forth—I speak still of moral doctrine—as that it moves one to do that which it doth teach? For, as Aristotle says, it is not *Gnosis* [knowing] but *Praxis* [doing—ed.] must be

the fruit; and how *Praxis* cannot be, without being moved to practice, it is no hard matter to consider. The philosopher shows you the way, he informs you of the particularities, as well of the tediousness of the way, as of the pleasant lodging you shall have when your journey is ended, as of the many by-turnings that may divert you from your way; but this is to no man but to him that will read him, and read him with attentive, studious painfulness; which constant desire whosoever has in him, has already passed half the hardness of the way, and therefore is beholding to the philosopher but for the other half. Nay, truly, learned men have learnedly thought, that where once reason has so much overmastered passion as that the mind has a free desire to do well, the inward light each mind has in itself is as good as a philosopher's book; since in nature we know it is well to do well, and what is well and what is evil, although not in the words of art which philosophers bestow upon us; for out of natural conceit the philosophers drew it. But to be moved to do that which we know, or to be moved with desire to know, *hoc opus, hic labor est* [this is the work, this is the labor—ed.]

Now therein of all sciences—I speak still of human, and according to the human conceit—is our poet the monarch. For he doth not only show the way, but gives so sweet a prospect into the way as will entice any man to enter into it. Nay, he doth, as if your journey should lie through a fair vineyard, at the very first give you a cluster of grapes, that full of that taste you may long to pass further. He begins not with obscure definitions, which must blur the margent [margin—ed.] with interpretations, and load the memory with doubtfulness. But he comes to you with words set in delightful proportion, either accompanied with, or prepared for, the well-enchanting skill of music; and with a tale, forsooth, he comes unto you, with a tale which holds children from play, and old men from the chimney-corner, and, pretending no more, doth intend the winning of the mind from wickedness to virtue; even as the child is often brought to take most wholesome things, by hiding them in such other as to have a pleasant taste,—which, if one should begin to tell them the nature of the aloes or rhubarb they should receive, would sooner take their physic at their ears than at their mouth. So is it in men, most of which are childish in the best things, till they be cradled in their graves,—glad they will be to hear the tales of Hercules, Achilles, Cyrus, Æneas; and, hearing them, must needs hear the right description of wisdom, valor, and justice; which, if they had been barely, that is to say philosophically, set out, they would swear they be brought to school again.

That imitation whereof poetry is, has the most conveniency to nature of all other; insomuch that, as Aristotle says, those things which in themselves are horrible, as cruel battles, unnatural monsters, are made in poetical imitation delightful. Truly, I have known men, that even with reading *Amadis de Gaule*, which, God knows, wants much of a perfect poesy, have found their hearts moved to the exercise of courtesy, liberality, and especially courage. Who reads Æneas carrying old Anchises on his back, that wishes not it were his fortune to perform so excellent an act? Whom do not those words of Turnus move, the tale of Turnus having planted his image in the imagination?

Fugientem haec terra videbit?

Usque adeone mori miserum est?

[Shall this land see him in flight? Is it so wretched to die?—ed.]

Where the philosophers, as they scorn to delight, so must they be content little to move—saving wrangling whether virtue be the chief or the only good, whether the contemplative or the active life do excel—which Plato and Boethius well knew, and therefore made Mistress Philosophy very often borrow the masking raiment of Poesy. For even those hard-hearted evil men who think virtue a school-name, and know no other good but *indulgere genio* [indulge one's inclination—ed.], and therefore despise the austere admonitions of the philosopher, and feel not the inward reason they stand upon, yet will be content to be delighted, which is all the good-fellow poet seems to promise; and so steal to see the form of goodness—which seen, they cannot but love—ere themselves be aware, as if they took a medicine of cherries.

Infinite proofs of the strange effects of this poetical invention might be alleged; only two shall serve, which are so often remembered as I think all men know them. The one of Menenius Agrippa, who, when the whole people of Rome had resolutely divided themselves from the senate, with apparent show of utter ruin, though he were, for that time, an excellent orator, came not among them upon trust either of figurative speeches or cunning insinuations, and much less with far-fetched maxims of philosophy, which, especially if they were Platonic, they must have learned geometry before they could well have conceived; but, forsooth, he behaves himself like a homely and familiar poet. He tells them a tale, that there was a time when all parts of the body made a mutinous conspiracy against the belly, which they thought devoured the fruits of each other's labor; they concluded they would let so unprofitable a spender starve. In the end, to be short—for the tale is notorious, and as notorious that it was a tale—with punishing the belly they plagued themselves. This, applied by him, wrought such effect in the people, as I never read that ever words brought forth but then so sudden and so good an alteration; for upon reasonable conditions a perfect reconciliation ensued.

The other is of Nathan the prophet, who, when the holy David had so far forsaken God as to confirm adultery with murder, when he was to do the tenderest office of a friend, in laying his own shame before his eyes,—sent by God to call again so chosen a servant, how doth he it but by telling of a man whose beloved lamb was ungratefully taken from his bosom? The application most divinely true, but the discourse itself feigned; which made David (I speak of the second and instrumental cause) as in a glass to see his own filthiness, as that heavenly Psalm of Mercy well testifies.

By these, therefore, examples and reasons, I think it may be manifest that the poet, with that same hand of delight, doth draw the mind more effectually than any other art doth. And so a conclusion not unfitly ensues: that as virtue is the most excellent resting-place for all worldly learning to make his end of, so poetry, being the most familiar to teach it, and most princely to move towards it, in the most excellent work is the most excellent workman.

But I am content not only to decipher him by his works—although works in commendation or dispraise must ever hold a high authority—but more narrowly will examine his parts; so that, as in a man, though all together may carry a presence full of majesty and beauty, perchance in some one defectious piece we may find a blemish.

Now in his parts, kinds, or species, as you list to term them, it is to be noted that some poesies have coupled together two or three kinds,—as tragical and comical, whereupon is risen the tragi-comical; some, in the like manner, have mingled prose and verse, as Sannazzaro and Boethius; some have mingled matters heroical and pastoral; but that comes all to one in this question, for, if severed they be good, the conjunction cannot be hurtful. Therefore, perchance forgetting some, and leaving some as needless to be remembered, it shall not be amiss in a word to cite the special kinds, to see what faults may be found in the right use of them.

Is it then the pastoral poem which is misliked?—for perchance where the hedge is lowest they will soonest leap over. Is the poor pipe disdained, which sometimes out of Meliboeæus' mouth can show the misery of people under hard lords and ravening soldiers, and again, by Tityrus, what blessedness is derived to them that lie lowest from the goodness of them that sit highest? sometimes, under the pretty tales of wolves and sheep, can include the whole considerations of wrong-doing and patience; sometimes show that contention for trifles can get but a trifling victory; where perchance a man may see that even Alexander and Darius, when they strove who should be cock of this world's dunghill, the benefit they got was that the after-livers may say:

*Hæc memini et victum frustra contendere Thyrsim;
Ex illo Corydon, Corydon est tempore nobis*

[I remember such things, and that the defeated Thyrsis struggled vainly; From that time, with us Corydon is the Corydon—ed.]

Or is it the lamenting elegiac, which in a kind heart would move rather pity than blame; who bewails, with the great philosopher Heraclitus, the weakness of mankind and the wretchedness of the world; who surely is to be praised, either for compassionate accompanying just causes of lamentation, or for rightly painting out how weak be the passions of woefulness?

Is it the bitter and wholesome iambic, who rubs the galled mind, in making shame the trumpet of villainy with bold and open crying out against naughtiness? Or the satiric? who

Omne vafer vitium ridenti tangit amico;

[The sly fellow touches every vice while making his friend laugh—ed.]

who sportingly never leaves till he make a man laugh at folly, and at length ashamed to laugh at himself, which he cannot avoid without avoiding the folly;

who, while *circum præcordia ludit* [he plays around his heartstrings], gives us to feel how many headaches a passionate life brings us to,—how, when all is done,

Est Ulubris, animus si nos non deficit œquus.

[If we do not lack the equable temperament, it is in Ulubrae (noted for desolation)—ed.]

No, perchance it is the comic; whom naughty play-makers and stage-keepers have justly made odious. To the argument of abuse I will answer after. Only thus much now is to be said, that the comedy in an imitation of the common errors of our life, which he represents in the most ridiculous and scornful sort that may be, so as it is impossible that any beholder can be content to be such a one. Now, as in geometry the oblique must be known as well as the right, and in arithmetic the odd as well as the even; so in the actions of our life who sees not the filthiness of evil, wants a great foil to perceive the beauty of virtue. This doth the comedy handle so, in our private and domestic matters, as with hearing it we get, as it were, an experience what is to be looked for of a niggardly Demea, of a crafty Davus, of a flattering Gnatho, of a vain-glorious Thraso; and not only to know what effects are to be expected, but to know who be such, by the signifying badge given them by the comedian. And little reason has any man to say that men learn evil by seeing it so set out; since, as I said before, there is no man living, but by the force truth has in nature, no sooner sees these men play their parts, but wishes them *in pistrinum* [in the mill (place of punishment)—ed.], although perchance the sack of his own faults lie so behind his back, that he sees not himself to dance the same measure,—whereto yet nothing can more open his eyes than to find his own actions contemptibly set forth.

So that the right use of comedy will, I think, by nobody be blamed, and much less of the high and excellent tragedy, that opens the greatest wounds, and shows forth the ulcers that are covered with tissue; that makes kings fear to be tyrants, and tyrants manifest their tyrannical humors; that with stirring the effects of admiration and commiseration teaches the uncertainty of this world, and upon how weak foundations gilded roofs are builded; that makes us know:

Qui sceptræ sævus duro imperio regit,

Timet timentes, metus in auctorem redit

[The savage king who wields the scepter with cruel sway Fears those who fear him; dread comes back to the head of the originator—ed.]

But how much it can move, Plutarch yields a notable testimony of the abominable tyrant Alexander Pheræus; from whose eyes a tragedy, well made and represented, drew abundance of tears, who without all pity had murdered infinite numbers, and some of his own blood; so as he that was not ashamed to make matters for tragedies, yet could not resist the sweet violence of a tragedy. And if it wrought no further good in him, it was that he, in despite of himself, withdrew himself from

hearkening to that which might mollify his hardened heart. But it is not the tragedy they do dislike, for it were too absurd to cast out so excellent a representation of whatsoever is most worthy to be learned.

Is it the lyric that most displeases, who with his tuned lyre and well accorded voice, gives praise, the reward of virtue, to virtuous acts; who gives moral precepts and natural problems; who sometimes raises up his voice to the height of the heavens, in singing the lauds of the immortal God? Certainly I must confess mine own barbarousness; I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet; and yet it is sung but by some blind crowder [a public entertainer, singing for a crowd—ed.], with no rougher voice than rude style; which being so evil appareled in the dust and cobwebs of that uncivil age, what would it work, trimmed in the gorgeous eloquence of Pindar? In Hungary I have seen it the manner of all feasts, and other such meetings, to have songs of their ancestors' valor, which that right soldierlike nation think the chiefest kindlers of brave courage. The incomparable Lacedæmonians did not only carry that kind of music ever with them to the field, but even at home, as such songs were made, so were they all content to be singers of them; when the lusty men were to tell what they did, the old men what they had done, and the young men what they would do. And where a man may say that Pindar many times praises highly victories of small moment, matters rather of sport than virtue; as it may be answered, it was the fault of the poet, and not of the poetry, so indeed the chief fault was in the time and custom of the Greeks, who set those toys at so high a price that Philip of Macedon reckoned a horserace won at Olympus among his three fearful felicities. But as the unimitable Pindar often did, so is that kind most capable and most fit to awake the thoughts from the sleep of idleness, to embrace honorable enterprises.

There rests the heroical, whose very name, I think, should daunt all backbiters. For by what conceit can a tongue be directed to speak evil of that which draws with it no less champions than Achilles, Cyrus, Æneas, Turnus Tydeus, Rinaldo? who doth not only teach and move to a truth, but teaches and moves to the most high and excellent truth; who makes magnanimity and justice shine through all misty fearfulness and foggy desires; who, if the saying of Plato and Tully be true, that who could see virtue would be wonderfully ravished with the love of her beauty, this man sets her out to make her more lovely, in her holiday apparel, to the eye of any that will deign not to disdain until they understand. But if anything be already said in the defense of sweet poetry, all concurs to the maintaining the heroical, which is not only a kind, but the best and most accomplished kind of poetry. For, as the image of each action stirs and instructs the mind, so the lofty image of such worthies most inflames the mind with desire to be worthy, and informs with counsel how to be worthy. Only let Æneas be worn in the tablet of your memory, how he governs himself in the ruin of his country; in the preserving his old father, and carrying away his religious ceremonies; in obeying the god's commandment to leave Dido, though not only all passionate kindness, but even the human consideration of virtuous gratefulness, would have craved other of him; how in

storms, how in storms, how in sports, how in war, how in peace, how a fugitive, how victorious, how besieged, how besieging, how to strangers, how to allies, how to enemies, how to his own; lastly, how in his inward self, and how in his outward government; and I think, in a mind most prejudiced with a prejudicating humor, he will be found in excellency fruitful,—yea, even as Horace says, *melius Chrysippo et Crantore* [better than Chrysippus and Crantor (famous philosophers)—ed.]. But truly I imagine it falls out with these poet-whippers as with some good women who often are sick, but in faith they cannot tell where. So the name of poetry is odious to them, but neither his cause nor effects, neither the sum that contains him nor the particularities descending from him, give any fast handle to their carping dispraise.

Since, then, poetry is of all human learnings the most ancient and of most fatherly antiquity, as from whence other learnings have taken their beginnings, since it is so universal that no learned nation doth despise it, nor barbarous nation is without it; since both Roman and Greek gave divine names unto it, the one of “prophesying,” the other of “making,” and that indeed that name of “making” is fit for him, considering that whereas other arts retain themselves within their subjects, and receive, as it were, their being from it, the poet only brings his own stuff, and doth not learn a conceit out of a matter, but makes matter for a conceit; since neither his description nor his end contains any evil, the thing described cannot be evil; since his effects be so good as to teach goodness, and delight the learners of it; since therein—namely in moral doctrine, the chief of all knowledges—he doth not only far pass the historian, but for instructing is well nigh comparable to the philosopher, and for moving leaves him behind him; since the Holy Scripture, wherein there is no uncleanness, has whole parts in it poetical, and that even our Savior Christ vouchsafed to use the flowers of it; since all his kinds are not only in their united forms, but in their several dissections fully commendable; I think, and think I think rightly, the laurel crown appointed for triumphant captains doth worthily, of all other learnings, honor the poet’s triumph.

But because we have ears as well as tongues, and that the lightest reasons that may be will seem to weigh greatly, if nothing be put in the counter-balance, let us hear, and, as well as we can, ponder, what objections be made against this art, which may be worthy either of yielding or answering.

First, truly, I note not only in these *misomousoi*, poet-haters, but in all that kind of people who seek a praise by dispraising others, that they do prodigally spend a great many wandering words in quips and scoffs, carping and taunting at each thing which, by stirring the spleen, may stay the brain from a through-beholding the worthiness of the subject. Those kind of objections, as they are full of a very idle easiness—since there is nothing of so sacred a majesty but that an itching tongue may rub itself upon it—so deserve they no other answer, but, instead of laughing at the jest, to laugh at the jester. We know a playing wit can praise the discretion of an ass, the comfortableness of being in debt, and the jolly commodity of being sick of the plague. So of the contrary side, if we will turn Ovid’s verse,

Ut lateat virtus proximitate mali,
[that good lie hid in nearness of the evil,—ed.]

Agrippa will be as merry in showing the vanity of science, as Erasmus was in commending of folly; neither shall any man or matter escape some touch of these smiling railers. But for Erasmus and Agrippa, they had another foundation than the superficial part would promise Marry, these other pleasant fault-finders, who will correct the verb before they understand the noun, and confute others' knowledge before they confirm their own, I would have them only remember that scoffing comes not of wisdom; so as the best title in true English they get with their merriments is to be called good fools,—for so have our grave forefathers ever termed that humorous kind of jesters.

But that which gives greatest scope to their scorning humor is riming and versing. It is already said, and as I think truly said, it is not riming and versing that makes poesy. One may be a poet without versing, and a versifier without poetry. But yet presuppose it were inseparable—as indeed it seems Scaliger judges—truly it were an inseparable commendation. For if *oratio* next to *ratio*, speech next to reason, be the greatest gift bestowed upon mortality, that cannot be praiseless which doth most polish that blessing of speech; which considers each word, not only as a man may say by his forcible quality, but by his best-measured quantity; carrying even in themselves a harmony,—without, perchance, number, measure, order, proportion be in our time grown odious.

But lay aside the just praise it has by being the only fit speech for music—music, I say, the most divine striker of the senses—thus much is undoubtedly true, that if reading be foolish without remembering, memory being the only treasurer of knowledge, those words which are fittest for memory are likewise most convenient for knowledge. Now that verse far exceeds prose in the knitting up of the memory, the reason is manifest; the words, besides their delight, which has a great affinity to memory, being so set, as one cannot be lost but the whole work fails; which, accusing itself, calls the remembrance back to itself, and so most strongly confirms it. Besides, one word so, as it were, begetting another, as, be it in rime or measured verse, by the former a man shall have a near guess to the follower. Lastly, even they that have taught the art of memory have showed nothing so apt for it as a certain room divided into many places, well and thoroughly known; now that has the verse in effect perfectly, every word having his natural seat, which seat must needs make the word remembered. But what needs more in a thing so known to all men? Who is it that ever was a scholar that doth not carry away some verses of Virgil, Horace, or Cato, which in his youth he learned, and even to his old age serve him for hourly lessons? as:

Percontatorem fugito, nam garrulus idem est
[Stay away from an inquisitive man: he is sure to be garrulous—ed.]
[and] *Dum sibi quisque placet, credula turba sumus*
[While each pleases himself, we are a credulous mob—ed]

But the fitness it has for memory is notably proved by all delivery of arts, wherein, for the most part, from grammar to logic, mathematic, phisic, and the rest, the rules chiefly necessary to be borne away are compiled in verses. So that verse being in itself sweet and orderly, and being best for memory, the only handle of knowledge; it must be in jest that any man can speak against it.

Now then go we to the most important imputations laid to the poor poets; for aught I can yet learn they are these.

First, that there being many other more fruitful knowledges, a man might better spend his time in them than in this.

Secondly, that it is the mother of lies.

Thirdly, that it is the nurse of abuse, infecting us with many pestilent desires, with a siren's sweetness drawing the mind to the serpent's tail of sinful fancies,— and herein especially comedies give the largest field to ear [plough—ed] as Chaucer says; how, both in other nations and in ours, before poets did soften us, we were full of courage, given to martial exercises, the pillars of manlike liberty, and not lulled asleep in shady idleness with poets' pastimes.

And, lastly and chiefly, they cry out with an open mouth, as if they had overshot Robin Hood, that Plato banished them out of his Commonwealth. Truly this is much, if there be much truth in it.

First, to the first, that a man might better spend his time is a reason indeed; but it doth, as they say, but *petere principium* [to return or revert to the beginning—ed.] For if it be, as I affirm, that no learning is so good as that which teaches and moves to virtue, and that none can both teach and move thereto so much as poesy, then is the conclusion manifest that ink and paper cannot be to a more profitable purpose employed. And certainly, though a man should grant their first assumption, it should follow, methinks, very unwillingly, that good is not good because better is better. But I still and utterly deny that there is sprung out of earth a more fruitful knowledge.

To the second, therefore, that they should be the principal liars, I answer paradoxically, but truly, I think truly, that of all writers under the sun the poet is the least liar; and though he would, as a poet can scarcely be a liar. The astronomer, with his cousin the geometrician, can hardly escape when they take upon them to measure the height of the stars. How often, think you, do the physicians lie, when they aver things good for sicknesses, which afterwards send Charon a great number of souls drowned in a potion before they come to his ferry? And no less of the rest which take upon them to affirm. Now for the poet, he nothing affirms, and therefore never lies. For, as I take it, to lie is to affirm that to be true which is false; so as the other artists, and especially the historian, affirming many things, can, in the cloudy knowledge of mankind, hardly escape from many lies. But the poet, as I said before, never affirms. The poet never makes any circles about your imagination, to conjure you to believe for true what he writes. He cites not authorities of other histories, but even for his entry calls the sweet Muses to inspire into him a good invention; in troth, not laboring to tell you what is or is not, but

what should or should not be. And therefore though he recount things not true, yet because he tells them not for true he lies not; without we will say that Nathan lied in his speech, before alleged, to David; which, as a wicked man durst scarce say, so think I none so simple would say that Æsop lied in the tales of his beasts; for who thinks that Æsop wrote it for actually true, were well worthy to have his name chronicled among the beasts he writes of. What child is there that, coming to a play, and seeing Thebes written in great letters upon an old door, doth believe that it is Thebes? If then a man can arrive at that child's age, to know that the poet's persons and doings are but pictures what should be, and not stories what have been, they will never give the lie to things not affirmatively but allegorically and figuratively written. And therefore, as in history looking for truth, they may go away full-fraught with falsehood, so in poesy looking but for fiction, they shall use the narration but as an imaginative ground—plot of a profitable invention. But hereto is replied that the poets give names to men they write of, which argues a conceit of an actual truth, and so, not being true, proves a falsehood. And doth the lawyer lie then, when, under the names of John of the Stile, and John of the Nokes, he puts his case? But that is easily answered: their naming of men is but to make their picture the more lively, and not to build any history. Painting men, they cannot leave men nameless. We see we cannot play at chess but that we must give names to our chess-men; and yet, me thinks, he were a very partial champion of truth that would say we lied for giving a piece of wood the reverend title of a bishop. The poet names Cyrus and Æneas no other way than to show what men of their fames, fortunes, and estates should do.

Their third is, how much it abuses men's wit, training it to wanton sinfulness and lustful love. For indeed that is the principal, if not the only, abuse I can hear alleged. They say the comedies rather teach than reprehend amorous conceits. They say the lyric is larded with passionate sonnets, the elegiac weeps the want of his mistress, and that even to the heroical Cupid has ambitiously climbed Alas! Love, I would thou couldst as well defend thyself as thou canst offend others! I would those on whom thou dost attend could either put thee away, or yield good reason why they keep thee! But grant love of beauty to be a beastly fault, although it be very hard, since only man, and no beast, has that gift to discern beauty; grant that lovely name of Love to deserve all hateful reproaches, although even some of my masters the philosophers spent a good deal of their lamp-oil in setting forth the excellency of it; grant, I say, whatsoever they will have granted that not only love, but lust, but vanity, but, if they list, scurrility possesses many leaves of the poets' books; yet think I when this is granted, they will find their sentence may with good manners put the last words foremost, and not say that poetry abuses man's wit, but that man's wit abuses poetry.

For I will not deny, but that man's wit may make poesy, which should be *eikastike*, which some learned have defined "figuring forth good things," to be *phantastike*, which doth contrariwise infect the fancy with unworthy objects; as the painter that should give to the eye either some excellent perspective, or

some fine picture fit for building or fortification, or containing in it some no table example, as Abraham sacrificing his son Isaac, Judith killing Holofernes, David fighting with Goliath, may leave those, and please an ill pleased eye with wanton shows of better-hidden matters. But what! shall the abuse of a thing make the right use odious? Nay, truly, though I yield that poesy may not only be abused, but that being abused, by the reason of his sweet charming force, it can do more hurt than any other army of words, yet shall it be so far from concluding that the abuse should give reproach to the abused, that contrariwise it is a good reason, that whatsoever, being abused, doth most harm, being rightly used—and upon the right use each thing receives his title—doth most good. Do we not see the skill of physic, the best rampire [rampart—ed] to our often-assaulted bodies, being abused, teach poison, the most violent destroyer? Doth not knowledge of law, whose end is to even and right all things, being abused, grow the crooked fosterer of horrible injuries? Doth not, to go in the highest, God's word abused breed heresy, and his name abused become blasphemy? Truly a needle cannot do much hurt, and as truly—with leave of ladies be it spoken—it cannot do much good. With a sword thou may kill thy father, and with a sword thou may defend thy prince and country. So that, as in their calling poets the fathers of lies they say nothing, so in this their argument of abuse they prove the commendation.

They allege herewith, that before poets began to be in price our nation has set their hearts' delight upon action, and not upon imagination; rather doing things worthy to be written, than writing things fit to be done. What that before-time was. I think scarcely Sphinx can tell; since no memory is so ancient that has the precedence of poetry. And certain it is that, in our plainest homeliness, yet never was the Albion nation without poetry. Marry, this argument, though it be leveled against poetry, yet is it indeed a chainshot against all learning,—or bookishness, as they commonly term it. Of such mind were certain Goths, of whom it is written that, having in the spoil of a famous city taken a fair library, one hangman—belike fit to execute the fruits of their wits—who had murdered a great number of bodies, would have set fire in it “No,” said another very gravely, “take heed what you do; for while they are busy about these toys, we shall with more leisure conquer their countries.” This, indeed, is the ordinary doctrine of ignorance, and many words sometimes I have heard spent in it; but because this reason is generally against all learning, as well as poetry, or rather all learning but poetry; because it were too large a digression to handle, or at least too superfluous, since it is manifest that all government of action is to be gotten by knowledge, and knowledge best by gathering many knowledges, which is reading; I only, with Horace, to him that is of that opinion

Jubeo stultum esse libenter

[I gladly bid him to be a fool—ed.]

for as for poetry itself, it is the freest from this objection, for poetry is the companion of the camps. I dare undertake, Orlando Furioso or honest King Arthur will never

displease a soldier; but the quiddity of *ens*, and *prima materia*, will hardly agree with a corselet. And therefore, as I said in the beginning, even Turks and Tartars are delighted with poets. Homer, a Greek, flourished before Greece flourished; and if to a slight conjecture a conjecture may be opposed, truly it may seem, that as by him their learned men took almost their first light of knowledge, so their active men received their first motions of courage. Only Alexander's example may serve, who by Plutarch is accounted of such virtue, that Fortune was not his guide but his footstool; whose acts speak for him, though Plutarch did not; indeed the phoenix of warlike princes. This Alexander left his schoolmaster, living Aristotle, behind him, but took dead Homer with him. He put the philosopher Callistheries to death for his seeming philosophical, indeed mutinous, stubbornness; but the chief thing he was ever heard to wish for was that Homer had been alive. He well found he received more bravery of mind by the pattern of Achilles, than by hearing the definition of fortitude. And therefore if Cato misliked Fulvius for carrying Ennius with him to the field, it may be answered that if Cato misliked it, the noble Fulvius liked it, or else he had not done it. For it was not the excellent Cato Uticensis, whose authority, I would much more have revered; but it was the former, in truth a bitter punisher of faults, but else a man that had never sacrificed to the Graces. He misliked and cried out upon all Greek learning; and yet, being fourscore years old, began to learn it, belike fearing that Pluto understood not Latin. Indeed, the Roman laws allowed no person to be carried to the wars but he that was in the soldiers' roll. And therefore though Cato misliked his unmustered person, he misliked not his work. And if he had, Scipio Nasica, judged by common consent the best Roman, loved him. Both the other Scipio brothers, who had by their virtues no less surnames than of Asia and Afric, so loved him that they caused his body to be buried in their sepulcher. So as Cato's authority being but against his person, and that answered with so far greater than himself, is herein of no validity.

But now, indeed, my burthen is great, that Plato's name is laid upon me, whom I must confess, of all philosophers I have ever esteemed most worthy of reverence; and with great reason, since of all philosophers he is the most poetical; yet if he will defile the fountain out of which his flowing streams have proceeded, let us boldly examine with what reasons he did it.

First, truly, a man might maliciously object that Plato, being a philosopher, was a natural enemy of poets. For, indeed, after the philosophers had picked out of the sweet mysteries of poetry the right discerning true points of knowledge, they forthwith, putting it in method, and making a school-art of that which the poets did only teach by a divine delightfulness, beginning to spurn at their guides, like ungrateful prentices were not content to set up shops for themselves, but sought by all means to discredit their masters; which by the force of delight being barred them, the less they could overthrow them the more they hated them. For, indeed, they found for Homer seven cities strove who should have him for their citizen; where many cities banished philosophers, as not fit members to live among them. For only repeating certain of Euripides' verses, many Athenians had their lives saved

of the Syracusans, where the Athenians themselves thought many philosophers unworthy to live. Certain poets as Simonides and Pindar, had so prevailed with Heiro the First, that of a tyrant they made him a just king; where Plato could do so little with Dionysius, that he himself of a philosopher was made a slave. But who should do thus, I confess, should requite the objections made against poets with like cavillations against philosophers; as likewise one should do that should bid one read Phædrus or Symposium in Plato, or the Discourse of Love in Plutarch, and see whether any poet do authorize abominable filthiness, as they do.

Again, a man might ask out of what commonwealth Plato doth banish them. In sooth, thence where he himself allows community of women. So as belike this banishment grew not for effeminate wantonness, since little should poetical sonnets be hurtful when a man might have what woman he listed. But I honor philosophical instructions, and bless the wits which bred them, so as they be not abused, which is likewise stretched to poetry. Saint Paul himself, who yet, for the credit of poets, alleges twice two poets, and one of them by the name of a prophet, sets a watchword upon philosophy,—indeed upon the abuse. So doth Plato upon the abuse, not upon poetry. Plato found fault that the poets of his time filled the world with wrong opinions of the gods, making light tales of that unspotted essence, and therefore would not have the youth depraved with such opinions. Herein may much be said; let this suffice: the poets did not induce such opinions, but did imitate those opinions already induced. For all the Greek stories can well testify that the very religion of that time stood upon many and many-fashioned gods; not taught so by the poets, but followed according to their nature of imitation. Who list may read in Plutarch the discourses of Isis and Osiris, of the Cause why Oracles ceased, of the Divine Providence, and see whether the theology of that nation stood not upon such dreams,—which the poets indeed superstitiously observed; and truly, since they had not the light of Christ, did much better in it than the philosophers, who, shaking off superstition, brought in atheism.

Plato therefore, whose authority I had much rather justly construe than unjustly resist, meant not in general of poets, in those words of which Julius Scaliger says, *Qua autoritate barbari quidam atque hispidi, abuti velint ad poetas e republica exigendos* [which authority (Plato's) some barbarians want to abuse, in order to banish poets from the state—ed] but only meant to drive out those wrong opinions of the Deity, whereof now, without further law, Christianity has taken away all the hurtful belief, perchance, as he thought, nourished by the then esteemed poets. And a man need go no further than to Plato himself to know his meaning; who, in his dialogue called *Ion*, gives high and rightly divine commendation unto poetry. So as Plato, banishing the abuse, not the thing, not banishing it, but giving due honor unto it, shall be our patron and not our adversary. For, indeed, I had much rather, since truly I may do it, show their mistaking of Plato, under whose lion's skin they would make an ass—like braying against poesy, than go about to overthrow his authority; whom, the wiser a man is, the more just cause he shall find to have in admiration; especially since he attributes unto poesy more than

myself do, namely to be a very inspiring of a divine force, far above man's wit, as in the forenamed dialogue is apparent.

Of the other side, who would show the honors have been by the best sort of judgments granted them, a whole sea of examples would present themselves: Alexanders, Cæsars, Scipios, all favorers of poets; Lælius, called the Roman Socrates, himself a poet, so as part of *Heautontimoroumenos* in Terence was supposed to be made by him. And even the Greek Socrates, whom Apollo confirmed to be the only wise man, is said to have spent part of his old time in putting Æsop's Fables into verses; and therefore full evil should it become his scholar, Plato, to put such words in his master's mouth against poets. But what needs more? Aristotle writes the Art of Poesy; and why, if it should not be written? Plutarch teaches the use to be gathered of them; and how, if they should not be read? And who reads Plutarch's either history or philosophy, shall find he trims both their garments with guards [ornaments—ed.] of poesy. But I list not to defend poesy with the help of his underling historiography. Let it suffice that it is a fit soil for praise to dwell upon; and what dispraise may set upon it, is either easily overcome, or transformed into just commendation.

So that since the excellencies of it may be so easily and so justly confirmed, and the low-creeping objections so soon trodden down: it not being an art of lies, but of true doctrine; not of effeminateness, but of notable stirring of courage; not of abusing man's wit, but of strengthening man's wit; not banished, but honored by Plato; let us rather plant more laurels for to engarland our poets' heads—which honor of being laureate, as besides them only triumphant captains were, is a sufficient authority to show the price they ought to be held in—than suffer the ill-savored breath of such wrong speakers once to blow upon the clear springs of poesy.

But since I have run so long a career in this matter, methinks, before I give my pen a full stop, it shall be but a little more lost time to inquire why England, the mother of excellent minds, should be grown so hard a stepmother to poets; who certainly in wit ought to pass all others, since all only proceeds from their wit, being indeed makers of themselves, not takers of others. How can I but exclaim,

Musa, mihi causas memora, quo numine læso?

[O Muse, recall to me the causes by which her divine will had been slighted—ed.]

Sweet poesy! that has anciently had kings, emperors, senators, great captains, such as, besides a thousand others, David, Adrian, Sophocles, Germanicus, not only to favor poets, but to be poets; and of our nearer times can present for her patrons a Robert, King of Sicily; the great King Francis of France; King James of Scotland; such cardinals as Bembus and Bibbiena; such famous preachers and teachers as Beza and Melancthon; so learned philosophers as Fracastorius and Scaliger; so great orators as Pontanus and Muretus; so piercing wits as George Buchanan; so grave counselors as—besides many, but before all—that Hospital of France, than whom, I think, that realm never brought forth a more accomplished judgment more firmly builded upon virtue; I say these, with numbers of others, not only to read others' poesies but to poetize for others' reading. That poesy,

thus embraced in all other places, should only find in our time a hard welcome in England, I think the very earth laments it, and therefore decks our soil with fewer laurels than it was accustomed. For heretofore poets have in England also flourished; and, which is to be noted, even in those time when the trumpet of Mars did sound loudest. And now that an over-faint quietness should seem to strew the house for poets, they are almost in as good reputation as the mountebanks at Venice. Truly even that, as of the one side it gives great praise to poesy, which, like Venus—but to better purpose—has rather be troubled in the net with Mars, than enjoy the homely quiet of Vulcan; so serves it for a piece of a reason why they are less grateful to idle England, which now can scarce endure the pain of a pen. Upon this necessarily follows, that base men with servile wits undertake it, who think it enough if they can be rewarded of the printer. And so as Epaminondas is said, with the honor of his virtue to have made an office, by his exercising it, which before was contemptible, to become highly respected; so these men, no more but setting their names to it, by their own disgracefulness disgrace the most graceful poesy. For now, as if all the Muses were got with child to bring forth bastard poets, without any commission they do post over the banks of Helicon, till they make their readers more weary than posthorses; while, in the meantime, they,

Queis meliore luto finxit præcordia Titan,
[On hearts the Titan has formed better clay—ed.]

are better content to suppress the outflowings of their wit, than by publishing them to be accounted knights of the same order.

But I that, before ever I dust aspire unto the dignity, am admitted into the company of the paper-blurrers, do find the very true cause of our wanting estimation is want of desert, taking upon us to be poets in despite of Pallas [though lacking inspiration—ed.]. Now wherein we want desert were a thank-worthy labor to express; but if I knew, I should have mended myself. But as I never desired the title, so have I neglected the means to come by it; only, overmastered by some thoughts, I yielded an inky tribute unto them Marry, they that delight in poesy itself should seek to know what they do and how they do; and especially look themselves in an unflattering glass of reason, if they be inclinable unto it. For poesy must not be drawn by the ears, it must be gently led, or rather it must lead; which was partly the cause that made the ancient learned affirm it was a divine gift, and no human skill, since all other knowledges lie ready for any that has strength of wit, a poet no industry can make if his own genius be not carried into it. And therefore is it an old proverb: *Orator fit, poeta nascitur* [the orator is made, the poet is born—ed.]. Yet confess I always that, as the fertilest ground must be manured [cultivated—ed.], so must the highest-flying wit have a Dædalus to guide him. That Dædalus, they say, both in this and in other, has three wings to bear itself up into the air of due commendation: that is, art, imitation, and exercise. But these neither artificial rules nor imitative patterns, we much cumber ourselves withal. Exercise indeed we do,

but that very fore-backwardly, for where we should exercise to know, we exercise as having known; and so is our brain delivered of much matter which never was begotten by knowledge. For there being two principal parts, matter to be expressed by words, and words to express the matter, in neither we use art or imitation rightly. Our matter is *quodlibet* indeed, though wrongly performing Ovid's verse,

Quicquid conabar dicere, versus erat;
[Whatever I tried to say was poetry—ed.]

never marshalling it into any assured rank, that almost the readers cannot tell where to find themselves.

Chaucer, undoubtedly, did excellently in his *Troilus and Cressida*; of whom, truly, I know not whether to marvel more, either that he in that misty time could see so clearly, or that we in this clear age walk so stumblingly after him. Yet had he great wants, fit to be forgiven in so revered antiquity. I account the *Mirror of Magistrates* meetly furnished of beautiful parts; and in the Earl of Surrey's lyrics many things tasting of a noble birth, and worthy of a noble mind. The *Shepherd's Calendar* has much poetry in his eclogues, indeed worthy the reading, if I be not deceived. That same framing of his style to an old rustic language I dare not allow, since neither Theocritus in Greek, Virgil in Latin, nor Sannazzaro in Italian did affect it. Besides these, I do not remember to have seen but few (to speak boldly) printed, that have poetical sinews in them. For proof whereof, let but most of the verses be put in prose, and then ask the meaning, and it will be found that one verse did but beget another, without ordering at the first what should be at the last; which becomes a confused mass of words, with a tinkling sound of rime, barely accompanied with reason.

Our tragedies and comedies not without cause cried out against, observing rules neither of honest civility nor of skilful poetry, excepting *Gorboduc*,—again I say of those that I have seen. Which notwithstanding as it is full of stately speeches and well-sounding phrases, climbing to the height of Seneca's style, and as full of notable morality, which it doth most delightfully teach, and so obtain the very end of poesy; yet in truth it is very defectious in the circumstances, which grieves me, because it might not remain as an exact model of all tragedies. For it is faulty both in place and time, the two necessary companions of all corporal actions. For where the stage should always represent but one place, and the uttermost time presupposed in it should be, both by Aristotle's precept and common reason, but one day; there is both many days and many places inartificially imagined.

But if it be so in *Gorboduc*, how much more in all the rest? where you shall have Asia of the one side, and Afric of the other, and so many other under-kingdoms, that the player, when he comes in, must ever begin with telling where he is, or else the tale will not be conceived. Now ye shall have three ladies walk to gather flowers, and then we must believe the stage to be a garden. By and by we hear news of shipwreck in the same place, and then we are to blame if we accept it not for a rock.

Upon the back of that comes out a hideous monster with fire and smoke, and then the miserable beholders are bound to take it for a cave. While in the mean time two armies fly in, represented with four swords and bucklers, and then what hard heart will not receive it for a pitched field?

Now of time they are much more liberal. For ordinary it is that two young princes fall in love; after many traverses she is got with child, delivered of a fair boy, he is lost, grows a man, falls in love, and is ready to get another child,—and all this in two hours' space; which how absurd it is in sense even sense may imagine, and art has taught, and all ancient examples justified, and at this day the ordinary players in Italy will not err in. Yet will some bring in an example of *Eunuchus* in Terence, that contains matter of two days, yet far short of twenty years. True it is, and so was it to be played in two days, yet far short of twenty years. True it is, and so was it to be played in two days, and so fitted to the time it set forth. And though Plautus have in one place done amiss, let us hit with him, and not miss with him. But they will say, How then shall we set forth a story which contains both many places and many times? And do they not know that a tragedy is tied to the laws of poesy, and not of history; not bound to follow the story, but having liberty either to feign a quite new matter, or to frame the history to the most tragical convenience? Again, many things may be told which cannot be showed,—if they know the difference betwixt reporting and representing. As for example I may speak, though I am here, of Peru, and in speech digress from that to the description of Calicut; but in action I cannot represent it without Pacolet's horse. And so was the manner the ancients took, by some Nuntius [messenger—ed] to recount things done in former time or other place.

Lastly, if they will represent a history, they must not, as Horace says, begin *ab ovo* [from the egg—ed] but they must come to the principal point of that one action which they will represent. By example this will be best expressed. I have a story of young Polydorus, delivered for safety's sake, with great riches, by his father Priamus to Polymnestor, King of Thrace, in the Trojan war time. He, after some years, hearing the overthrow of Priamus, for to make the treasure his own murders the child; the body of the child is taken up by Hecuba; she, the same day, finds a sleight to be revenged most cruelly of the tyrant. Where now would one of our tragedy writers begin, but with the delivery of the child? Then should he sail over into Thrace, and so spend I know not how many years, and travel numbers of places. But where doth Euripides? Even with the finding of the body, leaving the rest to be told by the spirit of Polydorus. This needs no further to be enlarged; the dullest wit may conceive it.

But, besides these gross absurdities, how all their plays be neither right tragedies nor right comedies, mingling kings and clowns, not because the matter so carries it, but thrust in the clown by head and shoulders to play a part in majestic matters, with neither decency nor discretion; so as neither the admiration and commiseration, nor the right sportfulness, is by their mongrel tragi-comedy obtained. I know Apuleius did somewhat so, but that is a thing recounted with

space of time, not represented in one moment; and I know the ancients have one or two examples of tragi-comedies, as Plautus has *Amphytrio*. But, if we mark them well, we shall find that they never, or very daintily, match hornpipes and funerals. So falls it out that, having indeed no right comedy in that comical part of our tragedy, we have nothing but scurrility, unworthy of any chaste ears, or some extreme show of doltishness, indeed fit to lift up a loud laughter, and nothing else; where the whole tract of a comedy should be full of delight, as the tragedy should be still maintained in a well-raised admiration.

But our comedians think there is no delight without laughter, which is very wrong; for though laughter may come with delight, yet comes it not of delight, as though delight should be the cause of laughter; but well may one thing breed both together. Nay, rather in themselves they have, as it were, a kind of contrariety. For delight we scarcely do, but in things that have a convenience to ourselves, or to the general nature; laughter almost ever comes of things most disproportioned to ourselves and nature. Delight has a joy in it either permanent or present; laughter has only a scornful tickling. For example, we are ravished with delight to see a fair woman, and yet are far from being moved to laughter. We laugh at deformed creatures, wherein certainly we cannot delight. We delight in good chances, we laugh at mischances. We delight to hear the happiness of our friends and country, at which he were worthy to be laughed at that would laugh. We shall, contrarily, laugh sometimes to find a matter quite mistaken and go down the hill against the bias, in the mouth of some such men, as for the respect of them one shall be heartily sorry he cannot choose but laugh, and so is rather pained than delighted with laughter. Yet deny I not but that they may go well together. For as in Alexander's picture well set out we delight without laughter, and in twenty mad antics we laugh without delight; so in Hercules, painted with his great beard and furious countenance, in woman's attire, spinning at Omphale's commandment, it breeds both delight and laughter; for the representing of so strange a power in love, procures delight, and the scornfulness of the action stirs laughter.

But I speak to this purpose, that all the end of the comical part be not upon such scornful matters as stir laughter only, but mixed with it that delightful teaching which is the end of poesy. And the great fault, even in that point of laughter, and forbidden plainly by Aristotle, is that they stir laughter in sinful things, which are rather execrable than ridiculous; or in miserable, which are rather to be pitied than scorned. For what is it to make folks gape at a wretched beggar or a beggarly clown, or, against law of hospitality, to jest at strangers because they speak not English so well as we do? what do we learn? since it is certain:

*Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se,
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit.*

[Unhappy poverty has nothing in it harder than this: It makes men ridiculous—ed.]

But rather a busy loving courtier; a heartless threatening Thraso; a self-wise-seeming schoolmaster; a wry transformed traveler: these if we saw walk in stage-names, which we play naturally, therein were delightful laughter and teaching delightfulness,—as in the other, the tragedies of Buchanan do justly bring forth a divine admiration.

But I have lavished out too many words of this playmatter. I do it, because as they are excelling parts of poesy, so is there none so much used in England, and none can be more pitifully abused; which, like an unmannerly daughter, showing a bad education, causes her mother Poesy's honesty to be called in question.

Other sorts of poetry almost have we none, but that lyrical kind of songs and sonnets, which, Lord if he gave us so good minds, how well it might be employed, and with how heavenly fruits both private and public, in singing the praises of the immortal beauty, the immortal goodness of that God who gives us hands to write, and wits to conceive!—of which we might well want words, but never matter; of which we could turn our eyes to nothing, but we should ever have new-budding occasions.

But truly, many of such writings as come under the banner of irresistible love, if I were a mistress would never persuade me they were in love; so coldly they apply fiery speeches, as men that had rather read lovers' writings, and so caught up certain swelling phrases—which hang together like a man which once told me the wind was at north-west and by south, because he would be sure to name winds enough—than that in truth they feel those passions, which easily, as I think, may be bewrayed by that same forcibleness, or *energia* (as the Greeks call it) of the writer. But let this be a sufficient, though short note, that we miss the right use of the material point of poesy.

Now for the outside of it, which is words, or (as I may term it) diction, it is even well worse, so is that honey-flowing matron eloquence appareled or rather disguised, in a courtesan-like painted affectation: one time with so farfetched words, that many seem monsters—but must seem strangers—to any poor Englishman; another time with coursing of a letter [alliteration—ed.] as if they were bound to follow the method of a dictionary; another time with figures and flowers extremely winter-starved.

But I would this fault were only peculiar to versifiers, and had not as large possession among prose-printers, and, which is to be marveled, among many scholars, and, which is to be pitied, among some preachers. Truly I could wish—if at least I might be so bold to wish in a thing beyond the reach of my capacity—the diligent imitators of Tully and Demosthenes (most worthy to be imitated) did not so much keep. Nizolian paper-books of their figures and phrases, as by attentive translation, as it were devour them whole, and make them wholly theirs. For now they cast sugar and spice upon every dish that is served to the table; like those Indians, not content to wear ear-rings at the fit and natural place of the ears, but they will thrust jewels through their nose and lips, because they will be sure to be fine. Tully, when he was to drive out Catiline as it were with a thunderbolt of eloquence, often used that figure of repetition, as *Vivit Vivit? Immo vero etiam in*

senatum venit, etc. [He lives Does he live? In truth, he even comes to the Senate—ed.]. Indeed, inflamed with a well-grounded rage, he would have his words, as it were, double out of his mouth; and so do that artificially, which we see men in choler do naturally. And we, having noted the grace of those words, hale them in sometime to a familiar epistle, when it were too much choler to be choleric. How well store of *similiter* cadences [rhymes—ed.] doth sound with the gravity of the pulpit, I would but invoke Demosthenes' soul to tell, who with a rare daintiness uses them. Truly they have made me think of the sophister that with too much subtlety would prove two eggs three, and though he might be counted a sophister, had none for his labor. So these men bringing in such a kind of eloquence, well may they obtain an opinion of a seeming fineness, but persuade few,—which should be the end of their fineness.

Now for similitudes in certain printed discourses, I think all herbarists, all stories of beasts, fowls, and fishes are rifled up, that they may come in multitudes to wait upon any of our conceits, which certainly is as absurd a surfeit to the ears as is possible. For the force of a similitude not being to prove any thing to a contrary disputer, but only to explain to a willing hearer; when that is done, the rest is a most tedious prattling, rather overswaying the memory from the purpose whereto they were applied, then any whit informing the judgment, already either satisfied of by similitudes not to be satisfied.

For my part, I do not doubt, when Antonius and Crassus, the great forefathers of Cicero in eloquence, the one (as Cicero testifies of them) pretended not to know art, the other not to set by it, because [so that—ed.] with a plain sensibleness they might win credit of popular ears, which credit is the nearest step to persuasion, which persuasion is the chief mark of oratory,—I do not doubt, I say, but that they used these knacks, very sparingly; which who doth generally use any man may see doth dance to his own music, and so be noted by the audience more careful to speak curiously than truly. Undoubtedly (at least to my opinion undoubtedly) I have found in divers small-learned courtiers a more sound style than in some professors of learning; of which I can guess no other cause, but that the courtier following that which by practice he finds fittest to nature, therein, though he know it not, doth according to art—though not by art; where the other, using art to show art and not to hide art as in these cases he should do—flies from nature, and indeed abuses art.

But what! me thinks I deserve to be pounded for straying from poetry to oratory. But both have such an affinity in the wordish consideration, that I think this digression will make my meaning receive the fuller understanding:—which is not to take upon me to teach poets how they should do, but only, finding myself sick among the rest, to show some one or two spots of the common infection grown among the most part of writers; that, acknowledging ourselves somewhat awry, we may bend to the right use both of matter and manner: whereto our language gives us great occasion, being, indeed, capable of any excellent exercising of it.

I know some will say it is a mingled language. And why not so much the better, taking the best of both the other? Another will say it wants grammar. Nay, truly, it has that praise that it wants not grammar. For grammar it might have, but it needs it not; being so easy in itself, and so void of those cumbersome differences of cases, genders, moods, and tenses, which, I think, was a piece of the Tower of Babylon's curse, that a man should be put to school to learn his mother-tongue. But for the uttering sweetly and properly the conceits of the mind, which is the end of speech, that has it equally with any other tongue in the world; and is particularly happy in compositions of two or three words together, near the Greek, far beyond the Latin,—which is one of the greatest beauties that can be in a language.

Now of versifying there are two sorts, the one ancient, the other modern. The ancient marked the quantity of each syllable, and according to that framed his verse, the modern observing only number, with some regard of the accent, the chief life of it stands in that like sounding of the words, which we call rime. Whether of these be the more excellent would bear many speeches; the ancient no doubt more fit for music, both words and tune observing quantity; and more fit lively to express divers passions, by the low or lofty sound of the well-weighed syllable. The latter likewise with his rime strikes a certain music to the ear; and, in fine, since it doth delight, though by another way, it obtains the same purpose; there being in either, sweetness, and wanting in neither, majesty. Truly the English, before any other vulgar language I know, is fit for both sorts. For, for the ancient, the Italian is so full of vowels that it must ever be cumbered with elisions; the Dutch so, of the other side, with consonants, that they cannot yield the sweet sliding fit for a verse. The French in his whole language has not one word that has his accent in the last syllable saving two, called antepenultima, and little more has the Spanish; and therefore very gracelessly may they use dactyls. The English is subject to none of these defects. Now for rime [rhythm—ed.], though we do not observe quantity, yet we observe the accent very precisely, which other languages either cannot do, or will not do so absolutely. That *cæsura*, or breathing-place in the midst of the verse, neither Italian nor Spanish have, the French and we never almost fail of.

Lastly, even the very rime itself the Italian cannot put in the last syllable, by the French named the masculine rime, but still in the next to the last, which the French call the female, or the next before that, which the Italians term *sdrucchiola*. The example of the former is *buono: suono*; of the *sdrucchiola* is *femina: semina*. The French, of the other side, has both the male, as *bon: son*, and the female, as *plaise: taise*; but the *sdrucchiola* he has not. Where the English has all three, as *due: true, father: rather, motion: potion*; with much more which might be said, but that already I find the triflingness of this discourse is much too much enlarged.

So that since the ever praiseworthy poesy is full of virtue-breeding delightfulness, and void of no gift that ought to be in the noble name of learning; since the blames laid against it are either false or feeble; since the cause why it is not esteemed in England is the fault of poet-apes, not poets; since, lastly, our tongue is most fit to honor poesy, and to be honored by poesy; I conjure you all that have had the evil

luck to read this ink-wasting toy of mine, even in the name of the Nine Muses, no more to scorn the sacred mysteries of poesy; no more to laugh at the name of poets, as though they were next inheritors to fools; no more to jest at the reverend title of “a rhymers”; but to believe, with Aristotle, that they were the ancient treasurers of the Grecians’ divinity; to believe, with Bembo, that they were first bringers—in of all civility; to believe, with Scaliger, that no philosopher’s precepts can sooner make you an honest man than the reading of Virgil; to believe, with Claverus, the translator of Cornutus, that it pleased the Heavenly Deity by Hesiod and Homer, under the veil of fables, to give us all knowledge, logic, rhetoric, philosophy natural and moral, and *quid non?* to believe, with me, that there are many mysteries contained in poetry which of purpose were written darkly, lest by profane wits it should be abused; to believe, with Landino, that they are so beloved of the gods, that whatsoever they write proceeds of a divine fury; lastly, to believe themselves, when they tell you they will make you immortal by their verses.

Thus doing, your name shall flourish in the printers’ shops. Thus doing, you shall be of kin to many a poetical preface. Thus doing, you shall be most fair, most rich, most wise, most all; you shall dwell upon superlatives. Thus doing, though you be *libertino patre natus* [the son of a freedman], you shall suddenly grow *Herculean proles* [Herculean offspring—ed]:

Si quid mea carmina possunt.

[If my verses can do anything—ed.]

Thus doing, your soul shall be placed with Dante’s Beatrice or Virgil’s Anchises.

But if—fie of such a but!—you be born so near the dull-making cataract of Nilus, that you cannot hear the planet-like music of poetry; if you have so earth-creeping a mind that it cannot lift itself up to look to the sky of poetry, or rather, by a certain rustical disdain, will become such a mome [blockhead—ed.], as to be a Momus of poetry; then, though I will not wish unto you the ass’ ears of Midas, nor to be driven by a poet’s verses, as Bubonax was, to hang himself; nor to be rimed to death, as is said to be done in Ireland; yet thus much curse. I must send you in the behalf of all poets:—that while you live in love, and never get favor for lacking skill of a sonnet; and when you die, your memory die from the earth for want of an epitaph.

The text used here is from *An Apologie for Poetrie*, ed Edward Arber (London, 1858), with additional material from *Sidney’s Apologie for Poetrie*, ed. J. Churton Collins (Oxford, 1907) and *The Defense of Poesy*, ed A. S. Cook (Boston, 1890).

2.10.2 Reading and Review Questions

1. How is learning synonymous with poetry, do you think? What does Sidney mean by delightful teaching?
2. Why does Sidney believe that poetry has a moral purpose? What are his arguments? What relation, if any, does poetry have to action, do you

- think, and why? How does his representation of the uses of art compare with Chaucer's or Spenser's?
3. To what degree, if any, does Sidney's Protestantism factor into his reasons for defending poetry, and how?
 4. The Defense includes amongst its characters Edward Wotton, a friend of Sidney; John Pietro Pugliano, the Italian riding master to the Emperor; and himself in his historical persona as Sir Philip Sidney, poet and courtier. How does he construct his role of poet in the Defense? How does he construct his role of courtier in the Defense? How are the two roles related, if at all, in the Defense? How does his self-depiction compare with Chaucer's or More's?
 5. How does poetry build national identity, according to Sidney? What are his arguments? Do his views validate Spenser's poetry in *The Faerie Queene*, for instance?

2.11 MARY (SIDNEY) HERBERT, COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE

(1562-1621)

Unlike her brother Sir Philip Sidney, Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, did not attend a public school or university; instead, she was tutored at home in Latin, French, and Italian languages and literature. And at the age of fifteen, her family arranged her marriage to the wealthy Henry Herbert, 2nd Earl of Pembroke (1538-1601), thus cementing their families' already strong alliance. While she served her family's political goals, Mary Sidney Herbert managed to develop her own interests within her private realms, the Pembroke estate at Wilton and Baynards Castle in London, where she shaped literary and scientific coterie. She further supported her family by sponsoring elegies to her brother Sir Philip Sidney who died in 1586 from wounds suffered at the Battle of Zutphen. "The Doleful Lay of Clorinda," Mary Sidney Herbert's first published work, appeared in a collection of elegies that included "Astrophil," Spenser's tribute to Sir Philip Sidney.



Image 2.12 | Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke

Artist | Unknown

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The genres in which she wrote revealed Elizabethan attitudes towards women, their scope and purpose within society. In the accepted role of “conduit,” she translated works by Petrarch, Robert Garnier (1544-1590), and Phillippe Duplessis Mornay (1549-1623), dedicated works and encomia to her sovereign (first Elizabeth I) and Queen Anne (wife of James I), and elegized Sir Philip Sidney. She took on the accepted role of relative being to Sir Philip Sidney, gaining fame and acceptance as his sister, by completing his unfinished works, and advocating his literary legacy. Her elegies to her brother were done in the pastoral tradition. Her translations from the French and Italian demonstrate the importance of Continental traditions to English literature. Her metric translations of Psalms 44-150, translations that introduced an astonishing array of metrical verse forms, demonstrate the Protestant influence on both sacred and secular expressions of faith. All her publications reveal Mary Sidney Herbert’s attitude toward herself as a writer in her own right, as she published her works under her own name.

2.11.1 “The Doleful Lay of Clorinda”

(1595)

Ay me, to whom shall I my case complain,
 That may compassion my impatient grief?
 Or where shall I unfold my inward pain,
 That my enriven heart may find relief?
 Shall I unto the heavenly pow’rs it show,
 Or unto earthly men that dwell below?

To heavens? Ah, they, alas, the authors were,
 And workers of my unremedied woe:
 For they foresee what to us happens here,
 And they foresaw, yet suffered this be so.
 From them comes good, from them comes also ill,
 That which they made, who can them warn to spill.

To men? Ah, they, alas, like wretched be,
 And subject to the heavens’ ordinance:
 Bound to abide whatever they decree.
 Their best redress is their best sufferance.
 How then can they, like wretched, comfort me,
 The which no less need comforted to be?

Then to myself will I my sorrow mourn,
 Sith none alive like sorrowful remains:
 And to myself my plaints shall back return,
 To pay their usury with doubled pains.

The woods, the hills, the rivers shall resound
The mournful accent of my sorrow's ground.

Woods, hills, and rivers now are desolate,
Sith he is gone the which them all did grace:
And all the fields do wail their widow state,
Sith death their fairest flow'r did late deface.
 The fairest flow'r in field that ever grew,
 Was Astrophel; that was, we all may rue.

What cruel hand of cursed foe unknown,
Hath cropped the stalk which bore so fair a flow'r?
Untimely cropped, before it well were grown,
And clean defaced in untimely hour.
 Great loss to all that ever him did see,
 Great loss to all, but greatest loss to me.

Break now your garlands, O ye shepherds' lasses,
Sith the fair flow'r, which them adorned, is gone:
The flow'r, which them adorned, is gone to ashes,
Never again let lass put garland on.
 Instead of garland, wear sad cypress now,
 And bitter elder, broken from the bough.

Ne ever sing the love-lays which he made:
Who ever made such lays of love as he?
Ne ever read the riddles, which he said
Unto yourselves, to make you merry glee.
 Your merry glee is now laid all abed,
 Your merry maker now, alas, is dead.

Death, the devourer of all the world's delight,
Hath robbed you and reft from me my joy:
Both you and me and all the world he quite
Hath robbed of joyance, and left sad annoy.
 Joy of the world, and shepherds' pride was he,
 Shepherds' hope never like again to see.

O Death, that hast us of such riches reft,
Tell us at least, what hast thou with it done?
What is become of him whose flow'r here left
Is but the shadow of his likeness gone:

Scarce like the shadow of that which he was,
Naught like, but that he like a shade did pass.

But that immortal spirit, which was decked
With all the dowries of celestial grace:
By sovereign choice from th'heavenly choirs select,
And lineally derived from angels' race,
 Oh, what is now of it become, aread.
 Ay me, can so divine a thing be dead?

Ah no: it is not dead, ne can it die,
But lives for aye, in blissful Paradise:
Where like a new-born babe it soft doth lie,
In bed of lilies wrapped in tender wise,
 And compassed all about with roses sweet,
 And dainty violets from head to feet.

There thousand birds all of celestial brood,
To him do sweetly carol day and night:
And with strange notes, of him well understood,
Lull him asleep in angel-like delight;
 Whilst in sweet dream to him presented be
 Immortal beauties, which no eye may see.

But he them sees and takes exceeding pleasure
Of their divine aspects, appearing plain,
And kindling love in him above all measure,
Sweet love still joyous, never feeling pain.
 For what so goodly form he there doth see,
 He may enjoy from jealous rancor free.

There liveth he in everlasting bliss,
Sweet spirit never fearing more to die:
Ne dreading harm from any foes of his,
Ne fearing savage beasts' more cruelty.
 Whilst we here, wretches, wail his private lack,
 And with vain vows do often call him back.

But live thou there still happy, happy spirit,
And give us leave thee here thus to lament:
Not thee that dost thy heaven's joy inherit,
But our own selves that here in dole are drent.
 Thus do we weep and wail, and wear our eyes,
 Mourning in other's, our own miseries.

2.11.2 "To the Angel Spirit of the Most Excellent Sir Philip Sidney"

(1623)

(Variant printed in Samuel Daniel's 1623 Works)

To thee, pure spirit, to thee alone addressed
Is this joint work, by double interest thine,
Thine by his own, and what is done of mine
Inspired by thee, thy secret power impressed.
My Muse with thine, itself dared to combine
As mortal stuff with that which is divine:
Let thy fair beams give luster to the rest

That Israel's King may deign his own, transformed
In substance no, but superficial 'tire;
And English guised in some sort may aspire
To better grace thee what the vulgar formed:
His sacred tones, age after age admire;
Nations grow great in pride and pure desire
So to excel in holy rites performed.

Oh, had that soul which honor brought to rest
Too soon not left and reft the world of all
What man could show, which we perfection call,
This precious piece had sorted with the best.
But ah, wide festered wounds that never shall
Nor must be closed, unto fresh bleeding fall:
Ah, memory, what needs this new arrest?

Yet blessed grief, that sweetness can impart
Since thou art blest! Wrongly do I complain:
Whatever weights my heavy thoughts sustain
Dear feels my soul for thee. I know my part
Nor be my weakness to thy rites a stain,
Rites to aright, life-blood would not refrain:
Assist me, then, that life what thine did part.

Time may bring forth what time hath yet suppressed
In whom thy loss hath laid to utter waste;
The wrack of time, untimely all defaced,
Remaining as the tomb of life deceased,
Where, in my heart the highest room thou hast;

There, truly there, thy earthly being is placed,
Triumph of death: in life how more than blest.

Behold, oh, that thou were now to behold
This finished long perfection's part begun,
The rest but pieced, as left by thee undone.
Pardon blest soul, presumption overbold,
If love and zeal hath to this error run:
'Tis zealous love, love that hath never done,
Nor can enough, though justly here controlled.

But since it hath no other scope to go,
Nor other purpose but to honor thee,
That thine may shine, where all the Graces be;
And that my thoughts (like smallest streams that flow,
Pay to their sea, their tributary fee)
Do strive, yet have no means to quit nor free
That mighty debt of infinities I owe

To thy great worth which time to times enroll,
Wonder of men, sole born, sole of thy kind
Complete in all, but heavenly was thy mind,
For wisdom, goodness, sweetness, fairest soul:
Too good to wish, too fair for earth, refined
For heaven, where all true glory rests confined;
And where but there no life without control?

Oh, when from this account, this cast-up sum,
This reck'ning made the audit of my woe,
Sometime of rase my swelling passions know
How work my thoughts, my sense is stricken dumb
That would thee more than words could ever show,
Which all fall short. Who knew thee best do know
There lives no wit that may thy praise become.

And rest fair monuments of thy fair fame,
Though not complete. Nor can we reach, in thought,
What on that goodly piece time would have wrought
Had divers so spared that life (but life) to frame
The rest. Alas, such loss! The world hath naught
Can equal it, nor, oh, more grievance brought,
Yet what remains must ever crown thy name.

Receive these hymns, these obsequies receive,
 (If any mark of thy secret spirit thou bear)
 Made only thine, and no name else must wear.
 I can no more: Dear Soul, I take my leave;
 My sorrow strives to mount the highest sphere.

2.11.3 "Psalm 51"

(1599)

O Lord, whose grace no limits comprehend;
 Sweet Lord, whose mercies stand from measure free;
 To me that grace, to me that mercy send,
 And wipe, O Lord, my sins from sinful me.
 Oh, cleanse, oh, wash, my foul iniquity;
 Cleanse still my spots, still wash away my stainings,
 Till stains and spots in me leave no remainings.

For I, alas, acknowledging do know
 My filthy fault, my faulty filthiness
 To my soul's eye incessantly doth show,
 Which done to thee, to thee I do confess,
 Just judge, true witness, that for righteousness
 Thy doom may pass against my guilt awarded,
 Thy evidence for truth may be regarded.

My mother, lo, when I began to be,
 Conceiving me, with me did sin conceive:
 And as with living heat she cherished me,
 Corruption did like cherishing receive.
 But, lo, thy love to purest good doth cleave,
 And inward truth: which, hardly else discerned,
 My truant soul in thy hid school hath learned.

Then as thyself to lepers hast assigned,
 With hyssop, Lord, thy hyssop, purge me so:
 And that shall cleanse the leproy of my mind.
 Make over me thy mercy's streams to flow,
 So shall my whiteness scorn the whitest snow.
 To ear and heart send sounds and thoughts of gladness,
 That bruised bones may dance away their sadness.

Thy ill-pleased eye from my misdeeds avert:
 Cancel the registers my sins contain:

Create in me a pure, clean, spotless heart;
 Inspire a sprite where love of right may reign
 Ah, cast me not from thee; take not again
 Thy breathing grace; again thy comfort send me,
 And let the guard of thy free sprite attend me.

So I to them a guiding hand will be,
 Whose faulty feet have wandered from thy way,
 And turned from sin will make return to thee,
 Whom turned from thee sin erst had led astray.
 O God, God of my health, oh, do away
 My bloody crime: so shall my tongue be raised
 To praise thy truth, enough cannot be praised.

Unlock my lips, shut up with sinful shame:
 Then shall my mouth, O Lord, thy honor sing.
 For bleeding fuel for thy altar's flame,
 To gain thy grace what boots it me to bring?
 Burnt-offrings are to thee no pleasant thing.
 The sacrifice that God will hold respected,
 Is the heart-broken soul, the sprite dejected.

Lastly, O Lord, how so I stand or fall,
 Leave not thy loved Zion to embrace;
 But with thy favor build up Salem's wall,
 And still in peace, maintain that peaceful place.
 Then shalt thou turn a well-accepting face
 To sacred fires with offered gifts perfumed:
 Till ev'n whole calves on altars be consumed.

2.11.4 "Psalm 55"

(1599)

My God, most glad to look, most prone to hear,
 An open ear, oh, let my prayer find,
 And from my plaint turn not thy face away.
 Behold my gestures, hearken what I say,
 While uttering moans with most tormented mind,
 My body I no less torment and tear.
 For, lo, their fearful threat'nings would mine ear,
 Who grieves on griefs on me still heaping lay,
 A mark to wrath and hate and wrong assigned;
 Therefore, my heart hath all his force resigned

To trembling pants; death terrors on me pray;
I fear, nay, shake, nay, quiv'ring quake with fear.

Then say I, oh, might I but cut the wind,
Borne on the wing the fearful dove doth bear:
Stay would I not, till I in rest might stay.
Far hence, oh, far, then would I take my way
Unto the desert, and repose me there,
These storms of woe, these tempests left behind.
But swallow them, O Lord, in darkness blind,
Confound their counsels, lead their tongues astray,
That what they mean by words may not appear.
For mother Wrong within their town each where,
And daughter Strife their ensigns so display,
As if they only thither were confined.

These walk their city walls both night and day;
Oppressions, tumults, guiles of every kind
Are burgesses and dwell the middle near;
About their streets his masking robes doth wear
Mischief clothed in deceit, with treason lined,
Where only he, he only bears the sway.
But not my foe with me this prank did play,
For then I would have borne with patient cheer
An unkind part from whom I know unkind,
Nor he whose forehead Envy's mark had signed,
His trophies on my ruins sought to rear,
From whom to fly I might have made assay.

But this to thee, to thee impute I may,
My fellow, my companion, held most dear,
My soul, my other self, my inward friend:
Whom unto me, me unto whom did bind
Exchanged secrets, who together were
God's temple wont to visit, there to pray.
Oh, let a sudden death work their decay,
Who speaking fair such cankered malice mind,
Let them be buried breathing in their bier;
But purple morn, black ev'n, and midday clear
Shall see my praying voice to God inclined,
Rousing him up, and naught shall me dismay.

He ransomed me; he for my safety fined
 In fight where many sought my soul to slay;
 He, still himself to no succeeding heir
 Leaving his empire shall no more forbear
 But at my motion, all these atheists pay,
 By whom, still one, such mischiefs are designed.
 Who but such caitiffs would have undermined,
 Nay, overthrown, from whom but kindness mere
 They never found? Who would such trust betray?
 What buttered words! Yet war their hearts bewray.
 Their speech more sharp than sharpest sword or spear
 Yet softer flows than balm from wounded rind.

But my o'erloaden soul, thyself upcheer,
 Cast on God's shoulders what thee down doth weigh
 Long borne by thee with bearing pained and pined:
 To care for thee he shall be ever kind;
 By him the just in safety held away
 Changeless shall enter, live, and leave the year:
 But, Lord, how long shall these men tarry here?
 Fling them in pit of death where never shined
 The light of life, and while I make my stay
 On thee, let who their thirst with blood allay
 Have their life-holding thread so weakly twined
 That it, half-spun, death may in sunder shear.

2.11.5 "Psalm 57"

(1599)

Thy mercy, Lord, Lord, now thy mercy show:
 On thee I lie;
 To thee I fly.
 Hide me, hie me, as thine own,
 Till these blasts be overblown,
 Which now do fiercely blow.

To highest God I will erect my cry,
 Who quickly shall
 Dispatch this all.
 He shall down from heaven send
 From disgrace me to defend
 His love and verity.

My soul encaged lies with lions' brood,
 Villains whose hands
 Are fiery brands,
 Teeth more sharp than shaft or spear,
 Tongues far better edge do bear
Than swords to shed my blood.

As high as highest heav'n can give thee place,
 O Lord, ascend,
 And thence extend
 With most bright, most glorious show
 Over all the earth below,
The sunbeams of thy face.

Me to entangle every way I go
 Their trap and net
 Is ready set.
 Holes they dig but their own holes
 Pitfalls make for their own souls:
So, Lord, oh, serve them so.

My heart prepared, prepared is my heart
 To spread thy praise
 With tuned lays:
 Wake my tongue, my lute awake,
 Thou my harp the consort make,
Myself will bear a part.

Myself when first the morning shall appear,
 With voice and string
 So will thee sing:
 That this earthly globe, and all
 Treading on this earthly ball,
My praising notes shall hear.

For god, my only God, thy gracious love
 Is mounted far
 Above each star,
 Thy unchanged verity
 Heav'nly wings do lift as high
As clouds have room to move.

As high as highest heav'n can give thee place,
 O Lord, ascend
 And thence extend
 With most bright, most glorious show
 Over all the earth below,
 The sunbeams of thy face.

2.11.6 "Psalm 84"

(1599)

How lovely is thy dwelling,
 Great god, to whom all greatness is belonging!
 To view thy courts far, far from any telling
 My soul doth long and pine with longing
 Unto the God that liveth,
 The God that all life giveth,
 My heart and body both aspire,
 Above delight, beyond desire.

Alas, the sparrow knoweth
 The house where free and fearless she resideth;
 Directly to the nest the swallow goeth,
 Where with her sons she safe abideth.
 Oh, altars thine, most mighty
 In war, yea, most almighty:
 Thy altars, Lord, ah, why should I
 From altars thine excluded lie?

Oh, happy who remaineth
 Thy household-man and still thy praise unfoldeth!
 Oh, happy who himself on thee sustaineth,
 Who to thy house his journey holdeth!
 Me seems I see them going
 Where mulberries are growing:
 How wells they dig in thirsty plain,
 And cisterns make for falling rain.

Me seems I see augmented
 Still troop with troop, till all at length discover
 Zion, where to their sight is represented
 The Lord of hosts, the Zion lover.
 O Lord, O God, most mighty
 In war, yea, most almighty:

Hear what I beg; hearken, I say,
O Jacob's God, to what I pray.

Thou art the shield us shieldeth:
Then, Lord, behold the face of thine anointed
One day spent in thy courts more comfort yieldeth
Than thousands otherwise appointed.
I count it clearer pleasure
To spend my age's treasure
Waiting a porter at thy gates
Than dwell a lord with wicked mates.

Thou art the sun that shineth;
Thou art the buckler, Lord that us defendeth:
Glory and grace Jehovah's hand assigneth
And good without refusal sendeth
To him who truly treadeth
The path to pureness leadeth.
O Lord of might, thrice blessed he
Whose confidence is built on thee.

2.11.7 "Psalm 102"

(1599)

O Lord, my praying hear;
Lord, let my cry come to thine ear.
Hide not thy face away,
But haste, and answer me,
In this my most, most miserable day,
Wherein I pray and cry to thee.

My days as smoke are past;
My bones as flaming fuel waste,
Mown down in me, alas.
With scythe of sharpest pain.
My heart is withered like the wounded grass;
My stomach doth all food disdain.

So lean my woes me leave,
That to my flesh my bones do cleave;
And so I bray and howl,
As use to howl and bray

The lonely pelican and desert owl,
Like whom I languish long the day.

I languish so the day,
The night in watch I waste away;
Right as the sparrow sits,
Bereft of spouse, or son,
Which irked alone with dolor's deadly fits
To company will not be won.

As day to day succeeds,
So shame on shame to me proceeds
From them that do me hate,
Who of my wrack so boast,
That wishing ill, they wish but my estate,
Yet think they wish of ills the most.

Therefore my bread is clay;
Therefore my tears my wine allay.
For how else should it be,
Sith thou still angry art,
And seem'st for naught to have advanced me,
But me advanced to subvert?

The sun of my life-days
Inclines to west with falling rays,
And I as hay am dried,
While yet in steadfast seat
Eternal thou eternally dost bide,
Thy memory no years can fret.

Oh, then at length arise;
On Zion cast thy mercy's eyes.
Now is the time that thou
To mercy shouldst incline
Concerning her: O Lord, the time is now
Thyself for mercy didst assign.

Thy servants wait the day
When she, who like a carcass lay
Stretched forth in ruin's bier,
Shall so arise and live,

The nations all Jehova's name shall fear,
All kings to thee shall glory give.

Because thou hast anew
Made Zion stand, restored to view
Thy glorious presence there,
Because thou hast, I say,
Beheld our woes and not refused to hear
What wretched we did plaining pray,

This of record shall bide
To this and every age beside.
And they commend thee shall
Whom thou anew shall make,
That from the prospect of thy heav'nly hall
Thy eye of earth survey did take,

Heark'ning to prisoners' groans,
And setting free condemned ones,
That they, when nations come,
And realms to serve the Lord,
In Zion and in Salem might become
Fit means his honor to record.

But what is this if I
In the mid way should fall and die?
My God, to thee I pray,
Who canst my prayer give.
Turn not to night the noontide of my day,
Since endless thou dost ageless live.

The earth, the heaven stands
Once founded, formed by thy hands:
They perish, thou shalt bide;
They old, as clothes shall wear,
Till changing still, full change shall them betide,
Unclothed of all the clothes they bear.

But thou art one, still one:
Time interest in thee hath none.
Then hope, who godly be,
Or come of godly race:

Endless your bliss, as never ending he,
 His presence your unchanged place.

2.11.8 "Psalm 150"

(1599)

Oh, laud the Lord, the God of hosts commend,
 Exalt his pow'r, advance his holiness:
 With all your might lift his almightiness;
 Your greatest praise upon his greatness spend.

Make trumpet's noise in shrillest notes ascend;
 Make lute and lyre his loved fame express;
 Him let the pipe, him let the tabret bless,
 Him organ's breath, that winds or waters lend

Let ringing timbrels so his honor sound,
 Let sounding cymbals so his glory ring,
 That in their tunes such melody be found
 As fits the pomp of most triumphant king.

Conclude: by all that air or life enfold,
 Let high Jehovah highly be extolled.

2.11.9 Reading and Review Questions

1. In "Doleful Lay," Mary Herbert Spenser names the speaker who is clearly a woman. How does she give Clorinda a distinctly and distinctively female-gendered voice?
2. How does Mary Herbert Spenser use nature imagery in "Doleful Lay?" To what degree, if any, is it idealized and/or allegorized?
3. Mary Herbert Spenser dedicates her translations of the Psalms to her brother with the elegy "To the Angel Spirit of the Most Excellent Sir Philip Sidney." In this poem, she attributes the translations' heavenly power to her brother, an expressed humility and subordination she repeats in various ways, including deploring her own weakness and presumption. To what degree, if any, is Mary Herbert Spenser in these ways fulfilling elegiac versus gender conventions? How does her representation of gender compare with Elizabeth I's?
4. How, if at all, does Mary Herbert Spenser reveal her Protestant faith in her translations of the Psalms?

5. Considering the restrictions that her era placed upon females taking any public role in religious practices, to what degree, if at all, does Mary Herbert Spenser distinguish between private or personal versus public and universal expressions of faith in her translations of the Psalms? How, if at all, does her prowess and versatility in metrical verse play into this distinction?

2.12 CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

(1564-1593)

Christopher Marlowe was the son of a shoemaker. He attended King's School in Canterbury and then, by winning an Archbishop Parker scholarship, he studied at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree which should have been followed three years later by a Master's degree. To earn a Master's, Marlowe was expected to take orders. That he didn't, and that the university only awarded Marlowe the Masters after receiving a letter from the Privy Council, speaks to mysteries and uncertainties in Marlowe's activities while at Cambridge. During the time when he was ostensibly studying for his Master's, Marlowe left Cambridge for extended lengths of time. His destinations and actions during these frequent absences remain unknown. However, the Privy Council reassured the university by letter in which it declared that Marlowe was working for England's benefit and for the Queen's good service. Some scholars believe that this service involved spying against expatriate Roman Catholics (and their conspiracies against Elizabeth) in Rheims. That Marlowe's work remains a mystery suggests that it was deliberately kept secret by the government.

His post-graduate public career began when he left Cambridge for London. There, he may have continued his work for the government, but he certainly began writing plays. His *Tamburlaine the Great* (1590) proved a great success and heralded the new age of great Elizabethan Theater, directly influencing its flowering. Marlowe was one of the first playwrights to use blank verse; Thomas Kyd (1558-1594) imitated it in *The Spanish Tragedy* (c. 1585). Marlowe's style was astounding; his title characters and his plays' actions are larger than life—almost incomprehensively so. Edward II was a powerful monarch who was also flawed and ultimately

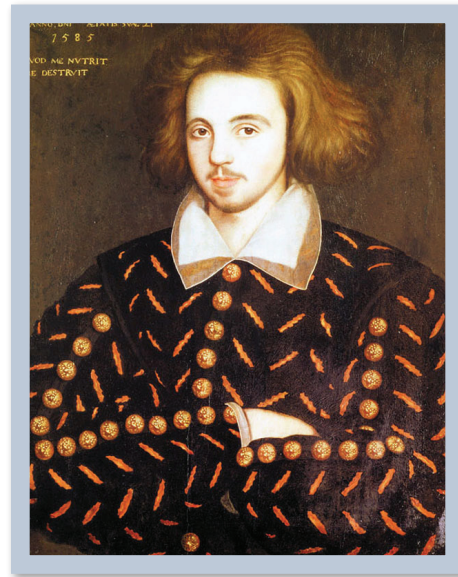


Image 2.13 | Christopher Marlowe

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deposed (though it is unclear whether or not Marlowe wrote a play called *Edward II*); the Jew of Malta was phenomenally wealthy yet morally bankrupt; Dr. Faustus is a demigod in his magical powers who heedlessly diminishes and damns himself. Faustus aspires to a dominion that stretches “as far as doth the mind of man” (I.i.61) but ultimately wishes to be changed to a dumb beast.

Marlowe’s own character may have been as compelling and ambiguous as those in his plays. Suspicion surrounded him, and friends and acquaintances denounced him for atheism or leanings toward the Roman Catholic faith. In 1593, Thomas Kyd, with whom Marlowe at one time shared lodgings, testified that Marlowe read atheistical texts, upon which testimony Marlowe was arrested for heresy, or atheism (which was then a crime). He was not brought to trial, nor even imprisoned. Instead, he was released on the condition that he report to an officer of the court. Within days of his release, Marlowe was killed by Ingram Frizer (d. 1627). Apparently, the two fought over a lodging house bill, and Frizer fatally stabbed Marlowe in the forehead. Frizer served Sir Francis Walsingham (c. 1532-1590) who ran an intelligence service. Some scholars believe Frizer assassinated Marlowe for being a spy, or counter-spy. But no evidence has proven such conjectures.

We do know that Marlowe was an extraordinary artist and playwright, one who certainly influenced his contemporaries, including William Shakespeare—who also created a famously-divided character (like Dr. Faustus) in his *Hamlet* and an avaricious, vengeful Jew in his *Shylock*. And in his *Sonnet 29*, when Shakespeare acknowledges envy for “this man’s art,” it does not take much stretch of the imagination to wonder if he may have had Marlowe in mind.

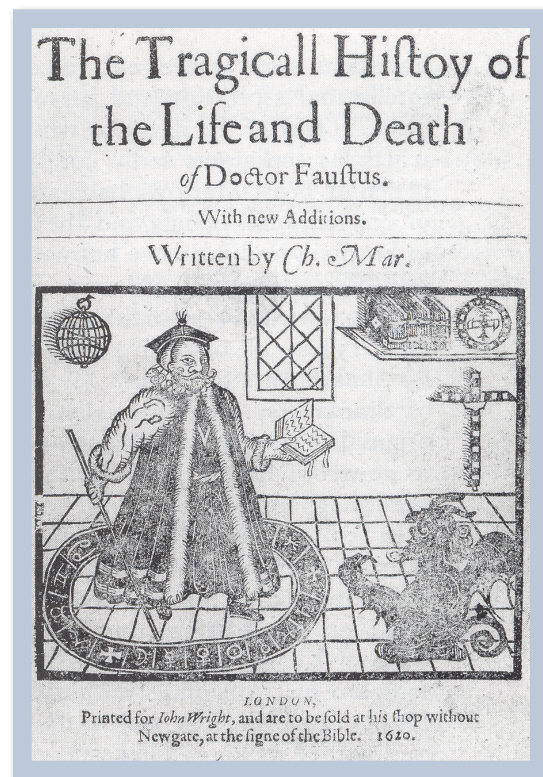


Image 2.14 | The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus Title Page

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2.12.1 *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*

(1604)

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

THE POPE.

CARDINAL OF LORRAIN.

THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY.

DUKE OF VANHOLT.

FAUSTUS.

VALDES, friend to FAUSTUS.

CORNELIUS, friend to FAUSTUS.

WAGNER, servant to FAUSTUS.

Clown.

ROBIN.

RALPH.

Vintner.

Horse-courser.

A KNIGHT.

An Old Man.

Scholars, Friars, and Attendants.

DUCHESS OF VANHOLT

LUCIFER.

BELZEBUB.

MEPHISTOPHILIS.

Good Angel.

Evil Angel.

The Seven Deadly Sins.

Devils.

Spirits in the shapes of ALEXANDER THE GREAT, of his Paramour
and of HELEN.

Chorus.

[Enter CHORUS.]

CHORUS.

Not marching now in fields of Thrasymene,
Where Mars did mate the Carthaginians;
Nor sporting in the dalliance of love,
In courts of kings where state is overturn'd;
Nor in the pomp of proud audacious deeds,
Intends our Muse to vaunt her heavenly verse:
Only this, gentlemen,—we must perform
The form of Faustus' fortunes, good or bad:
To patient judgments we appeal our plaud,
And speak for Faustus in his infancy.
Now is he born, his parents base of stock,
In Germany, within a town call'd Rhodes:
Of riper years, to Wertenberg he went,
Whereas his kinsmen chiefly brought him up.
So soon he profits in divinity,

The fruitful plot of scholarism grac'd,
 That shortly he was grac'd with doctor's name,
 Excelling all whose sweet delight disputes
 In heavenly matters of theology;
 Till swoln with cunning, of a self-conceit,
 His waxen wings did mount above his reach,
 And, melting, heavens conspir'd his overthrow;
 For, falling to a devilish exercise,
 And glutted now with learning's golden gifts,
 He surfeits upon cursed necromancy;
 Nothing so sweet as magic is to him,
 Which he prefers before his chiefest bliss:
 And this the man that in his study sits.
 [Exit.]

[FAUSTUS discovered in his study.]

FAUSTUS.

Settle thy studies, Faustus, and begin
 To sound the depth of that thou wilt profess:
 Having commenc'd, be a divine in shew,
 Yet level at the end of every art,
 And live and die in Aristotle's works.
 Sweet Analytics, 'tis thou hast ravish'd me!
Bene disserere est finis logices.
 Is, to dispute well, logic's chiefest end?
 Affords this art no greater miracle?
 Then read no more; thou hast attain'd that end:
 A greater subject fitteth Faustus' wit:
 Bid Economy farewell, and Galen come,
 Seeing, *Ubi desinit philosophus, ibi incipit medicus:*
 Be a physician, Faustus; heap up gold,
 And be eterniz'd for some wondrous cure:
Summum bonum medicinae sanitas,
 The end of physic is our body's health.
 Why, Faustus, hast thou not attain'd that end?
 Is not thy common talk found aphorisms?
 Are not thy bills hung up as monuments,
 Whereby whole cities have escap'd the plague,
 And thousand desperate maladies been eas'd?
 Yet art thou still but Faustus, and a man.
 Couldst thou make men to live eternally,
 Or, being dead, raise them to life again,

Then this profession were to be esteem'd.
Physic, farewell! Where is Justinian?

[Reads.]

*Si una eademque res legatur duobus, alter rem,
alter valorem rei, &c.*
A pretty case of paltry legacies!

[Reads.]

Exhoereditare filium non potest pater, nisi, &c.
Such is the subject of the institute,
And universal body of the law:
This study fits a mercenary drudge,
Who aims at nothing but external trash;
Too servile and illiberal for me.
When all is done, divinity is best:
Jerome's Bible, Faustus; view it well.

[Reads.]

Stipendium peccati mors est.
Ha!
Stipendium, &c.
The reward of sin is death: that's hard.

[Reads.]

Si peccasse negamus, fallimur, et nulla est in nobis veritas;
If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and
there's no truth in us. Why, then, belike we must sin, and so
consequently die:
Ay, we must die an everlasting death.
What doctrine call you this, *Che sera, sera*,
What will be, shall be? Divinity, adieu!
These metaphysics of magicians,
And necromantic books are heavenly;
Lines, circles, scenes, letters, and characters;
Ay, these are those that Faustus most desires.
O, what a world of profit and delight,
Of power, of honour, of omnipotence,
Is promis'd to the studious artizan!
All things that move between the quiet poles
Shall be at my command: emperors and kings
Are but obeyed in their several provinces,
Nor can they raise the wind, or rend the clouds;
But his dominion that exceeds in this,

Stretcheth as far as doth the mind of man;
A sound magician is a mighty god:
Here, Faustus, tire thy brains to gain a deity.

[Enter WAGNER.]

Wagner, commend me to my dearest friends,
The German Valdes and Cornelius;
Request them earnestly to visit me.

WAGNER.

I will, sir.
[Exit.]

FAUSTUS.

Their conference will be a greater help to me
Than all my labours, plod I ne'er so fast.

[Enter GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL.]

GOOD ANGEL.

O, Faustus, lay that damned book aside,
And gaze not on it, lest it tempt thy soul,
And heap God's heavy wrath upon thy head!
Read, read the Scriptures:—that is blasphemy.

EVIL ANGEL.

Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art
Wherein all Nature's treasure is contain'd:
Be thou on earth as Jove is in the sky,
Lord and commander of these elements.
[Exeunt Angels.]

FAUSTUS.

How am I glutted with conceit of this!
Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please,
Resolve me of all ambiguities,
Perform what desperate enterprise I will?
I'll have them fly to India for gold,
Ransack the ocean for orient pearl,
And search all corners of the new-found world
For pleasant fruits and princely delicates;
I'll have them read me strange philosophy,
And tell the secrets of all foreign kings;

I'll have them wall all Germany with brass,
 And make swift Rhine circle fair Wertenberg;
 I'll have them fill the public schools with silk,
 Wherewith the students shall be bravely clad;
 I'll levy soldiers with the coin they bring,
 And chase the Prince of Parma from our land,
 And reign sole king of all the provinces;
 Yea, stranger engines for the brunt of war,
 Than was the fiery keel at Antwerp's bridge,
 I'll make my servile spirits to invent.

[Enter VALDES and CORNELIUS.]

Come, German Valdes, and Cornelius,
 And make me blest with your sage conference.
 Valdes, sweet Valdes, and Cornelius,
 Know that your words have won me at the last
 To practice magic and concealed arts:
 Yet not your words only, but mine own fantasy,
 That will receive no object; for my head
 But ruminates on necromantic skill.
 Philosophy is odious and obscure;
 Both law and physic are for petty wits;
 Divinity is basest of the three,
 Unpleasant, harsh, contemptible, and vile:
 'Tis magic, magic, that hath ravish'd me.
 Then, gentle friends, aid me in this attempt;
 And I, that have with concise syllogisms
 Gravell'd the pastors of the German church,
 And made the flowering pride of Wertenberg
 Swarm to my problems, as the infernal spirits
 On sweet Musaeus when he came to hell,
 Will be as cunning as Agrippa was,
 Whose shadow made all Europe honour him.

VALDES.

Faustus, these books, thy wit, and our experience,
 Shall make all nations to canonize us.
 As Indian Moors obey their Spanish lords,
 So shall the spirits of every element
 Be always serviceable to us three;
 Like lions shall they guard us when we please;
 Like Almain rutters with their horsemen's staves,
 Or Lapland giants, trotting by our sides;

Sometimes like women, or unwedded maids,
 Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows
 Than have the white breasts of the queen of love:
 From Venice shall they drag huge argosies,
 And from America the golden fleece
 That yearly stuffs old Philip's treasury;
 If learned Faustus will be resolute.

FAUSTUS.

Valdes, as resolute am I in this
 As thou to live: therefore object it not.

CORNELIUS.

The miracles that magic will perform
 Will make thee vow to study nothing else.
 He that is grounded in astrology,
 Enrich'd with tongues, well seen in minerals,
 Hath all the principles magic doth require:
 Then doubt not, Faustus, but to be renown'd,
 And more frequented for this mystery
 Than heretofore the Delphian oracle.
 The spirits tell me they can dry the sea,
 And fetch the treasure of all foreign wrecks,
 Ay, all the wealth that our forefathers hid
 Within the massy entrails of the earth:
 Then tell me, Faustus, what shall we three want?

FAUSTUS.

Nothing, Cornelius. O, this cheers my soul!
 Come, shew me some demonstrations magical,
 That I may conjure in some lusty grove,
 And have these joys in full possession.

VALDES.

Then haste thee to some solitary grove,
 And bear wise Bacon's and Albertus' works,
 The Hebrew Psalter, and New Testament;
 And whatsoever else is requisite
 We will inform thee ere our conference cease.

CORNELIUS.

Valdes, first let him know the words of art;
 And then, all other ceremonies learn'd,
 Faustus may try his cunning by himself.

VALDES.

First I'll instruct thee in the rudiments,
And then wilt thou be perfecter than I.

FAUSTUS.

Then come and dine with me, and, after meat,
We'll canvass every quiddity thereof;
For, ere I sleep, I'll try what I can do:
This night I'll conjure, though I die therefore.
[Exeunt.]

[Enter two SCHOLARS.]

FIRST SCHOLAR.

I wonder what's become of Faustus, that was wont
to make our schools ring with *sic probo*.

SECOND SCHOLAR.

That shall we know, for see, here comes his boy.

Enter WAGNER.

FIRST SCHOLAR.

How now, sirrah! where's thy master?

WAGNER.

God in heaven knows.

SECOND SCHOLAR.

Why, dost not thou know?

WAGNER.

Yes, I know; but that follows not.

FIRST SCHOLAR.

Go to, sirrah! leave your jesting, and tell us
where he is.

WAGNER.

That follows not necessary by force of argument, that you,
being licentiates, should stand upon: therefore acknowledge
your error, and be attentive.

SECOND SCHOLAR.

Why, didst thou not say thou knewest?

WAGNER.

Have you any witness on't?

FIRST SCHOLAR.

Yes, sirrah, I heard you.

WAGNER.

Ask my fellow if I be a thief.

SECOND SCHOLAR.

Well, you will not tell us?

WAGNER.

Yes, sir, I will tell you: yet, if you were not dunces, you would never ask me such a question; for is not he corpus naturale? and is not that mobile? then wherefore should you ask me such a question? But that I am by nature phlegmatic, slow to wrath, and prone to lechery (to love, I would say), it were not for you to come within forty foot of the place of execution, although I do not doubt to see you both hanged the next sessions. Thus having triumphed over you, I will set my countenance like a precisian, and begin to speak thus:— Truly, my dear brethren, my master is within at dinner, with Valdes and Cornelius, as this wine, if it could speak, would inform your worships: and so, the Lord bless you, preserve you, and keep you, my dear brethren, my dear brethren! [Exit.]

FIRST SCHOLAR.

Nay, then, I fear he is fallen into that damned art for which they two are infamous through the world.

SECOND SCHOLAR.

Were he a stranger, and not allied to me, yet should I grieve for him. But, come, let us go and inform the Rector, and see if he by his grave counsel can reclaim him.

FIRST SCHOLAR.

O, but I fear me nothing can reclaim him!

SECOND SCHOLAR.

Yet let us try what we can do.

[Exeunt.]

[Enter FAUSTUS to conjure.]

FAUSTUS.

Now that the gloomy shadow of the earth,
 Longing to view Orion's drizzling look,
 Leaps from th' antartic world unto the sky,
 And dims the welkin with her pitchy breath,
 Faustus, begin thine incantations,
 And try if devils will obey thy hest,
 Seeing thou hast pray'd and sacrific'd to them.
 Within this circle is Jehovah's name,
 Forward and backward anagrammatiz'd,
 Th' abbreviated names of holy saints,
 Figures of every adjunct to the heavens,
 And characters of signs and erring stars,
 By which the spirits are enforc'd to rise:
 Then fear not, Faustus, but be resolute,
 And try the uttermost magic can perform.—
*Sint mihi dei Acherontis propitii! Valeat numen triplex Jehovoe!
 Ignei, aerii, aquatani spiritus, salvete! Orientis princeps
 Belzebub, inferni ardentis monarcha, et Demogorgon, propitiamus
 vos, ut appareat et surgat Mephistophilis, quod tumeraris:
 per Jehovam, Gehennam, et consecratam aquam quam nunc spargo,
 signumque crucis quod nunc facio, et per vota nostra, ipse nunc
 surgat nobis dicatus Mephistophilis!*

[Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS.]

I charge thee to return, and change thy shape;
 Thou art too ugly to attend on me:
 Go, and return an old Franciscan friar;
 That holy shape becomes a devil best.

[Exit MEPHISTOPHILIS.]

I see there's virtue in my heavenly words:
 Who would not be proficient in this art?
 How pliant is this Mephistophilis,
 Full of obedience and humility!

Such is the force of magic and my spells:
No, Faustus, thou art conjuror laureat,
That canst command great Mephistophilis:
Quin regis Mephistophilis fratris imagine.

[Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS like a Franciscan friar.]

MEPHIST.

Now, Faustus, what wouldst thou have me do?

FAUSTUS.

I charge thee wait upon me whilst I live,
To do whatever Faustus shall command,
Be it to make the moon drop from her sphere,
Or the ocean to overwhelm the world.

MEPHIST.

I am a servant to great Lucifer,
And may not follow thee without his leave:
No more than he commands must we perform.

FAUSTUS.

Did not he charge thee to appear to me?

MEPHIST.

No, I came hither of mine own accord.

FAUSTUS.

Did not my conjuring speeches raise thee? speak.

MEPHIST.

That was the cause, but yet per accidens;
For, when we hear one rack the name of God,
Abjure the Scriptures and his Saviour Christ,
We fly, in hope to get his glorious soul;
Nor will we come, unless he use such means
Whereby he is in danger to be damn'd.
Therefore the shortest cut for conjuring
Is stoutly to abjure the Trinity,
And pray devoutly to the prince of hell.

FAUSTUS.

So Faustus hath
Already done; and holds this principle,

There is no chief but only Belzebub;
 To whom Faustus doth dedicate himself.
 This word “damnation” terrifies not him,
 For he confounds hell in Elysium:
 His ghost be with the old philosophers!
 But, leaving these vain trifles of men’s souls,
 Tell me what is that Lucifer thy lord?

MEPHIST.

Arch-regent and commander of all spirits.

FAUSTUS.

Was not that Lucifer an angel once?

MEPHIST.

Yes, Faustus, and most dearly lov’d of God.

FAUSTUS.

How comes it, then, that he is prince of devils?

MEPHIST.

O, by aspiring pride and insolence;
 For which God threw him from the face of heaven.

FAUSTUS.

And what are you that live with Lucifer?

MEPHIST.

Unhappy spirits that fell with Lucifer,
 Conspir’d against our God with Lucifer,
 And are for ever damn’d with Lucifer.

FAUSTUS.

Where are you damn’d?

MEPHIST.

In hell.

FAUSTUS.

How comes it, then, that thou art out of hell?

MEPHIST.

Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it:
 Think’st thou that I, who saw the face of God,

And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,
 Am not tormented with ten thousand hells,
 In being depriv'd of everlasting bliss?
 O, Faustus, leave these frivolous demands,
 Which strike a terror to my fainting soul!

FAUSTUS.

What, is great Mephistophilis so passionate
 For being deprived of the joys of heaven?
 Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude,
 And scorn those joys thou never shalt possess.
 Go bear these tidings to great Lucifer:
 Seeing Faustus hath incurr'd eternal death
 By desperate thoughts against Jove's deity,
 Say, he surrenders up to him his soul,
 So he will spare him four and twenty years,
 Letting him live in all voluptuousness;
 Having thee ever to attend on me,
 To give me whatsoever I shall ask,
 To tell me whatsoever I demand,
 To slay mine enemies, and aid my friends,
 And always be obedient to my will.
 Go and return to mighty Lucifer,
 And meet me in my study at midnight,
 And then resolve me of thy master's mind.

MEPHIST.

I will, Faustus.
 [Exit.]

FAUSTUS.

Had I as many souls as there be stars,
 I'd give them all for Mephistophilis.
 By him I'll be great emperor of the world,
 And make a bridge thorough the moving air,
 To pass the ocean with a band of men;
 I'll join the hills that bind the Afric shore,
 And make that country continent to Spain,
 And both contributory to my crown:
 The Emperor shall not live but by my leave,
 Nor any potentate of Germany.
 Now that I have obtain'd what I desir'd,
 I'll live in speculation of this art,

Till Mephistophilis return again.
[Exit.]

[Enter WAGNER and CLOWN.]

WAGNER.

Sirrah boy, come hither.

CLOWN.

How, boy! swowns, boy! I hope you have seen many boys
with such pickadevaunts as I have: boy, quotha!

WAGNER.

Tell me, sirrah, hast thou any comings in?

CLOWN.

Ay, and goings out too; you may see else.

WAGNER.

Alas, poor slave! see how poverty jesteth in his nakedness!
the villain is bare and out of service, and so hungry, that I know
he would give his soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton,
though it were blood-raw.

CLOWN.

How! my soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton, though
'twere blood-raw! not so, good friend: by'r lady, I had need
have it well roasted, and good sauce to it, if I pay so dear.

WAGNER.

Well, wilt thou serve me, and I'll make thee go like
Qui mihi discipulus?

CLOWN.

How, in verse?

WAGNER.

No, sirrah; in beaten silk and staves-acre.

CLOWN.

How, how, knaves-acre! ay, I thought that was all the land
his father left him. Do you hear? I would be sorry to rob you of
your living.

WAGNER.

Sirrah, I say in staves-acre.

CLOWN.

Oho, oho, staves-acre! why, then, belike, if I were your man, I should be full of vermin.

WAGNER.

So thou shalt, whether thou beest with me or no. But, sirrah, leave your jesting, and bind yourself presently unto me for seven years, or I'll turn all the lice about thee into familiars, and they shall tear thee in pieces.

CLOWN.

Do you hear, sir? you may save that labour; they are too familiar with me already: swowns, they are as bold with my flesh as if they had paid for their meat and drink.

WAGNER.

Well, do you hear, sirrah? hold, take these guilders.

[Gives money.]

CLOWN.

Gridirons! what be they?

WAGNER.

Why, French crowns.

CLOWN.

Mass, but for the name of French crowns, a man were as good have as many English counters. And what should I do with these?

WAGNER.

Why, now, sirrah, thou art at an hour's warning, whensoever or wheresoever the devil shall fetch thee.

CLOWN.

No, no; here, take your gridirons again.

WAGNER.

Truly, I'll none of them.

CLOWN.

Truly, but you shall.

WAGNER.

Bear witness I gave them him.

CLOWN.

Bear witness I give them you again.

WAGNER.

Well, I will cause two devils presently to fetch thee away.—Baliol and Belcher!

CLOWN.

Let your Baliol and your Belcher come here, and I'll knock them, they were never so knocked since they were devils: say I should kill one of them, what would folks say? “Do ye see yonder tall fellow in the round slop? he has killed the devil.” So I should be called Kill-devil all the parish over.

[Enter two DEVILS; and the CLOWN runs up and down crying.]

WAGNER.

Baliol and Belcher,—spirits, away!

Exeunt DEVILS.

CLOWN.

What, are they gone? a vengeance on them! they have vile long nails. There was a he-devil and a she-devil: I'll tell you how you shall know them; all he-devils has horns, and all she-devils has clifts and cloven feet.

WAGNER.

Well, sirrah, follow me.

CLOWN.

But, do you hear? if I should serve you, would you teach me to raise up Banios and Belcheos?

WAGNER.

I will teach thee to turn thyself to any thing, to a dog, or a cat, or a mouse, or a rat, or any thing.

CLOWN.

How! a Christian fellow to a dog, or a cat, a mouse,
or a rat! no, no, sir; if you turn me into any thing, let it be
in the likeness of a little pretty frisking flea, that I may be
here and there and every where: O, I'll tickle the pretty wenches'
plackets! I'll be amongst them, i'faith.

WAGNER.

Well, sirrah, come.

CLOWN.

But, do you hear, Wagner?

WAGNER.

How!—Baliol and Belcher!

CLOWN.

O Lord! I pray, sir, let Banio and Belcher go sleep.

WAGNER.

Villain, call me Master Wagner, and let thy left eye be
diametarily fixed upon my right heel, with *quasi vestigiis
nostris insistere*.

[Exit.]

CLOWN.

God forgive me, he speaks Dutch fustian. Well, I'll follow
him; I'll serve him, that's flat.

[Exit.]

[FAUSTUS discovered in his study.]

FAUSTUS.

Now, Faustus, must
Thou needs be damn'd, and canst thou not be sav'd:
What boots it, then, to think of God or heaven?
Away with such vain fancies, and despair;
Despair in God, and trust in Belzebub:
Now go not backward; no, Faustus, be resolute:
Why waver'st thou? O, something soundeth in mine ears,
"Abjure this magic, turn to God again!"
Ay, and Faustus will turn to God again.
To God? he loves thee not;
The god thou serv'st is thine own appetite,

Wherein is fix'd the love of Belzebub:
To him I'll build an altar and a church,
And offer lukewarm blood of new-born babes.

[Enter GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL.]

GOOD ANGEL.

Sweet Faustus, leave that execrable art.

FAUSTUS.

Contrition, prayer, repentance—what of them?

GOOD ANGEL.

O, they are means to bring thee unto heaven!

EVIL ANGEL.

Rather illusions, fruits of lunacy,
That make men foolish that do trust them most.

GOOD ANGEL.

Sweet Faustus, think of heaven and heavenly things.

EVIL ANGEL.

No, Faustus; think of honour and of wealth.

[Exeunt ANGELS.]

FAUSTUS.

Of wealth!
Why, the signiory of Embden shall be mine.
When Mephistophilis shall stand by me,
What god can hurt thee, Faustus? thou art safe
Cast no more doubts.—Come, Mephistophilis,
And bring glad tidings from great Lucifer;—
Is't not midnight?—come, Mephistophilis,
Veni, veni, Mephistophile!

[Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS.]

Now tell me what says Lucifer, thy lord?

MEPHIST.

That I shall wait on Faustus whilst he lives,
So he will buy my service with his soul.

FAUSTUS.

Already Faustus hath hazarded that for thee.

MEPHIST.

But, Faustus, thou must bequeath it solemnly,
And write a deed of gift with thine own blood;
For that security craves great Lucifer.
If thou deny it, I will back to hell.

FAUSTUS.

Stay, Mephistophilis, and tell me, what good will my soul
do thy lord?

MEPHIST.

Enlarge his kingdom.

FAUSTUS.

Is that the reason why he tempts us thus?

MEPHIST.

Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris.

FAUSTUS.

Why, have you any pain that torture others!

MEPHIST.

As great as have the human souls of men.
But, tell me, Faustus, shall I have thy soul?
And I will be thy slave, and wait on thee,
And give thee more than thou hast wit to ask.

FAUSTUS.

Ay, Mephistophilis, I give it thee.

MEPHIST.

Then, Faustus, stab thine arm courageously,
And bind thy soul, that at some certain day
Great Lucifer may claim it as his own;
And then be thou as great as Lucifer.

FAUSTUS.

[Stabbing his arm] Lo, Mephistophilis, for love of thee,
I cut mine arm, and with my proper blood

Assure my soul to be great Lucifer's,
Chief lord and regent of perpetual night!
View here the blood that trickles from mine arm,
And let it be propitious for my wish.

MEPHIST.

But, Faustus, thou must
Write it in manner of a deed of gift.

FAUSTUS.

Ay, so I will [Writes]. But, Mephistophilis,
My blood congeals, and I can write no more.

MEPHIST.

I'll fetch thee fire to dissolve it straight.
[Exit.]

FAUSTUS.

What might the staying of my blood portend?
Is it unwilling I should write this bill?
Why streams it not, that I may write afresh?
FAUSTUS GIVES TO THEE HIS SOUL: ah, there it stay'd!
Why shouldst thou not? is not thy soul shine own?
Then write again, FAUSTUS GIVES TO THEE HIS SOUL.

[Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS with a chafer of coals.]

MEPHIST.

Here's fire; come, Faustus, set it on.

FAUSTUS.

So, now the blood begins to clear again;
Now will I make an end immediately.
[Writes.]

MEPHIST.

O, what will not I do to obtain his soul?
[Aside.]

FAUSTUS.

Consummatum est; this bill is ended,
And Faustus hath bequeath'd his soul to Lucifer.
But what is this inscription on mine arm?
Homo, fuge: whither should I fly?

If unto God, he'll throw me down to hell.
 My senses are deceiv'd; here's nothing writ:—
 I see it plain; here in this place is writ,
Homo, fuge: yet shall not Faustus fly.

MEPHIST.

I'll fetch him somewhat to delight his mind.
 [Aside, and then exit.]

[Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS with DEVILS, who give crowns and rich apparel to FAUSTUS, dance, and then depart.]

FAUSTUS.

Speak, Mephistophilis, what means this show?

MEPHIST.

Nothing, Faustus, but to delight thy mind withal,
 And to shew thee what magic can perform.

FAUSTUS.

But may I raise up spirits when I please?

MEPHIST.

Ay, Faustus, and do greater things than these.

FAUSTUS.

Then there's enough for a thousand souls.
 Here, Mephistophilis, receive this scroll,
 A deed of gift of body and of soul:
 But yet conditionally that thou perform
 All articles prescrib'd between us both.

MEPHIST.

Faustus, I swear by hell and Lucifer
 To effect all promises between us made!

FAUSTUS.

Then hear me read them. [Reads] *On these conditions Following. First, that Faustus may be a spirit in form and Substance. Secondly, that Mephistophilis shall be his servant, And at his command. Thirdly, that Mephistophilis do for him, And bring him whatsoever he desires. Fourthly, that he shall Be in his chamber or house invisible. Lastly, that he shall appear To the said John Faustus, at all times, in what form or shape*

*Soever he please. I, John Faustus, of Wertenberg, Doctor, by
These presents, do give both body and soul to Lucifer Prince of
The East, and his minister Mephistophilis; and futhermore grant
Unto them, that, twenty-four years being expired, the articles
Above-written inviolate, full power to fetch or carry the said
John Faustus, body and soul, flesh, blood, or goods, into their
Habitation wheresoever. By me, John Faustus.*

MEPHIST.

Speak, Faustus, do you deliver this as your deed?

FAUSTUS.

Ay, take it, and the devil give thee good on't!

MEPHIST.

Now, Faustus, ask what thou wilt.

FAUSTUS.

First will I question with thee about hell.
Tell me, where is the place that men call hell?

MEPHIST.

Under the heavens.

FAUSTUS.

Ay, but whereabout?

MEPHIST.

Within the bowels of these elements,
Where we are tortur'd and remain for ever:
Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscrib'd
In one self place; for where we are is hell,
And where hell is, there must we ever be:
And, to conclude, when all the world dissolves,
And every creature shall be purified,
All places shall be hell that are not heaven.

FAUSTUS.

Come, I think hell's a fable.

MEPHIST.

Ay, think so still, till experience change thy mind.

FAUSTUS.

Why, think'st thou, then, that Faustus shall be damn'd?

MEPHIST.

Ay, of necessity, for here's the scroll
Wherein thou hast given thy soul to Lucifer.

FAUSTUS.

Ay, and body too: but what of that?
Think'st thou that Faustus is so fond to imagine
That, after this life, there is any pain?
Tush, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales.

MEPHIST.

But, Faustus, I am an instance to prove the contrary,
For I am damn'd, and am now in hell.

FAUSTUS.

How! now in hell!
Nay, an this be hell, I'll willingly be damn'd here:
What! walking, disputing, &c.
But, leaving off this, let me have a wife,
The fairest maid in Germany;
For I am wanton and lascivious,
And cannot live without a wife.

MEPHIST.

How! a wife!
I prithee, Faustus, talk not of a wife.

FAUSTUS.

Nay, sweet Mephistophilis, fetch me one, for I will have
one.

MEPHIST.

Well, thou wilt have one? Sit there till I come: I'll
fetch thee a wife in the devil's name.
[Exit.]

[Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS with a DEVIL drest like a WOMAN, with fire-works.]

MEPHIST.

Tell me, Faustus, how dost thou like thy wife?

FAUSTUS.

A plague on her for a hot whore!

MEPHIST.

Tut, Faustus,
Marriage is but a ceremonial toy;
If thou lovest me, think no more of it.
I'll cull thee out the fairest courtezans,
And bring them every morning to thy bed:
She whom thine eye shall like, thy heart shall have,
Be she as chaste as was Penelope,
As wise as Saba, or as beautiful
As was bright Lucifer before his fall.
Hold, take this book, peruse it thoroughly:
[Gives book.]
The iterating of these lines brings gold;
The framing of this circle on the ground
Brings whirlwinds, tempests, thunder, and lightning;
Pronounce this thrice devoutly to thyself,
And men in armour shall appear to thee,
Ready to execute what thou desir'st.

FAUSTUS.

Thanks, Mephistophilis: yet fain would I have a book
wherein I might behold all spells and incantations, that I
might raise up spirits when I please.

MEPHIST.

Here they are in this book.
[Turns to them.]

FAUSTUS.

Now would I have a book where I might see all characters
and planets of the heavens, that I might know their motions and
dispositions.

MEPHIST.

Here they are too.
[Turns to them.]

FAUSTUS.

Nay, let me have one book more,—and then I have done,—
wherein I might see all plants, herbs, and trees, that grow upon
the earth.

MEPHIST.
Here they be.

FAUSTUS.
O, thou art deceived.

MEPHIST.
Tut, I warrant thee.
[Turns to them.]

FAUSTUS.
When I behold the heavens, then I repent,
And curse thee, wicked Mephistophilis,
Because thou hast depriv'd me of those joys.

MEPHIST.
Why, Faustus,
Thinkest thou heaven is such a glorious thing?
I tell thee, 'tis not half so fair as thou,
Or any man that breathes on earth.

FAUSTUS.
How prov'st thou that?

MEPHIST.
'Twas made for man, therefore is man more excellent.

FAUSTUS.
If it were made for man, 'twas made for me:
I will renounce this magic and repent.

[Enter GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL.]

GOOD ANGEL.
Faustus, repent; yet God will pity thee.

EVIL ANGEL.
Thou art a spirit; God cannot pity thee.

FAUSTUS.
Who buzzeth in mine ears I am a spirit?
Be I a devil, yet God may pity me;
Ay, God will pity me, if I repent.

EVIL ANGEL.

Ay, but Faustus never shall repent.

[Exeunt ANGELS.]

FAUSTUS.

My heart's so harden'd, I cannot repent:
 Scarce can I name salvation, faith, or heaven,
 But fearful echoes thunder in mine ears,
 "Faustus, thou art damn'd!" then swords, and knives,
 Poison, guns, halters, and envenom'd steel
 Are laid before me to despatch myself;
 And long ere this I should have slain myself,
 Had not sweet pleasure conquer'd deep despair.
 Have not I made blind Homer sing to me
 Of Alexander's love and Oenon's death?
 And hath not he, that built the walls of Thebes
 With ravishing sound of his melodious harp,
 Made music with my Mephistophilis?
 Why should I die, then, or basely despair?
 I am resolv'd; Faustus shall ne'er repent.—
 Come, Mephistophilis, let us dispute again,
 And argue of divine astrology.
 Tell me, are there many heavens above the moon
 Are all celestial bodies but one globe,
 As is the substance of this centric earth?

MEPHIST.

As are the elements, such are the spheres,
 Mutually folded in each other's orb,
 And, Faustus,
 All jointly move upon one axletree,
 Whose terminine is term'd the world's wide pole;
 Nor are the names of Saturn, Mars, or Jupiter
 Feign'd, but are erring stars.

FAUSTUS.

But, tell me, have they all one motion, both situ et
 tempore?

MEPHIST.

All jointly move from east to west in twenty-four hours
 upon the poles of the world; but differ in their motion upon
 the poles of the zodiac.

FAUSTUS.

Tush,
These slender trifles Wagner can decide:
Hath Mephistophilis no greater skill?
Who knows not the double motion of the planets?
The first is finish'd in a natural day;
The second thus; as Saturn in thirty years; Jupiter in twelve;
Mars in four; the Sun, Venus, and Mercury in a year; the Moon in
twenty-eight days. Tush, these are freshmen's suppositions.
But, tell me, hath every sphere a dominion or intelligentia?

MEPHIST.

Ay.

FAUSTUS.

How many heavens or spheres are there?

MEPHIST.

Nine; the seven planets, the firmament, and the empyreal
heaven.

FAUSTUS.

Well, resolve me in this question; why have we not
conjunctions, oppositions, aspects, eclipses, all at one time,
but in some years we have more, in some less?

MEPHIST.

Per inoequalem motum respectu totius.

FAUSTUS.

Well, I am answered. Tell me who made the world?

MEPHIST.

I will not.

FAUSTUS.

Sweet Mephistophilis, tell me.

MEPHIST.

Move me not, for I will not tell thee.

FAUSTUS.

Villain, have I not bound thee to tell me any thing?

MEPHIST.

Ay, that is not against our kingdom; but this is. Think thou on hell, Faustus, for thou art damned.

FAUSTUS.

Think, Faustus, upon God that made the world.

MEPHIST.

Remember this.
[Exit.]

FAUSTUS.

Ay, go, accursed spirit, to ugly hell!
'Tis thou hast damn'd distressed Faustus' soul.
Is't not too late?

[Re-enter GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL.]

EVIL ANGEL.

Too late.

GOOD ANGEL.

Never too late, if Faustus can repent.

EVIL ANGEL.

If thou repent, devils shall tear thee in pieces.

GOOD ANGEL.

Repent, and they shall never raze thy skin.

[Exeunt ANGELS.]

FAUSTUS.

Ah, Christ, my Saviour,
Seek to save distressed Faustus' soul!

[Enter LUCIFER, BELZEBUB, and MEPHISTOPHILIS.]

LUCIFER.

Christ cannot save thy soul, for he is just:
There's none but I have interest in the same.

FAUSTUS.

O, who art thou that look'st so terrible?

LUCIFER.

I am Lucifer,
And this is my companion-prince in hell.

FAUSTUS.

O, Faustus, they are come to fetch away thy soul!

LUCIFER.

We come to tell thee thou dost injure us;
Thou talk'st of Christ, contrary to thy promise:
Thou shouldst not think of God: think of the devil,
And of his dam too.

FAUSTUS.

Nor will I henceforth: pardon me in this,
And Faustus vows never to look to heaven,
Never to name God, or to pray to him,
To burn his Scriptures, slay his ministers,
And make my spirits pull his churches down.

LUCIFER.

Do so, and we will highly gratify thee. Faustus, we are
come from hell to shew thee some pastime: sit down, and thou
shalt see all the Seven Deadly Sins appear in their proper shapes.

FAUSTUS.

That sight will be as pleasing unto me,
As Paradise was to Adam, the first day
Of his creation.

LUCIFER.

Talk not of Paradise nor creation; but mark this show:
talk of the devil, and nothing else.—Come away!

[Enter the SEVEN DEADLY SINS.]

Now, Faustus, examine them of their several names and dispositions.

FAUSTUS.

What art thou, the first?

PRIDE.

I am Pride. I disdain to have any parents. I am like to Ovid's flea; I can creep into every corner of a wench; sometimes, like a perriwig, I sit upon her brow; or, like a fan of feathers, I kiss her lips; indeed, I do—what do I not? But, fie, what a scent is here! I'll not speak another word, except the ground were perfumed, and covered with cloth of arras.

FAUSTUS.

What art thou, the second?

COVETOUSNESS.

I am Covetousness, begotten of an old churl, in an old leathern bag: and, might I have my wish, I would desire that this house and all the people in it were turned to gold, that I might lock you up in my good chest: O, my sweet gold!

FAUSTUS.

What art thou, the third?

WRATH.

I am Wrath. I had neither father nor mother: I leapt out of a lion's mouth when I was scarce half-an-hour old; and ever since I have run up and down the world with this case of rapiers, wounding myself when I had nobody to fight withal. I was born in hell; and look to it, for some of you shall be my father.

FAUSTUS.

What art thou, the fourth?

ENVY.

I am Envy, begotten of a chimney-sweeper and an oyster-wife. I cannot read, and therefore wish all books were burnt. I am lean with seeing others eat. O, that there would come a famine through all the world, that all might die, and I live alone! then thou shouldst see how fat I would be. But must thou sit, and I stand? come down, with a vengeance!

FAUSTUS.

Away, envious rascal!—What art thou, the fifth?

GLUTTONY.

Who I, sir? I am Gluttony. My parents are all dead, and the devil a penny they have left me, but a bare pension, and that is thirty meals a-day and ten bevers,—a small trifle to suffice nature. O, I come of a royal parentage! my grandfather was a Gammon of Bacon, my grandmother a Hogshead of Claret-wine; my godfathers were these, Peter Pickle-herring and Martin Martlemas-beef; O, but my godmother, she was a jolly gentlewoman, and well-beloved in every good town and city; her name was Mistress Margery March-beer. Now, Faustus, thou hast heard all my progeny; wilt thou bid me to supper?

FAUSTUS.

No, I'll see thee hanged: thou wilt eat up all my victuals.

GLUTTONY.

Then the devil choke thee!

FAUSTUS.

Choke thyself, glutton!—What art thou, the sixth?

SLOTH.

I am Sloth. I was begotten on a sunny bank, where I have lain ever since; and you have done me great injury to bring me from thence: let me be carried thither again by Gluttony and Lechery. I'll not speak another word for a king's ransom.

FAUSTUS.

What are you, Mistress Minx, the seventh and last?

LECHERY.

Who I, sir? I am one that loves an inch of raw mutton better than an ell of fried stock-fish; and the first letter of my name begins with L.

FAUSTUS.

Away, to hell, to hell!

[Exeunt the SINS.]

LUCIFER.

Now, Faustus, how dost thou like this?

FAUSTUS.

O, this feeds my soul!

LUCIFER.

Tut, Faustus, in hell is all manner of delight.

FAUSTUS.

O, might I see hell, and return again,
How happy were I then!

LUCIFER.

Thou shalt; I will send for thee at midnight.
In meantime take this book; peruse it thoroughly,
And thou shalt turn thyself into what shape thou wilt.

FAUSTUS.

Great thanks, mighty Lucifer!
This will I keep as chary as my life.

LUCIFER.

Farewell, Faustus, and think on the devil.

FAUSTUS.

Farewell, great Lucifer.

[Exeunt LUCIFER and BELZEBUB.]

Come, Mephistophilis.

[Exeunt.]

[Enter CHORUS.]

CHORUS.

Learned Faustus,
To know the secrets of astronomy
Graven in the book of Jove's high firmament,
Did mount himself to scale Olympus' top,
Being seated in a chariot burning bright,
Drawn by the strength of yoky dragons' necks.
He now is gone to prove cosmography,
And, as I guess, will first arrive at Rome,
To see the Pope and manner of his court,
And take some part of holy Peter's feast,
That to this day is highly solemniz'd.

[Exit.]

[Enter FAUSTUS and MEPHISTOPHILIS.]

FAUSTUS.

Having now, my good Mephistophilis,
 Pass'd with delight the stately town of Trier,
 Environ'd round with airy mountain-tops,
 With walls of flint, and deep-entrenched lakes,
 Not to be won by any conquering prince;
 From Paris next, coasting the realm of France,
 We saw the river Maine fall into Rhine,
 Whose banks are set with groves of fruitful vines;
 Then up to Naples, rich Campania,
 Whose buildings fair and gorgeous to the eye,
 The streets straight forth, and pav'd with finest brick,
 Quarter the town in four equivalents:
 There saw we learned Maro's golden tomb,
 The way he cut, an English mile in length,
 Thorough a rock of stone, in one night's space;
 From thence to Venice, Padua, and the rest,
 In one of which a sumptuous temple stands,
 That threatens the stars with her aspiring top.
 Thus hitherto hath Faustus spent his time:
 But tell me now what resting-place is this?
 Hast thou, as erst I did command,
 Conducted me within the walls of Rome?

MEPHIST.

Faustus, I have; and, because we will not be unprovided,
 I have taken up his Holiness' privy-chamber for our use.

FAUSTUS.

I hope his Holiness will bid us welcome.

MEPHIST.

Tut, 'tis no matter; man; we'll be bold with his good cheer.
 And now, my Faustus, that thou mayst perceive
 What Rome containeth to delight thee with,
 Know that this city stands upon seven hills
 That underprop the groundwork of the same:
 Just through the midst runs flowing Tiber's stream
 With winding banks that cut it in two parts;
 Over the which four stately bridges lean,
 That make safe passage to each part of Rome:

Upon the bridge call'd Ponte Angelo
 Erected is a castle passing strong,
 Within whose walls such store of ordnance are,
 And double cannons fram'd of carved brass,
 As match the days within one complete year;
 Besides the gates, and high pyramides,
 Which Julius Caesar brought from Africa.

FAUSTUS.

Now, by the kingdoms of infernal rule,
 Of Styx, of Acheron, and the fiery lake
 Of ever-burning Phlegethon, I swear
 That I do long to see the monuments
 And situation of bright-splendent Rome:
 Come, therefore, let's away.

MEPHIST.

Nay, Faustus, stay: I know you'd fain see the Pope,
 And take some part of holy Peter's feast,
 Where thou shalt see a troop of bald-pate friars,
 Whose *summum bonum* is in belly-cheer.

FAUSTUS.

Well, I'm content to compass then some sport,
 And by their folly make us merriment.
 Then charm me, that I
 May be invisible, to do what I please,
 Unseen of any whilst I stay in Rome.
 [Mephistophilis charms him.]

MEPHIST.

So, Faustus; now
 Do what thou wilt, thou shalt not be discern'd.

[Sound a Sonnet. Enter the POPE and the CARDINAL OF LORRAIN to the banquet, with FRIARS attending.]

POPE.

My Lord of Lorraine, will't please you draw near?

FAUSTUS.

Fall to, and the devil choke you, an you spare!

POPE.

How now! who's that which spake?—Friars, look about.

FIRST FRIAR.

Here's nobody, if it like your Holiness.

POPE.

My lord, here is a dainty dish was sent me from the Bishop of Milan.

FAUSTUS.

I thank you, sir.
[Snatches the dish.]

POPE.

How now! who's that which snatched the meat from me? will no man look?—My lord, this dish was sent me from the Cardinal of Florence.

FAUSTUS.

You say true; I'll ha't.
[Snatches the dish.]

POPE.

What, again!—My lord, I'll drink to your grace.

FAUSTUS.

I'll pledge your grace.
[Snatches the cup.]

C. OF LOR.

My lord, it may be some ghost, newly crept out of Purgatory, come to beg a pardon of your Holiness.

POPE.

It may be so.—Friars, prepare a dirge to lay the fury of this ghost.—Once again, my lord, fall to.
[The POPE crosses himself.]

FAUSTUS.

What, are you crossing of yourself?
Well, use that trick no more, I would advise you.
[The POPE crosses himself again.]

Well, there's the second time. Aware the third;
 I give you fair warning.
 [The POPE crosses himself again, and FAUSTUS hits him a box
 of the ear; and they all run away.]
 Come on, Mephistophilis; what shall we do?

MEPHIST.

Nay, I know not: we shall be cursed with bell, book,
 and candle.

FAUSTUS.

How! bell, book, and candle,—candle, book, and bell,—
 Forward and backward, to curse Faustus to hell!
 Anon you shall hear a hog grunt, a calf bleat, and an ass bray,
 Because it is Saint Peter's holiday.

[Re-enter all the FRIARS to sing the Dirge.]

FIRST FRIAR.

Come, brethren, let's about our business with good devotion.
 They sing.
Cursed be he that stole away his holiness' meat from the table! maledicat Dominus!
Cursed be he that struck his holiness a blow on the face!
 maledicat Dominus!
Cursed be he that took Friar Sandelo a blow on the pate!
 maledicat Dominus!
Cursed be he that disturbeth our holy dirge! maledicat
 Dominus!
Cursed be he that took away his holiness' wine! maledicat
 Dominus? ['?' sic]
 Et omnes Sancti! Amen!
 [MEPHISTOPHILIS and FAUSTUS beat the FRIARS, and fling
 fire-works among them; and so exeunt.]

[Enter CHORUS.]

CHORUS.

When Faustus had with pleasure ta'en the view
 Of rarest things, and royal courts of kings,
 He stay'd his course, and so returned home;
 Where such as bear his absence but with grief,
 I mean his friends and near'st companions,
 Did gratulate his safety with kind words,

And in their conference of what befell,
Touching his journey through the world and air,
They put forth questions of astrology,
Which Faustus answer'd with such learned skill
As they admir'd and wonder'd at his wit.
Now is his fame spread forth in every land:
Amongst the rest the Emperor is one,
Carolus the Fifth, at whose palace now
Faustus is feasted 'mongst his noblemen.
What there he did, in trial of his art,
I leave untold; your eyes shall see['t] perform'd.
[Exit.]

[Enter ROBIN the Ostler, with a book in his hand.]

ROBIN.

O, this is admirable! here I ha' stolen one of Doctor
Faustus' conjuring-books, and, i'faith, I mean to search some
circles for my own use. Now will I make all the maidens in our
parish dance at my pleasure, stark naked, before me; and so
by that means I shall see more than e'er I felt or saw yet.

[Enter RALPH, calling ROBIN.]

RALPH.

Robin, prithee, come away; there's a gentleman tarries
to have his horse, and he would have his things rubbed and made
clean: he keeps such a chafing with my mistress about it; and
she has sent me to look thee out; prithee, come away.

ROBIN.

Keep out, keep out, or else you are blown up, you are
dismembered, Ralph: keep out, for I am about a roaring piece
of work.

RALPH.

Come, what doest thou with that same book? thou canst
not read?

ROBIN.

Yes, my master and mistress shall find that I can read,
he for his forehead, she for her private study; she's born to
bear with me, or else my art fails.

RALPH.

Why, Robin, what book is that?

ROBIN.

What book! why, the most intolerable book for conjuring that e'er was invented by any brimstone devil.

RALPH.

Canst thou conjure with it?

ROBIN.

I can do all these things easily with it; first, I can make thee drunk with ippocras at any tabern in Europe for nothing; that's one of my conjuring works.

RALPH.

Our Master Parson says that's nothing.

ROBIN.

True, Ralph: and more, Ralph, if thou hast any mind to Nan Spit, our kitchen-maid, then turn her and wind her to thy own use, as often as thou wilt, and at midnight.

RALPH.

O, brave, Robin! shall I have Nan Spit, and to mine own use? On that condition I'll feed thy devil with horse-bread as long as he lives, of free cost.

ROBIN.

No more, sweet Ralph: let's go and make clean our boots, which lie foul upon our hands, and then to our conjuring in the devil's name.

[Exeunt.]

[Enter ROBIN and RALPH with a silver goblet.]

ROBIN.

Come, Ralph: did not I tell thee, we were for ever made by this Doctor Faustus' book? ecce, signum! here's a simple purchase for horse-keepers: our horses shall eat no hay as long as this lasts.

RALPH.

But, Robin, here comes the Vintner.

ROBIN.

Hush! I'll gull him supernaturally.

[Enter VINTNER.]

Drawer, I hope all is paid; God be with you!—Come, Ralph.

VINTNER.

Soft, sir; a word with you. I must yet have a goblet paid from you, ere you go.

ROBIN.

I a goblet, Ralph, I a goblet!—I scorn you; and you are but a, &c. I a goblet! search me.

VINTNER.

I mean so, sir, with your favour.
[Searches ROBIN.]

ROBIN.

How say you now?

VINTNER.

I must say somewhat to your fellow.—You, sir!

RALPH.

Me, sir! me, sir! search your fill. [VINTNER searches him.]
Now, sir, you may be ashamed to burden honest men with a matter of truth.

VINTNER.

Well, tone of you hath this goblet about you.

ROBIN.

You lie, drawer, 'tis afore me [Aside].—Sirrah you, I'll teach you to impeach honest men;—stand by;—I'll scour you for a goblet;—stand aside you had best, I charge you in the name of Belzebub.—Look to the goblet, Ralph [Aside to RALPH].

VINTNER.

What mean you, sirrah?

ROBIN.

I'll tell you what I mean. [Reads from a book] Sanctobulorum
Periphrasticon—nay, I'll tickle you, Vintner.—Look to the goblet,
Ralph [Aside to RALPH].—[Reads] Polypragmos Belseborams framanto
pacostiphos tostu, Mephistophilis, &c.

[Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS, sets squibs at their backs, and then exit. They run
about.]

VINTNER.

O, *nomine Domini!* what meanest thou, Robin? thou hast no
goblet.

RALPH.

Peccatum peccatorum!—Here's thy goblet, good Vintner.
[Gives the goblet to VINTNER, who exit.]

ROBIN.

Misericordia pro nobis! what shall I do? Good devil, forgive
me now, and I'll never rob thy library more.

[Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS.]

MEPHIST.

Monarch of Hell, under whose black survey
Great potentates do kneel with awful fear,
Upon whose altars thousand souls do lie,
How am I vexed with these villains' charms?
From Constantinople am I hither come,
Only for pleasure of these damned slaves.

ROBIN.

How, from Constantinople! you have had a great journey:
will you take sixpence in your purse to pay for your supper, and
be gone?

MEPHIST.

Well, villains, for your presumption, I transform thee
into an ape, and thee into a dog; and so be gone!
[Exit.]

ROBIN.

How, into an ape! that's brave: I'll have fine sport with
the boys; I'll get nuts and apples enow.

RALPH.

And I must be a dog.

ROBIN.

I'faith, thy head will never be out of the pottage-pot.

[Exeunt.]

[Enter EMPEROR, FAUSTUS, and a KNIGHT, with ATTENDANTS.]

EMPEROR.

Master Doctor Faustus, I have heard strange report
of thy knowledge in the black art, how that none in my empire
nor in the whole world can compare with thee for the rare effects
of magic: they say thou hast a familiar spirit, by whom thou canst
accomplish what thou list. This, therefore, is my request, that
thou let me see some proof of thy skill, that mine eyes may be
witnesses to confirm what mine ears have heard reported: and here
I swear to thee, by the honour of mine imperial crown, that,
whatever thou doest, thou shalt be no ways prejudiced or endamaged.

KNIGHT.

I'faith, he looks much like a conjurer.

[Aside.]

FAUSTUS.

My gracious sovereign, though I must confess myself far
inferior to the report men have published, and nothing answerable
to the honour of your imperial majesty, yet, for that love and duty
binds me thereunto, I am content to do whatsoever your majesty
shall command me.

EMPEROR.

Then, Doctor Faustus, mark what I shall say.
As I was sometime solitary set
Within my closet, sundry thoughts arose
About the honour of mine ancestors,
How they had won by prowess such exploits,
Got such riches, subdu'd so many kingdoms,
As we that do succeed, or they that shall
Hereafter possess our throne, shall
(I fear me) ne'er attain to that degree
Of high renown and great authority:
Amongst which kings is Alexander the Great,

Chief spectacle of the world's pre-eminence,
 The bright shining of whose glorious acts
 Lightens the world with his reflecting beams,
 As when I hear but motion made of him,
 It grieves my soul I never saw the man:
 If, therefore, thou, by cunning of thine art,
 Canst raise this man from hollow vaults below,
 Where lies entomb'd this famous conqueror,
 And bring with him his beauteous paramour,
 Both in their right shapes, gesture, and attire
 They us'd to wear during their time of life,
 Thou shalt both satisfy my just desire,
 And give me cause to praise thee whilst I live.

FAUSTUS.

My gracious lord, I am ready to accomplish your request,
 so far forth as by art and power of my spirit I am able to perform.

KNIGHT.

I'faith, that's just nothing at all.
 [Aside.]

FAUSTUS.

But, if it like your grace, it is not in my ability
 to present before your eyes the true substantial bodies of those
 two deceased princes, which long since are consumed to dust.

KNIGHT.

Ay, marry, Master Doctor, now there's a sign of grace in
 you, when you will confess the truth.
 [Aside.]

FAUSTUS.

But such spirits as can lively resemble Alexander and
 his paramour shall appear before your grace, in that manner that
 they both lived in, in their most flourishing estate; which
 I doubt not shall sufficiently content your imperial majesty.

EMPEROR.

Go to, Master Doctor; let me see them presently.

KNIGHT.

Do you hear, Master Doctor? you bring Alexander and his
 paramour before the Emperor!

FAUSTUS.

How then, sir?

KNIGHT.

I'faith, that's as true as Diana turned me to a stag.

FAUSTUS.

No, sir; but, when Actaeon died, he left the horns for you.—Mephistophilis, be gone.

[Exit MEPHISTOPHILIS.]

KNIGHT.

Nay, an you go to conjuring, I'll be gone.

[Exit.]

FAUSTUS.

I'll meet with you anon for interrupting me so.

—Here they are, my gracious lord.

[Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS with SPIRITS in the shapes of ALEXANDER and his PARAMOUR.]

EMPEROR.

Master Doctor, I heard this lady, while she lived, had a wart or mole in her neck: how shall I know whether it be so or no?

FAUSTUS.

Your highness may boldly go and see.

EMPEROR.

Sure, these are no spirits, but the true substantial bodies of those two deceased princes.

Exeunt Spirits.

FAUSTUS.

Wilt please your highness now to send for the knight that was so pleasant with me here of late?

EMPEROR.

One of you call him forth.

[Exit ATTENDANT.]

[Re-enter the KNIGHT with a pair of horns on his head.]

How now, sir knight! why, I had thought thou hadst been a bachelor,
but now I see thou hast a wife, that not only gives thee horns,
but makes thee wear them. Feel on thy head.

KNIGHT.

Thou damned wretch and execrable dog,
Bred in the concave of some monstrous rock,
How dar'st thou thus abuse a gentleman?
Villain, I say, undo what thou hast done!

FAUSTUS.

O, not so fast, sir! there's no haste: but, good, are
you remembered how you crossed me in my conference with the
Emperor? I think I have met with you for it.

EMPEROR.

Good Master Doctor, at my entreaty release him: he hath
done penance sufficient.

FAUSTUS.

My gracious lord, not so much for the injury he offered
me here in your presence, as to delight you with some mirth, hath
Faustus worthily requited this injurious knight; which being all
I desire, I am content to release him of his horns:—and,
sir knight, hereafter speak well of scholars.—Mephistophilis,
transform him straight. [MEPHISTOPHILIS removes the horns.]
—Now, my good lord, having done my duty, I humbly take my leave.

EMPEROR.

Farewell, Master Doctor: yet, ere you go,
Expect from me a bounteous reward.

[Exeunt EMPEROR, KNIGHT, and ATTENDANTS.]

FAUSTUS.

Now, Mephistophilis, the restless course
That time doth run with calm and silent foot,
Shortening my days and thread of vital life,
Calls for the payment of my latest years:
Therefore, sweet Mephistophilis, let us
Make haste to Wertenberg.

MEPHIST.

What, will you go on horse-back or on foot[?]

FAUSTUS.

Nay, till I'm past this fair and pleasant green,
I'll walk on foot.

[Enter a HORSE-COURSER.]

HORSE-COURSER.

I have been all this day seeking one Master Fustian:
mass, see where he is!—God save you, Master Doctor!

FAUSTUS.

What, horse-courser! you are well met.

HORSE-COURSER.

Do you hear, sir? I have brought you forty dollars
for your horse.

FAUSTUS.

I cannot sell him so: if thou likest him for fifty, take
him.

HORSE-COURSER.

Alas, sir, I have no more!—I pray you, speak for
me.

MEPHIST.

I pray you, let him have him: he is an honest fellow,
and he has a great charge, neither wife nor child.

FAUSTUS.

Well, come, give me your money [HORSE-COURSER gives
FAUSTUS the money]: my boy will deliver him to you. But I must
tell you one thing before you have him; ride him not into the
water, at any hand.

HORSE-COURSER.

Why, sir, will he not drink of all waters?

FAUSTUS.

O, yes, he will drink of all waters; but ride him not into the water: ride him over hedge or ditch, or where thou wilt, but not into the water.

HORSE-COURSER.

Well, sir.—Now am I made man for ever: I'll not leave my horse for forty: if he had but the quality of hey-ding-ding, hey-ding-ding, I'd make a brave living on him: he has a buttock as slick as an eel [Aside].—Well, God b'wi'ye, sir: your boy will deliver him me: but, hark you, sir; if my horse be sick or ill at ease, if I bring his water to you, you'll tell me what it is?

FAUSTUS.

Away, you villain! what, dost think I am a horse-doctor?

[Exit HORSE-COURSER.]

What art thou, Faustus, but a man condemn'd to die?

Thy fatal time doth draw to final end;

Despair doth drive distrust into my thoughts:

Confound these passions with a quiet sleep:

Tush, Christ did call the thief upon the Cross;

Then rest thee, Faustus, quiet in conceit.

[Sleeps in his chair.]

[Re-enter HORSE-COURSER, all wet, crying.]

HORSE-COURSER.

Alas, alas! Doctor Fustian, quoth a mass, Doctor Lopus was never such a doctor: has given me a purgation, has purged me of forty dollars; I shall never see them more. But yet, like an ass as I was, I would not be ruled by him, for he bade me I should ride him into no water: now I, thinking my horse had had some rare quality that he would not have had me know of, I, like a venturous youth, rid him into the deep pond at the town's end. I was no sooner in the middle of the pond, but my horse vanished away, and I sat upon a bottle of hay, never so near drowning in my life. But I'll seek out my doctor, and have my forty dollars again, or I'll make it the dearest horse!—O, yonder is his snipper-snapper.—Do you hear? you, hey-pass, where's your master?

MEPHIST.

Why, sir, what would you? you cannot speak with him.

HORSE-COURSER.

But I will speak with him.

MEPHIST.

Why, he's fast asleep: come some other time.

HORSE-COURSER.

I'll speak with him now, or I'll break his
glass-windows about his ears.

MEPHIST.

I tell thee, he has not slept this eight nights.

HORSE-COURSER.

An he have not slept this eight weeks, I'll
speak with him.

MEPHIST.

See, where he is, fast asleep.

HORSE-COURSER.

Ay, this is he.—God save you, Master Doctor,
Master Doctor, Master Doctor Fustian! forty dollars, forty dollars
for a bottle of hay!

MEPHIST.

Why, thou seest he hears thee not.

HORSE-COURSER.

So-ho, ho! so-ho, ho! [Hollows in his ear.] No,
will you not wake? I'll make you wake ere I go. [Pulls FAUSTUS
by the leg, and pulls it away.] Alas, I am undone! what shall
I do?

FAUSTUS.

O, my leg, my leg!—Help, Mephistophilis! call the
officers.—My leg, my leg!

MEPHIST.

Come, villain, to the constable.

HORSE-COURSER.

O Lord, sir, let me go, and I'll give you forty
dollars more!

MEPHIST.

Where be they?

HORSE-COURSER.

I have none about me: come to my ostry,
and I'll give them you.

MEPHIST.

Be gone quickly.
[HORSE-COURSER runs away.]

FAUSTUS.

What, is he gone? farewell he! Faustus has his leg again,
and the Horse-courser, I take it, a bottle of hay for his labour:
well, this trick shall cost him forty dollars more.

Enter WAGNER.

How now, Wagner! what's the news with thee?

WAGNER.

Sir, the Duke of Vanholt doth earnestly entreat your
company.

FAUSTUS.

The Duke of Vanholt! an honourable gentleman, to whom
I must be no niggard of my cunning.—Come, Mephistophilis,
let's away to him.
[Exeunt.]

[Enter the DUKE OF VANHOLT, the DUCHESS, and FAUSTUS.]

DUKE.

Believe me, Master Doctor, this merriment hath much pleased
me.

FAUSTUS.

My gracious lord, I am glad it contents you so well.
—But it may be, madam, you take no delight in this. I have heard

that great-bellied women do long for some dainties or other: what is it, madam? tell me, and you shall have it.

DUCHESS.

Thanks, good Master Doctor: and, for I see your courteous intent to pleasure me, I will not hide from you the thing my heart desires; and, were it now summer, as it is January and the dead time of the winter, I would desire no better meat than a dish of ripe grapes.

FAUSTUS.

Alas, madam, that's nothing!—Mephistophilis, be gone.
[Exit MEPHISTOPHILIS.] Were it a greater thing than this, so it would content you, you should have it.

[Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS with grapes.]

Here they be, madam: wilt please you taste on them?

DUKE.

Believe me, Master Doctor, this makes me wonder above the rest, that being in the dead time of winter and in the month of January, how you should come by these grapes.

FAUSTUS.

If it like your grace, the year is divided into two circles over the whole world, that, when it is here winter with us, in the contrary circle it is summer with them, as in India, Saba, and farther countries in the east; and by means of a swift spirit that I have, I had them brought hither, as you see.—How do you like them, madam? be they good?

DUCHESS.

Believe me, Master Doctor, they be the best grapes that e'er I tasted in my life before.

FAUSTUS.

I am glad they content you so, madam.

DUKE.

Come, madam, let us in, where you must well reward this learned man for the great kindness he hath shewed to you.

DUCHESS.

And so I will, my lord; and, whilst I live, rest
beholding for this courtesy.

FAUSTUS.

I humbly thank your grace.

DUKE.

Come, Master Doctor, follow us, and receive your reward.
[Exeunt.]

[Enter WAGNER.]

WAGNER.

I think my master means to die shortly,
For he hath given to me all his goods:
And yet, methinks, if that death were near,
He would not banquet, and carouse, and swill
Amongst the students, as even now he doth,
Who are at supper with such belly-cheer
As Wagner ne'er beheld in all his life.
See, where they come! belike the feast is ended.
[Exit.]

[Enter FAUSTUS with two or three SCHOLARS, and MEPHISTOPHILIS.]

FIRST SCHOLAR.

Master Doctor Faustus, since our conference about
fair ladies, which was the beautifulest in all the world, we have
determined with ourselves that Helen of Greece was the admirablest
lady that ever lived: therefore, Master Doctor, if you will do us
that favour, as to let us see that peerless dame of Greece, whom
all the world admires for majesty, we should think ourselves much
beholding unto you.

FAUSTUS.

Gentlemen,
For that I know your friendship is unfeign'd,
And Faustus' custom is not to deny
The just requests of those that wish him well,
You shall behold that peerless dame of Greece,
No otherways for pomp and majesty
Than when Sir Paris cross'd the seas with her,

And brought the spoils to rich Dardania.
 Be silent, then, for danger is in words.
 [Music sounds, and HELEN passeth over the stage.]

SECOND SCHOLAR.

Too simple is my wit to tell her praise,
 Whom all the world admires for majesty.

THIRD SCHOLAR.

No marvel though the angry Greeks pursu'd
 With ten years' war the rape of such a queen,
 Whose heavenly beauty passeth all compare.

FIRST SCHOLAR.

Since we have seen the pride of Nature's works,
 And only paragon of excellence,
 Let us depart; and for this glorious deed
 Happy and blest be Faustus evermore!

FAUSTUS.

Gentlemen, farewell: the same I wish to you.

[Exeunt SCHOLARS.]

[Enter an OLD MAN.]

OLD MAN.

Ah, Doctor Faustus, that I might prevail
 To guide thy steps unto the way of life,
 By which sweet path thou mayst attain the goal
 That shall conduct thee to celestial rest!
 Break heart, drop blood, and mingle it with tears,
 Tears falling from repentant heaviness
 Of thy most vile and loathsome filthiness,
 The stench whereof corrupts the inward soul
 With such flagitious crimes of heinous sin
 As no commiseration may expel,
 But mercy, Faustus, of thy Saviour sweet,
 Whose blood alone must wash away thy guilt.

FAUSTUS.

Where art thou, Faustus? wretch, what hast thou done?
 Damn'd art thou, Faustus, damn'd; despair and die!
 Hell calls for right, and with a roaring voice

Says, "Faustus, come; thine hour is almost come;"
And Faustus now will come to do thee right.
[MEPHISTOPHILIS gives him a dagger.]

OLD MAN.

Ah, stay, good Faustus, stay thy desperate steps!
I see an angel hovers o'er thy head,
And, with a vial full of precious grace,
Offers to pour the same into thy soul:
Then call for mercy, and avoid despair.

FAUSTUS.

Ah, my sweet friend, I feel
Thy words to comfort my distressed soul!
Leave me a while to ponder on my sins.

OLD MAN.

I go, sweet Faustus; but with heavy cheer,
Fearing the ruin of thy hopeless soul.
[Exit.]

FAUSTUS.

Accursed Faustus, where is mercy now?
I do repent; and yet I do despair:
Hell strives with grace for conquest in my breast:
What shall I do to shun the snares of death?

MEPHIST.

Thou traitor, Faustus, I arrest thy soul
For disobedience to my sovereign lord:
Revolt, or I'll in piece-meal tear thy flesh.

FAUSTUS.

Sweet Mephistophilis, entreat thy lord
To pardon my unjust presumption,
And with my blood again I will confirm
My former vow I made to Lucifer.

MEPHIST.

Do it, then, quickly, with unfeigned heart,
Lest greater danger do attend thy drift.

FAUSTUS.

Torment, sweet friend, that base and crooked age,
That durst dissuade me from thy Lucifer,
With greatest torments that our hell affords.

MEPHIST.

His faith is great; I cannot touch his soul;
But what I may afflict his body with
I will attempt, which is but little worth.

FAUSTUS.

One thing, good servant, let me crave of thee,
To glut the longing of my heart's desire,—
That I might have unto my paramour
That heavenly Helen which I saw of late,
Whose sweet embracings may extinguish clean
Those thoughts that do dissuade me from my vow,
And keep mine oath I made to Lucifer.

MEPHIST.

Faustus, this, or what else thou shalt desire,
Shall be perform'd in twinkling of an eye.

Re-enter HELEN.

FAUSTUS.

Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium—
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.—
[Kisses her.]
Her lips suck forth my soul: see, where it flies!—
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.
I will be Paris, and for love of thee,
Instead of Troy, shall Wertenberg be sack'd;
And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
And wear thy colours on my plumed crest;
Yea, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
And then return to Helen for a kiss.
O, thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter

When he appear'd to hapless Semele;
More lovely than the monarch of the sky
In wanton Arethusa's azur'd arms;
And none but thou shalt be my paramour!
[Exeunt.]

[Enter the OLD MAN.]

OLD MAN.

Accursed Faustus, miserable man,
That from thy soul exclud'st the grace of heaven,
And fly'st the throne of his tribunal-seat!

[Enter DEVILS.]

Satan begins to sift me with his pride:
As in this furnace God shall try my faith,
My faith, vile hell, shall triumph over thee.
Ambitious fiends, see how the heavens smile
At your repulse, and laugh your state to scorn!
Hence, hell! for hence I fly unto my God.
[Exeunt,—on one side, DEVILS, on the other, OLD MAN.]

[Enter FAUSTUS, with SCHOLARS.]

FAUSTUS.

Ah, gentlemen!

FIRST SCHOLAR.

What ails Faustus?

FAUSTUS.

Ah, my sweet chamber-fellow, had I lived with thee,
then had I lived still! but now I die eternally. Look, comes
he not? comes he not?

SECOND SCHOLAR.

What means Faustus?

THIRD SCHOLAR.

Belike he is grown into some sickness by being
over-solitary.

FIRST SCHOLAR.

If it be so, we'll have physicians to cure him.
—'Tis but a surfeit; never fear, man.

FAUSTUS.

A surfeit of deadly sin, that hath damned both body
and soul.

SECOND SCHOLAR.

Yet, Faustus, look up to heaven; remember God's
mercies are infinite.

FAUSTUS.

But Faustus' offence can ne'er be pardoned: the serpent
that tempted Eve may be saved, but not Faustus. Ah, gentlemen,
hear me with patience, and tremble not at my speeches! Though
my heart pants and quivers to remember that I have been a student
here these thirty years, O, would I had never seen Wertenberg,
never read book! and what wonders I have done, all Germany can
witness, yea, all the world; for which Faustus hath lost both
Germany and the world, yea, heaven itself, heaven, the seat of
God, the throne of the blessed, the kingdom of joy; and must
remain in hell for ever, hell, ah, hell, for ever! Sweet friends,
what shall become of Faustus, being in hell for ever?

THIRD SCHOLAR.

Yet, Faustus, call on God.

FAUSTUS.

On God, whom Faustus hath abjured! on God, whom Faustus
hath blasphemed! Ah, my God, I would weep! but the devil draws in
my tears. Gush forth blood, instead of tears! yea, life and soul!
O, he stays my tongue! I would lift up my hands; but see, they
hold them, they hold them!

ALL.

Who, Faustus?

FAUSTUS.

Lucifer and Mephistophilis. Ah, gentlemen, I gave them
my soul for my cunning!

ALL.

God forbid!

FAUSTUS.

God forbade it, indeed; but Faustus hath done it: for vain pleasure of twenty-four years hath Faustus lost eternal joy and felicity. I writ them a bill with mine own blood: the date is expired; the time will come, and he will fetch me.

FIRST SCHOLAR.

Why did not Faustus tell us of this before, that divines might have prayed for thee?

FAUSTUS.

Oft have I thought to have done so; but the devil threatened to tear me in pieces, if I named God, to fetch both body and soul, if I once gave ear to divinity: and now 'tis too late. Gentlemen, away, lest you perish with me.

SECOND SCHOLAR.

O, what shall we do to save Faustus?

FAUSTUS.

Talk not of me, but save yourselves, and depart.

THIRD SCHOLAR.

God will strengthen me; I will stay with Faustus.

FIRST SCHOLAR.

Tempt not God, sweet friend; but let us into the next room, and there pray for him.

FAUSTUS.

Ay, pray for me, pray for me; and what noise soever ye hear, come not unto me, for nothing can rescue me.

SECOND SCHOLAR.

Pray thou, and we will pray that God may have mercy upon thee.

FAUSTUS.

Gentlemen, farewell: if I live till morning, I'll visit you; if not, Faustus is gone to hell.

ALL.

Faustus, farewell.

[Exeunt SCHOLARS.—The clock strikes eleven.]

FAUSTUS.

Ah, Faustus,

Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,
 And then thou must be damn'd perpetually!
 Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of heaven,
 That time may cease, and midnight never come;
 Fair Nature's eye, rise, rise again, and make
 Perpetual day; or let this hour be but
 A year, a month, a week, a natural day,
 That Faustus may repent and save his soul!

O lente, lente currite, noctis equi!

The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,
 The devil will come, and Faustus must be damn'd.
 O, I'll leap up to my God!—Who pulls me down?—
 See, see, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!
 One drop would save my soul, half a drop: ah, my Christ!—
 Ah, rend not my heart for naming of my Christ!
 Yet will I call on him: O, spare me, Lucifer!—
 Where is it now? 'tis gone: and see, where God
 Stretcheth out his arm, and bends his ireful brows!
 Mountains and hills, come, come, and fall on me,
 And hide me from the heavy wrath of God!

No, no!

Then will I headlong run into the earth:
 Earth, gape! O, no, it will not harbour me!
 You stars that reign'd at my nativity,
 Whose influence hath allotted death and hell,
 Now draw up Faustus, like a foggy mist,
 Into the entrails of yon labouring cloud[s],
 That, when you vomit forth into the air,
 My limbs may issue from your smoky mouths,
 So that my soul may but ascend to heaven!

[The clock strikes the half-hour.]

Ah, half the hour is past! 'twill all be past anon

O God,

If thou wilt not have mercy on my soul,
 Yet for Christ's sake, whose blood hath ransom'd me,
 Impose some end to my incessant pain;
 Let Faustus live in hell a thousand years,

A hundred thousand, and at last be sav'd!
 O, no end is limited to damned souls!
 Why wert thou not a creature wanting soul?
 Or why is this immortal that thou hast?
 Ah, Pythagoras' metempsychosis, were that true,
 This soul should fly from me, and I be chang'd
 Unto some brutish beast! all beasts are happy,
 For, when they die,
 Their souls are soon dissolv'd in elements;
 But mine must live still to be plagu'd in hell.
 Curs'd be the parents that engender'd me!
 No, Faustus, curse thyself, curse Lucifer
 That hath depriv'd thee of the joys of heaven.
 [The clock strikes twelve.]
 O, it strikes, it strikes! Now, body, turn to air,
 Or Lucifer will bear thee quick to hell!
 [Thunder and lightning.]
 O soul, be chang'd into little water-drops,
 And fall into the ocean, ne'er be found!

[Enter DEVILS.]

My God, my god, look not so fierce on me!
 Adders and serpents, let me breathe a while!
 Ugly hell, gape not! come not, Lucifer!
 I'll burn my books!—Ah, Mephistophilis!

[Exeunt DEVILS with FAUSTUS.]

[Enter CHORUS.]

CHORUS.

Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight,
 And burn'd is Apollo's laurel-bough,
 That sometime grew within this learned man.
 Faustus is gone: regard his hellish fall,
 Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise,
 Only to wonder at unlawful things,
 Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits
 To practice more than heavenly power permits.
 [Exit.]

2.12.2 Reading and Review Questions

1. What is Faustus's true ambition? Why is it that he turns to magic and to Mephistophilis, against whom he has been particularly warned? What relationship, if any, does he seem to have with the Christian God? What is his attitude towards the Christian God? How does Faustus's character compare with the Redcrosse Knight's, for example?
2. How do Faustus's ambitions for his magic compare with what he achieves with his magic? If you see a discrepancy between the two, then what accounts for this discrepancy, do you think?
3. Why do you think that Faustus has several opportunities to repent? Why does he reaffirm his pact with Lucifer? What keeps him from repenting, even to the very end of the play?
4. The Old Man appears near the end of Faustus's term of contract. Who is the Old Man, do you think? Why does he appear so suddenly at this point in the play? What purpose, if any, does he serve? What might he represent?
5. How, if at all, does the character of Faustus and his actions reflect the religious conflicts and concerns that occurred during Marlowe's lifetime?

2.13 WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

(1564-1616)

Shakespeare was born on April 23, and he died on April 23. He was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, and he died in Stratford-upon-Avon. These facts frame many additional facts and many conjectures. He probably received an education in Latin studies at the town's grammar school, as his father was a municipal officer (mayor and justice of the peace) so could send his son to the school for free. At the age of eighteen, Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway (1556-1623), a woman who was eight years his senior and who lived in nearby Shottery. Their child Susanna (1583-1649) was born five months later. Two years after that, their twins Hamnet and Judith were born, with Hamnet dying at the age of eleven and Judith surviving to the age of seventy-seven. Anne outlived Shakespeare by seven years, receiving in his will his second-best bed and being buried next to him in the Church of the Holy Trinity, Stratford-upon-Avon.

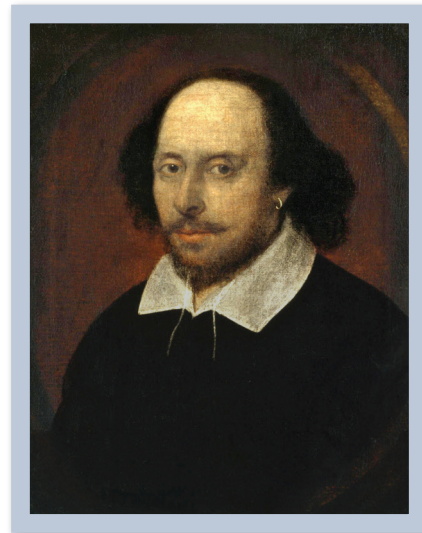


Image 2.15 | William Shakespeare

Artist | John Taylor

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Seven years after the birth of the twins, Robert Greene (1558-1592) writes of Shakespeare as an actor and playwright in London, describing him in *Greenes Groatsworth of Wit* (1592) as “an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his Tiger’s heart wrapt in a player’s hide, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you: and being an absolute Johannes Factotum, is in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in a country.” Green was a member of the “University Wits,” a group of Cambridge and Oxford young men—including Christopher Marlowe—that sought to bring their classical learning to the stage. Although Shakespeare attended neither Cambridge nor Oxford, his early plays echo Marlowe’s blank verse; indeed, Shakespeare’s *Henry VI Parts I, II, and III*, according to the Oxford University Press, may have been co-written by Marlowe, so Marlowe’s influence may have been direct. Shakespeare also demonstrated classical learning on the stage with his Plautean *Comedy of Errors* (performed in 1594) and his Senecan tragedy *Titus Andronicus* (performed in 1594).

He dedicated two classically-themed poems to his patron Henry Wriothesley, third earl of Southampton. Both *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594) were published as quarto pamphlets, with *Venus and Adonis* running through eighteen editions and *The Rape of Lucrece*, eight editions by 1655. In 1594, Shakespeare was a partner in the Lord Chamberlain’s Men, a theater company from which he derived profits for such plays as *Romeo and Juliet* (performed around 1595-1596), *The Merchant of Venice* (performed around 1596-97), *Henry IV Parts I and II* (performed around 1597-1598), and *Twelfth Night: Or, What You Will* (performed around 1600-1602).

From 1595, he also probably worked on his sonnet sequence that was not published until 1609. These sonnets employ numerous conventions, such as the idealized and aloof woman. He also used the already-extant rhyme scheme of ABAB CDCD EFEF GG. Yet he used it so deftly and naturally that the form is now known as the Shakespearean sonnet. His sonnets reflect on the power of poetry and the matters of poetic art, such as romantic love, in language that compels belief in their truth and authenticity—even though their possibly autobiographical elements have not been proven. For example, they trace a friendship with a beautiful young man and a romance with a dark lady. The identity of either of these figures is unknown, though early conjectures identify the young man as Shakespeare’s patron Wriothesley and the dark lady as a sonnet convention along the lines of Petrarch’s Laura. When published, the sequence was dedicated to an unknown Mr. W. H., described as the sonnets’ only begetter.

In 1599, Shakespeare’s company built the Globe Theater, with Shakespeare being one of six shareholders; the others included the great actor Richard Burbage (1567-1619) and John Heminges (1566-1630) who, with Henry Condell (1576-1627), edited the *First Folio* (1623) collection of Shakespeare’s plays. In 1613, during a performance of Shakespeare’s *Henry VIII*, the Globe was destroyed by fire but was

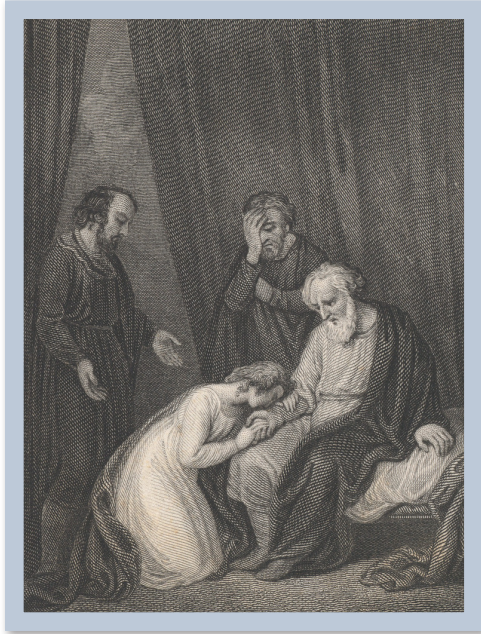


Image 2.16 | Cordelia and King Lear

Artist | William Shakespeare

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rebuilt the next year. Upon the accession of James I (1603), the Lord Chamberlain's Men was renamed the King's Men, and Shakespeare began writing his greatest tragedies, including *Othello* (performed around 1604), *King Lear* (performed around 1605-1606), and *Macbeth* (performed around 1606). With his profits, Shakespeare built New Place, the second largest house in Stratford-upon-Avon.

In 1606, the King's Men acquired a private theater, Blackfriars, along with its playwrights Francis Beaumont (1584-1616) and John Fletcher (1579-1625), whose style may have influenced Shakespeare's final romances, including *Cymbeline* (performed around 1609-1610), *The Winter's Tale* (performed around 1610-1611), and *The Tempest* (performed in 1611). Shakespeare collaborated with Fletcher on *Henry VIII*

(performed around 1612-1613), *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (performed around 1612-1613), and *Cardenio* (performed around 1612-1613). In 1613, Shakespeare retired to Stratford-upon-Avon. He died in 1616, a little over two months after his daughter Judith married Thomas Quiney (1589-1663).

Although these facts seem sparse, they are more in number than facts known about other playwrights of Shakespeare's time. Yet, they still offer too little knowledge to those around the world who have loved Shakespeare's works over the course of four hundred years—a man whose invented words enrich the English language; whose characters fill imaginations; and whose range of style, sheer beauty of expression, and depth and breadth of insight authenticate the most profound of human emotions.

The interpretation of Shakespeare over time provides a mirror to the history of interpretation itself. In 1693, Thomas Rymer attacked *Othello* as not a tragedy but a farce due to its offering, in his opinion, neither meaning nor moral. In 1699, James Drake similarly demonstrated the expectation for moral lessons in art when he admired the poetic justice of *Hamlet* (first performed around 1609). The eighteenth century evinced interest in the particularities of Shakespeare's characters; for example, in 1777, Maurice Morgann wrote an essay on the character of Falstaff describing him as not a coward but a sensible man.

Shakespeare's *King Lear* suggests a way to interpret or gain meaning from this play (and perhaps his others). This extraordinarily dynamic work, with wheels within wheels of meaning, depicts extreme betrayal, cruelty, and suffering of such intensity that an audience may wish to turn away from it. The character Edgar

serves as a type of audience, as almost a pure observer of a painful scene between the mad King Lear and the blinded Duke of Gloucester, Edgar's own father. But Edgar will not turn away, saying in an aside—presumably to the actual audience—that he would not take this scene from report. And he offers a possible explanation for the purpose and effect of art when he describes himself as one who has gained compassion through suffering, as one who “by the art of known and feeling sorrows,/ Am pregnant to good pity” (220-21).

2.13.1 Selected Sonnets

(1598)

2

When forty winters shall besiege thy brow,
 And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,
 Thy youth's proud livery, so gaz'd on now,
 Will be a tatter'd weed, of small worth held;
 Then being ask'd where all thy beauty lies,
 Where all the treasure of thy lusty days,
 To say, within thine own deep-sunken eyes,
 Were an all-eating shame and thriftless praise.
 How much more praise deserv'd thy beauty's use,
 If thou couldst answer 'This fair child of mine
 Shall sum my count, and make my old excuse,'
 Proving his beauty by succession thine!
 This were to be new made when thou art old,
 And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold.

12

When I do count the clock that tells the time,
 And see the brave day sunk in hideous night;
 When I behold the violet past prime,
 And sable curls, all silvered o'er with white;
 When lofty trees I see barren of leaves,
 Which erst from heat did canopy the herd,
 And summer's green all girded up in sheaves,
 Borne on the bier with white and bristly beard,
 Then of thy beauty do I question make,
 That thou among the wastes of time must go,
 Since sweets and beauties do themselves forsake
 And die as fast as they see others grow;
 And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defence
 Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence

13

O! that you were your self; but, love you are
 No longer yours, than you your self here live:
 Against this coming end you should prepare,
 And your sweet semblance to some other give:
 So should that beauty which you hold in lease
 Find no determination; then you were
 Yourself again, after yourself's decease,
 When your sweet issue your sweet form should bear.
 Who lets so fair a house fall to decay,
 Which husbandry in honour might uphold,
 Against the stormy gusts of winter's day
 And barren rage of death's eternal cold?
 O! none but unthrifths. Dear my love, you know,
 You had a father: let your son say so.

15

When I consider every thing that grows
 Holds in perfection but a little moment,
 That this huge stage presenteth nought but shows
 Whereon the stars in secret influence comment;
 When I perceive that men as plants increase,
 Cheered and checked even by the self-same sky,
 Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease,
 And wear their brave state out of memory;
 Then the conceit of this inconstant stay
 Sets you most rich in youth before my sight,
 Where wasteful Time debateth with decay
 To change your day of youth to sullied night,
 And all in war with Time for love of you,
 As he takes from you, I engraft you new.

18

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
 Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
 Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
 And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
 Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
 And often is his gold complexion dimm'd,
 And every fair from fair sometime declines,
 By chance, or nature's changing course untrimm'd:
 But thy eternal summer shall not fade,

Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,
 Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
 When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st,
 So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

22

My glass shall not persuade me I am old,
 So long as youth and thou are of one date;
 But when in thee time's furrows I behold,
 Then look I death my days should expiate.
 For all that beauty that doth cover thee,
 Is but the seemly raiment of my heart,
 Which in thy breast doth live, as thine in me:
 How can I then be elder than thou art?
 O! therefore love, be of thyself so wary
 As I, not for myself, but for thee will;
 Bearing thy heart, which I will keep so chary
 As tender nurse her babe from faring ill.
 Presume not on th' heart when mine is slain,
 Thou gav'st me thine not to give back again.

23

As an unperfect actor on the stage,
 Who with his fear is put beside his part,
 Or some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
 Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart;
 So I, for fear of trust, forget to say
 The perfect ceremony of love's rite,
 And in mine own love's strength seem to decay,
 O'ercharg'd with burthen of mine own love's might.
 O! let my looks be then the eloquence
 And dumb presagers of my speaking breast,
 Who plead for love, and look for recompense,
 More than that tongue that more hath more express'd.
 O! learn to read what silent love hath writ:
 To hear with eyes belongs to love's fine wit.

29

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes
 I all alone bewep my outcast state,
 And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,

And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
 Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
 Featur'd like him, like him with friends possess'd,
 Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
 With what I most enjoy contented least;
 Yet in these thoughts my self almost despising,
 Haply I think on thee,—and then my state,
 Like to the lark at break of day arising
 From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
 For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
 That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

40

Take all my loves, my love, yea take them all;
 What hast thou then more than thou hadst before?
 No love, my love, that thou mayst true love call;
 All mine was thine, before thou hadst this more.
 Then if for my love thou my love receivest,
 I cannot blame thee, for my love thou usest;
 But yet be blam'd, if thou thyself deceivest
 By wilful taste of what thyself refuseth.
 I do forgive thy robbery, gentle thief,
 Although thou steal thee all my poverty;
 And yet, love knows, it is a greater grief
 To bear love's wrong, than hate's known injury.
 Lascivious grace, in whom all ill well shows,
 Kill me with spites, yet we must not be foes.

55

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
 Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme;
 But you shall shine more bright in these contents
 Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time.
 When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
 And broils root out the work of masonry,
 Nor Mars his sword, nor war's quick fire shall burn
 The living record of your memory.
 'Gainst death, and all-oblivious enmity
 Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room
 Even in the eyes of all posterity
 That wear this world out to the ending doom.
 So, till the judgment that yourself arise,
 You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

71

No longer mourn for me when I am dead
 Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
 Give warning to the world that I am fled
 From this vile world with vilest worms to dwell:
 Nay, if you read this line, remember not
 The hand that writ it, for I love you so,
 That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
 If thinking on me then should make you woe.
 O! if,—I say you look upon this verse,
 When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
 Do not so much as my poor name rehearse;
 But let your love even with my life decay;
 Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
 And mock you with me after I am gone.

78

So oft have I invoked thee for my Muse,
 And found such fair assistance in my verse
 As every alien pen hath got my use
 And under thee their poesy disperse.
 Thine eyes, that taught the dumb on high to sing
 And heavy ignorance aloft to fly,
 Have added feathers to the learned's wing
 And given grace a double majesty.
 Yet be most proud of that which I compile,
 Whose influence is thine, and born of thee:
 In others' works thou dost but mend the style,
 And arts with thy sweet graces graced be;
 But thou art all my art, and dost advance
 As high as learning, my rude ignorance.

87

Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing,
 And like enough thou know'st thy estimate,
 The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing:
 My bonds in thee are all determinate.
 For how do I hold thee but by thy granting,
 And for that riches where is my deserving?
 The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,
 And so my patent back again is swerving.
 Thy self thou gav'st, thy own worth then not knowing,

Or me to whom thou gav'st it, else mistaking,
 So thy great gift, upon misprision growing,
 Comes home again, on better judgement making.
 Thus have I had thee as a dream doth flatter,
 In sleep a King, but waking no such matter.

96

Some say thy fault is youth, some wantonness;
 Some say thy grace is youth and gentle sport;
 Both grace and faults are lov'd of more and less:
 Thou mak'st faults graces that to thee resort.
 As on the finger of a throned queen
 The basest jewel will be well esteem'd,
 So are those errors that in thee are seen
 To truths translated, and for true things deem'd.
 How many lambs might the stern wolf betray,
 If like a lamb he could his looks translate!
 How many gazers mightst thou lead away,
 If thou wouldst use the strength of all thy state!
 But do not so; I love thee in such sort,
 As, thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

106

When in the chronicle of wasted time
 I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
 And beauty making beautiful old rime,
 In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights,
 Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,
 Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
 I see their antique pen would have express'd
 Even such a beauty as you master now.
 So all their praises are but prophecies
 Of this our time, all you prefiguring;
 And for they looked but with divining eyes,
 They had not skill enough your worth to sing:
 For we, which now behold these present days,
 Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

127

In the old age black was not counted fair,
 Or if it were, it bore not beauty's name;
 But now is black beauty's successive heir,

And beauty slander'd with a bastard shame:
 For since each hand hath put on Nature's power,
 Fairing the foul with Art's false borrowed face,
 Sweet beauty hath no name, no holy bower,
 But is profan'd, if not lives in disgrace.
 Therefore my mistress' eyes are raven black,
 Her eyes so suited, and they mourners seem
 At such who, not born fair, no beauty lack,
 Sland'ring creation with a false esteem:
 Yet so they mourn becoming of their woe,
 That every tongue says beauty should look so.

130

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
 Coral is far more red, than her lips red:
 If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
 If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
 I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,
 But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
 And in some perfumes is there more delight
 Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
 I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
 That music hath a far more pleasing sound:
 I grant I never saw a goddess go,—
 My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
 And yet by heaven, I think my love as rare,
 As any she belied with false compare.

135

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy 'Will,'
 And 'Will' to boot, and 'Will' in over-plus;
 More than enough am I that vex'd thee still,
 To thy sweet will making addition thus.
 Wilt thou, whose will is large and spacious,
 Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine?
 Shall will in others seem right gracious,
 And in my will no fair acceptance shine?
 The sea, all water, yet receives rain still,
 And in abundance addeth to his store;
 So thou, being rich in 'Will,' add to thy 'Will'
 One will of mine, to make thy large will more.
 Let no unkind 'No' fair beseechers kill;
 Think all but one, and me in that one 'Will.'

138

When my love swears that she is made of truth,
 I do believe her though I know she lies,
 That she might think me some untutor'd youth,
 Unlearned in the world's false subtleties.
 Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
 Although she knows my days are past the best,
 Simply I credit her false-speaking tongue;
 On both sides thus is simple truth suppressed.
 But wherefore says she not she is unjust?
 And wherefore say not I that I am old?
 O! love's best habit is in seeming trust,
 And age in love loves not to have years told:
 Therefore I lie with her, and she with me,
 And in our faults by lies we flatter'd be.

144

Two loves I have of comfort and despair,
 Which like two spirits do suggest me still:
 The better angel is a man right fair,
 The worser spirit a woman colour'd ill.
 To win me soon to hell, my female evil,
 Tempteth my better angel from my side,
 And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,
 Wooing his purity with her foul pride.
 And whether that my angel be turn'd fiend,
 Suspect I may, yet not directly tell;
 But being both from me, both to each friend,
 I guess one angel in another's hell:
 Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,
 Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

2.13.2 *Much Ado About Nothing***Act I**

Scene I. Before LEONATO'S House.

[Enter LEONATO, HERO, BEATRICE and others, with a Messenger.]

LEONATO.

I learn in this letter that Don Pedro of Arragon comes this night to Messina.

MESSENGER.

He is very near by this: he was not three leagues off when I left him.

LEONATO.

How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?

MESSENGER.

But few of any sort, and none of name.

LEONATO.

A victory is twice itself when the achiever brings home full numbers. I find here that Don Pedro hath bestowed much honour on a young Florentine called Claudio.

MESSENGER.

Much deserved on his part, and equally remembered by Don Pedro. He hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age, doing in the figure of a lamb the feats of a lion: he hath indeed better bettered expectation than you must expect of me to tell you how.

LEONATO.

He hath an uncle here in Messina will be very much glad of it.

MESSENGER.

I have already delivered him letters, and there appears much joy in him; even so much that joy could not show itself modest enough without a badge of bitterness.

LEONATO.

Did he break out into tears?

MESSENGER.

In great measure.

LEONATO.

A kind overflow of kindness. There are no faces truer than those that are so washed; how much better is it to weep at joy than to weep at weeping!

BEATRICE.

I pray you, is Signior Mountanto returned from the wars or no?

MESSENGER.

I know none of that name, lady: there was none such in the army of any sort.

LEONATO.

What is he that you ask for, niece?

HERO.

My cousin means Signior Benedick of Padua.

MESSENGER.

O! he is returned, and as pleasant as ever he was.

BEATRICE.

He set up his bills here in Messina and challenged Cupid at the flight; and my uncle's fool, reading the challenge, subscribed for Cupid, and challenged him at the bird-bolt. I pray you, how many hath he killed and eaten in these wars? But how many hath he killed? for, indeed, I promised to eat all of his killing.

LEONATO.

Faith, niece, you tax Signior Benedick too much; but he'll be meet with you, I doubt it not.

MESSENGER.

He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.

BEATRICE.

You had musty victual, and he hath holp to eat it; he is a very valiant trencher-man; he hath an excellent stomach.

MESSENGER.

And a good soldier too, lady.

BEATRICE.

And a good soldier to a lady; but what is he to a lord?

MESSENGER.

A lord to a lord, a man to a man; stuffed with all honourable virtues.

BEATRICE.

It is so indeed; he is no less than a stuffed man; but for the stuffing,—well, we are all mortal.

LEONATO.

You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her; they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them.

BEATRICE.

Alas! he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict four of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man governed with one! so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse; for it is all the wealth that he hath left to be known a reasonable creature. Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn brother.

MESSENGER.

Is't possible?

BEATRICE.

Very easily possible: he wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat; it ever changes with the next block.

MESSENGER.

I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books.

BEATRICE.

No; an he were, I would burn my study. But, I pray you, who is his companion? Is there no young squarer now that will make a voyage with him to the devil?

MESSENGER.

He is most in the company of the right noble Claudio.

BEATRICE.

O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease: he is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. God help the noble Claudio! If he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pound ere a' be cured.

MESSENGER.

I will hold friends with you, lady.

BEATRICE.

Do, good friend.

LEONATO.

You will never run mad, niece.

BEATRICE.

No, not till a hot January.

MESSENGER.

Don Pedro is approached.

[Enter DON PEDRO, DON JOHN, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, BALTHAZAR, and Others.]

DON PEDRO.

Good Signior Leonato, you are come to meet your trouble: the fashion of the world is to avoid cost, and you encounter it.

LEONATO.

Never came trouble to my house in the likeness of your Grace, for trouble being gone, comfort should remain; but when you depart from me, sorrow abides and happiness takes his leave.

DON PEDRO.

You embrace your charge too willingly. I think this is your daughter.

LEONATO.

Her mother hath many times told me so.

BENEDICK.

Were you in doubt, sir, that you asked her?

LEONATO.

Signior Benedick, no; for then were you a child.

DON PEDRO.

You have it full, Benedick: we may guess by this what you are, being a man. Truly the lady fathers herself. Be happy, lady, for you are like an honourable father.

BENEDICK.

If Signior Leonato be her father, she would not have his head on her shoulders for all Messina, as like him as she is.

BEATRICE.

I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick: nobody marks you.

BENEDICK.

What! my dear Lady Disdain, are you yet living?

BEATRICE.

Is it possible Disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it as Signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain if you come in her presence.

BENEDICK.

Then is courtesy a turncoat. But it is certain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted; and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.

BEATRICE.

A dear happiness to women: they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that. I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.

BENEDICK.

God keep your ladyship still in that mind; so some gentleman or other shall 'scape a predestinate scratched face.

BEATRICE.

Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were.

BENEDICK.

Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

BEATRICE.

A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours.

BENEDICK.

I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer. But keep your way, i' God's name; I have done.

BEATRICE.

You always end with a jade's trick: I know you of old.

DON PEDRO.

That is the sum of all, Leonato: Signior Claudio, and Signior Benedick, my dear friend Leonato hath invited you all. I tell him we shall stay here at the least a month, and he heartily prays some occasion may detain us longer: I dare swear he is no hypocrite, but prays from his heart.

LEONATO.

If you swear, my lord, you shall not be forsworn. [To DON JOHN] Let me bid you welcome, my lord: being reconciled to the prince your brother, I owe you all duty.

DON JOHN.

I thank you: I am not of many words, but I thank you.

LEONATO.

Please it your Grace lead on?

DON PEDRO.

Your hand, Leonato; we will go together.
[Exeunt all but BENEDICK and CLAUDIO.]

CLAUDIO.

Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of Signior Leonato?

BENEDICK.

I noted her not; but I looked on her.

CLAUDIO.

Is she not a modest young lady?

BENEDICK.

Do you question me, as an honest man should do, for my simple true judgment; or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a professed tyrant to their sex?

CLAUDIO.

No; I pray thee speak in sober judgment.

BENEDICK.

Why, i' faith, methinks she's too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great praise; only this commendation I can afford her, that were she other than she is, she were unhandsome, and being no other but as she is, I do not like her.

CLAUDIO.

Thou thinkest I am in sport: I pray thee tell me truly how thou likest her.

BENEDICK.

Would you buy her, that you enquire after her?

CLAUDIO.

Can the world buy such a jewel?

BENEDICK.

Yea, and a case to put it into. But speak you this with a sad brow, or do you play the flouting Jack, to tell us Cupid is a good hare-finder, and Vulcan a rare carpenter? Come, in what key shall a man take you, to go in the song?

CLAUDIO.

In mine eye she is the sweetest lady that ever I looked on.

BENEDICK.

I can see yet without spectacles and I see no such matter: there's her cousin an she were not possessed with a fury, exceeds her as much in beauty as the first of May doth the last of December. But I hope you have no intent to turn husband, have you?

CLAUDIO.

I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn to the contrary, if Hero would be my wife.

BENEDICK.

Is't come to this, i' faith? Hath not the world one man but he will wear his cap with suspicion? Shall I never see a bachelor of threescore again? Go to, i' faith; an thou wilt needs thrust thy neck into a yoke, wear the print of it and sigh away Sundays. Look! Don Pedro is returned to seek you.

[Re-enter DON PEDRO.]

DON PEDRO.

What secret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonato's?

BENEDICK.

I would your Grace would constrain me to tell.

DON PEDRO.

I charge thee on thy allegiance.

BENEDICK.

You hear, Count Claudio: I can be secret as a dumb man; I would have you think so; but on my allegiance mark you this, on my allegiance: he is in love. With who? now that is your Grace's part. Mark how short his answer is: with Hero, Leonato's short daughter.

CLAUDIO.

If this were so, so were it uttered.

BENEDICK.

Like the old tale, my lord: 'it is not so, nor 'twas not so; but indeed, God forbid it should be so.'

CLAUDIO.

If my passion change not shortly. God forbid it should be otherwise.

DON PEDRO.

Amen, if you love her; for the lady is very well worthy.

CLAUDIO.

You speak this to fetch me in, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

By my troth, I speak my thought.

CLAUDIO.

And in faith, my lord, I spoke mine.

BENEDICK.

And by my two faiths and troths, my lord, I spoke mine.

CLAUDIO.

That I love her, I feel.

DON PEDRO.

That she is worthy, I know.

BENEDICK.

That I neither feel how she should be loved nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me: I will die in it at the stake.

DON PEDRO.

Thou wast ever an obstinate heretic in the despite of beauty.

CLAUDIO.

And never could maintain his part but in the force of his will.

BENEDICK.

That a woman conceived me, I thank her; that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks; but that I will have a recheat winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an invisible baldrick, all women shall pardon me. Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none; and the fine is,—for the which I may go the finer,—I will live a bachelor.

DON PEDRO.

I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love.

BENEDICK.

With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my lord; not with love: prove that ever I lose more blood with love than I will get again with drinking, pick out mine eyes with a ballad-maker's pen and hang me up at the door of a brothel-house for the sign of blind Cupid.

DON PEDRO.

Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prove a notable argument.

BENEDICK.

If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat and shoot at me; and he that hits me, let him be clapped on the shoulder and called Adam.

DON PEDRO.

Well, as time shall try: 'In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke.'

BENEDICK.

The savage bull may; but if ever the sensible Benedick bear it, pluck off the bull's horns and set them in my forehead; and let me be vilely painted, and in such great letters as they write, 'Here is good horse to hire,' let them signify under my sign 'Here you may see Benedick the married man.'

CLAUDIO.

If this should ever happen, thou wouldst be horn-mad.

DON PEDRO.

Nay, if Cupid have not spent all his quiver in Venice, thou wilt quake for this shortly.

BENEDICK.

I look for an earthquake too then.

DON PEDRO.

Well, you will temporize with the hours. In the meantime, good Signior Benedick, repair to Leonato's: commend me to him and tell him I will not fail him at supper; for indeed he hath made great preparation.

BENEDICK.

I have almost matter enough in me for such an embassy; and so I commit you—

CLAUDIO.

To the tuition of God: from my house, if I had it,—

DON PEDRO.

The sixth of July: your loving friend, Benedick.

BENEDICK.

Nay, mock not, mock not. The body of your discourse is sometime guarded with fragments, and the guards are but slightly basted on neither: ere you flout old ends any further, examine your conscience: and so I leave you.

[Exit.]

CLAUDIO.

My liege, your highness now may do me good.

DON PEDRO.

My love is thine to teach: teach it but how,
And thou shalt see how apt it is to learn
hard lesson that may do thee good.

CLAUDIO.

Hath Leonato any son, my lord?

DON PEDRO.

No child but Hero's he's his only heir.

Dost thou affect her, Claudio?

CLAUDIO.

O! my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I looked upon her with a soldier's eye,
That lik'd, but had a rougher task in hand
Than to drive liking to the name of love;
But now I am return'd, and that war-thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying, I lik'd her ere I went to wars.

DON PEDRO.

Thou wilt be like a lover presently,
And tire the hearer with a book of words.
If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it,
And I will break with her, and with her father,
And thou shalt have her. Was't not to this end
That thou began'st to twist so fine a story?

CLAUDIO.

How sweetly you do minister to love,
That know love's grief by his complexion!
But lest my liking might too sudden seem,
I would have salv'd it with a longer treatise.

DON PEDRO.

What need the bridge much broader than the flood?
The fairest grant is the necessity.
Look, what will serve is fit: 'tis once, thou lov'st,
And I will fit thee with the remedy.
I know we shall have revelling to-night:
I will assume thy part in some disguise,
And tell fair Hero I am Claudio;
And in her bosom I'll unclasp my heart,
And take her hearing prisoner with the force

And strong encounter of my amorous tale:
Then, after to her father will I break;
And the conclusion is, she shall be thine.
In practice let us put it presently.
[Exeunt.]

Scene II. A room in LEONATO'S house.
[Enter LEONATO and ANTONIO, meeting.]

LEONATO.

How now, brother! Where is my cousin your son? Hath he provided this music?

ANTONIO.

He is very busy about it. But, brother, I can tell you strange news that you yet dreamt not of.

LEONATO.

Are they good?

ANTONIO.

As the event stamps them: but they have a good cover; they show well outward. The prince and Count Claudio, walking in a thick-pleached alley in my orchard, were thus much overheard by a man of mine: the prince discovered to Claudio that he loved my niece your daughter and meant to acknowledge it this night in a dance; and if he found her accordant, he meant to take the present time by the top and instantly break with you of it.

LEONATO.

Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

ANTONIO.

A good sharp fellow: I will send for him; and question him yourself.

LEONATO.

No, no; we will hold it as a dream till it appear itself: but I will acquaint my daughter withal, that she may be the better prepared for an answer, if peradventure this be true. Go you, and tell her of it.

[Several persons cross the stage.]

Cousins, you know what you have to do. O! I cry you mercy, friend; go you with me, and I will use your skill. Good cousin, have a care this busy time.

[Exeunt.]

Scene III. Another room in LEONATO'S house.
[Enter DON JOHN and CONRADE.]

CONRADE.

What the good-year, my lord! why are you thus out of measure sad?

DON JOHN.

There is no measure in the occasion that breeds; therefore the sadness is without limit.

CONRADE.

You should hear reason.

DON JOHN.

And when I have heard it, what blessings brings it?

CONRADE.

If not a present remedy, at least a patient sufferance.

DON JOHN.

I wonder that thou, being,—as thou say'st thou art,—born under Saturn, goest about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief. I cannot hide what I am: I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests; eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure; sleep when I am drowsy, and tend on no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and claw no man in his humour.

CONRADE.

Yea; but you must not make the full show of this till you may do it without controlment. You have of late stood out against your brother, and he hath ta'en you newly into his grace; where it is impossible you should take true root but by the fair weather that you make yourself: it is needful that you frame the season for your own harvest.

DON JOHN.

I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in his grace; and it better fits my blood to be disdained of all than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any: in this, though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain. I am trusted with a muzzle and enfranchised with a clog; therefore I have decreed not to sing in my cage. If I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking: in the meantime, let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

CONRADE.

Can you make no use of your discontent?

DON JOHN.

I make all use of it, for I use it only. Who comes here?

[Enter Borachio.]

What news, Borachio?

BORACHIO.

I came yonder from a great supper: the prince your brother is royally entertained by Leonato; and I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

DON JOHN.

Will it serve for any model to build mischief on? What is he for a fool that betroths himself to unquietness?

BORACHIO.

Marry, it is your brother's right hand.

DON JOHN.

Who? the most exquisite Claudio?

BORACHIO.

Even he.

DON JOHN.

A proper squire! And who, and who? which way looks he?

BORACHIO.

Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato.

DON JOHN.

A very forward March-chick! How came you to this?

BORACHIO.

Being entertained for a perfumer, as I was smoking a musty room, comes me the prince and Claudio, hand in hand, in sad conference: I whipt me behind the arras, and there heard it agreed upon that the prince should woo Hero for himself, and having obtained her, give her to Count Claudio.

DON JOHN.

Come, come; let us thither: this may prove food to my displeasure. That young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow: if I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way. You are both sure, and will assist me?

CONRADE.

To the death, my lord.

DON JOHN.

Let us to the great supper: their cheer is the greater that I am subdued. Would the cook were of my mind! Shall we go to prove what's to be done?

BORACHIO.

We'll wait upon your lordship.
[Exeunt.]

Act II

Scene I. A hall in LEONATO'S house.

[Enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, HERO, BEATRICE, and Others.]

LEONATO.

Was not Count John here at supper?

ANTONIO.

I saw him not.

BEATRICE.

How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him but I am heart-burned an hour after.

HERO.

He is of a very melancholy disposition.

BEATRICE.

He were an excellent man that were made just in the mid-way between him and Benedick: the one is too like an image, and says nothing; and the other too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling.

LEONATO.

Then half Signior Benedick's tongue in Count John's mouth, and half Count John's melancholy in Signior Benedick's face,—

BEATRICE.

With a good leg and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world if he could get her good will.

LEONATO.

By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.

ANTONIO.

In faith, she's too curst.

BEATRICE.

Too curst is more than curst: I shall lessen God's sending that way; for it is said, 'God sends a curst cow short horns;' but to a cow too curst he sends none.

LEONATO.

So, by being too curst, God will send you no horns?

BEATRICE.

Just, if he send me no husband; for the which blessing I am at him upon my knees every morning and evening. Lord! I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face: I had rather lie in the woollen.

LEONATO.

You may light on a husband that hath no beard.

BEATRICE.

What should I do with him? dress him in my apparel and make him my waiting-gentlewoman? He that hath a beard is more than a youth, and he that hath no beard is less than a man; and he that is more than a youth is not for me; and he that is less than a man, I am not for him: therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the bear-ward, and lead his apes into hell.

LEONATO.

Well then, go you into hell?

BEATRICE.

No; but to the gate; and there will the devil meet me, like an old cuckold, with horns on his head, and say, 'Get you to heaven, Beatrice, get you to heaven; here's no place for you maids.' So deliver I up my apes, and away to Saint Peter for the heavens; he shows me where the bachelors sit, and there live we as merry as the day is long.

ANTONIO.

[To Hero.] Well, niece, I trust you will be ruled by your father.

BEATRICE.

Yes, faith; it is my cousin's duty to make curtsy, and say, 'Father, as it please you:'—but yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another curtsy, and say, 'Father, as it please me.'

LEONATO.

Well, niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband.

BEATRICE.

Not till God make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be over-mastered with a piece of valiant dust? to make an account of her life to a clod of wayward marl? No, uncle, I'll none: Adam's sons are my brethren; and truly, I hold it a sin to match in my kinred.

LEONATO.

Daughter, remember what I told you: if the prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer.

BEATRICE.

The fault will be in the music, cousin, if you be not wooed in good time: if the prince be too important, tell him there is measure in everything, and so dance out the answer. For, hear me, Hero: wooing, wedding, and repenting is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque-pace: the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly-modest, as a measure, full of state and ancientry; and then comes Repentance, and with his bad legs, falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave.

LEONATO.

Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly.

BEATRICE.

I have a good eye, uncle: I can see a church by daylight.

LEONATO.

The revellers are entering, brother: make good room.

[Enter, DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, BALTHASAR, DON JOHN, BORACHIO, MARGARET, URSULA, and Others, masked.]

DON PEDRO.

Lady, will you walk about with your friend?

HERO.

So you walk softly and look sweetly and say nothing, I am yours for the walk; and especially when I walk away.

DON PEDRO.

With me in your company?

HERO.

I may say so, when I please.

DON PEDRO.

And when please you to say so?

HERO.

When I like your favour; for God defend the lute should be like the case!

DON PEDRO.

My visor is Philemon's roof; within the house is Jove.

HERO.

Why, then, your visor should be thatch'd.

DON PEDRO.

Speak low, if you speak love.

[Takes her aside.]

BALTHAZAR.

Well, I would you did like me.

MARGARET.

So would not I, for your own sake; for I have many ill qualities.

BALTHAZAR.

Which is one?

MARGARET.

I say my prayers aloud.

BALTHAZAR.

I love you the better; the hearers may cry Amen.

MARGARET.

God match me with a good dancer!

BALTHAZAR.

Amen.

MARGARET.

And God keep him out of my sight when the dance is done! Answer, clerk.

BALTHAZAR.

No more words: the clerk is answered.

URSULA.

I know you well enough: you are Signior Antonio.

ANTONIO.

At a word, I am not.

URSULA.

I know you by the waggling of your head.

ANTONIO.

To tell you true, I counterfeit him.

URSULA.

You could never do him so ill-well, unless you were the very man.
Here's his dry hand up and down: you are he, you are he.

ANTONIO.

At a word, I am not.

URSULA.

Come, come; do you think I do not know you by your excellent wit?
Can virtue hide itself? Go to, mum, you are he: graces will appear, and there's an end.

BEATRICE.

Will you not tell me who told you so?

BENEDICK.

No, you shall pardon me.

BEATRICE.

Nor will you not tell me who you are?

BENEDICK.

Not now.

BEATRICE.

That I was disdainful, and that I had my good wit out of the 'Hundred Merry Tales.'
Well, this was Signior Benedick that said so.

BENEDICK.

What's he?

BEATRICE.

I am sure you know him well enough.

BENEDICK.

Not I, believe me.

BEATRICE.

Did he never make you laugh?

BENEDICK.

I pray you, what is he?

BEATRICE.

Why, he is the prince's jester: a very dull fool; only his gift is in devising impossible slanders: none but libertines delight in him; and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villany; for he both pleases men and angers them, and then they laugh at him and beat him. I am sure he is in the fleet: I would he had boarded me!

BENEDICK.

When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say.

BEATRICE.

Do, do: he'll but break a comparison or two on me; which, peradventure not marked or not laughed at, strikes him into melancholy; and then there's a partridge wing saved, for the fool will eat no supper that night. [Music within.] We must follow the leaders.

BENEDICK.

In every good thing.

BEATRICE.

Nay, if they lead to any ill, I will leave them at the next turning.

[Dance. Then exeunt all but DON JOHN, BORACHIO, and CLAUDIO.]

DON JOHN.

Sure my brother is amorous on Hero, and hath withdrawn her father to break with him about it. The ladies follow her and but one visor remains.

BORACHIO.

And that is Claudio: I know him by his bearing.

DON JOHN.

Are you not Signior Benedick?

CLAUDIO.

You know me well; I am he.

DON JOHN.

Signior, you are very near my brother in his love: he is enamoured on Hero; I pray you, dissuade him from her; she is no equal for his birth: you may do the part of an honest man in it.

CLAUDIO.

How know you he loves her?

DON JOHN.

I heard him swear his affection.

BORACHIO.

So did I too; and he swore he would marry her to-night.

DON JOHN.

Come, let us to the banquet.

[Exeunt DON JOHN and BORACHIO.]

CLAUDIO.

Thus answer I in name of Benedick,
But hear these ill news with the ears of Claudio.
'Tis certain so; the prince wooes for himself.
Friendship is constant in all other things
Save in the office and affairs of love:
herefore all hearts in love use their own tongues;
Let every eye negotiate for itself
And trust no agent; for beauty is a witch
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.
This is an accident of hourly proof,
Which I mistrusted not. Farewell, therefore, Hero!
[Re-enter Benedick.]

BENEDICK.

Count Claudio?

CLAUDIO.

Yea, the same.

BENEDICK.

Come, will you go with me?

CLAUDIO.

Whither?

BENEDICK.

Even to the next willow, about your own business, count. What fashion will you wear the garland of? About your neck, like a usurer's chain? or under your arm, like a lieutenant's scarf? You must wear it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.

CLAUDIO.

I wish him joy of her.

BENEDICK.

Why, that's spoken like an honest drovier: so they sell bullocks. But did you think the prince would have served you thus?

CLAUDIO.

I pray you, leave me.

BENEDICK.

Ho! now you strike like the blind man: 'twas the boy that stole your meat, and you'll beat the post.

CLAUDIO.

If it will not be, I'll leave you.

[Exit.]

BENEDICK.

Alas! poor hurt fowl. Now will he creep into sedges. But, that my Lady Beatrice should know me, and not know me! The prince's fool! Ha! it may be I go under that title because I am merry. Yea, but so I am apt to do myself wrong; I am not so reputed: it is the base though bitter disposition of Beatrice that puts the world into her person, and so gives me out. Well, I'll be revenged as I may.

[Re-enter Don Pedro.]

DON PEDRO.

Now, signior, where's the count? Did you see him?

BENEDICK.

Troth, my lord, I have played the part of Lady Fame. I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in a warren. I told him, and I think I told him true, that your Grace had

got the good will of this young lady; and I offered him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipped.

DON PEDRO.

To be whipped! What's his fault?

BENEDICK.

The flat transgression of a school-boy, who, being overjoy'd with finding a bird's nest, shows it his companion, and he steals it.

DON PEDRO.

Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? The transgression is in the stealer.

BENEDICK.

Yet it had not been amiss the rod had been made, and the garland too; for the garland he might have worn himself, and the rod he might have bestowed on you, who, as I take it, have stolen his bird's nest.

DON PEDRO.

I will but teach them to sing, and restore them to the owner.

BENEDICK.

If their singing answer your saying, by my faith, you say honestly.

DON PEDRO.

The Lady Beatrice hath a quarrel to you: the gentleman that danced with her told her she is much wronged by you.

BENEDICK.

O! she misused me past the endurance of a block: an oak but with one green leaf on it, would have answered her: my very visor began to assume life and scold with her. She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the prince's jester, that I was duller than a great thaw; huddling jest upon jest with such impossible conveyance upon me, that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole army shooting at me. She speaks poniards, and every word stabs: if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no living near her; she would infect to the north star. I would not marry her, though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgressed: she would have made Hercules have turned spit, yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too. Come, talk not of her; you shall find her the infernal Ate in good apparel. I would to God some scholar would conjure her, for certainly, while she is here, a man may live as quiet in hell as in a sanctuary; and people sin upon purpose because they would go thither; so indeed, all disquiet, horror and perturbation follow her.

[Re-enter CLAUDIO, BEATRICE, HERO, and LEONATO.]

DON PEDRO.

Look! here she comes.

BENEDICK.

Will your Grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand now to the Antipodes that you can devise to send me on; I will fetch you a toothpicker now from the furthest inch of Asia; bring you the length of Prester John's foot; fetch you a hair off the Great Cham's beard; do you any embassy to the Pygmies, rather than hold three words' conference with this harpy. You have no employment for me?

DON PEDRO.

None, but to desire your good company.

BENEDICK.

O God, sir, here's a dish I love not: I cannot endure my Lady Tongue.
[Exit.]

DON PEDRO.

Come, lady, come; you have lost the heart of Signior Benedick.

BEATRICE.

Indeed, my lord, he lent it me awhile; and I gave him use for it, a double heart for a single one: marry, once before he won it of me with false dice, therefore your Grace may well say I have lost it.

DON PEDRO.

You have put him down, lady, you have put him down.

BEATRICE.

So I would not he should do me, my lord, lest I should prove the mother of fools. I have brought Count Claudio, whom you sent me to seek.

DON PEDRO.

Why, how now, count! wherefore are you sad?

CLAUDIO.

Not sad, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

How then? Sick?

CLAUDIO.

Neither, my lord.

BEATRICE.

The count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well; but civil count, civil as an orange, and something of that jealous complexion.

DON PEDRO.

I' faith, lady, I think your blazon to be true; though, I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false. Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won; I have broke with her father, and, his good will obtained; name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy!

LEONATO.

Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes: his Grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it!

BEATRICE.

Speak, Count, 'tis your cue.

CLAUDIO.

Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy, if I could say how much. Lady, as you are mine, I am yours: I give away myself for you and dote upon the exchange.

BEATRICE.

Speak, cousin; or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let not him speak neither.

DON PEDRO.

In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

BEATRICE.

Yea, my lord; I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care. My cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

CLAUDIO.

And so she doth, cousin.

BEATRICE.

Good Lord, for alliance! Thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sunburnt. I may sit in a corner and cry heigh-ho for a husband!

DON PEDRO.

Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

BEATRICE.

I would rather have one of your father's getting. Hath your Grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

DON PEDRO.

Will you have me, lady?

BEATRICE.

No, my lord, unless I might have another for working days: your Grace is too costly to wear every day. But, I beseech your Grace, pardon me; I was born to speak all mirth and no matter.

DON PEDRO.

Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for out of question, you were born in a merry hour.

BEATRICE.

No, sure, my lord, my mother cried; but then there was a star danced, and under that was I born. Cousins, God give you joy!

LEONATO.

Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

BEATRICE.

I cry you mercy, uncle. By your Grace's pardon.
[Exit.]

DON PEDRO.

By my troth, a pleasant spirited lady.

LEONATO.

There's little of the melancholy element in her, my lord: she is never sad but when she sleeps; and not ever sad then, for I have heard my daughter say, she hath often dreamed of unhappiness and waked herself with laughing.

DON PEDRO.

She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband.

LEONATO.

O! by no means: she mocks all her wooers out of suit.

DON PEDRO.

She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

LEONATO.

O Lord! my lord, if they were but a week married, they would talk themselves mad.

DON PEDRO.

Count Claudio, when mean you to go to church?

CLAUDIO.

To-morrow, my lord. Time goes on crutches till love have all his rites.

LEONATO.

Not till Monday, my dear son, which is hence a just seven-night; and a time too brief too, to have all things answer my mind.

DON PEDRO.

Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing; but, I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us. I will in the interim undertake one of Hercules' labours, which is, to bring Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection the one with the other. I would fain have it a match; and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction.

LEONATO.

My lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights' watchings.

CLAUDIO.

And I, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

And you too, gentle Hero?

HERO.

I will do any modest office, my lord, to help my cousin to a good husband.

DON PEDRO.

And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know. Thus far can I praise him; he is of a noble strain, of approved valour, and confirmed honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in love with Benedick; and I, with your two helps, will so practise on Benedick that, in despite of his quick wit and his queasy stomach, he shall fall in love with Beatrice. If we can do this, Cupid

is no longer an archer: his glory shall be ours, for we are the only love-gods. Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift.

[Exeunt.]

Scene II. Another room in LEONATO'S house.

[Enter DON JOHN and BORACHIO.]

DON JOHN.

It is so; the Count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

BORACHIO.

Yea, my lord; but I can cross it.

DON JOHN.

Any bar, any cross, any impediment will be medicinal to me: I am sick in displeasure to him, and whatsoever comes athwart his affection ranges evenly with mine. How canst thou cross this marriage?

BORACHIO.

Not honestly, my lord; but so covertly that no dishonesty shall appear in me.

DON JOHN.

Show me briefly how.

BORACHIO.

I think I told your lordship, a year since, how much I am in the favour of Margaret, the waiting-gentlewoman to Hero.

DON JOHN.

I remember.

BORACHIO.

I can, at any unseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to look out at her lady's chamber window.

DON JOHN.

What life is in that, to be the death of this marriage?

BORACHIO.

The poison of that lies in you to temper. Go you to the prince your brother; spare not to tell him, that he hath wronged his honour in marrying the renowned Claudio,—whose estimation do you mightily hold up,—to a contaminated stale, such a one as Hero.

DON JOHN.

What proof shall I make of that?

BORACHIO.

Proof enough to misuse the prince, to vex Claudio, to undo Hero, and kill

LEONATO.

Look you for any other issue?

DON JOHN.

Only to despite them, I will endeavour anything.

BORACHIO.

Go then; find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro and the Count Claudio alone: tell them that you know that Hero loves me; intend a kind of zeal both to the prince and Claudio, as—in love of your brother's honour, who hath made this match, and his friend's reputation, who is thus like to be cozened with the semblance of a maid,—that you have discovered thus. They will scarcely believe this without trial: offer them instances, which shall bear no less likelihood than to see me at her chamber-window, hear me call Margaret Hero, hear Margaret term me Claudio; and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding: for in the meantime I will so fashion the matter that Hero shall be absent; and there shall appear such seeming truth of Hero's disloyalty, that jealousy shall be called assurance, and all the preparation overthrown.

DON JOHN.

Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice. Be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

BORACHIO.

Be you constant in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

DON JOHN.

I will presently go learn their day of marriage.

[Exeunt.]

Scene III. LEONATO'S Garden.

[Enter Benedick.]

BENEDICK.

Boy!

[Enter a Boy.]

BOY.

Signior?

BENEDICK.

In my chamber-window lies a book; bring it hither to me in the orchard.

BOY.

I am here already, sir.

BENEDICK.

I know that; but I would have thee hence, and here again. [Exit Boy.] I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love: and such a man is Claudio. I have known, when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife; and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe: I have known when he would have walked ten mile afoot to see a good armour; and now will he lie ten nights awake, carving the fashion of a new doublet. He was wont to speak plain and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier; and now is he turned orthography; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes. May I be so converted, and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not: I will not be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair, yet I am well; another is wise, yet I am well; another virtuous, yet I am well; but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of what colour it please God. Ha! the prince and Monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbour.

[Withdraws.]

[Enter DON PEDRO, LEONATO, and CLAUDIO, followed by BALTHAZAR and Musicians.]

DON PEDRO.

Come, shall we hear this music?

CLAUDIO.

Yea, my good lord. How still the evening is, As hush'd on purpose to grace harmony!

DON PEDRO.

See you where Benedick hath hid himself?

CLAUDIO.

O! very well, my lord: the music ended, We'll fit the kid-fox with a penny-worth.

DON PEDRO.

Come, Balthazar, we'll hear that song again.

BALTHAZAR.

O! good my lord, tax not so bad a voice To slander music any more than once.

DON PEDRO.

It is the witness still of excellency, To put a strange face on his own perfection. I pray thee, sing, and let me woo no more.

BALTHAZAR.

Because you talk of wooing, I will sing; Since many a wooer doth commence his suit To her he thinks not worthy; yet he woos; Yet will he swear he loves.

DON PEDRO.

Nay, pray thee come; Or if thou wilt hold longer argument, Do it in notes.

BALTHAZAR.

Note this before my notes; There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting.

DON PEDRO.

Why these are very crotchets that he speaks; Notes, notes, forsooth, and nothing!
[Music.]

BENEDICK.

Now, divine air! now is his soul ravished! Is it not strange that sheep's guts should hale souls out of men's bodies? Well, a horn for my money, when all's done.

[Balthasar sings.]

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,

Men were deceivers ever;

One foot in sea, and one on shore,

To one thing constant never.

Then sigh not so,

But let them go,

And be you blithe and bonny,

Converting all your sounds of woe

Into Hey nonny, nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no mo

Of dumps so dull and heavy;

The fraud of men was ever so,

Since summer first was leavy.

Then sigh not so,

But let them go,

And be you blithe and bonny,

Converting all your sounds of woe

Into Hey nonny, nonny.

DON PEDRO.

By my troth, a good song.

BALTHAZAR.

And an ill singer, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

Ha, no, no, faith; thou singest well enough for a shift.

BENEDICK.

[Aside.] An he had been a dog that should have howled thus, they would have hanged him; and I pray God his bad voice bode no mischief. I had as lief have heard the night-raven, come what plague could have come after it.

DON PEDRO.

Yea, marry; dost thou hear, Balthazar? I pray thee, get us some excellent music, for to-morrow night we would have it at the Lady Hero's chamber-window.

BALTHAZAR.

The best I can, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

Do so: farewell.

[Exeunt BALTHAZAR and Musicians.]

Come hither, Leonato: what was it you told me of to-day, that your niece Beatrice was in love with Signior Benedick?

CLAUDIO.

O! ay:— [Aside to DON PEDRO] Stalk on, stalk on; the fowl sits. I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

LEONATO.

No, nor I neither; but most wonderful that she should so dote on Signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviours seemed ever to abhor.

BENEDICK.

[Aside.] Is't possible? Sits the wind in that corner?

LEONATO.

By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to think of it but that she loves him with an enraged affection: it is past the infinite of thought.

DON PEDRO.

May be she doth but counterfeit.

CLAUDIO.

Faith, like enough.

LEONATO.

O God! counterfeit! There was never counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion as she discovers it.

DON PEDRO.

Why, what effects of passion shows she?

CLAUDIO.

[Aside.] Bait the hook well: this fish will bite.

LEONATO.

What effects, my lord? She will sit you; [To Claudio.] You heard my daughter tell you how.

CLAUDIO.

She did, indeed.

DON PEDRO.

How, how, I pray you? You amaze me: I would have thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection.

LEONATO.

I would have sworn it had, my lord; especially against Benedick.

BENEDICK.

[Aside] I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it: knavery cannot, sure, hide itself in such reverence.

CLAUDIO.

[Aside.] He hath ta'en the infection: hold it up.

DON PEDRO.

Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

LEONATO.

No; and swears she never will: that's her torment.

CLAUDIO.

'Tis true, indeed; so your daughter says: 'Shall I,' says she, 'that have so oft encountered him with scorn, write to him that I love him?'

LEONATO.

This says she now when she is beginning to write to him; for she'll be up twenty times a night, and there will she sit in her smock till she have writ a sheet of paper: my daughter tells us all.

CLAUDIO.

Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty jest your daughter told us of.

LEONATO.

O! when she had writ it, and was reading it over, she found Benedick and Beatrice between the sheet?

CLAUDIO.

That.

LEONATO.

O! she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence; railed at herself, that she should be so immodest to write to one that she knew would flout her: 'I measure him,' says she, 'by my own spirit; for I should flout him, if he writ to me; yea, though I love him, I should.'

CLAUDIO.

Then down upon her knees she falls, weeps, sobs, beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, curses; 'O sweet Benedick! God give me patience!'

LEONATO.

She doth indeed; my daughter says so; and the ecstasy hath so much overborne her, that my daughter is sometimes afraid she will do a desperate outrage to herself. It is very true.

DON PEDRO.

It were good that Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it.

CLAUDIO.

To what end? he would make but a sport of it and torment the poor lady worse.

DON PEDRO.

An he should, it were an alms to hang him. She's an excellent sweet lady, and, out of all suspicion, she is virtuous.

CLAUDIO.

And she is exceeding wise.

DON PEDRO.

In everything but in loving Benedick.

LEONATO.

O! my lord, wisdom and blood combating in so tender a body, we have ten proofs to one that blood hath the victory. I am sorry for her, as I have just cause, being her uncle and her guardian.

DON PEDRO.

I would she had bestowed this dotage on me; I would have daffed all other respects and made her half myself. I pray you, tell Benedick of it, and hear what a' will say.

LEONATO.

Were it good, think you?

CLAUDIO.

Hero thinks surely she will die; for she says she will die if he love her not, and she will die ere she make her love known, and she will die if he woo her, rather than she will bate one breath of her accustomed crossness.

DON PEDRO.

She doth well: if she should make tender of her love, 'tis very possible he'll scorn it; for the man,—as you know all,—hath a contemptible spirit.

CLAUDIO.

He is a very proper man.

DON PEDRO.

He hath indeed a good outward happiness.

CLAUDIO.

Fore God, and in my mind, very wise.

DON PEDRO.

He doth indeed show some sparks that are like wit.

CLAUDIO.

And I take him to be valiant.

DON PEDRO.

As Hector, I assure you: and in the managing of quarrels you may say he is wise; for either he avoids them with great discretion, or undertakes them with a most Christian-like fear.

LEONATO.

If he do fear God, a' must necessarily keep peace: if he break the peace, he ought to enter into a quarrel with fear and trembling.

DON PEDRO.

And so will he do; for the man doth fear God, howsoever it seems not in him by some large jests he will make. Well, I am sorry for your niece. Shall we go seek Benedick and tell him of her love?

CLAUDIO.

Never tell him, my lord: let her wear it out with good counsel.

LEONATO.

Nay, that's impossible: she may wear her heart out first.

DON PEDRO.

Well, we will hear further of it by your daughter: let it cool the while. I love Benedick well, and I could wish he would modestly examine himself, to see how much he is unworthy so good a lady.

LEONATO.

My lord, will you walk? dinner is ready.

CLAUDIO.

[Aside.] If he do not dote on her upon this, I will never trust my expectation.

DON PEDRO.

[Aside.] Let there be the same net spread for her; and that must your daughter and her gentle-woman carry. The sport will be, when they hold one an opinion of another's dotage, and no such matter: that's the scene that I would see, which will be merely a dumb-show. Let us send her to call him in to dinner.

[Exeunt DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, and LEONATO.]

BENEDICK.

[Advancing from the arbour.] This can be no trick: the conference was sadly borne. They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady: it seems her affections have their full bent. Love me! why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured: they say I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from her; they say too that she will rather die than give any sign of affection. I did never think to marry: I must not seem proud: happy are they that hear their detractions, and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair: 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness; and virtuous: 'tis so, I cannot reprove it; and wise, but for loving me: by my troth, it is no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her folly, for I will

be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage; but doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the career of his humour? No; the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. Here comes Beatrice. By this day! she's a fair lady: I do spy some marks of love in her.
[Enter BEATRICE.]

BEATRICE.

Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

BENEDICK.

Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

BEATRICE.

I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me: if it had been painful, I would not have come.

BENEDICK.

You take pleasure then in the message?

BEATRICE.

Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point, and choke a daw withal. You have no stomach, signior: fare you well.
[Exit.]

BENEDICK.

Ha! 'Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner,' there's a double meaning in that. 'I took no more pains for those thanks than you took pains to thank me,' that's as much as to say, Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks. If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew. I will go get her picture.
[Exit.]

Act III

Scene I. Leonato's Garden

[Enter HERO, MARGARET, and URSULA.]

HERO.

Good Margaret, run thee to the parlour;
There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice
Proposing with the prince and Claudio:

Whisper her ear, and tell her, I and Ursula
 Walk in the orchard, and our whole discourse
 Is all of her; say that thou overheard'st us,
 And bid her steal into the pleached bower,
 Where honey-suckles, ripen'd by the sun,
 Forbid the sun to enter; like favourites,
 Made proud by princes, that advance their pride
 Against that power that bred it. There will she hide her,
 To listen our propose. This is thy office;
 Bear thee well in it and leave us alone.

MARGARET.

I'll make her come, I warrant you, presently.
 [Exit.]

HERO.

Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,
 As we do trace this alley up and down,
 Our talk must only be of Benedick:
 When I do name him, let it be thy part
 To praise him more than ever man did merit.
 My talk to thee must be how Benedick
 Is sick in love with Beatrice: of this matter
 Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
 That only wounds by hearsay.
 [Enter BEATRICE, behind.]
 Now begin; For look where Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs
 Close by the ground, to hear our conference.

URSULA.

The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish
 Cut with her golden oars the silver stream,
 And greedily devour the treacherous bait:
 So angle we for Beatrice; who even now
 Is couched in the woodbine coverture.
 Fear you not my part of the dialogue.

HERO.

Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing
 Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it.
 [They advance to the bower.]
 No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful;
 I know her spirits are as coy and wild
 As haggards of the rock.

URSULA.

But are you sure
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?

HERO.

So says the prince, and my new-trothed lord.

URSULA.

And did they bid you tell her of it, madam?

HERO.

They did entreat me to acquaint her of it;
But I persuaded them, if they lov'd Benedick,
To wish him wrestle with affection,
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

URSULA.

Why did you so? Doth not the gentleman
Deserve as full as fortunate a bed
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon?

HERO.

O god of love! I know he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man;
But nature never fram'd a woman's heart
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice;
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprising what they look on, and her wit
Values itself so highly, that to her
All matter else seems weak. She cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so self-endeared.

URSULA.

Sure I think so; And therefore certainly it were not good
She knew his love, lest she make sport at it.

HERO.

Why, you speak truth. I never yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featur'd,
But she would spell him backward: if fair-fac'd,
She would swear the gentleman should be her sister;
If black, why, Nature, drawing of an antick,

Made a foul blot; if tall, a lance ill-headed;
 If low, an agate very vilely cut;
 If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds;
 If silent, why, a block moved with none.
 So turns she every man the wrong side out,
 And never gives to truth and virtue that
 Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.

URSULA.

Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

HERO.

No; not to be so odd, and from all fashions,
 As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable.
 But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,
 She would mock me into air: O! she would laugh me
 Out of myself, press me to death with wit.
 Therefore let Benedick, like cover'd fire,
 Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly:
 It were a better death than die with mocks,
 Which is as bad as die with tickling.

URSULA.

Yet tell her of it: hear what she will say.

HERO.

No; rather I will go to Benedick,
 And counsel him to fight against his passion.
 And, truly, I'll devise some honest slanders
 To stain my cousin with. One doth not know
 How much an ill word may empoison liking.

URSULA.

O! do not do your cousin such a wrong.
 She cannot be so much without true judgment,—
 Having so swift and excellent a wit
 As she is priz'd to have,—as to refuse
 So rare a gentleman as Signior Benedick.

HERO.

He is the only man of Italy,
 Always excepted my dear Claudio.

URSULA.

I pray you, be not angry with me, madam,
Speaking my fancy: Signior Benedick,
For shape, for bearing, argument and valour,
Goes foremost in report through Italy.

HERO.

Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.

URSULA.

His excellence did earn it, ere he had it.
When are you married, madam?

HERO.

Why, every day, to-morrow. Come, go in:
I'll show thee some attires, and have thy counsel
Which is the best to furnish me to-morrow.

URSULA.

She's lim'd, I warrant you: we have caught her, madam.

HERO.

If it prove so, then loving goes by haps:
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.
[Exeunt HERO and URSULA.]

BEATRICE.

[Advancing.] What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!
No glory lives behind the back of such.
And, Benedick, love on; I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand:
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band;
For others say thou dost deserve, and I
Believe it better than reportingly.
[Exit.]

Scene II. A Room in LEONATO'S House

[Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, and LEONATO.]

DON PEDRO.

I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then go I toward Arragon.

CLAUDIO.

I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe me.

DON PEDRO.

Nay, that would be as great a soil in the new gloss of your marriage, as to show a child his new coat and forbid him to wear it. I will only be bold with Benedick for his company; for, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth; he hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bowstring, and the little hangman dare not shoot at him. He hath a heart as sound as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper; for what his heart thinks his tongue speaks.

BENEDICK.

Gallants, I am not as I have been.

LEONATO.

So say I: methinks you are sadder.

CLAUDIO.

I hope he be in love.

DON PEDRO.

Hang him, truant! there's no true drop of blood in him, to be truly touched with love. If he be sad, he wants money.

BENEDICK.

I have the tooth-ache.

DON PEDRO.

Draw it.

BENEDICK.

Hang it.

CLAUDIO.

You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards.

DON PEDRO.

What! sigh for the tooth-ache?

LEONATO.

Where is but a humour or a worm?

BENEDICK.

Well, every one can master a grief but he that has it.

CLAUDIO.

Yet say I, he is in love.

DON PEDRO.

There is no appearance of fancy in him, unless it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises; as to be a Dutchman to-day, a Frenchman to-morrow; or in the shape of two countries at once, as a German from the waist downward, all slops, and a Spaniard from the hip upward, no doublet. Unless he have a fancy to this foolery, as it appears he hath, he is no fool for fancy, as you would have it appear he is.

CLAUDIO.

If he be not in love with some woman, there is no believing old signs: a' brushes his hat a mornings; what should that bode?

DON PEDRO.

Hath any man seen him at the barber's?

CLAUDIO.

No, but the barber's man hath been seen with him; and the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuffed tennis-balls.

LEONATO.

Indeed he looks younger than he did, by the loss of a beard.

DON PEDRO.

Nay, a' rubs himself with civet: can you smell him out by that?

CLAUDIO.

That's as much as to say the sweet youth's in love.

DON PEDRO.

The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

CLAUDIO.

And when was he wont to wash his face?

DON PEDRO.

Yea, or to paint himself? for the which, I hear what they say of him.

CLAUDIO.

Nay, but his jesting spirit; which is now crept into a lute-string, and new-governed by stops.

DON PEDRO.

Indeed, that tells a heavy tale for him. Conclude, conclude he is in love.

CLAUDIO.

Nay, but I know who loves him.

DON PEDRO.

That would I know too: I warrant, one that knows him not.

CLAUDIO.

Yes, and his ill conditions; and in despite of all, dies for him.

DON PEDRO.

She shall be buried with her face upwards.

BENEDICK.

Yet is this no charm for the tooth-ache. Old signior, walk aside with me: I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you, which these hobby-horses must not hear.

[Exeunt BENEDICK and LEONATO.]

DON PEDRO.

For my life, to break with him about Beatrice.

CLAUDIO.

'Tis even so. Hero and Margaret have by this played their parts with Beatrice, and then the two bears will not bite one another when they meet.

[Enter DON JOHN.]

DON JOHN.

My lord and brother, God save you!

DON PEDRO.

Good den, brother.

DON JOHN.

If your leisure served, I would speak with you.

DON PEDRO.

In private?

DON JOHN.

If it please you; yet Count Claudio may hear, for what I would speak of concerns him.

DON PEDRO.

What's the matter?

DON JOHN.

[To CLAUDIO.] Means your lordship to be married to-morrow?

DON PEDRO.

You know he does.

DON JOHN.

I know not that, when he knows what I know.

CLAUDIO.

If there be any impediment, I pray you discover it.

DON JOHN.

You may think I love you not: let that appear hereafter, and aim better at me by that I now will manifest. For my brother, I think he holds you well, and in dearness of heart hath help to effect your ensuing marriage; surely suit ill-spent and labour ill bestowed!

DON PEDRO.

Why, what's the matter?

DON JOHN.

I came hither to tell you; and circumstances shortened,—for she has been too long a talking of,—the lady is disloyal.

CLAUDIO.

Who, Hero?

DON JOHN.

Even she: Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero.

CLAUDIO.

Disloyal?

DON JOHN.

The word's too good to paint out her wickedness; I could say, she were worse: think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it. Wonder not till further warrant: go but with me to-night, you shall see her chamber-window entered, even the night before her wedding-day: if you love her then, to-morrow wed her; but it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

CLAUDIO.

May this be so?

DON PEDRO.

I will not think it.

DON JOHN.

If you dare not trust that you see, confess not that you know. If you will follow me, I will show you enough; and when you have seen more and heard more, proceed accordingly.

CLAUDIO.

If I see anything to-night why I should not marry her to-morrow, in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

DON PEDRO.

And, as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her.

DON JOHN.

I will disparage her no farther till you are my witnesses: bear it coldly but till midnight, and let the issue show itself.

DON PEDRO.

O day untowardly turned!

CLAUDIO.

O mischief strangely thwarting!

DON JOHN.

O plague right well prevented! So will you say when you have seen the sequel.
[Exeunt.]

Scene III. A Street

[Enter DOGBERRY and VERGES, with the Watch.]

DOGBERRY.

Are you good men and true?

VERGES.

Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

DOGBERRY.

Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the prince's watch.

VERGES.

Well, give them their charge, neighbour Dogberry.

DOGBERRY.

First, who think you the most desartless man to be constable?

FIRST WATCH.

Hugh Oatcake, sir, or George Seacoal; for they can write and read.

DOGBERRY.

Come hither, neighbour Seacoal. God hath blessed you with a good name: to be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune; but to write and read comes by nature.

SECOND WATCH.

Both which, Master Constable,—

DOGBERRY.

You have: I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favour, sir, why, give God thanks, and make no boast of it; and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity. You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore bear you the lanthorn. This is your charge: you shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand, in the prince's name.

SECOND WATCH.

How, if a' will not stand?

DOGBERRY.

Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave.

VERGES.

If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the prince's subjects.

DOGBERRY.

True, and they are to meddle with none but the prince's subjects. You shall also make no noise in the streets: for, for the watch to babble and to talk is most tolerable and not to be endured.

SECOND WATCH.

We will rather sleep than talk: we know what belongs to a watch.

DOGBERRY.

Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman, for I cannot see how sleeping should offend; only have a care that your bills be not stolen. Well, you are to call at all the alehouses, and bid those that are drunk get them to bed.

SECOND WATCH.

How if they will not?

DOGBERRY.

Why then, let them alone till they are sober: if they make you not then the better answer, you may say they are not the men you took them for.

SECOND WATCH.

Well, sir.

DOGBERRY.

If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man; and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.

SECOND WATCH.

If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

DOGBERRY.

Truly, by your office, you may; but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled. The most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is and steal out of your company.

VERGES.

You have been always called a merciful man, partner.

DOGBERRY.

Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will, much more a man who hath any honesty in him.

VERGES.

If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse and bid her still it.

SECOND WATCH.

How if the nurse be asleep and will not hear us?

DOGBERRY.

Why then, depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying; for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baes, will never answer a calf when he bleats.

VERGES.

'Tis very true.

DOGBERRY.

This is the end of the charge. You constable, are to present the prince's own person: if you meet the prince in the night, you may stay him.

VERGES.

Nay, by'r lady, that I think, a' cannot.

DOGBERRY.

Five shillings to one on't, with any man that knows the statutes, he may stay him: marry, not without the prince be willing; for, indeed, the watch ought to offend no man, and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.

VERGES.

By'r lady, I think it be so.

DOGBERRY.

Ha, ah, ha! Well, masters, good night: an there be any matter of weight chances, call up me: keep your fellows' counsels and your own, and good night. Come, neighbour.

SECOND WATCH.

Well, masters, we hear our charge: let us go sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to bed.

DOGBERRY.

One word more, honest neighbours. I pray you, watch about Signior Leonato's door; for the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great coil to-night. Adieu; be vigilant, I beseech you.

[Exeunt DOGBERRY and VERGES.]

[Enter BORACHIO and CONRADE.]

BORACHIO.

What, Conrade!

WATCH.

[Aside.] Peace! stir not.

BORACHIO.

Conrade, I say!

CONRADE.

Here, man. I am at thy elbow.

BORACHIO.

Mass, and my elbow itched; I thought there would a scab follow.

CONRADE.

I will owe thee an answer for that; and now forward with thy tale.

BORACHIO.

Stand thee close then under this penthouse, for it drizzles rain, and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

WATCH.

[Aside.] Some treason, masters; yet stand close.

BORACHIO.

Therefore know, I have earned of Don John a thousand ducats.

CONRADE.

Is it possible that any villany should be so dear?

BORACHIO.

Thou shouldst rather ask if it were possible any villany should be so rich; for when rich villains have need of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will.

CONRADE.

I wonder at it.

BORACHIO.

That shows thou art unconfirmed. Thou knowest that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak, is nothing to a man.

CONRADE.

Yes, it is apparel.

BORACHIO.

I mean, the fashion.

CONRADE.

Yes, the fashion is the fashion.

BORACHIO.

Tush! I may as well say the fool's the fool. But seest thou not what a deformed thief this fashion is?

WATCH.

[Aside.] I know that Deformed; a' has been a vile thief this seven years; a' goes up and down like a gentleman: I remember his name.

BORACHIO.

Didst thou not hear somebody?

CONRADE.

No: 'twas the vane on the house.

BORACHIO.

Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is? how giddily he turns about all the hot bloods between fourteen and five-and-thirty? sometime fashioning them like Pharaoh's soldiers in the reechy painting; sometime like god Bel's priests in the old church-window; sometime like the shaven Hercules in the smirched worm-eaten tapestry, where his codpiece seems as massy as his club?

CONRADE.

All this I see, and I see that the fashion wears out more apparel than the man. But art not thou thyself giddy with the fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion?

BORACHIO.

Not so neither; but know, that I have to-night wooed Margaret, the Lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero: she leans me out at her mistress' chamber-window, bids me a thousand times good night,—I tell this tale vilely:—I should first tell thee how the prince, Claudio, and my master, planted and placed and possessed by my master Don John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

CONRADE.

And thought they Margaret was Hero?

BORACHIO.

Two of them did, the prince and Claudio; but the devil my master, knew she was Margaret; and partly by his oaths, which first possessed them, partly by the dark night, which did deceive them, but chiefly by my villany, which did confirm any slander that Don John had made, away went Claudio enraged; swore he would meet her, as he was appointed, next morning at the temple, and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what he saw o'er night, and send her home again without a husband.

FIRST WATCH.

We charge you in the prince's name, stand!

SECOND WATCH.

Call up the right Master Constable. We have here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth.

FIRST WATCH.

And one Deformed is one of them: I know him, a' wears a lock.

CONRADE.

Masters, masters!

SECOND WATCH.

You'll be made bring Deformed forth, I warrant you.

CONRADE.

Masters,—

FIRST WATCH.

Never speak: we charge you let us obey you to go with us.

BORACHIO.

We are like to prove a goodly commodity, being taken up of these men's bills.

CONRADE.

A commodity in question, I warrant you. Come, we'll obey you.
[Exeunt.]

Scene IV. A Room in LEONATO'S House.

[Enter HERO, MARGARET, and URSULA.]

HERO.

Good Ursula, wake my cousin Beatrice, and desire her to rise.

URSULA.

I will, lady.

HERO.

And bid her come hither.

URSULA.

Well.
[Exit.]

MARGARET.

Troth, I think your other rabato were better.

HERO.

No, pray thee, good Meg, I'll wear this.

MARGARET.

By my troth's not so good; and I warrant your cousin will say so.

HERO.

My cousin's a fool, and thou art another: I'll wear none but this.

MARGARET.

I like the new tire within excellently, if the hair were a thought browner; and your gown's a most rare fashion, i' faith. I saw the Duchess of Milan's gown that they praise so.

HERO.

O! that exceeds, they say.

MARGARET.

By my troth's but a night-gown in respect of yours: cloth o' gold, and cuts, and laced with silver, set with pearls, down sleeves, side sleeves, and skirts round, underborne with a blush tinsel; but for a fine, quaint, graceful, and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

HERO.

God give me joy to wear it! for my heart is exceeding heavy.

MARGARET.

'Twill be heavier soon by the weight of a man.

HERO.

Fie upon thee! art not ashamed?

MARGARET.

Of what, lady? of speaking honourably? is not marriage honourable in a beggar? Is not your lord honourable without marriage? I think you would have me say, 'saving your reverence, a husband.' An bad thinking do not wrest true speaking, I'll offend nobody. Is there any harm in 'the heavier for a husband'? None, I think, an it be the right husband and the right wife; otherwise 'tis light, and not heavy: ask my Lady Beatrice else; here she comes.

[Enter BEATRICE.]

HERO.

Good morrow, coz.

BEATRICE.

Good morrow, sweet Hero.

HERO.

Why, how now? do you speak in the sick tune?

BEATRICE.

I am out of all other tune, methinks.

MARGARET.

Clap's into 'Light o' love'; that goes without a burden: do you sing it, and I'll dance it.

BEATRICE.

Ye, light o' love with your heels! then, if your husband have stables enough, you'll see he shall lack no barnes.

MARGARET.

O illegitimate construction! I scorn that with my heels.

BEATRICE.

'Tis almost five o'clock, cousin; 'tis time you were ready. By my troth, I am exceeding ill. Heigh-ho!

MARGARET.

For a hawk, a horse, or a husband?

BEATRICE.

For the letter that begins them all, H.

MARGARET.

Well, an you be not turned Turk, there's no more sailing by the star.

BEATRICE.

What means the fool, trow?

MARGARET.

Nothing I; but God send every one their heart's desire!

HERO.

These gloves the Count sent me; they are an excellent perfume.

BEATRICE.

I am stuffed, cousin, I cannot smell.

MARGARET.

A maid, and stuffed! there's goodly catching of cold.

BEATRICE.

O, God help me! God help me! how long have you professed apprehension?

MARGARET.

Ever since you left it. Doth not my wit become me rarely!

BEATRICE.

It is not seen enough, you should wear it in your cap. By my troth, I am sick.

MARGARET.

Get you some of this distilled Carduus Benedictus, and lay it to your heart: it is the only thing for a qualm.

HERO.

There thou prick'st her with a thistle.

BEATRICE.

Benedictus! why benedictus? you have some moral in this Benedictus.

MARGARET.

Moral! no, by my troth, I have no moral meaning; I meant, plain holy-thistle. You may think, perchance, that I think you are in love: nay, by'r lady, I am not such a fool to think what I list; nor I list not to think what I can; nor, indeed, I cannot think, if I would think my heart out of thinking, that you are in love, or that you will be in love, or that you can be in love. Yet Benedick was such another, and now is he become a man: he swore he would never marry; and yet now, in despite of his heart, he eats his meat without grudging: and how you may be converted, I know not; but methinks you look with your eyes as other women do.

BEATRICE.

What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

MARGARET.

Not a false gallop.

[Re-enter URSULA.]

URSULA.

Madam, withdraw: the prince, the count, Signior Benedick, Don John, and all the gallants of the town, are come to fetch you to church.

HERO.

Help to dress me, good coz, good Meg, good Ursula.
[Exeunt.]

Scene V. Another Room in LEONATO'S House
[Enter LEONATO and DOGBERRY and VERGES.]

LEONATO.

What would you with me, honest neighbour?

DOGBERRY.

Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you, that decerns you nearly.

LEONATO.

Brief, I pray you; for you see it is a busy time with me.

DOGBERRY.

Marry, this it is, sir.

VERGES.

Yes, in truth it is, sir.

LEONATO.

What is it, my good friends?

DOGBERRY.

Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter: an old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt as, God help, I would desire they were; but, in faith, honest as the skin between his brows.

VERGES.

Yes, I thank God, I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man and no honester than I.

DOGBERRY.

Comparisons are odorous: palabras, neighbour Verges.

LEONATO.

Neighbours, you are tedious.

DOGBERRY.

It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor duke's officers; but truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

LEONATO.

All thy tediousness on me! ha?

DOGBERRY.

Yea, an't were a thousand pound more than 'tis; for I hear as good exclamation on your worship, as of any man in the city, and though I be but a poor man, I am glad to hear it.

VERGES.

And so am I.

LEONATO.

I would fain know what you have to say.

VERGES.

Marry, sir, our watch to-night, excepting your worship's presence, ha' ta'en a couple of as arrant knaves as any in Messina.

DOGBERRY.

A good old man, sir; he will be talking; as they say, 'when the age is in, the wit is out.' God help us! it is a world to see! Well said, i' faith, neighbour Verges: well, God's a good man; an two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind. An honest soul, i' faith, sir; by my troth he is, as ever broke bread; but God is to be worshipped: all men are not alike; alas! good neighbour.

LEONATO.

Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you.

DOGBERRY.

Gifts that God gives.

LEONATO.

I must leave you.

DOGBERRY.

One word, sir: our watch, sir, hath indeed comprehended two aspicious persons, and we would have them this morning examined before your worship.

LEONATO.

Take their examination yourself, and bring it me: I am now in great haste, as may appear unto you.

DOGBERRY.

It shall be suffigance.

LEONATO.

Drink some wine ere you go: fare you well.

[Enter a Messenger.]

MESSENGER.

My lord, they stay for you to give your daughter to her husband.

LEONATO.

I'll wait upon them: I am ready.

[Exeunt LEONATO and Messenger.]

DOGBERRY.

Go, good partner, go, get you to Francis Seacoal; bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the gaol: we are now to examination these men.

VERGES.

And we must do it wisely.

DOGBERRY.

We will spare for no wit, I warrant you; here's that shall drive some of them to a non-come: only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication, and meet me at the gaol.

[Exeunt.]

Act IV

Scene I. The Inside of a Church.

[Enter DON PEDRO, DON JOHN, LEONATO, FRIAR FRANCIS, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, HERO, BEATRICE, &c.]

LEONATO.

Come, Friar Francis, be brief: only to the plain form of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

FRIAR.

You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady?

CLAUDIO.

No.

LEONATO.

To be married to her, friar; you come to marry her.

FRIAR.

Lady, you come hither to be married to this count?

HERO.

I do.

FRIAR.

If either of you know any inward impediment, why you should not be conjoined, I charge you, on your souls, to utter it.

CLAUDIO.

Know you any, Hero?

HERO.

None, my lord.

FRIAR.

Know you any, count?

LEONATO.

I dare make his answer; none.

CLAUDIO.

O! what men dare do! what men may do! what men daily do, not knowing what they do!

BENEDICK.

How now! Interjections? Why then, some be of laughing, as ah! ha! he!

CLAUDIO.

Stand thee by, friar. Father, by your leave: Will you with free and unconstrained soul Give me this maid, your daughter?

LEONATO.

As freely, son, as God did give her me.

CLAUDIO.

And what have I to give you back whose worth
May counterpoise this rich and precious gift?

DON PEDRO.

Nothing, unless you render her again.

CLAUDIO.

Sweet prince, you learn me noble thankfulness.
There, Leonato, take her back again:
Give not this rotten orange to your friend;
She's but the sign and semblance of her honour.
Behold! how like a maid she blushes here.
O! what authority and show of truth
Can cunning sin cover itself withal.
Comes not that blood as modest evidence
To witness simple virtue? Would you not swear,
All you that see her, that she were a maid,
By these exterior shows? But she is none:
She knows the heat of a luxurious bed;
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.

LEONATO.

What do you mean, my lord?

CLAUDIO.

Not to be married,
Not to knit my soul to an approved wanton.

LEONATO.

Dear my lord, if you, in your own proof,
Have vanquish'd the resistance of her youth,
And made defeat of her virginity,—

CLAUDIO.

I know what you would say: if I have known her,
You'll say she did embrace me as a husband,
And so extenuate the 'forehand sin: No, Leonato,
I never tempted her with word too large;
But, as a brother to his sister, show'd
Bashful sincerity and comely love.

HERO.

And seem'd I ever otherwise to you?

CLAUDIO.

Out on thee! Seeming! I will write against it:
You seem to me as Dian in her orb,
As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown;
But you are more intemperate in your blood
Than Venus, or those pamper'd animals
That rage in savage sensuality.

HERO.

Is my lord well, that he doth speak so wide?

LEONATO.

Sweet prince, why speak not you?

DON PEDRO.

What should I speak?
I stand dishonour'd, that have gone about
To link my dear friend to a common stale.

LEONATO.

Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?

DON JOHN.

Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.

BENEDICK.

This looks not like a nuptial.

HERO.

True! O God!

CLAUDIO.

Leonato, stand I here? Is this the prince?
Is this the prince's brother?
Is this face Hero's? Are our eyes our own?

LEONATO.

All this is so; but what of this, my lord?

CLAUDIO.

Let me but move one question to your daughter,
And by that fatherly and kindly power
That you have in her, bid her answer truly.

LEONATO.

I charge thee do so, as thou art my child.

HERO.

O, God defend me! how am I beset!
What kind of catechizing call you this?

CLAUDIO.

To make you answer truly to your name.

HERO.

Is it not Hero? Who can blot that name
With any just reproach?

CLAUDIO.

Marry, that can Hero:
Hero itself can blot out Hero's virtue.
What man was he talk'd with you yesternight
Out at your window, betwixt twelve and one?
Now, if you are a maid, answer to this.

HERO.

I talk'd with no man at that hour, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

Why, then are you no maiden.
Leonato, I am sorry you must hear: upon my honour,
Myself, my brother, and this grieved count,
Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night,
Talk with a ruffian at her chamber-window;
Who hath indeed, most like a liberal villain,
Confess'd the vile encounters they have had
A thousand times in secret.

DON JOHN.

Fie, fie! they are not to be nam'd, my lord,
Not to be spoke of;
There is not chastity enough in language
Without offence to utter them. Thus, pretty lady,
I am sorry for thy much misgovernment.

CLAUDIO.

O Hero! what a Hero hadst thou been,
If half thy outward graces had been plac'd

About thy thoughts and counsels of thy heart!
But fare thee well, most foul, most fair! farewell,
Thou pure impiety, and impious purity!
For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love,
And on my eyelids shall conjecture hang,
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm,
And never shall it more be gracious.

LEONATO.

Hath no man's dagger here a point for me?
[HERO swoons.]

BEATRICE.

Why, how now, cousin! wherefore sink you down?

DON JOHN.

Come, let us go. These things, come thus to light,
Smother her spirits up.
[Exeunt DON PEDRO, DON JOHN and CLAUDIO.]

BENEDICK.

How doth the lady?

BEATRICE.

Dead, I think! help, uncle! Hero! why, Hero! Uncle! Signior Benedick! Friar!

LEONATO.

O Fate! take not away thy heavy hand:
Death is the fairest cover for her shame
That may be wish'd for.

BEATRICE.

How now, cousin Hero?

FRIAR.

Have comfort, lady.

LEONATO.

Dost thou look up?

FRIAR.

Yea; wherefore should she not?

LEONATO.

Wherefore! Why, doth not every earthly thing
 Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny
 The story that is printed in her blood?
 Do not live, Hero; do not ope thine eyes;
 For, did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,
 Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shames,
 Myself would, on the rearward of reproaches,
 Strike at thy life. Griev'd I, I had but one?
 Chid I for that at frugal nature's frame?
 O! one too much by thee. Why had I one?
 Why ever wast thou lovely in mine eyes?
 Why had I not with charitable hand
 Took up a beggar's issue at my gates,
 Who smirched thus, and mir'd with infamy,
 I might have said, 'No part of it is mine;
 This shame derives itself from unknown loins?'
 But mine, and mine I lov'd, and mine I prais'd,
 And mine that I was proud on, mine so much
 That I myself was to myself not mine,
 Valuing of her; why, she—O! she is fallen
 Into a pit of ink, that the wide sea
 Hath drops too few to wash her clean again,
 And salt too little which may season give
 To her foul-tainted flesh.

BENEDICK.

Sir, sir, be patient.
 For my part, I am so attir'd in wonder,
 I know not what to say.

BEATRICE.

O! on my soul, my cousin is belied!

BENEDICK.

Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

BEATRICE.

No, truly, not; although, until last night I have this twelvemonth been her bedfellow.

LEONATO.

Confirm'd, confirm'd! O! that is stronger made,
 Which was before barr'd up with ribs of iron.

Would the two princes lie? and Claudio lie,
 Who lov'd her so, that, speaking of her foulness,
 Wash'd it with tears? Hence from her! let her die.

FRIAR.

Hear me a little;
 For I have only been silent so long,
 And given way unto this course of fortune,
 By noting of the lady: I have mark'd
 A thousand blushing apparitions
 To start into her face; a thousand innocent shames
 In angel whiteness bear away those blushes;
 And in her eye there hath appear'd a fire,
 To burn the errors that these princes hold
 Against her maiden truth. Call me a fool;
 Trust not my reading nor my observations,
 Which with experimental seal doth warrant
 The tenure of my book; trust not my age,
 My reverence, calling, nor divinity,
 If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here
 Under some biting error.

LEONATO.

Friar, it cannot be.
 Thou seest that all the grace that she hath left
 Is that she will not add to her damnation
 A sin of perjury: she not denies it.
 Why seek'st thou then to cover with excuse
 That which appears in proper nakedness?

FRIAR.

Lady, what man is he you are accus'd of?

HERO.

They know that do accuse me, I know none;
 If I know more of any man alive
 Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
 Let all my sins lack mercy! O, my father!
 Prove you that any man with me convers'd
 At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight
 Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,
 Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.

FRIAR.

There is some strange misprision in the princes.

BENEDICK.

Two of them have the very bent of honour;
And if their wisdoms be misled in this,
The practice of it lives in John the bastard,
Whose spirits toil in frame of villainies.

LEONATO.

I know not. If they speak but truth of her,
These hands shall tear her; if they wrong her honour,
The proudest of them shall well hear of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine,
Nor age so eat up my invention,
Nor fortune made such havoc of my means,
Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends,
But they shall find, awak'd in such a kind,
Both strength of limb and policy of mind,
Ability in means and choice of friends,
To quit me of them throughly.

FRIAR.

Pause awhile, And let my counsel sway you in this case.
Your daughter here the princes left for dead;
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it that she is dead indeed:
Maintain a mourning ostentation;
And on your family's old monument
Hang mournful epitaphs and do all rites
That appertain unto a burial.

LEONATO.

What shall become of this? What will this do?

FRIAR.

Marry, this well carried shall on her behalf
Change slander to remorse; that is some good.
But not for that dream I on this strange course,
But on this travail look for greater birth.
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,
Upon the instant that she was accus'd,
Shall be lamented, pitied and excus'd

Of every hearer; for it so falls out
 That what we have we prize not to the worth
 Whiles we enjoy it, but being lack'd and lost,
 Why, then we rack the value, then we find
 The virtue that possession would not show us
 Whiles it was ours. So will it fare with Claudio:
 When he shall hear she died upon his words,
 The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
 Into his study of imagination,
 And every lovely organ of her life
 Shall come apparell'd in more precious habit,
 More moving-delicate, and full of life
 Into the eye and prospect of his soul,
 Than when she liv'd indeed: then shall he mourn,—
 If ever love had interest in his liver,—
 And wish he had not so accused her,
 No, though he thought his accusation true.
 Let this be so, and doubt not but success
 Will fashion the event in better shape
 Than I can lay it down in likelihood.
 But if all aim but this be levell'd false,
 The supposition of the lady's death
 Will quench the wonder of her infamy:
 And if it sort not well, you may conceal her,—
 As best befits her wounded reputation,—
 In some reclusive and religious life,
 Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries.

BENEDICK.

Signior Leonato, let the friar advise you:
 And though you know my inwardness and love
 Is very much unto the prince and Claudio,
 Yet, by mine honour, I will deal in this
 As secretly and justly as your soul
 Should with your body.

LEONATO.

Being that I flow in grief, The smallest twine may lead me.

FRIAR.

'Tis well consented: presently away;
 For to strange sores strangely they strain the cure.
 Come, lady, die to live: this wedding day

Perhaps is but prolong'd: have patience and endure.
[Exeunt FRIAR, HERO, and LEONATO.]

BENEDICK.

Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while?

BEATRICE.

Yea, and I will weep a while longer.

BENEDICK.

I will not desire that.

BEATRICE.

You have no reason; I do it freely.

BENEDICK.

Surely I do believe your fair cousin is wronged.

BEATRICE.

Ah! how much might the man deserve of me that would right her.

BENEDICK.

Is there any way to show such friendship?

BEATRICE.

A very even way, but no such friend.

BENEDICK.

May a man do it?

BEATRICE.

It is a man's office, but not yours.

BENEDICK.

I do love nothing in the world so well as you: is not that strange?

BEATRICE.

As strange as the thing I know not. It were as possible for me to say I loved nothing so well as you; but believe me not, and yet I lie not; I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing. I am sorry for my cousin.

BENEDICK.

By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me.

BEATRICE.

Do not swear by it, and eat it.

BENEDICK.

I will swear by it that you love me; and I will make him eat it that says I love not you.

BEATRICE.

Will you not eat your word?

BENEDICK.

With no sauce that can be devised to it. I protest I love thee.

BEATRICE.

Why then, God forgive me!

BENEDICK.

What offence, sweet Beatrice?

BEATRICE.

You have stayed me in a happy hour: I was about to protest I loved you.

BENEDICK.

And do it with all thy heart.

BEATRICE.

I love you with so much of my heart that none is left to protest.

BENEDICK.

Come, bid me do anything for thee.

BEATRICE.

Kill Claudio.

BENEDICK.

Ha! not for the wide world.

BEATRICE.

You kill me to deny it. Farewell.

BENEDICK.

Tarry, sweet Beatrice.

BEATRICE.

I am gone, though I am here: there is no love in you: nay, I pray you, let me go.

BENEDICK.

Beatrice,—

BEATRICE.

In faith, I will go.

BENEDICK.

We'll be friends first.

BEATRICE.

You dare easier be friends with me than fight with mine enemy.

BENEDICK.

Is Claudio thine enemy?

BEATRICE.

Is he not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman? O! that I were a man. What! bear her in hand until they come to take hands, and then, with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour,—O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place.

BENEDICK.

Hear me, Beatrice,—

BEATRICE.

Talk with a man out at a window! a proper saying!

BENEDICK.

Nay, but Beatrice,—

BEATRICE.

Sweet Hero! she is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone.

BENEDICK.

Beat—

BEATRICE.

Princes and counties! Surely, a princely testimony, a goodly Count Comfect; a sweet gallant, surely! O! that I were a man for his sake, or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into cursies, valour into

compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules, that only tells a lie and swears it. I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

BENEDICK.

Tarry, good Beatrice. By this hand, I love thee.

BEATRICE.

Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

BENEDICK.

Think you in your soul the Count Claudio hath wronged Hero?

BEATRICE.

Yea, as sure is I have a thought or a soul.

BENEDICK.

Enough! I am engaged, I will challenge him. I will kiss your hand, and so leave you. By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account. As you hear of me, so think of me. Go, comfort your cousin: I must say she is dead; and so, farewell.
[Exeunt.]

Scene II. A Prison

[Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, and SEXTON, in gowns; and the Watch, with CONRADE and BORACHIO.]

DOGBERRY.

Is our whole dissembly appeared?

VERGES.

O! a stool and a cushion for the sexton.

SEXTON.

Which be the malefactors?

DOGBERRY.

Marry, that am I and my partner.

VERGES.

Nay, that's certain: we have the exhibition to examine.

SEXTON.

But which are the offenders that are to be examined? let them come before Master constable.

DOGBERRY.

Yea, marry, let them come before me. What is your name, friend?

BORACHIO.

Borachio.

DOGBERRY.

Pray write down Borachio. Yours, sirrah?

CONRADE.

I am a gentleman, sir, and my name is Conrade.

DOGBERRY.

Write down Master gentleman Conrade. Masters, do you serve God?

BOTH.

Yea, sir, we hope.

DOGBERRY.

Write down that they hope they serve God: and write God first; for God defend but God should go before such villains! Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves, and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves?

CONRADE.

Marry, sir, we say we are none.

DOGBERRY.

A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you; but I will go about with him. Come you hither, sirrah; a word in your ear: sir, I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves.

BORACHIO.

Sir, I say to you we are none.

DOGBERRY.

Well, stand aside. Fore God, they are both in a tale. Have you writ down, that they are none?

SEXTON.

Master constable, you go not the way to examine: you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

DOGBERRY.

Yea, marry, that's the eftest way. Let the watch come forth. Masters, I charge you, in the prince's name, accuse these men.

FIRST WATCH.

This man said, sir, that Don John, the prince's brother, was a villain.

DOGBERRY.

Write down Prince John a villain. Why, this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother villain.

BORACHIO.

Master Constable,—

DOGBERRY.

Pray thee, fellow, peace: I do not like thy look, I promise thee.

SEXTON.

What heard you him say else?

SECOND WATCH.

Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John for accusing the Lady Hero wrongfully.

DOGBERRY.

Flat burglary as ever was committed.

VERGES.

Yea, by the mass, that it is.

SEXTON.

What else, fellow?

FIRST WATCH.

And that Count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

DOGBERRY.

O villain! thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this.

SEXTON.

What else?

SECOND WATCH.

This is all.

SEXTON.

And this is more, masters, than you can deny. Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away: Hero was in this manner accused, in this manner refused, and, upon the grief of this, suddenly died. Master Constable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonato's: I will go before and show him their examination.

[Exit.]

DOGBERRY.

Come, let them be opinioned.

VERGES.

Let them be in the hands—

CONRADE.

Off, coxcomb!

DOGBERRY.

God's my life! where's the sexton? let him write down the prince's officer coxcomb. Come, bind them. Thou naughty varlet!

CONRADE.

Away! you are an ass; you are an ass.

DOGBERRY.

Dost thou not suspect my place? Dost thou not suspect my years? O that he were here to write me down an ass! but, masters, remember that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass. No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be proved upon thee by good witness. I am a wise fellow; and, which is more, an officer; and, which is more, a householder; and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any in Messina; and one that knows the law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two gowns, and everything handsome about him. Bring him away. O that I had been writ down an ass!

[Exeunt.]

Act V

Scene I. Before LEONATO'S House.

[Enter LEONATO and ANTONIO.]

ANTONIO.

If you go on thus, you will kill yourself
And 'tis not wisdom thus to second grief
Against yourself.

LEONATO.

I pray thee, cease thy counsel,
Which falls into mine ears as profitless
As water in a sieve: give not me counsel;
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine:
Bring me a father that so lov'd his child,
Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him speak to me of patience;
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine,
And let it answer every strain for strain,
As thus for thus and such a grief for such,
In every lineament, branch, shape, and form:
If such a one will smile, and stroke his beard;
Bid sorrow wag, cry 'hem' when he should groan,
Patch grief with proverbs; make misfortune drunk
With candle-wasters; bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather patience.
But there is no such man; for, brother, men
Can counsel and speak comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but, tasting it,
Their counsel turns to passion, which before
Would give preceptual medicine to rage,
Fetter strong madness in a silken thread,
Charm ache with air and agony with words.
No, no; 'tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow,
But no man's virtue nor sufficiency
To be so moral when he shall endure
The like himself. Therefore give me no counsel:
My griefs cry louder than advertisement.

ANTONIO.

Therein do men from children nothing differ.

LEONATO.

I pray thee peace! I will be flesh and blood;
For there was never yet philosopher

That could endure the toothache patiently,
However they have writ the style of gods
And made a push at chance and sufferance.

ANTONIO.

Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself;
Make those that do offend you suffer too.

LEONATO.

There thou speak'st reason: nay, I will do so.
My soul doth tell me Hero is belied;
And that shall Claudio know; so shall the prince,
And all of them that thus dishonour her.

ANTONIO.

Here comes the prince and Claudio hastily.
[Enter DON PEDRO and CLAUDIO.]

DON PEDRO.

Good den, good den.

CLAUDIO.

Good day to both of you.

LEONATO.

Hear you, my lords,—

DON PEDRO.

We have some haste, Leonato.

LEONATO.

Some haste, my lord! well, fare you well, my lord:
Are you so hasty now?—well, all is one.

DON PEDRO.

Nay, do not quarrel with us, good old man.

ANTONIO.

If he could right himself with quarrelling,
Some of us would lie low.

CLAUDIO.

Who wrongs him?

LEONATO.

Marry, thou dost wrong me; thou dissembler, thou.
Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword; I fear thee not.

CLAUDIO.

Marry, beshrew my hand,
If it should give your age such cause of fear.
In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword.

LEONATO.

Tush, tush, man! never fleer and jest at me:
I speak not like a dotard nor a fool,
As, under privilege of age, to brag
What I have done being young, or what would do,
Were I not old. Know, Claudio, to thy head,
Thou hast so wrong'd mine innocent child and me
That I am forc'd to lay my reverence by,
And, with grey hairs and bruise of many days,
Do challenge thee to trial of a man.
I say thou hast belied mine innocent child:
Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,
And she lied buried with her ancestors;
O! in a tomb where never scandal slept,
Save this of hers, fram'd by thy villany!

CLAUDIO.

My villany?

LEONATO.

Thine, Claudio; thine, I say.

DON PEDRO.

You say not right, old man,

LEONATO.

My lord, my lord,
I'll prove it on his body, if he dare,
Despite his nice fence and his active practice,
His May of youth and bloom of lustihood.

CLAUDIO.

Away! I will not have to do with you.

LEONATO.

Canst thou so daff me? Thou hast kill'd my child;
If thou kill'st me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.

ANTONIO.

He shall kill two of us, and men indeed:
But that's no matter; let him kill one first:
Win me and wear me; let him answer me.
Come, follow me, boy; come, sir boy, come, follow me.
Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining fence;
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.

LEONATO.

Brother,—

ANTONIO.

Content yourself. God knows I lov'd my niece;
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villains,
That dare as well answer a man indeed
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue.
Boys, apes, braggarts, Jacks, milksops!

LEONATO.

Brother Antony,—

ANTONIO.

Hold your content. What, man! I know them, yea,
And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple,
Scambling, out-facing, fashion-monging boys,
That lie and cog and flout, deprave and slander,
Go antickly, show outward hideousness,
And speak off half a dozen dangerous words,
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst;
And this is all!

LEONATO.

But, brother Antony,—

ANTONIO.

Come, 'tis no matter:
Do not you meddle, let me deal in this.

DON PEDRO.

Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience.
My heart is sorry for your daughter's death;
But, on my honour, she was charg'd with nothing
But what was true and very full of proof.

LEONATO.

My lord, my lord—

DON PEDRO.

I will not hear you.

LEONATO.

No? Come, brother, away. I will be heard.—

ANTONIO.

And shall, or some of us will smart for it.
[Exeunt LEONATO and ANTONIO.]
[Enter BENEDICK.]

DON PEDRO.

See, see; here comes the man we went to seek.

CLAUDIO.

Now, signior, what news?

BENEDICK.

Good day, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

Welcome, signior: you are almost come to part almost a fray.

CLAUDIO.

We had like to have had our two noses snapped off with two old men without teeth.

DON PEDRO.

Leonato and his brother. What think'st thou? Had we fought, I doubt we should have been too young for them.

BENEDICK.

In a false quarrel there is no true valour. I came to seek you both.

CLAUDIO.

We have been up and down to seek thee; for we are high-proof melancholy, and would fain have it beaten away. Wilt thou use thy wit?

BENEDICK.

It is in my scabbard; shall I draw it?

DON PEDRO.

Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side?

CLAUDIO.

Never any did so, though very many have been beside their wit. I will bid thee draw, as we do the minstrels; draw, to pleasure us.

DON PEDRO.

As I am an honest man, he looks pale. Art thou sick, or angry?

CLAUDIO.

What, courage, man! What though care killed a cat, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

BENEDICK.

Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career, an you charge it against me. I pray you choose another subject.

CLAUDIO.

Nay then, give him another staff: this last was broke cross.

DON PEDRO.

By this light, he changes more and more: I think he be angry indeed.

CLAUDIO.

If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle.

BENEDICK.

Shall I speak a word in your ear?

CLAUDIO.

God bless me from a challenge!

BENEDICK.

[Aside to CLAUDIO.]

] You are a villain, I jest not: I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare,

and when you dare. Do me right, or I will protest your cowardice. You have killed a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you. Let me hear from you.

CLAUDIO.

Well I will meet you, so I may have good cheer.

DON PEDRO.

What, a feast, a feast?

CLAUDIO.

I' faith, I thank him; he hath bid me to a calf's-head and a capon, the which if I do not carve most curiously, say my knife's naught. Shall I not find a woodcock too?

BENEDICK.

Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes easily.

DON PEDRO.

I'll tell thee how Beatrice praised thy wit the other day. I said, thou hadst a fine wit.

'True,' says she, 'a fine little one.'

'No,' said I, 'a great wit.'

'Right,' said she, 'a great gross one.'

'Nay,' said I, 'a good wit.'

'Just,' said she, 'it hurts nobody.'

'Nay,' said I, 'the gentleman is wise.'

'Certain,' said she, 'a wise gentleman.'

'Nay,' said I, 'he hath the tongues.'

'That I believe' said she, 'for he swore a thing to me on Monday night, which he forswore on Tuesday morning: there's a double tongue; there's two tongues.'

Thus did she, an hour together, trans-shape thy particular virtues; yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the properest man in Italy.

CLAUDIO.

For the which she wept heartily and said she cared not.

DON PEDRO.

Yea, that she did; but yet, for all that, an if she did not hate him deadly, she would love him dearly. The old man's daughter told us all.

CLAUDIO.

All, all; and moreover, God saw him when he was hid in the garden.

DON PEDRO.

But when shall we set the savage bull's horns on the sensible Benedick's head?

CLAUDIO.

Yea, and text underneath, 'Here dwells Benedick the married man!'

BENEDICK.

Fare you well, boy: you know my mind. I will leave you now to your gossip-like humour; you break jests as braggarts do their blades, which, God be thanked, hurt not. My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you: I must discontinue your company. Your brother the bastard is fled from Messina: you have, among you, killed a sweet and innocent lady. For my Lord Lack-beard there, he and I shall meet; and till then, peace be with him.

[Exit.]

DON PEDRO.

He is in earnest.

CLAUDIO.

In most profound earnest; and, I'll warrant you, for the love of Beatrice.

DON PEDRO.

And hath challenged thee?

CLAUDIO.

Most sincerely.

DON PEDRO.

What a pretty thing man is when he goes in his doublet and hose and leaves off his wit!

CLAUDIO.

He is then a giant to an ape; but then is an ape a doctor to such a man.

DON PEDRO.

But, soft you; let me be: pluck up, my heart, and be sad! Did he not say my brother was fled?

[Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, and the Watch, with CONRADE and BORACHIO.]

DOGBERRY.

Come you, sir: if justice cannot tame you, she shall ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance. Nay, an you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be looked to.

DON PEDRO.

How now! two of my brother's men bound! Borachio, one!

CLAUDIO.

Hearken after their offence, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

Officers, what offence have these men done?

DOGBERRY.

Marry, sir, they have committed false report; moreover, they have spoken untruths; secondarily, they are slanders; sixth and lastly, they have belied a lady; thirdly, they have verified unjust things; and to conclude, they are lying knaves.

DON PEDRO.

First, I ask thee what they have done; thirdly, I ask thee what's their offence; sixth and lastly, why they are committed; and, to conclude, what you lay to their charge?

CLAUDIO.

Rightly reasoned, and in his own division; and, by my troth, there's one meaning well suited.

DON PEDRO.

Who have you offended, masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? this learned constable is too cunning to be understood. What's your offence?

BORACHIO.

Sweet prince, let me go no further to mine answer: do you hear me, and let this count kill me. I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light; who, in the night overheard me confessing to this man how Don John your brother incensed me to slander the Lady Hero; how you were brought into the orchard and saw me court Margaret in Hero's garments; how you disgraced her, when you should marry her. My villany they have upon record; which I had rather seal with my death than repeat over to my shame. The lady is dead upon mine and my master's false accusation; and, briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.

DON PEDRO.

Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?

CLAUDIO.

I have drunk poison whiles he utter'd it.

DON PEDRO.

But did my brother set thee on to this?

BORACHIO.

Yea; and paid me richly for the practice of it.

DON PEDRO.

He is compos'd and fram'd of treachery: And fled he is upon this villany.

CLAUDIO.

Sweet Hero! now thy image doth appear In the rare semblance that I lov'd it first.

DOGBERRY.

Come, bring away the plaintiffs: by this time our sexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of the matter. And masters, do not forget to specify, when time and place shall serve, that I am an ass.

VERGES.

Here, here comes Master Signior Leonato, and the sexton too.
[Re-enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, and the Sexton.]

LEONATO.

Which is the villain? Let me see his eyes,
That, when I note another man like him,
I may avoid him. Which of these is he?

BORACHIO.

If you would know your wronger, look on me.

LEONATO.

Art thou the slave that with thy breath hast kill'd
Mine innocent child?

BORACHIO.

Yea, even I alone.

LEONATO.

No, not so, villain; thou beliest thyself:
Here stand a pair of honourable men;
A third is fled, that had a hand in it.
I thank you, princes, for my daughter's death:
Record it with your high and worthy deeds.
'Twas bravely done, if you bethink you of it.

CLAUDIO.

I know not how to pray your patience;
Yet I must speak. Choose your revenge yourself;

Impose me to what penance your invention
 Can lay upon my sin: yet sinn'd I not
 But in mistaking.

DON PEDRO.

By my soul, nor I:
 And yet, to satisfy this good old man,
 I would bend under any heavy weight
 That he'll enjoin me to.

LEONATO.

I cannot bid you bid my daughter live;
 That were impossible; but, I pray you both,
 Possess the people in Messina here
 How innocent she died; and if your love
 Can labour aught in sad invention,
 Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb,
 And sing it to her bones: sing it to-night.
 To-morrow morning come you to my house,
 And since you could not be my son-in-law,
 Be yet my nephew. My brother hath a daughter,
 Almost the copy of my child that's dead,
 And she alone is heir to both of us:
 Give her the right you should have given her cousin,
 And so dies my revenge.

CLAUDIO.

O noble sir,
 Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me!
 I do embrace your offer; and dispose
 For henceforth of poor Claudio.

LEONATO.

To-morrow then I will expect your coming;
 To-night I take my leave. This naughty man
 Shall face to face be brought to Margaret,
 Who, I believe, was pack'd in all this wrong,
 Hir'd to it by your brother.

BORACHIO.

No, by my soul she was not;
 Nor knew not what she did when she spoke to me;
 But always hath been just and virtuous
 In anything that I do know by her.

DOGBERRY.

Moreover, sir,—which, indeed, is not under white and black,— this plaintiff here, the offender, did call me ass: I beseech you, let it be remembered in his punishment. And also, the watch heard them talk of one Deformed: they say he wears a key in his ear and a lock hanging by it, and borrows money in God's name, the which he hath used so long and never paid, that now men grow hard-hearted, and will lend nothing for God's sake. Pray you, examine him upon that point.

LEONATO.

I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

DOGBERRY.

Your worship speaks like a most thankful and reverent youth, and I praise God for you.

LEONATO.

There's for thy pains.

DOGBERRY.

God save the foundation!

LEONATO.

Go, I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thank thee.

DOGBERRY.

I leave an arrant knave with your worship; which I beseech your worship to correct yourself, for the example of others. God keep your worship! I wish your worship well; God restore you to health! I humbly give you leave to depart, and if a merry meeting may be wished, God prohibit it! Come, neighbour.
[Exeunt DOGBERRY and VERGES.]

LEONATO.

Until to-morrow morning, lords, farewell.

ANTONIO.

Farewell, my lords: we look for you to-morrow.

DON PEDRO.

We will not fail.

CLAUDIO.

To-night I'll mourn with Hero.
[Exeunt DON PEDRO and CLAUDIO.]

LEONATO.

[To the Watch.] Bring you these fellows on. We'll talk with Margaret, How her acquaintance grew with this lewd fellow.

[Exeunt.]

Scene 2. LEONATO'S Garden

[Enter BENEDICK and MARGARET, meeting.]

BENEDICK.

Pray thee, sweet Mistress Margaret, deserve well at my hands by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

MARGARET.

Will you then write me a sonnet in praise of my beauty?

BENEDICK.

In so high a style, Margaret, that no man living shall come over it; for, in most comely truth, thou deservest it.

MARGARET.

To have no man come over me! why, shall I always keep below stairs?

BENEDICK.

Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth; it catches.

MARGARET.

And yours as blunt as the fencer's foils, which hit, but hurt not.

BENEDICK.

A most manly wit, Margaret; it will not hurt a woman: and so, I pray thee, call Beatrice. I give thee the bucklers.

MARGARET.

Give us the swords, we have bucklers of our own.

BENEDICK.

If you use them, Margaret, you must put in the pikes with a vice; and they are dangerous weapons for maids.

MARGARET.

Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who I think hath legs.

BENEDICK.

And therefore will come.

[Exit MARGARET.]

The god of love,

That sits above,

And knows me, and knows me,

How pitiful I deserve,—

I mean, in singing; but in loving, Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the first employer of panders, and a whole book full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet run smoothly in the even road of a blank verse, why, they were never so truly turned over and over as my poor self in love. Marry, I cannot show it in rime; I have tried: I can find out no rime to 'lady' but 'baby', an innocent rhyme; for 'scorn,' 'horn', a hard rime; for 'school', 'fool', a babbling rhyme; very ominous endings: no, I was not born under a riming planet, nor I cannot woo in festival terms.

[Enter BEATRICE.]

Sweet Beatrice, wouldst thou come when I called thee?

BEATRICE.

Yea, signior; and depart when you bid me.

BENEDICK.

O, stay but till then!

BEATRICE.

'Then' is spoken; fare you well now: and yet, ere I go, let me go with that I came for; which is, with knowing what hath passed between you and Claudio.

BENEDICK.

Only foul words; and thereupon I will kiss thee.

BEATRICE.

Foul words is but foul wind, and foul wind is but foul breath, and foul breath is noisome; therefore I will depart unkissed.

BENEDICK.

Thou hast frightened the word out of his right sense, so forcible is thy wit. But I must tell thee plainly, Claudio undergoes my challenge, and either I must shortly hear from him, or I will subscribe him a coward. And, I pray thee now, tell me, for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

BEATRICE.

For them all together; which maintained so politic a state of evil that they will not

admit any good part to intermingle with them. But for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

BENEDICK.

'Suffer love,' a good epithet! I do suffer love indeed, for I love thee against my will.

BEATRICE.

In spite of your heart, I think. Alas, poor heart! If you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours; for I will never love that which my friend hates.

BENEDICK.

Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

BEATRICE.

It appears not in this confession: there's not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself.

BENEDICK.

An old, an old instance, Beatrice, that lived in the time of good neighbours. If a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monument than the bell rings and the widow weeps.

BEATRICE.

And how long is that think you?

BENEDICK.

Question: why, an hour in clamour and a quarter in rheum: therefore is it most expedient for the wise,—if Don Worm, his conscience, find no impediment to the contrary,—to be the trumpet of his own virtues, as I am to myself. So much for praising myself, who, I myself will bear witness, is praiseworthy. And now tell me, how doth your cousin?

BEATRICE.

Very ill.

BENEDICK.

And how do you?

BEATRICE.

Very ill too.

BENEDICK.

Serve God, love me, and mend. There will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste.

[Enter URSULA.]

URSULA.

Madam, you must come to your uncle. Yonder's old coil at home: it is proved, my Lady Hero hath been falsely accused, the prince and Claudio mightily abused; and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone. Will you come presently?

BEATRICE.

Will you go hear this news, signior?

BENEDICK.

I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes; and moreover I will go with thee to thy uncle's.

[Exeunt.]

Scene III. The Inside of a Church

[Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, and Attendants, with music and tapers]

CLAUDIO.

Is this the monument of Leonato?

A LORD.

It is, my lord.

CLAUDIO.

[Reads from a scroll.]

Done to death by slanderous tongues

Was the Hero that here lies:

Death, in guerdon of her wrongs,

Gives her fame which never dies.

So the life that died with shame

Lives in death with glorious fame.

Hang thou there upon the tomb,

Praising her when I am dumb.

Now, music, sound, and sing your solemn hymn.

SONG.

Pardon, goddess of the night,

Those that slew thy virgin knight;

For the which, with songs of woe,

Round about her tomb they go.

Midnight, assist our moan;

Help us to sigh and groan,

Heavily, heavily:

Graves, yawn and yield your dead,
Till death be uttered,
Heavily, heavily.

CLAUDIO.

Now, unto thy bones good night!
Yearly will I do this rite.

DON PEDRO.

Good morrow, masters: put your torches out.
The wolves have prey'd; and look, the gentle day,
Before the wheels of Phoebus, round about
Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey.
Thanks to you all, and leave us: fare you well.

CLAUDIO.

Good morrow, masters: each his several way.

DON PEDRO.

Come, let us hence, and put on other weeds; And then to Leonato's we will go.

CLAUDIO.

And Hymen now with luckier issue speed's,
Than this for whom we rend'red up this woe!
[Exeunt.]

Scene IV. A Room in LEONATO'S House.

[Enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, BENEDICK, BEATRICE, MARGARET, URSULA,
FRIAR FRANCIS, and HERO.]

FRIAR.

Did I not tell you she was innocent?

LEONATO.

So are the prince and Claudio, who accus'd her
Upon the error that you heard debated:
But Margaret was in some fault for this,
Although against her will, as it appears
In the true course of all the question.

ANTONIO.

Well, I am glad that all things sort so well.

BENEDICK.

And so am I, being else by faith enforc'd
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.

LEONATO.

Well, daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves,
And when I send for you, come hither mask'd:
The prince and Claudio promis'd by this hour
To visit me.

[Exeunt Ladies.]

You know your office, brother;
You must be father to your brother's daughter,
And give her to young Claudio.

ANTONIO.

Which I will do with confirm'd countenance.

BENEDICK.

Friar, I must entreat your pains, I think.

FRIAR.

To do what, signior?

BENEDICK.

To bind me, or undo me; one of them.
Signior Leonato, truth it is, good signior,
Your niece regards me with an eye of favour.

LEONATO.

That eye my daughter lent her: 'tis most true.

BENEDICK.

And I do with an eye of love requite her.

LEONATO.

The sight whereof I think, you had from me,
From Claudio, and the prince. But what's your will?

BENEDICK.

Your answer, sir, is enigmatical:
But, for my will, my will is your good will
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoin'd

In the state of honourable marriage:
In which, good friar, I shall desire your help.

LEONATO.

My heart is with your liking.

FRIAR.

And my help. Here comes the prince and Claudio.
[Enter DON PEDRO and CLAUDIO, with Attendants.]

DON PEDRO.

Good morrow to this fair assembly.

LEONATO.

Good morrow, prince; good morrow, Claudio:
We here attend you. Are you yet determin'd
To-day to marry with my brother's daughter?

CLAUDIO.

I'll hold my mind, were she an Ethiope.

LEONATO.

Call her forth, brother: here's the friar ready.
[Exit ANTONIO.]

DON PEDRO.

Good morrow, Benedick. Why, what's the matter,
That you have such a February face,
So full of frost, of storm and cloudiness?

CLAUDIO.

I think he thinks upon the savage bull.
Tush! fear not, man, we'll tip thy horns with gold,
And all Europa shall rejoice at thee,
As once Europa did at lusty Jove,
When he would play the noble beast in love.

BENEDICK.

Bull Jove, sir, had an amiable low:
And some such strange bull leap'd your father's cow,
And got a calf in that same noble feat,
Much like to you, for you have just his bleat.

CLAUDIO.

For this I owe you: here comes other reckonings.
[Re-enter ANTONIO, with the ladies masked.]
Which is the lady I must seize upon?

ANTONIO.

This same is she, and I do give you her.

CLAUDIO.

Why then, she's mine. Sweet, let me see your face.

LEONATO.

No, that you shall not, till you take her hand
Before this friar, and swear to marry her.

CLAUDIO.

Give me your hand: before this holy friar,
I am your husband, if you like of me.

HERO.

And when I liv'd, I was your other wife:
[Unmasking.] And when you lov'd, you were my other husband.

CLAUDIO.

Another Hero!

HERO.

Nothing certainer:
One Hero died defil'd, but I do live,
And surely as I live, I am a maid.

DON PEDRO.

The former Hero! Hero that is dead!

LEONATO.

She died, my lord, but whiles her slander liv'd.

FRIAR.

All this amazement can I qualify:
When after that the holy rites are ended,
I'll tell you largely of fair Hero's death:
Meantime, let wonder seem familiar,
And to the chapel let us presently.

BENEDICK.

Soft and fair, friar. Which is Beatrice?

BEATRICE.

[Unmasking.] I answer to that name. What is your will?

BENEDICK.

Do not you love me?

BEATRICE.

Why, no; no more than reason.

BENEDICK.

Why, then, your uncle and the prince and Claudio
Have been deceived; for they swore you did.

BEATRICE.

Do not you love me?

BENEDICK.

Troth, no; no more than reason.

BEATRICE.

Why, then my cousin, Margaret, and Ursula,
Are much deceiv'd; for they did swear you did.

BENEDICK.

They swore that you were almost sick for me.

BEATRICE.

They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.

BENEDICK.

Tis no such matter. Then you do not love me?

BEATRICE.

No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

LEONATO.

Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

CLAUDIO.

And I'll be sworn upon't that he loves her;
For here's a paper written in his hand,

A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,
Fashion'd to Beatrice.

HERO.

And here's another,
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

BENEDICK.

A miracle! here's our own hands against our hearts. Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity.

BEATRICE.

I would not deny you; but, by this good day, I yield upon great persuasion, and partly to save your life, for I was told you were in a consumption.

BENEDICK.

Peace! I will stop your mouth. [Kisses her.]

DON PEDRO.

How dost thou, Benedick, the married man?

BENEDICK.

I'll tell thee what, prince; a college of witcrackers cannot flout me out of my humour. Dost thou think I care for a satire or an epigram? No; if man will be beaten with brains, a' shall wear nothing handsome about him. In brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it; and therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it, for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion. For thy part, Claudio, I did think to have beaten thee; but, in that thou art like to be my kinsman, live unbruised, and love my cousin.

CLAUDIO.

I had well hoped thou wouldst have denied Beatrice, that I might have cudgelled thee out of thy single life, to make thee a double-dealer; which, out of question, thou wilt be, if my cousin do not look exceeding narrowly to thee.

BENEDICK.

Come, come, we are friends. Let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts and our wives' heels.

LEONATO.

We'll have dancing afterward.

BENEDICK.

First, of my word; therefore play, music! Prince, thou art sad; get thee a wife, get thee a wife: there is no staff more reverent than one tipped with horn.

[Enter Messenger.]

MESSENGER.

My lord, your brother John is ta'en in flight, And brought with armed men back to Messina.

BENEDICK.

Think not on him till to-morrow: I'll devise thee brave punishments for him. Strike up, pipers!

[Dance. Exeunt.]

2.13.3 King Lear

Act I

Scene I. A Room of State in King Lear's Palace

[Enter KENT, GLOUCESTER, and EDMUND]

KENT.

I thought the King had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.

GLOU.

It did always seem so to us; but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the Dukes he values most, for equalities are so weighed that curiosity in neither can make choice of either's moiety.

KENT.

Is not this your son, my lord?

GLOU.

His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge: I have so often blush'd to acknowledge him that now I am braz'd to't.

KENT.

I cannot conceive you.

GLOU.

Sir, this young fellow's mother could: whereupon she grew round-wombed, and had indeed, sir, a son for her cradle ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?

KENT.

I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.

GLOU.

But I have, sir, a son by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account: though this knave came something saucily into the world before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair; there was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged.—Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?

EDM.

No, my lord.

GLOU.

My Lord of Kent: remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

EDM.

My services to your lordship.

KENT.

I must love you, and sue to know you better.

EDM.

Sir, I shall study deserving.

GLOU.

He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again.—The king is coming.

[Sennet within.]

[Enter LEAR, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, and ATTENDANTS.]

LEAR.

Attend the lords of France and Burgundy,
Gloucester.

GLOU.

I shall, my liege.

[Exeunt GLOUCESTER and EDMUND.]

LEAR.

Meantime we shall express our darker purpose.—
Give me the map there.—Know that we have divided

In three our kingdom: and 'tis our fast intent
 To shake all cares and business from our age;
 Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
 Unburden'd crawl toward death.—Our son of Cornwall,
 And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
 We have this hour a constant will to publish
 Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
 May be prevented now. The princes, France and Burgundy,
 Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,
 Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn,
 And here are to be answer'd.—Tell me, my daughters,—
 Since now we will divest us both of rule,
 Interest of territory, cares of state,—
 Which of you shall we say doth love us most?
 That we our largest bounty may extend
 Where nature doth with merit challenge.—Goneril,
 Our eldest-born, speak first.

GON.

Sir, I love you more than words can wield the matter;
 Dearer than eyesight, space, and liberty;
 Beyond what can be valu'd, rich or rare;
 No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour;
 As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found;
 A love that makes breath poor and speech unable;
 Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

COR.

[Aside.] What shall Cordelia speak? Love, and be silent.

LEAR.

Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,
 With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
 With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
 We make thee lady: to thine and Albany's issue
 Be this perpetual.—What says our second daughter,
 Our dearest Regan, wife to Cornwall? Speak.

REG.

Sir, I am made of the selfsame metal that my sister is,
 And prize me at her worth. In my true heart
 I find she names my very deed of love;
 Only she comes too short,—that I profess

Myself an enemy to all other joys
 Which the most precious square of sense possesses,
 And find I am alone felicitate
 In your dear highness' love.

COR.

[Aside.] Then poor Cordelia!
 And yet not so; since, I am sure, my love's
 More richer than my tongue.

LEAR.

To thee and thine hereditary ever
 Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom;
 No less in space, validity, and pleasure
 Than that conferr'd on Goneril.—Now, our joy,
 Although the last, not least; to whose young love
 The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
 Strive to be interest'd; what can you say to draw
 A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.

COR.

Nothing, my lord.

LEAR.

Nothing!

COR.

Nothing.

LEAR.

Nothing can come of nothing: speak again.

COR.

Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
 My heart into my mouth: I love your majesty
 According to my bond; no more nor less.

LEAR.

How, how, Cordelia! mend your speech a little,
 Lest you may mar your fortunes.

COR.

Good my lord,
 You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me: I

Return those duties back as are right fit,
 Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
 Why have my sisters husbands if they say
 They love you all? Haply, when I shall wed,
 That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry
 Half my love with him, half my care and duty:
 Sure I shall never marry like my sisters,
 To love my father all.

LEAR.

But goes thy heart with this?

COR.

Ay, good my lord.

LEAR.

So young, and so untender?

COR.

So young, my lord, and true.

LEAR.

Let it be so,—thy truth then be thy dower:
 For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
 The mysteries of Hecate, and the night;
 By all the operation of the orbs,
 From whom we do exist and cease to be;
 Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
 Propinquity, and property of blood,
 And as a stranger to my heart and me
 Hold thee, from this for ever. The barbarous Scythian,
 Or he that makes his generation messes
 To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
 Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and reliev'd,
 As thou my sometime daughter.

KENT.

Good my liege,—

LEAR.

Peace, Kent!
 Come not between the dragon and his wrath.
 I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest

On her kind nursery.—Hence, and avoid my sight!—[To Cordelia.]
 So be my grave my peace, as here I give
 Her father's heart from her!—Call France;—who stirs?
 Call Burgundy!—Cornwall and Albany,
 With my two daughters' dowers digest this third:
 Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.
 I do invest you jointly in my power,
 Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
 That troop with majesty.—Ourself, by monthly course,
 With reservation of an hundred knights,
 By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode
 Make with you by due turns. Only we still retain
 The name, and all the additions to a king;
 The sway,
 Revenue, execution of the rest,
 Beloved sons, be yours; which to confirm,
 This coronet part betwixt you.
 [Giving the crown.]

KENT.

Royal Lear,
 Whom I have ever honour'd as my king,
 Lov'd as my father, as my master follow'd,
 As my great patron thought on in my prayers.—

LEAR.

The bow is bent and drawn; make from the shaft.

KENT.

Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
 The region of my heart: be Kent unmannerly
 When Lear is mad. What wouldst thou do, old man?
 Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak
 When power to flattery bows? To plainness honour's bound
 When majesty falls to folly. Reverse thy state;
 And in thy best consideration check
 This hideous rashness: answer my life my judgment,
 Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least;
 Nor are those empty-hearted whose low sound
 Reverbs no hollowness.

LEAR.

Kent, on thy life, no more.

KENT.

My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against thine enemies; nor fear to lose it,
Thy safety being the motive.

LEAR.

Out of my sight!

KENT.

See better, Lear; and let me still remain
The true blank of thine eye.

LEAR.

Now, by Apollo,—

KENT.

Now by Apollo, king,
Thou swear'st thy gods in vain.

LEAR.

O vassal! miscreant!
[Laying his hand on his sword.]
ALB. and CORN.
Dear sir, forbear!

KENT.

Do;
Kill thy physician, and the fee bestow
Upon the foul disease. Revoke thy gift,
Or, whilst I can vent clamour from my throat,
I'll tell thee thou dost evil.

LEAR.

Hear me, recreant!
On thine allegiance, hear me!—
Since thou hast sought to make us break our vow,—
Which we durst never yet,—and with strain'd pride
To come between our sentence and our power,—
Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,—
Our potency made good, take thy reward.
Five days we do allot thee for provision
To shield thee from diseases of the world;
And on the sixth to turn thy hated back

Upon our kingdom: if, on the tenth day following,
 Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,
 The moment is thy death. Away! by Jupiter,
 This shall not be revok'd.

KENT.

Fare thee well, king: sith thus thou wilt appear,
 Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here.—
 [To CORDELIA.] The gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid,
 That justly think'st and hast most rightly said!
 [To REGAN and GONERIL.]
 And your large speeches may your deeds approve,
 That good effects may spring from words of love.—
 Thus Kent, O princes, bids you all adieu;
 He'll shape his old course in a country new.
 [Exit.]
 [Flourish. Re-enter GLOUCESTER, with FRANCE, BURGUNDY, and
 ATTENDANTS.]

GLOU.

Here's France and Burgundy, my noble lord.

LEAR.

My Lord of Burgundy,
 We first address toward you, who with this king
 Hath rivall'd for our daughter: what in the least
 Will you require in present dower with her,
 Or cease your quest of love?

BUR.

Most royal majesty,
 I crave no more than hath your highness offer'd,
 Nor will you tender less.

LEAR.

Right noble Burgundy,
 When she was dear to us, we did hold her so;
 But now her price is fall'n. Sir, there she stands:
 If aught within that little seeming substance,
 Or all of it, with our displeasure piec'd,
 And nothing more, may fitly like your grace,
 She's there, and she is yours.

BUR.

I know no answer.

LEAR.

Will you, with those infirmities she owes,
Unfriended, new-adopted to our hate,
Dower'd with our curse, and stranger'd with our oath,
Take her, or leave her?

BUR.

Pardon me, royal sir;
Election makes not up on such conditions.

LEAR.

Then leave her, sir; for, by the power that made me,
I tell you all her wealth.—[To France] For you, great king,
I would not from your love make such a stray
To match you where I hate; therefore beseech you
To avert your liking a more worthier way
Than on a wretch whom nature is asham'd
Almost to acknowledge hers.

FRANCE.

This is most strange,
That she, who even but now was your best object,
The argument of your praise, balm of your age,
Most best, most dearest, should in this trice of time
Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle
So many folds of favour. Sure her offence
Must be of such unnatural degree
That monsters it, or your fore-vouch'd affection
Fall'n into taint; which to believe of her
Must be a faith that reason without miracle
Should never plant in me.

COR.

I yet beseech your majesty,—
If for I want that glib and oily art
To speak and purpose not; since what I well intend,
I'll do't before I speak,—that you make known
It is no vicious blot, murder, or foulness,
No unchaste action or dishonour'd step,
That hath depriv'd me of your grace and favour;

But even for want of that for which I am richer,—
 A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue
 As I am glad I have not, though not to have it
 Hath lost me in your liking.

LEAR.

Better thou
 Hadst not been born than not to have pleas'd me better.

FRANCE.

Is it but this,—a tardiness in nature
 Which often leaves the history unspoke
 That it intends to do?—My lord of Burgundy,
 What say you to the lady? Love's not love
 When it is mingled with regards that stands
 Aloof from the entire point. Will you have her?
 She is herself a dowry.

BUR.

Royal king,
 Give but that portion which yourself propos'd,
 And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
 Duchess of Burgundy.

LEAR.

Nothing; I have sworn; I am firm.

BUR.

I am sorry, then, you have so lost a father
 That you must lose a husband.

COR.

Peace be with Burgundy!
 Since that respects of fortune are his love,
 I shall not be his wife.

FRANCE.

Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor;
 Most choice, forsaken; and most lov'd, despis'd!
 Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon:
 Be it lawful, I take up what's cast away.
 Gods, gods! 'tis strange that from their cold'st neglect
 My love should kindle to inflam'd respect.—

Thy dowerless daughter, king, thrown to my chance,
 Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France:
 Not all the dukes of waterish Burgundy
 Can buy this unpriz'd precious maid of me.—
 Bid them farewell, Cordelia, though unkind:
 Thou lovest here, a better where to find.

LEAR.

Thou hast her, France: let her be thine; for we
 Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see
 That face of hers again.—Therefore be gone
 Without our grace, our love, our benison.—
 Come, noble Burgundy.
 [Flourish. Exeunt LEAR, BURGUNDY, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GLOUCESTER,
 and ATTENDANTS.]

FRANCE.

Bid farewell to your sisters.

COR.

The jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
 Cordelia leaves you: I know you what you are;
 And, like a sister, am most loath to call
 Your faults as they are nam'd. Love well our father:
 To your professed bosoms I commit him:
 But yet, alas, stood I within his grace,
 I would prefer him to a better place.
 So, farewell to you both.

REG.

Prescribe not us our duties.

GON.

Let your study
 Be to content your lord, who hath receiv'd you
 At fortune's alms. You have obedience scanted,
 And well are worth the want that you have wanted.

COR.

Time shall unfold what plighted cunning hides:
 Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.
 Well may you prosper!

FRANCE.

Come, my fair Cordelia.

[Exeunt FRANCE and CORDELIA.]

GON.

Sister, it is not little I have to say of what most nearly appertains to us both. I think our father will hence to-night.

REG.

That's most certain, and with you; next month with us.

GON.

You see how full of changes his age is; the observation we have made of it hath not been little: he always loved our sister most; and with what poor judgment he hath now cast her off appears too grossly.

REG.

'Tis the infirmity of his age: yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself.

GON.

The best and soundest of his time hath been but rash; then must we look to receive from his age, not alone the imperfections of long-ingraved condition, but therewithal the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them.

REG.

Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him as this of Kent's banishment.

GON.

There is further compliment of leave-taking between France and him. Pray you let us hit together: if our father carry authority with such dispositions as he bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us.

REG.

We shall further think of it.

GON.

We must do something, and i' th' heat.

[Exeunt.]

Scene II. A Hall in the Earl of Gloucester's Castle.
[Enter Edmund with a letter.]

EDM.

Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base?
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?
Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take
More composition and fierce quality
Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,
Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops
Got 'tween asleep and wake?—Well then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
As to the legitimate: fine word—legitimate!
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall top the legitimate. I grow; I prosper.—
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!
[Enter Gloucester.]

GLOU.

Kent banish'd thus! and France in choler parted!
And the king gone to-night! subscrib'd his pow'r!
Confin'd to exhibition! All this done
Upon the gad!—Edmund, how now! What news?

EDM.

So please your lordship, none.
[Putting up the letter.]

GLOU.

Why so earnestly seek you to put up that letter?

EDM.

I know no news, my lord.

GLOU.

What paper were you reading?

EDM.

Nothing, my lord.

GLOU.

No? What needed, then, that terrible dispatch of it into your pocket? the quality of nothing hath not such need to hide itself. Let's see.

Come, if it be nothing, I shall not need spectacles.

EDM.

I beseech you, sir, pardon me. It is a letter from my brother that I have not all o'er-read; and for so much as I have perus'd, I find it not fit for your o'erlooking.

GLOU.

Give me the letter, sir.

EDM.

I shall offend, either to detain or give it. The contents, as in part I understand them, are to blame.

GLOU.

Let's see, let's see!

EDM.

I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an essay or taste of my virtue.

GLOU.

[Reads.] 'This policy and reverence of age makes the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny; who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffered. Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother,

EDGAR.'

Hum! Conspiracy?—'Sleep till I waked him,—you should enjoy half his revenue.'—My son Edgar! Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in? When came this to you? who brought it?

EDM.

It was not brought me, my lord, there's the cunning of it; I found it thrown in at the casement of my closet.

GLOU.

You know the character to be your brother's?

EDM.

If the matter were good, my lord, I durst swear it were his; but in respect of that, I would fain think it were not.

GLOU.

It is his.

EDM.

It is his hand, my lord; but I hope his heart is not in the contents.

GLOU.

Hath he never before sounded you in this business?

EDM.

Never, my lord: but I have heard him oft maintain it to be fit that, sons at perfect age, and fathers declined, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

GLOU.

O villain, villain!—His very opinion in the letter! Abhorred villain!—Unnatural, detested, brutish villain! worse than brutish!—Go, sirrah, seek him; I'll apprehend him. Abominable villain!—Where is he?

EDM.

I do not well know, my lord. If it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my brother till you can derive from him better testimony of his intent, you should run a certain course; where, if you violently proceed against him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great gap in your own honour, and shake in pieces the heart of his obedience. I dare pawn down my life for him that he hath writ this to feel my affection to your honour, and to no other pretence of danger.

GLOU.

Think you so?

EDM.

If your honour judge it meet, I will place you where you shall hear us confer of this, and by an auricular assurance have your satisfaction; and that without any further delay than this very evening.

GLOU.

He cannot be such a monster.

EDM.

Nor is not, sure.

GLOU.

To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him.—Heaven and earth!—Edmund, seek him out; wind me into him, I pray you: frame the business after your own wisdom. I would unstate myself to be in a due resolution.

EDM.

I will seek him, sir, presently; convey the business as I shall find means, and acquaint you withal.

GLOU.

These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us: though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourged by the sequent effects: love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked 'twixt son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there's son against father: the king falls from bias of nature; there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time: machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders follow us disquietly to our graves.—Find out this villain, Edmund; it shall lose thee nothing; do it carefully.—And the noble and true-hearted Kent banished! his offence, honesty!—'Tis strange.

[Exit.]

EDM.

This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune,—often the surfeit of our own behaviour,—we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars; as if we were villains on necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers by spherical pre-dominance;

drunkards, liars, and adulterers by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on: an admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star! My father compounded with my mother under the dragon's tail, and my nativity was under ursa major; so that it follows I am rough and lecherous.—Tut! I should have been that I am, had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my bastardizing.

[Enter Edgar.]

Pat!—he comes, like the catastrophe of the old comedy: my cue is villainous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o' Bedlam.—O, these eclipses do portend these divisions! fa, sol, la, mi.

EDG.

How now, brother Edmund! what serious contemplation are you in?

EDM.

I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses.

EDG.

Do you busy yourself with that?

EDM.

I promise you, the effects he writes of succeed unhappily: as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state, menaces and maledictions against king and nobles; needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches, and I know not what.

EDG.

How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

EDM.

Come, come! when saw you my father last?

EDG.

The night gone by.

EDM.

Spake you with him?

EDG.

Ay, two hours together.

EDM.

Parted you in good terms? Found you no displeasure in him by word or countenance?

EDG.

None at all.

EDM.

Bethink yourself wherein you may have offended him: and at my entreaty forbear his presence until some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure; which at this instant so rageth in him that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay.

EDG.

Some villain hath done me wrong.

EDM.

That's my fear. I pray you have a continent forbearance till the speed of his rage goes slower; and, as I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to hear my lord speak: pray you, go; there's my key.—If you do stir abroad, go armed.

EDG.

Armed, brother!

EDM.

Brother, I advise you to the best; I am no honest man if there be any good meaning toward you: I have told you what I have seen and heard but faintly; nothing like the image and horror of it: pray you, away!

EDG.

Shall I hear from you anon?

EDM.

I do serve you in this business.

[Exit Edgar.]

A credulous father! and a brother noble,

Whose nature is so far from doing harms
 That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty
 My practices ride easy!—I see the business.
 Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit:
 All with me's meet that I can fashion fit.
 [Exit.]

Scene III. A Room in the Duke of Albany's Palace.
 [Enter Goneril and Oswald.]

GON.

Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his fool?

OSW.

Ay, madam.

GON.

By day and night, he wrongs me; every hour
 He flashes into one gross crime or other,
 That sets us all at odds; I'll not endure it:
 His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
 On every trifle.—When he returns from hunting,
 I will not speak with him; say I am sick.—
 If you come slack of former services,
 You shall do well; the fault of it I'll answer.

OSW.

He's coming, madam; I hear him.
 [Horns within.]

GON.

Put on what weary negligence you please,
 You and your fellows; I'd have it come to question:
 If he distaste it, let him to our sister,
 Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,
 Not to be overruled. Idle old man,
 That still would manage those authorities
 That he hath given away!—Now, by my life,
 Old fools are babes again; and must be us'd
 With checks as flatteries,—when they are seen abus'd.
 Remember what I have said.

OSW.

Very well, madam.

GON.

And let his knights have colder looks among you;
 What grows of it, no matter; advise your fellows so;
 I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall,
 That I may speak.—I'll write straight to my sister
 To hold my very course.—Prepare for dinner.
 [Exeunt.]

Scene IV. A Hall in Albany's Palace.
 [Enter Kent, disguised.]

KENT.

If but as well I other accents borrow,
 That can my speech defuse, my good intent
 May carry through itself to that full issue
 For which I rais'd my likeness.—Now, banish'd Kent,
 If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condemn'd,
 So may it come, thy master, whom thou lov'st,
 Shall find thee full of labours.
 [Horns within. Enter King Lear, Knights, and Attendants.]

LEAR.

Let me not stay a jot for dinner; go get it ready.
 [Exit an Attendant.]
 How now! what art thou?

KENT.

A man, sir.

LEAR.

What dost thou profess? What wouldst thou with us?

KENT.

I do profess to be no less than I seem; to serve him truly that
 will put me in trust; to love him that is honest; to converse
 with him that is wise and says little; to fear judgment; to fight
 when I cannot choose; and to eat no fish.

LEAR.

What art thou?

KENT.

A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the king.

LEAR.

If thou be'st as poor for a subject as he's for a king, thou art poor enough. What wouldst thou?

KENT.

Service.

LEAR.

Who wouldst thou serve?

KENT.

You.

LEAR.

Dost thou know me, fellow?

KENT.

No, sir; but you have that in your countenance which I would fain call master.

LEAR.

What's that?

KENT.

Authority.

LEAR.

What services canst thou do?

KENT.

I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious tale in telling it and deliver a plain message bluntly. That which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in, and the best of me is diligence.

LEAR.

How old art thou?

KENT.

Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing; nor so old to dote on her for anything: I have years on my back forty-eight.

LEAR.

Follow me; thou shalt serve me. If I like thee no worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet.—Dinner, ho, dinner!—Where's my knave? my fool?—Go you and call my fool hither.

[Exit an attendant.]

[Enter Oswald.]

You, you, sirrah, where's my daughter?

OSW.

So please you,—

[Exit.]

LEAR.

What says the fellow there? Call the clotpoll back.—

[Exit a KNIGHT.]

Where's my fool, ho?—I think the world's asleep.

[Re-enter KNIGHT.]

How now! where's that mongrel?

KNIGHT.

He says, my lord, your daughter is not well.

LEAR.

Why came not the slave back to me when I called him?

KNIGHT.

Sir, he answered me in the roundest manner, he would not.

LEAR.

He would not!

KNIGHT.

My lord, I know not what the matter is; but to my judgment your highness is not entertained with that ceremonious affection as you were wont; there's a great abatement of kindness appears as well in the general dependants as in the duke himself also and your daughter.

LEAR.

Ha! say'st thou so?

KNIGHT.

I beseech you pardon me, my lord, if I be mistaken; for my duty cannot be silent when I think your highness wronged.

LEAR.

Thou but rememberest me of mine own conception: I have perceived a most faint neglect of late; which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity than as a very pretence and purpose of unkindness: I will look further into't.—But where's my fool? I have not seen him this two days.

KNIGHT.

Since my young lady's going into France, sir, the fool hath much pined away.

LEAR.

No more of that; I have noted it well.—Go you and tell my daughter I would speak with her.—

[Exit Attendant.]

Go you, call hither my fool.

[Exit another Attendant.]

[Re-enter Oswald.]

O, you, sir, you, come you hither, sir: who am I, sir?

OSW.

My lady's father.

LEAR.

My lady's father! my lord's knave: you whoreson dog! you slave! you cur!

OSW.

I am none of these, my lord; I beseech your pardon.

LEAR.

Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal?

[Striking him.]

OSW.

I'll not be struck, my lord.

KENT.

Nor tripp'd neither, you base football player.

[Tripping up his heels.]

LEAR.

I thank thee, fellow; thou servest me, and I'll love thee.

KENT.

Come, sir, arise, away! I'll teach you differences: away, away!
If you will measure your lubber's length again, tarry; but away!
go to; have you wisdom? so.
[Pushes Oswald out.]

LEAR.

Now, my friendly knave, I thank thee: there's earnest of thy
service.
[Giving Kent money.]
[Enter FOOL.]

FOOL.

Let me hire him too; here's my coxcomb.
[Giving Kent his cap.]

LEAR.

How now, my pretty knave! how dost thou?

FOOL.

Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.

KENT.

Why, fool?

FOOL.

Why, for taking one's part that's out of favour. Nay, an thou
canst not smile as the wind sits, thou'lt catch cold shortly:
there, take my coxcomb: why, this fellow hath banish'd two on's
daughters, and did the third a blessing against his will; if
thou follow him, thou must needs wear my coxcomb.—How now,
nuncle! Would I had two coxcombs and two daughters!

LEAR.

Why, my boy?

FOOL.

If I gave them all my living, I'd keep my coxcombs myself.
There's mine; beg another of thy daughters.

LEAR.

Take heed, sirrah,—the whip.

FOOL.

Truth's a dog must to kennel; he must be whipped out, when the lady brach may stand by the fire and stink.

LEAR.

A pestilent gall to me!

FOOL.

Sirrah, I'll teach thee a speech.

LEAR.

Do.

FOOL.

Mark it, nuncle:—
 Have more than thou showest,
 Speak less than thou knowest,
 Lend less than thou owest,
 Ride more than thou goest,
 Learn more than thou trowest,
 Set less than thou throwest;
 Leave thy drink and thy whore,
 And keep in-a-door,
 And thou shalt have more
 Than two tens to a score.

KENT.

This is nothing, fool.

FOOL.

Then 'tis like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer,—you gave me nothing for't.—Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle?

LEAR.

Why, no, boy; nothing can be made out of nothing.

FOOL.

[to Kent] Pr'ythee tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to: he will not believe a fool.

LEAR.

A bitter fool!

FOOL.

Dost thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter fool and a sweet one?

LEAR.

No, lad; teach me.

FOOL.

That lord that counsell'd thee
To give away thy land,
Come place him here by me,—
Do thou for him stand:
The sweet and bitter fool
Will presently appear;
The one in motley here,
The other found out there.

LEAR.

Dost thou call me fool, boy?

FOOL.

All thy other titles thou hast given away; that thou wast born with.

KENT.

This is not altogether fool, my lord.

FOOL.

No, faith; lords and great men will not let me: if I had a monopoly out, they would have part on't and loads too: they will not let me have all the fool to myself; they'll be snatching.—Nuncle, give me an egg, and I'll give thee two crowns.

LEAR.

What two crowns shall they be?

FOOL.

Why, after I have cut the egg i' the middle and eat up the meat, the two crowns of the egg. When thou clovest thy crown i' the middle and gav'st away both parts, thou borest thine ass on thy back o'er the dirt: thou hadst little wit in thy bald crown when thou gavest thy golden one away. If I speak like myself in

this, let him be whipped that first finds it so.

[Singing.]

Fools had ne'er less wit in a year;
For wise men are grown foppish,
And know not how their wits to wear,
Their manners are so apish.

LEAR.

When were you wont to be so full of songs, sirrah?

FOOL.

I have used it, nuncle, e'er since thou mad'st thy daughters thy
mothers; for when thou gav'st them the rod, and putttest down
thine own breeches,

[Singing.]

Then they for sudden joy did weep,
And I for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep
And go the fools among.
Pr'ythee, nuncle, keep a schoolmaster that can teach thy fool to
lie; I would fain learn to lie.

LEAR.

An you lie, sirrah, we'll have you whipped.

FOOL.

I marvel what kin thou and thy daughters are: they'll have me
whipped for speaking true; thou'lt have me whipped for lying;
and sometimes I am whipped for holding my peace. I had rather be
any kind o' thing than a fool: and yet I would not be thee,
nuncle: thou hast pared thy wit o' both sides, and left nothing
i' the middle:—here comes one o' the parings.

[Enter Goneril.]

LEAR.

How now, daughter? What makes that frontlet on? Methinks you
are too much of late i' the frown.

FOOL.

Thou wast a pretty fellow when thou hadst no need to care for
her frowning. Now thou art an O without a figure: I am better
than thou art; I am a fool, thou art nothing.—Yes, forsooth, I
will hold my tongue. So your face [To Goneril.] bids me, though

you say nothing. Mum, mum,
 He that keeps nor crust nor crum,
 Weary of all, shall want some.—
 [Pointing to LEAR.] That's a shealed peascod.

GON.

Not only, sir, this your all-licens'd fool,
 But other of your insolent retinue
 Do hourly carp and quarrel; breaking forth
 In rank and not-to-be-endured riots. Sir,
 I had thought, by making this well known unto you,
 To have found a safe redress; but now grow fearful,
 By what yourself too late have spoke and done,
 That you protect this course, and put it on
 By your allowance; which if you should, the fault
 Would not scape censure, nor the redresses sleep,
 Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal,
 Might in their working do you that offence
 Which else were shame, that then necessity
 Will call discreet proceeding.

FOOL.

For you know, nuncle,
 The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long
 That it had it head bit off by it young.
 So out went the candle, and we were left darkling.

LEAR.

Are you our daughter?

GON.

Come, sir,
 I would you would make use of that good wisdom,
 Whereof I know you are fraught; and put away
 These dispositions, that of late transform you
 From what you rightly are.

FOOL.

May not an ass know when the cart draws the horse?—Whoop, Jug! I
 love thee!

LEAR.

Doth any here know me?—This is not Lear;
 Doth Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes?

Either his notion weakens, his discernings
 Are lethargied.—Ha! waking? 'Tis not so!—
 Who is it that can tell me who I am?

FOOL.

Lear's shadow.

LEAR.

I would learn that; for, by the marks of sovereignty,
 Knowledge, and reason,
 I should be false persuaded I had daughters.

FOOL.

Which they will make an obedient father.

LEAR.

Your name, fair gentlewoman?

GON.

This admiration, sir, is much o' the favour
 Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you
 To understand my purposes aright:
 As you are old and reverend, you should be wise.
 Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires;
 Men so disorder'd, so debosh'd, and bold
 That this our court, infected with their manners,
 Shows like a riotous inn: epicurism and lust
 Make it more like a tavern or a brothel
 Than a grac'd palace. The shame itself doth speak
 For instant remedy: be, then, desir'd
 By her that else will take the thing she begs
 A little to disquantity your train;
 And the remainder, that shall still depend,
 To be such men as may besort your age,
 Which know themselves, and you.

LEAR.

Darkness and devils!—
 Saddle my horses; call my train together.—
 Degenerate bastard! I'll not trouble thee:
 Yet have I left a daughter.

GON.

You strike my people; and your disorder'd rabble
 Make servants of their betters.
 [Enter Albany.]

LEAR.

Woe that too late repents!—
 [To Albany.] O, sir, are you come?
 Is it your will? Speak, sir.—Prepare my horses.—
 Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend,
 More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child
 Than the sea-monster!

ALB.

Pray, sir, be patient.

LEAR.

[to Goneril] Detested kite, thou liest!:
 My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
 That all particulars of duty know;
 And in the most exact regard support
 The worships of their name.—O most small fault,
 How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show!
 Which, like an engine, wrench'd my frame of nature
 From the fix'd place; drew from my heart all love,
 And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!
 Beat at this gate that let thy folly in [Striking his head.]
 And thy dear judgment out!—Go, go, my people.

ALB.

My lord, I am guiltless, as I am ignorant
 Of what hath mov'd you.

LEAR.

It may be so, my lord.
 Hear, nature, hear; dear goddess, hear
 Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend
 To make this creature fruitful!
 Into her womb convey sterility!
 Dry up in her the organs of increase;
 And from her derogate body never spring
 A babe to honour her! If she must teem,
 Create her child of spleen, that it may live

And be a thwart disnatur'd torment to her!
 Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth;
 With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks;
 Turn all her mother's pains and benefits
 To laughter and contempt; that she may feel
 How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
 To have a thankless child!—Away, away!
 [Exit.]

ALB.

Now, gods that we adore, whereof comes this?

GON.

Never afflict yourself to know more of it;
 But let his disposition have that scope
 That dotage gives it.
 [Re-enter LEAR.]

LEAR.

What, fifty of my followers at a clap!
 Within a fortnight!

ALB.

What's the matter, sir?

LEAR.

I'll tell thee.—Life and death!—[To Goneril] I am asham'd
 That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus;
 That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,
 Should make thee worth them.—Blasts and fogs upon thee!
 Th' untented woundings of a father's curse
 Pierce every sense about thee!—Old fond eyes,
 Beweep this cause again, I'll pluck you out,
 And cast you, with the waters that you lose,
 To temper clay. Ha!
 Let it be so: I have another daughter,
 Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable:
 When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails
 She'll flay thy wolvisish visage. Thou shalt find
 That I'll resume the shape which thou dost think
 I have cast off for ever.
 [Exeunt Lear, Kent, and Attendants.]

GON.

Do you mark that?

ALB.

I cannot be so partial, Goneril,
To the great love I bear you,—

GON.

Pray you, content.—What, Oswald, ho!
[To the Fool] You, sir, more knave than fool, after your master.

FOOL.

Nuncle Lear, nuncle Lear, tarry,—take the fool with thee.—
A fox when one has caught her,
And such a daughter,
Should sure to the slaughter,
If my cap would buy a halter;
So the fool follows after.
[Exit.]

GON.

This man hath had good counsel.—A hundred knights!
'Tis politic and safe to let him keep
At point a hundred knights: yes, that on every dream,
Each buzz, each fancy, each complaint, dislike,
He may enguard his dotage with their powers,
And hold our lives in mercy.—Oswald, I say!—

ALB.

Well, you may fear too far.

GON.

Safer than trust too far:
Let me still take away the harms I fear,
Not fear still to be taken: I know his heart.
What he hath utter'd I have writ my sister:
If she sustain him and his hundred knights,
When I have show'd th' unfitness,—
[Re-enter Oswald.]
How now, Oswald!
What, have you writ that letter to my sister?

OSW.

Ay, madam.

GON.

Take you some company, and away to horse:
Inform her full of my particular fear;
And thereto add such reasons of your own
As may compact it more. Get you gone;
And hasten your return.

[Exit Oswald.]

No, no, my lord!
This milky gentleness and course of yours,
Though I condemn it not, yet, under pardon,
You are much more attack'd for want of wisdom
Than prais'd for harmful mildness.

ALB.

How far your eyes may pierce I cannot tell:
Striving to better, oft we mar what's well.

GON.

Nay then,—

ALB.

Well, well; the event.
[Exeunt.]

Scene V. Court before the Duke of Albany's Palace.
[Enter Lear, Kent, and FOOL.]

LEAR.

Go you before to Gloucester with these letters: acquaint my
daughter no further with anything you know than comes from her
demand out of the letter. If your diligence be not speedy, I
shall be there afore you.

KENT.

I will not sleep, my lord, till I have delivered your letter.
[Exit.]

FOOL.

If a man's brains were in's heels, were't not in danger of kibes?

LEAR.

Ay, boy.

FOOL.

Then I pr'ythee be merry; thy wit shall not go slipshod.

LEAR.

Ha, ha, ha!

FOOL.

Shalt see thy other daughter will use thee kindly; for though she's as like this as a crab's like an apple, yet I can tell what I can tell.

LEAR.

What canst tell, boy?

FOOL.

She'll taste as like this as a crab does to a crab. Thou canst tell why one's nose stands i' the middle on's face?

LEAR.

No.

FOOL.

Why, to keep one's eyes of either side's nose, that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.

LEAR.

I did her wrong,—

FOOL.

Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?

LEAR.

No.

FOOL.

Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house.

LEAR.

Why?

FOOL.

Why, to put's head in; not to give it away to his daughters, and leave his horns without a case.

LEAR.

I will forget my nature. So kind a father!—Be my horses ready?

FOOL.

Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the seven stars are no more than seven is a pretty reason.

LEAR.

Because they are not eight?

FOOL.

Yes indeed: thou wouldst make a good fool.

LEAR.

To tak't again perforce!—Monster ingratitude!

FOOL.

If thou wert my fool, nuncle, I'd have thee beaten for being old before thy time.

LEAR.

How's that?

FOOL.

Thou shouldst not have been old till thou hadst been wise.

LEAR.

O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven!
Keep me in temper; I would not be mad!—
[Enter Gentleman.]
How now? are the horses ready?

GENT.

Ready, my lord.

LEAR.

Come, boy.

FOOL.

She that's a maid now, and laughs at my departure,
Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter.
[Exeunt.]

Act II

Scene I. A court within the Castle of the Earl of Gloucester.
[Enter Edmund and Curan, meeting.]

EDM.

Save thee, Curan.

CUR.

And you, sir. I have been with your father, and given him notice that the Duke of Cornwall and Regan his duchess will be here with him this night.

EDM.

How comes that?

CUR.

Nay, I know not.—You have heard of the news abroad; I mean the whispered ones, for they are yet but ear-kissing arguments?

EDM.

Not I: pray you, what are they?

CUR.

Have you heard of no likely wars toward, 'twixt the two dukes of Cornwall and Albany?

EDM.

Not a word.

CUR.

You may do, then, in time. Fare you well, sir.
[Exit.]

EDM.

The Duke be here to-night? The better! best!
This weaves itself perforce into my business.
My father hath set guard to take my brother;
And I have one thing, of a queasy question,
Which I must act:—briefness and fortune work!—
Brother, a word!—descend:—brother, I say!
[Enter Edgar.]
My father watches:—sir, fly this place;
Intelligence is given where you are hid;

You have now the good advantage of the night.—
 Have you not spoken 'gainst the Duke of Cornwall?
 He's coming hither; now, i' the night, i' the haste,
 And Regan with him: have you nothing said
 Upon his party 'gainst the Duke of Albany?
 Advise yourself.

EDG.

I am sure on't, not a word.

EDM.

I hear my father coming:—pardon me;
 In cunning I must draw my sword upon you:—
 Draw: seem to defend yourself: now quit you well.—
 Yield:—come before my father.—Light, ho, here!
 Fly, brother.—Torches, torches!—So farewell.
 [Exit Edgar.]
 Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion
 Of my more fierce endeavour: [Wounds his arm.]
 I have seen drunkards
 Do more than this in sport.—Father, father!
 Stop, stop! No help?
 [Enter Gloucester, and Servants with torches.]

GLOU.

Now, Edmund, where's the villain?

EDM.

Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out,
 Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon
 To stand auspicious mistress,—

GLOU.

But where is he?

EDM.

Look, sir, I bleed.

GLOU.

Where is the villain, Edmund?

EDM.

Fled this way, sir. When by no means he could,—

GLOU.

Pursue him, ho!—Go after.

[Exeunt Servants.]

—By no means what?

EDM.

Persuade me to the murder of your lordship;
 But that I told him the revenging gods
 'Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend;
 Spoke with how manifold and strong a bond
 The child was bound to the father;—sir, in fine,
 Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
 To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion
 With his prepared sword, he charges home
 My unprovided body, lanc'd mine arm;
 But when he saw my best alarum'd spirits,
 Bold in the quarrel's right, rous'd to the encounter,
 Or whether gasted by the noise I made,
 Full suddenly he fled.

GLOU.

Let him fly far;
 Not in this land shall he remain uncaught;
 And found—dispatch'd.—The noble duke my master,
 My worthy arch and patron, comes to-night:
 By his authority I will proclaim it,
 That he which finds him shall deserve our thanks,
 Bringing the murderous coward to the stake;
 He that conceals him, death.

EDM.

When I dissuaded him from his intent,
 And found him pight to do it, with curst speech
 I threaten'd to discover him: he replied,
 'Thou unpossessing bastard! dost thou think,
 If I would stand against thee, would the reposal
 Of any trust, virtue, or worth in thee
 Make thy words faith'd? No: what I should deny
 As this I would; ay, though thou didst produce
 My very character, I'd turn it all
 To thy suggestion, plot, and damned practice:
 And thou must make a dullard of the world,
 If they not thought the profits of my death

Were very pregnant and potential spurs
To make thee seek it.'

GLOU.

Strong and fast'ned villain!
Would he deny his letter?—I never got him.
[Trumpets within.]
Hark, the duke's trumpets! I know not why he comes.—
All ports I'll bar; the villain shall not scape;
The duke must grant me that: besides, his picture
I will send far and near, that all the kingdom
May have due note of him; and of my land,
Loyal and natural boy, I'll work the means
To make thee capable.
[Enter Cornwall, Regan, and Attendants.]

CORN.

How now, my noble friend! since I came hither,—
Which I can call but now,—I have heard strange news.

REG.

If it be true, all vengeance comes too short
Which can pursue the offender. How dost, my lord?

GLOU.

O madam, my old heart is crack'd,—it's crack'd!

REG.

What, did my father's godson seek your life?
He whom my father nam'd? your Edgar?

GLOU.

O lady, lady, shame would have it hid!

REG.

Was he not companion with the riotous knights
That tend upon my father?

GLOU.

I know not, madam:—
It is too bad, too bad.

EDM.

Yes, madam, he was of that consort.

REG.

No marvel then though he were ill affected:
 'Tis they have put him on the old man's death,
 To have the expense and waste of his revenues.
 I have this present evening from my sister
 Been well inform'd of them; and with such cautions
 That if they come to sojourn at my house,
 I'll not be there.

CORN.

Nor I, assure thee, Regan.—
 Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father
 A childlike office.

EDM.

'Twas my duty, sir.

GLOU.

He did bewray his practice; and receiv'd
 This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.

CORN.

Is he pursu'd?

GLOU.

Ay, my good lord.

CORN.

If he be taken, he shall never more
 Be fear'd of doing harm: make your own purpose,
 How in my strength you please.—For you, Edmund,
 Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
 So much commend itself, you shall be ours:
 Natures of such deep trust we shall much need;
 You we first seize on.

EDM.

I shall serve you, sir,
 Truly, however else.

GLOU.

For him I thank your grace.

CORN.

You know not why we came to visit you,—

REG.

Thus out of season, threading dark-ey'd night:
 Occasions, noble Gloucester, of some poise,
 Wherein we must have use of your advice:—
 Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
 Of differences, which I best thought it fit
 To answer from our home; the several messengers
 From hence attend despatch. Our good old friend,
 Lay comforts to your bosom; and bestow
 Your needful counsel to our business,
 Which craves the instant use.

GLOU.

I serve you, madam:
 Your graces are right welcome.
 [Exeunt.]

Scene II. Before Gloucester's Castle.

[Enter Kent and Oswald, severally.]

OSW.

Good dawning to thee, friend: art of this house?

KENT.

Ay.

OSW.

Where may we set our horses?

KENT.

I' the mire.

OSW.

Pr'ythee, if thou lov'st me, tell me.

KENT.

I love thee not.

OSW.

Why then, I care not for thee.

KENT.

If I had thee in Lipsbury pinfold, I would make thee care for me.

OSW.

Why dost thou use me thus? I know thee not.

KENT.

Fellow, I know thee.

OSW.

What dost thou know me for?

KENT.

A knave; a rascal; an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy, worsted-stocking knave; a lily-livered, action-taking, whoreson, glass-gazing, superserviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; one that wouldst be a bawd in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pander, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch: one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if thou denyest the least syllable of thy addition.

OSW.

Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to rail on one that's neither known of thee nor knows thee?

KENT.

What a brazen-faced varlet art thou, to deny thou knowest me! Is it two days ago since I beat thee and tripped up thy heels before the king? Draw, you rogue: for, though it be night, yet the moon shines; I'll make a sop o' the moonshine of you: draw, you whoreson cullionly barbermonger, draw!
[Drawing his sword.]

OSW.

Away! I have nothing to do with thee.

KENT.

Draw, you rascal: you come with letters against the king; and take vanity the puppet's part against the royalty of her father: draw, you rogue, or I'll so carbonado your shanks:— draw, you rascal; come your ways!

OSW.

Help, ho! murder! help!

KENT.

Strike, you slave; stand, rogue, stand; you neat slave, strike!
[Beating him.]

OSW.

Help, ho! murder! murder!
[Enter Edmund, Cornwall, Regan, Gloucester, and Servants.]

EDM.

How now! What's the matter?

KENT.

With you, goodman boy, an you please: come, I'll flesh you; come on, young master.

GLOU.

Weapons! arms! What's the matter here?

CORN.

Keep peace, upon your lives;
He dies that strikes again. What is the matter?

REG.

The messengers from our sister and the king.

CORN.

What is your difference? speak.

OSW.

I am scarce in breath, my lord.

KENT.

No marvel, you have so bestirr'd your valour. You cowardly rascal, nature disclaims in thee; a tailor made thee.

CORN.

Thou art a strange fellow: a tailor make a man?

KENT.

Ay, a tailor, sir: a stonecutter or a painter could not have made him so ill, though he had been but two hours at the trade.

CORN.

Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

OSW.

This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spared at suit of
his grey beard,—

KENT.

Thou whoreson zed! thou unnecessary letter!—My lord, if you'll
give me leave, I will tread this unbolted villain into mortar and
daub the walls of a jakes with him.—Spare my grey beard, you
wagtail?

CORN.

Peace, sirrah!
You beastly knave, know you no reverence?

KENT.

Yes, sir; but anger hath a privilege.

CORN.

Why art thou angry?

KENT.

That such a slave as this should wear a sword,
Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords a-twain
Which are too intrinse t' unloose; smooth every passion
That in the natures of their lords rebel;
Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;
Renege, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks
With every gale and vary of their masters,
Knowing naught, like dogs, but following.—
A plague upon your epileptic visage!
Smile you my speeches, as I were a fool?
Goose, an I had you upon Sarum plain,
I'd drive ye cackling home to Camelot.

CORN.

What, art thou mad, old fellow?

GLOU.

How fell you out?
Say that.

KENT.

No contraries hold more antipathy
Than I and such a knave.

CORN.

Why dost thou call him knave? What is his fault?

KENT.

His countenance likes me not.

CORN.

No more perchance does mine, or his, or hers.

KENT.

Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plain:
I have seen better faces in my time
Than stands on any shoulder that I see
Before me at this instant.

CORN.

This is some fellow
Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb
Quite from his nature: he cannot flatter, he,—
An honest mind and plain,—he must speak truth!
An they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.
These kind of knaves I know which in this plainness
Harbour more craft and more corrupter ends
Than twenty silly-ducking observants
That stretch their duties nicely.

KENT.

Sir, in good faith, in sincere verity,
Under the allowance of your great aspect,
Whose influence, like the wreath of radiant fire
On flickering Phoebus' front,—

CORN.

What mean'st by this?

KENT.

To go out of my dialect, which you discommend so much. I know,
sir, I am no flatterer: he that beguiled you in a plain accent

was a plain knave; which, for my part, I will not be, though I should win your displeasure to entreat me to't.

CORN.

What was the offence you gave him?

OSW.

I never gave him any:
 It pleas'd the king his master very late
 To strike at me, upon his misconstruction;
 When he, compact, and flattering his displeasure,
 Tripp'd me behind; being down, insulted, rail'd
 And put upon him such a deal of man,
 That worthied him, got praises of the king
 For him attempting who was self-subdu'd;
 And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit,
 Drew on me here again.

KENT.

None of these rogues and cowards
 But Ajax is their fool.

CORN.

Fetch forth the stocks!—
 You stubborn ancient knave, you reverent braggart,
 We'll teach you,—

KENT.

Sir, I am too old to learn:
 Call not your stocks for me: I serve the king;
 On whose employment I was sent to you:
 You shall do small respect, show too bold malice
 Against the grace and person of my master,
 Stocking his messenger.

CORN.

Fetch forth the stocks!—As I have life and honour,
 there shall he sit till noon.

REG.

Till noon! Till night, my lord; and all night too!

KENT.

Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You should not use me so.

REG.

Sir, being his knave, I will.

CORN.

This is a fellow of the self-same colour
Our sister speaks of.—Come, bring away the stocks!
[Stocks brought out.]

GLOU.

Let me beseech your grace not to do so:
His fault is much, and the good king his master
Will check him for't: your purpos'd low correction
Is such as basest and contemned'st wretches
For pilferings and most common trespasses,
Are punish'd with: the king must take it ill
That he, so slightly valu'd in his messenger,
Should have him thus restrain'd.

CORN.

I'll answer that.

REG.

My sister may receive it much more worse,
To have her gentleman abus'd, assaulted,
For following her affairs.—Put in his legs.—
[Kent is put in the stocks.]
Come, my good lord, away.
[Exeunt all but Gloucester and KENT.]

GLOU.

I am sorry for thee, friend; 'tis the duke's pleasure,
Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd nor stopp'd; I'll entreat for thee.

KENT.

Pray do not, sir: I have watch'd, and travell'd hard;
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels:
Give you good morrow!

GLOU.

The duke's to blame in this: 'twill be ill taken.
[Exit.]

KENT.

Good king, that must approve the common saw,—
Thou out of heaven's benediction com'st
To the warm sun!
Approach, thou beacon to this under globe,
That by thy comfortable beams I may
Peruse this letter.—Nothing almost sees miracles
But misery:—I know 'tis from Cordelia,
Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
Of my obscured course; and shall find time
From this enormous state,—seeking to give
Losses their remedies,—All weary and o'erwatch'd,
Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
This shameful lodging.
Fortune, good night: smile once more, turn thy wheel!
[He sleeps.]

Scene III. The open Country.

[Enter Edgar.]

EDG.

I heard myself proclaim'd;
And by the happy hollow of a tree
Escap'd the hunt. No port is free; no place
That guard and most unusual vigilance
Does not attend my taking. While I may scape,
I will preserve myself: and am bethought
To take the basest and most poorest shape
That ever penury, in contempt of man,
Brought near to beast: my face I'll grime with filth;
Blanket my loins; elf all my hair in knots;
And with presented nakedness outface
The winds and persecutions of the sky.
The country gives me proof and precedent
Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,
Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms
Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary;
And with this horrible object, from low farms,
Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes, and mills,

Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,
Enforce their charity.—Poor Turlygod! poor Tom!
That's something yet:—Edgar I nothing am.
[Exit.]

Scene IV. Before Gloucester's Castle; Kent in the stocks.
[Enter Lear, Fool, and Gentleman.]

LEAR.

'Tis strange that they should so depart from home,
And not send back my messenger.

GENT.

As I learn'd,
The night before there was no purpose in them
Of this remove.

KENT.

Hail to thee, noble master!

LEAR.

Ha!
Mak'st thou this shame thy pastime?

KENT.

No, my lord.

FOOL.

Ha, ha! he wears cruel garters. Horses are tied by the
head; dogs and bears by the neck, monkeys by the loins, and
men by the legs: when a man is over-lusty at legs, then he
wears wooden nether-stocks.

LEAR.

What's he that hath so much thy place mistook
To set thee here?

KENT.

It is both he and she,
Your son and daughter.

LEAR.

No.

KENT.

Yes.

LEAR.

No, I say.

KENT.

I say, yea.

LEAR.

By Jupiter, I swear no.

KENT.

By Juno, I swear ay.

LEAR.

They durst not do't.

They would not, could not do't; 'tis worse than murder,

To do upon respect such violent outrage:

Resolve me, with all modest haste, which way

Thou mightst deserve or they impose this usage,

Coming from us.

KENT.

My lord, when at their home

I did commend your highness' letters to them,

Ere I was risen from the place that show'd

My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post,

Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth

From Goneril his mistress salutations;

Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,

Which presently they read: on whose contents,

They summon'd up their meiny, straight took horse;

Commanded me to follow and attend

The leisure of their answer; gave me cold looks:

And meeting here the other messenger,

Whose welcome I perceiv'd had poison'd mine,—

Being the very fellow which of late

Display'd so saucily against your highness,—

Having more man than wit about me, drew:

He rais'd the house with loud and coward cries.

Your son and daughter found this trespass worth

The shame which here it suffers.

FOOL.

Winter's not gone yet, if the wild geese fly that way.
 Fathers that wear rags
 Do make their children blind;
 But fathers that bear bags
 Shall see their children kind.
 Fortune, that arrant whore,
 Ne'er turns the key to th' poor.
 But for all this, thou shalt have as many dolours for thy
 daughters as thou canst tell in a year.

LEAR.

O, how this mother swells up toward my heart!
 Hysterica passio,—down, thou climbing sorrow,
 Thy element's below!—Where is this daughter?

KENT.

With the earl, sir, here within.

LEAR.

Follow me not;
 Stay here.
 [Exit.]

GENT.

Made you no more offence but what you speak of?

KENT.

None.
 How chance the king comes with so small a number?

FOOL.

An thou hadst been set i' the stocks for that question,
 thou hadst well deserved it.

KENT.

Why, fool?

FOOL.

We'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there's no
 labouring in the winter. All that follow their noses are led by
 their eyes but blind men; and there's not a nose among twenty
 but can smell him that's stinking. Let go thy hold when a great

wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it; but the great one that goes up the hill, let him draw thee after.

When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again: I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it. That sir which serves and seeks for gain, And follows but for form, Will pack when it begins to rain, And leave thee in the storm. But I will tarry; the fool will stay, And let the wise man fly: The knave turns fool that runs away; The fool no knave, perdy.

KENT.

Where learn'd you this, fool?

FOOL.

Not i' the stocks, fool.
[Re-enter Lear, with Gloucester.]

LEAR.

Deny to speak with me? They are sick? they are weary? They have travell'd all the night? Mere fetches; The images of revolt and flying off. Fetch me a better answer.

GLOU.

My dear lord,
You know the fiery quality of the duke;
How unremovable and fix'd he is
In his own course.

LEAR.

Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!—
Fiery? What quality? why, Gloucester, Gloucester,
I'd speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his wife.

GLOU.

Well, my good lord, I have inform'd them so.

LEAR.

Inform'd them! Dost thou understand me, man?

GLOU.

Ay, my good lord.

LEAR.

The King would speak with Cornwall; the dear father
 Would with his daughter speak, commands her service:
 Are they inform'd of this?—My breath and blood!—
 Fiery? the fiery duke?—Tell the hot duke that—
 No, but not yet: may be he is not well:
 Infirmity doth still neglect all office
 Whereto our health is bound: we are not ourselves
 When nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind
 To suffer with the body: I'll forbear;
 And am fallen out with my more headier will,
 To take the indispos'd and sickly fit
 For the sound man.—Death on my state! Wherefore
 [Looking on KENT.]
 Should he sit here? This act persuades me
 That this remotion of the duke and her
 Is practice only. Give me my servant forth.
 Go tell the duke and's wife I'd speak with them,
 Now, presently: bid them come forth and hear me,
 Or at their chamber door I'll beat the drum
 Till it cry 'Sleep to death.'

GLOU.

I would have all well betwixt you.
 [Exit.]

LEAR.

O me, my heart, my rising heart!—but down!

FOOL.

Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney did to the eels when she
 put 'em i' the paste alive; she knapped 'em o' the coxcombs with
 a stick and cried 'Down, wantons, down!' 'Twas her brother that,
 in pure kindness to his horse, buttered his hay.
 [Enter Cornwall, Regan, Gloucester, and Servants.]

LEAR.

Good-morrow to you both.

CORN.

Hail to your grace!
[Kent is set at liberty.]

REG.

I am glad to see your highness.

LEAR.

Regan, I think you are; I know what reason
I have to think so: if thou shouldst not be glad,
I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,
Sepulchring an adultress.—[To Kent] O, are you free?
Some other time for that.—Beloved Regan,
Thy sister's naught: O Regan, she hath tied
Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here,—
[Points to his heart.]
I can scarce speak to thee; thou'lt not believe
With how depriv'd a quality—O Regan!

REG.

I pray you, sir, take patience: I have hope
You less know how to value her desert
Than she to scant her duty.

LEAR.

Say, how is that?

REG.

I cannot think my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation: if, sir, perchance
She have restrain'd the riots of your followers,
'Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.

LEAR.

My curses on her!

REG.

O, sir, you are old;
Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine: you should be rul'd and led
By some discretion, that discerns your state
Better than you yourself. Therefore, I pray you,

That to our sister you do make return;
Say you have wrong'd her, sir.

LEAR.

Ask her forgiveness?
Do you but mark how this becomes the house:
'Dear daughter, I confess that I am old;
[Kneeling.]
Age is unnecessary: on my knees I beg
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food.'

REG.

Good sir, no more! These are unsightly tricks:
Return you to my sister.

LEAR.

[Rising.] Never, Regan:
She hath abated me of half my train;
Look'd black upon me; struck me with her tongue,
Most serpent-like, upon the very heart:—
All the stor'd vengeance of heaven fall
On her ingrateful top! Strike her young bones,
You taking airs, with lameness!

CORN.

Fie, sir, fie!

LEAR.

You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her scornful eyes! Infect her beauty,
You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the powerful sun,
To fall and blast her pride!

REG.

O the blest gods!
So will you wish on me when the rash mood is on.

LEAR.

No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse:
Thy tender-hefted nature shall not give
Thee o'er to harshness: her eyes are fierce; but thine
Do comfort, and not burn. 'Tis not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,

To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
 And, in conclusion, to oppose the bolt
 Against my coming in: thou better know'st
 The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
 Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude;
 Thy half o' the kingdom hast thou not forgot,
 Wherein I thee endow'd.

REG.

Good sir, to the purpose.

LEAR.

Who put my man i' the stocks?
 [Tucket within.]

CORN.

What trumpet's that?

REG.

I know't—my sister's: this approves her letter,
 That she would soon be here.
 [Enter Oswald.]
 Is your lady come?

LEAR.

This is a slave, whose easy-borrowed pride
 Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows.—
 Out, varlet, from my sight!

CORN.

What means your grace?

LEAR.

Who stock'd my servant? Regan, I have good hope
 Thou didst not know on't.—Who comes here? O heavens!
 [Enter Goneril.]
 If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
 Allow obedience, if yourselves are old,
 Make it your cause; send down, and take my part!—
 [To Goneril.] Art not ashamed to look upon this beard?—
 O Regan, wilt thou take her by the hand?

GON.

Why not by the hand, sir? How have I offended?
All's not offence that indiscretion finds
And dotage terms so.

LEAR.

O sides, you are too tough!
Will you yet hold?—How came my man i' the stocks?

CORN.

I set him there, sir: but his own disorders
Deserv'd much less advancement.

LEAR.

You? did you?

REG.

I pray you, father, being weak, seem so.
If, till the expiration of your month,
You will return and sojourn with my sister,
Dismissing half your train, come then to me:
I am now from home, and out of that provision
Which shall be needful for your entertainment.

LEAR.

Return to her, and fifty men dismiss'd?
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
To wage against the enmity o' the air;
To be a comrade with the wolf and owl,—
Necessity's sharp pinch!—Return with her?
Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took
Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
To knee his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg
To keep base life afoot.—Return with her?
Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter
To this detested groom.
[Pointing to Oswald.]

GON.

At your choice, sir.

LEAR.

I pr'ythee, daughter, do not make me mad:
I will not trouble thee, my child; farewell:

We'll no more meet, no more see one another:—
 But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter;
 Or rather a disease that's in my flesh,
 Which I must needs call mine: thou art a boil,
 A plague sore, an embossed carbuncle
 In my corrupted blood. But I'll not chide thee;
 Let shame come when it will, I do not call it:
 I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot
 Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove:
 Mend when thou canst; be better at thy leisure:
 I can be patient; I can stay with Regan,
 I and my hundred knights.

REG.

Not altogether so:
 I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
 For your fit welcome. Give ear, sir, to my sister;
 For those that mingle reason with your passion
 Must be content to think you old, and so—
 But she knows what she does.

LEAR.

Is this well spoken?

REG.

I dare avouch it, sir: what, fifty followers?
 Is it not well? What should you need of more?
 Yea, or so many, sith that both charge and danger
 Speak 'gainst so great a number? How in one house
 Should many people, under two commands,
 Hold amity? 'Tis hard; almost impossible.

GON.

Why might not you, my lord, receive attendance
 From those that she calls servants, or from mine?

REG.

Why not, my lord? If then they chanc'd to slack you,
 We could control them. If you will come to me,—
 For now I spy a danger,—I entreat you
 To bring but five-and-twenty: to no more
 Will I give place or notice.

LEAR.

I gave you all,—

REG.

And in good time you gave it.

LEAR.

Made you my guardians, my depositaries;
But kept a reservation to be follow'd
With such a number. What, must I come to you
With five-and-twenty, Regan? said you so?

REG.

And speak't again my lord; no more with me.

LEAR.

Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favour'd
When others are more wicked; not being the worst
Stands in some rank of praise.—
[To Goneril.] I'll go with thee:
Thy fifty yet doth double five-and-twenty,
And thou art twice her love.

GON.

Hear, me, my lord:
What need you five-and-twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?

REG.

What need one?

LEAR.

O, reason not the need: our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life is cheap as beast's: thou art a lady;
If only to go warm were gorgeous,
Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st
Which scarcely keeps thee warm.—But, for true need,—
You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!
You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,
As full of grief as age; wretched in both!

If it be you that stirs these daughters' hearts
 Against their father, fool me not so much
 To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger,
 And let not women's weapons, water-drops,
 Stain my man's cheeks!—No, you unnatural hags,
 I will have such revenges on you both
 That all the world shall,—I will do such things,—
 What they are yet, I know not; but they shall be
 The terrors of the earth. You think I'll weep;
 No, I'll not weep:—
 I have full cause of weeping; but this heart
 Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws
 Or ere I'll weep.—O fool, I shall go mad!
 [Exeunt Lear, Gloucester, Kent, and FOOL. Storm heard at a distance.]

CORN.

Let us withdraw; 'twill be a storm.

REG.

This house is little: the old man and his people
 Cannot be well bestow'd.

GON.

'Tis his own blame; hath put himself from rest
 And must needs taste his folly.

REG.

For his particular, I'll receive him gladly,
 But not one follower.

GON.

So am I purpos'd.
 Where is my lord of Gloucester?

CORN.

Followed the old man forth:—he is return'd.
 [Re-enter Gloucester.]

GLOU.

The king is in high rage.

CORN.

Whither is he going?

GLOU.

He calls to horse; but will I know not whither.

CORN.

'Tis best to give him way; he leads himself.

GON.

My lord, entreat him by no means to stay.

GLOU.

Alack, the night comes on, and the high winds
Do sorely ruffle; for many miles about
There's scarce a bush.

REG.

O, sir, to wilful men
The injuries that they themselves procure
Must be their schoolmasters. Shut up your doors:
He is attended with a desperate train;
And what they may incense him to, being apt
To have his ear abus'd, wisdom bids fear.

CORN.

Shut up your doors, my lord; 'tis a wild night:
My Regan counsels well: come out o' the storm.
[Exeunt.]

Act III

Scene I. A Heath.

[A storm with thunder and lightning. Enter Kent and a Gentleman, meeting.]

KENT.

Who's there, besides foul weather?

GENT.

One minded like the weather, most unquietly.

KENT.

I know you. Where's the king?

GENT.

Contending with the fretful elements;
 Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,
 Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main,
 That things might change or cease; tears his white hair,
 Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,
 Catch in their fury and make nothing of;
 Strives in his little world of man to outscorn
 The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.
 This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear would couch,
 The lion and the belly-pinched wolf
 Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,
 And bids what will take all.

KENT.

But who is with him?

GENT.

None but the fool, who labours to out-jest
 His heart-struck injuries.

KENT.

Sir, I do know you;
 And dare, upon the warrant of my note,
 Commend a dear thing to you. There is division,
 Although as yet the face of it be cover'd
 With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall;
 Who have,—as who have not, that their great stars
 Throne and set high?—servants, who seem no less,
 Which are to France the spies and speculations
 Intelligent of our state; what hath been seen,
 Either in snuffs and packings of the dukes;
 Or the hard rein which both of them have borne
 Against the old kind king; or something deeper,
 Whereof, perchance, these are but furnishings;—
 But, true it is, from France there comes a power
 Into this scatter'd kingdom; who already,
 Wise in our negligence, have secret feet
 In some of our best ports, and are at point
 To show their open banner.—Now to you:
 If on my credit you dare build so far
 To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
 Some that will thank you making just report

Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow
 The king hath cause to plain.
 I am a gentleman of blood and breeding;
 And from some knowledge and assurance offer
 This office to you.

GENT.

I will talk further with you.

KENT.

No, do not.
 For confirmation that I am much more
 Than my out wall, open this purse, and take
 What it contains. If you shall see Cordelia,—
 As fear not but you shall,—show her this ring;
 And she will tell you who your fellow is
 That yet you do not know. Fie on this storm!
 I will go seek the king.

GENT.

Give me your hand: have you no more to say?

KENT.

Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet,—
 That, when we have found the king,—in which your pain
 That way, I'll this,—he that first lights on him
 Holla the other.
 [Exeunt severally.]

Scene II. Another part of the heath. Storm continues.
 [Enter Lear and FOOL.]

LEAR.

Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
 You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
 Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
 You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
 Vaunt couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
 Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
 Strike flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
 Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once,
 That make ingrateful man!

FOOL.

O nuncle, court holy water in a dry house is better than this
rain water out o' door. Good nuncle, in; and ask thy daughters
blessing: here's a night pities nether wise men nor fools.

LEAR.

Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! spout, rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire are my daughters:
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children;
You owe me no subscription: then let fall
Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man:—
But yet I call you servile ministers,
That will with two pernicious daughters join
Your high-engender'd battles 'gainst a head
So old and white as this! O! O! 'tis foul!

FOOL.

He that has a house to put's head in has a good head-piece.
The codpiece that will house
Before the head has any,
The head and he shall louse:
So beggars marry many.
The man that makes his toe
What he his heart should make
Shall of a corn cry woe,
And turn his sleep to wake.
—for there was never yet fair woman but she made mouths in a
glass.

LEAR.

No, I will be the pattern of all patience;
I will say nothing.
[Enter KENT.]

KENT.

Who's there?

FOOL.

Marry, here's grace and a codpiece; that's a wise man and a fool.

KENT.

Alas, sir, are you here? Things that love night
 Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies
 Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
 And make them keep their caves; since I was man,
 Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
 Such groans of roaring wind and rain I never
 Remember to have heard: man's nature cannot carry
 Th' affliction nor the fear.

LEAR.

Let the great gods,
 That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
 Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
 That hast within thee undivulged crimes
 Unwhipp'd of justice: hide thee, thou bloody hand;
 Thou perjur'd, and thou simular man of virtue
 That art incestuous: caitiff, to pieces shake
 That under covert and convenient seeming
 Hast practis'd on man's life: close pent-up guilts,
 Rive your concealing continents, and cry
 These dreadful summoners grace.—I am a man
 More sinn'd against than sinning.

KENT.

Alack, bareheaded!
 Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;
 Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest:
 Repose you there, whilst I to this hard house,—
 More harder than the stones whereof 'tis rais'd;
 Which even but now, demanding after you,
 Denied me to come in,—return, and force
 Their scanted courtesy.

LEAR.

My wits begin to turn.—
 Come on, my boy. how dost, my boy? art cold?
 I am cold myself.—Where is this straw, my fellow?
 The art of our necessities is strange,
 That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.—
 Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
 That's sorry yet for thee.

FOOL.

[Singing.]

He that has and a little tiny wit—
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,—
Must make content with his fortunes fit,
For the rain it raineth every day.

LEAR.

True, boy.—Come, bring us to this hovel.
[Exeunt Lear and KENT.]

FOOL.

This is a brave night to cool a courtezan.—
I'll speak a prophecy ere I go:—
When priests are more in word than matter;
When brewers mar their malt with water;
When nobles are their tailors' tutors;
No heretics burn'd, but wenches' suitors;
When every case in law is right;
No squire in debt nor no poor knight;
When slanders do not live in tongues;
Nor cutpurses come not to throngs;
When usurers tell their gold i' the field;
And bawds and whores do churches build;—
Then shall the realm of Albion
Come to great confusion:
Then comes the time, who lives to see't,
That going shall be us'd with feet.
This prophecy Merlin shall make; for I live before his time.
[Exit.]

Scene III. A Room in Gloucester's Castle.

[Enter Gloucester and Edmund.]

GLOU.

Alack, alack, Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing. When I
desired their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the
use of mine own house; charged me on pain of perpetual displeasure,
neither to speak of him, entreat for him, nor any way sustain him.

EDM.

Most savage and unnatural!

GLOU.

Go to; say you nothing. There is division betwixt the dukes,
and a worse matter than that: I have received a letter this
night;—'tis dangerous to be spoken;—I have locked the letter in
my closet: these injuries the king now bears will be revenged
home; there's part of a power already footed: we must incline to
the king. I will seek him, and privily relieve him: go you and
maintain talk with the duke, that my charity be not of him
perceived: if he ask for me, I am ill, and gone to bed. If I
die for it, as no less is threatened me, the king my old master
must be relieved. There is some strange thing toward, Edmund;
pray you be careful.
[Exit.]

EDM.

This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the duke
Instantly know; and of that letter too:—
This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me
That which my father loses,—no less than all:
The younger rises when the old doth fall.
[Exit.]

Scene IV. A part of the Heath with a Hovel. Storm continues.
[Enter Lear, Kent, and FOOL.]

KENT.

Here is the place, my lord; good my lord, enter:
The tyranny of the open night's too rough
For nature to endure.

LEAR.

Let me alone.

KENT.

Good my lord, enter here.

LEAR.

Wilt break my heart?

KENT.

I had rather break mine own. Good my lord, enter.

LEAR.

Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious storm
 Invades us to the skin: so 'tis to thee
 But where the greater malady is fix'd,
 The lesser is scarce felt. Thou'dst shun a bear;
 But if thy flight lay toward the raging sea,
 Thou'dst meet the bear i' the mouth. When the mind's free,
 The body's delicate: the tempest in my mind
 Doth from my senses take all feeling else
 Save what beats there.—Filial ingratitude!
 Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand
 For lifting food to't?—But I will punish home:—
 No, I will weep no more.—In such a night
 To shut me out!—Pour on; I will endure:—
 In such a night as this! O Regan, Goneril!—
 Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all,—
 O, that way madness lies; let me shun that;
 No more of that.

KENT.

Good my lord, enter here.

LEAR.

Pr'ythee go in thyself; seek thine own ease:
 This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
 On things would hurt me more.—But I'll go in.—
 [To the FOOL.] In, boy; go first.—You houseless poverty,—
 Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.—
 [Fool goes in.]
 Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
 That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
 How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
 Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
 From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en
 Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;
 Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
 That thou mayst shake the superflux to them
 And show the heavens more just.

EDG.

[Within.] Fathom and half, fathom and half! Poor Tom!
 [The Fool runs out from the hovel.]

FOOL.

Come not in here, nuncle, here's a spirit.
Help me, help me!

KENT.

Give me thy hand.—Who's there?

FOOL.

A spirit, a spirit: he says his name's poor Tom.

KENT.

What art thou that dost grumble there i' the straw?
Come forth.
[Enter Edgar, disguised as a madman.]

EDG.

Away! the foul fiend follows me!—
Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind.—
Hum! go to thy cold bed, and warm thee.

LEAR.

Didst thou give all to thy two daughters?
And art thou come to this?

EDG.

Who gives anything to poor Tom? whom the foul fiend hath led
through fire and through flame, through ford and whirlpool, o'er
bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow and
halters in his pew, set ratsbane by his porridge; made him proud
of heart, to ride on a bay trotting horse over four-inched
bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor.—Bless thy five
wits!—Tom's a-cold.—O, do de, do de, do de.—Bless thee from
whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking! Do poor Tom some charity,
whom the foul fiend vexes:—there could I have him now,—and
there,—and there again, and there.
[Storm continues.]

LEAR.

What, have his daughters brought him to this pass?—
Couldst thou save nothing? Didst thou give 'em all?

FOOL.

Nay, he reserv'd a blanket, else we had been all shamed.

LEAR.

Now all the plagues that in the pendulous air
Hang fated o'er men's faults light on thy daughters!

KENT.

He hath no daughters, sir.

LEAR.

Death, traitor! nothing could have subdu'd nature
To such a lowness but his unkind daughters.—
Is it the fashion that discarded fathers
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?
Judicious punishment! 'twas this flesh begot
Those pelican daughters.

EDG.

Pillicock sat on Pillicock-hill:—
Halloo, halloo, loo loo!

FOOL.

This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.

EDG.

Take heed o' th' foul fiend: obey thy parents; keep thy word
justly; swear not; commit not with man's sworn spouse; set not
thy sweet heart on proud array. Tom's a-cold.

LEAR.

What hast thou been?

EDG.

A serving-man, proud in heart and mind; that curled my hair;
wore gloves in my cap; served the lust of my mistress' heart, and
did the act of darkness with her; swore as many oaths as I spake
words, and broke them in the sweet face of heaven: one that
slept in the contriving of lust, and waked to do it: wine loved
I deeply, dice dearly; and in woman out-paramour'd the Turk;
false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox
in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey.
Let not the creaking of shoes nor the rustling of silks betray
thy poor heart to woman: keep thy foot out of brothel, thy hand
out of placket, thy pen from lender's book, and defy the foul
fiend.—Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind: says

suum, mun, nonny. Dolphin my boy, boy, sessa! let him trot by.
[Storm still continues.]

LEAR.

Why, thou wert better in thy grave than to answer with thy
uncovered body this extremity of the skies.—Is man no more than
this? Consider him well. Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast
no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume.—Ha! here's three
on's are sophisticated! Thou art the thing itself:
unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked
animal as thou art.—Off, off, you lendings!—Come, unbutton
here.
[Tears off his clothes.]

FOOL.

Pr'ythee, nuncle, be contented; 'tis a naughty night to swim
in.—Now a little fire in a wild field were like an old lecher's
heart,—a small spark, all the rest on's body cold.—Look, here
comes a walking fire.

EDG.

This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet: he begins at curfew,
and walks till the first cock; he gives the web and the pin,
squints the eye, and makes the harelip; mildews the white wheat,
and hurts the poor creature of earth.
Swiethold footed thrice the old;
He met the nightmare, and her nine-fold;
Bid her alight
And her troth plight,
And aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!

KENT.

How fares your grace?
[Enter Gloucester with a torch.]

LEAR.

What's he?

KENT.

Who's there? What is't you seek?

GLOU.

What are you there? Your names?

EDG.

Poor Tom; that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the todpole, the wall-newt and the water; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets; swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; who is whipped from tithing to tithing, and stocked, punished, and imprisoned; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapons to wear;—
But mice and rats, and such small deer,
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.
Beware my follower.—Peace, Smulkin; peace, thou fiend!

GLOU.

What, hath your grace no better company?

EDG.

The prince of darkness is a gentleman:
Modo he's call'd, and Mahu.

GLOU.

Our flesh and blood, my lord, is grown so vile
That it doth hate what gets it.

EDG.

Poor Tom's a-cold.

GLOU.

Go in with me: my duty cannot suffer
To obey in all your daughters' hard commands;
Though their injunction be to bar my doors,
And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you,
Yet have I ventur'd to come seek you out
And bring you where both fire and food is ready.

LEAR.

First let me talk with this philosopher.—
What is the cause of thunder?

KENT.

Good my lord, take his offer; go into the house.

LEAR.

I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban.—
What is your study?

EDG.

How to prevent the fiend and to kill vermin.

LEAR.

Let me ask you one word in private.

KENT.

Importune him once more to go, my lord;
His wits begin to unsettle.

GLOU.

Canst thou blame him?
His daughters seek his death:—ah, that good Kent!—
He said it would be thus,—poor banish'd man!—
Thou say'st the king grows mad; I'll tell thee, friend,
I am almost mad myself: I had a son,
Now outlaw'd from my blood; he sought my life
But lately, very late: I lov'd him, friend,—
No father his son dearer: true to tell thee,
[Storm continues.]
The grief hath craz'd my wits.—What a night's this!—
I do beseech your grace,—

LEAR.

O, cry you mercy, sir.—
Noble philosopher, your company.

EDG.

Tom's a-cold.

GLOU.

In, fellow, there, into the hovel; keep thee warm.

LEAR.

Come, let's in all.

KENT.

This way, my lord.

LEAR.

With him;
I will keep still with my philosopher.

KENT.

Good my lord, soothe him; let him take the fellow.

GLOU.

Take him you on.

KENT.

Sirrah, come on; go along with us.

LEAR.

Come, good Athenian.

GLOU.

No words, no words: hush.

EDG.

Child Rowland to the dark tower came,
His word was still—Fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man.
[Exeunt.]

Scene V. A Room in Gloucester's Castle.

[Enter Cornwall and Edmund.]

CORN.

I will have my revenge ere I depart his house.

EDM.

How, my lord, I may be censured, that nature thus gives way to
loyalty, something fears me to think of.

CORN.

I now perceive it was not altogether your brother's evil
disposition made him seek his death; but a provoking merit, set
a-work by a reproveable badness in himself.

EDM.

How malicious is my fortune, that I must repent to be just! This
is the letter he spoke of, which approves him an intelligent
party to the advantages of France. O heavens! that this treason
were not—or not I the detector!

CORN.

Go with me to the duchess.

EDM.

If the matter of this paper be certain, you have mighty business in hand.

CORN.

True or false, it hath made thee earl of Gloucester. Seek out where thy father is, that he may be ready for our apprehension.

EDM.

[Aside.] If I find him comforting the king, it will stuff his suspicion more fully.—I will persevere in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood.

CORN.

I will lay trust upon thee; and thou shalt find a dearer father in my love.

[Exeunt.]

Scene VI. A Chamber in a Farmhouse adjoining the Castle.
[Enter Gloucester, Lear, Kent, Fool, and Edgar.]

GLOU.

Here is better than the open air; take it thankfully. I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can: I will not be long from you.

KENT.

All the power of his wits have given way to his impatience:—the gods reward your kindness!
[Exit Gloucester.]

EDG.

Frateretto calls me; and tells me Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness.—Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.

FOOL.

Pr'ythee, nuncle, tell me whether a madman be a gentleman or a yeoman.

LEAR.

A king, a king!

FOOL.

No, he's a yeoman that has a gentleman to his son; for he's a mad yeoman that sees his son a gentleman before him.

LEAR.

To have a thousand with red burning spits
Come hissing in upon 'em,—

EDG.

The foul fiend bites my back.

FOOL.

He's mad that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health,
a boy's love, or a whore's oath.

LEAR.

It shall be done; I will arraign them straight.—
[To Edgar.] Come, sit thou here, most learned justicer—
[To the FOOL.] Thou, sapient sir, sit here. Now, you she-foxes!—

EDG.

Look, where he stands and glares!—Want'st thou eyes at trial,
madam?
Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me,—

FOOL.

Her boat hath a leak,
And she must not speak
Why she dares not come over to thee.

EDG.

The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale.
Hoppedance cries in Tom's belly for two white herring. Croak not,
black angel; I have no food for thee.

KENT.

How do you, sir? Stand you not so amaz'd;
Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

LEAR.

I'll see their trial first.—Bring in their evidence.
[To Edgar.] Thou, robed man of justice, take thy place;—
[To the FOOL.] And thou, his yokefellow of equity,

Bench by his side:—[To KENT.] you are o' the commission,
Sit you too.

EDG.

Let us deal justly.
Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?
Thy sheep be in the corn;
And for one blast of thy minikin mouth
Thy sheep shall take no harm.
Purr! the cat is gray.

LEAR.

Arraign her first; 'tis Goneril. I here take my oath before
this honourable assembly, she kicked the poor king her father.

FOOL.

Come hither, mistress. Is your name Goneril?

LEAR.

She cannot deny it.

FOOL.

Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool.

LEAR.

And here's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim
What store her heart is made on.—Stop her there!
Arms, arms! sword! fire!—Corruption in the place!—
False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape?

EDG.

Bless thy five wits!

KENT.

O pity!—Sir, where is the patience now
That you so oft have boasted to retain?

EDG.

[Aside.] My tears begin to take his part so much
They'll mar my counterfeiting.

LEAR.

The little dogs and all,
Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart, see, they bark at me.

EDG.

Tom will throw his head at them.—Avaunt, you curs!
 Be thy mouth or black or white,
 Tooth that poisons if it bite;
 Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,
 Hound or spaniel, brach or lym,
 Or bobtail tike or trundle-tail,—
 Tom will make them weep and wail;
 For, with throwing thus my head,
 Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.
 Do de, de, de. Sessa! Come, march to wakes and fairs and market-
 towns. Poor Tom, thy horn is dry.

LEAR.

Then let them anatomize Regan; see what breeds about her
 heart. Is there any cause in nature that makes these hard
 hearts?—[To Edgar.] You, sir, I entertain you for one of my
 hundred; only I do not like the fashion of your garments: you'll
 say they are Persian; but let them be changed.

KENT.

Now, good my lord, lie here and rest awhile.

LEAR.

Make no noise, make no noise; draw the curtains:
 So, so. We'll go to supper i' the morning.

FOOL.

And I'll go to bed at noon.
 [Re-enter Gloucester.]

GLOU.

Come hither, friend: where is the king my master?

KENT.

Here, sir; but trouble him not,—his wits are gone.

GLOU.

Good friend, I pr'ythee, take him in thy arms;
 I have o'erheard a plot of death upon him;
 There is a litter ready; lay him in't
 And drive towards Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet
 Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master;

If thou shouldst dally half an hour, his life,
 With thine, and all that offer to defend him,
 Stand in assured loss: take up, take up;
 And follow me, that will to some provision
 Give thee quick conduct.

KENT.

Oppressed nature sleeps:—
 This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken sinews,
 Which, if convenience will not allow,
 Stand in hard cure.—Come, help to bear thy master;
 [To the FOOL.] Thou must not stay behind.

GLOU.

Come, come, away!
 [Exeunt Kent, Gloucester, and the Fool, bearing off LEAR.]

EDG.

When we our betters see bearing our woes,
 We scarcely think our miseries our foes.
 Who alone suffers suffers most i' the mind,
 Leaving free things and happy shows behind:
 But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip
 When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
 How light and portable my pain seems now,
 When that which makes me bend makes the king bow;
 He childed as I fathered!—Tom, away!
 Mark the high noises; and thyself bewray,
 When false opinion, whose wrong thought defiles thee,
 In thy just proof repeals and reconciles thee.
 What will hap more to-night, safe 'scape the king!
 Lurk, lurk.
 [Exit.]

Scene VII. A Room in Gloucester's Castle.

[Enter Cornwall, Regan, Goneril, Edmund, and Servants.]

CORN.

Post speedily to my lord your husband, show him this letter:—
 the army of France is landed.—Seek out the traitor Gloucester.
 [Exeunt some of the Servants.]

REG.

Hang him instantly.

GON.

Pluck out his eyes.

CORN.

Leave him to my displeasure.—Edmund, keep you our sister company: the revenges we are bound to take upon your traitorous father are not fit for your beholding. Advise the duke where you are going, to a most festinate preparation: we are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift and intelligent betwixt us. Farewell, dear sister:—farewell, my lord of Gloucester.

[Enter Oswald.]

How now! Where's the king?

OSW.

My lord of Gloucester hath convey'd him hence:
Some five or six and thirty of his knights,
Hot questrists after him, met him at gate;
Who, with some other of the lord's dependants,
Are gone with him towards Dover: where they boast
To have well-armed friends.

CORN.

Get horses for your mistress.

GON.

Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.

CORN.

Edmund, farewell.

[Exeunt Goneril, Edmund, and Oswald.]

Go seek the traitor Gloucester,
Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us.

[Exeunt other Servants.]

Though well we may not pass upon his life
Without the form of justice, yet our power
Shall do a courtesy to our wrath, which men
May blame, but not control.—Who's there? the traitor?

[Re-enter servants, with Gloucester.]

REG.

Ingrateful fox! 'tis he.

CORN.

Bind fast his corky arms.

GLOU.

What mean your graces?—Good my friends, consider
You are my guests: do me no foul play, friends.

CORN.

Bind him, I say.
[Servants bind him.]

REG.

Hard, hard.—O filthy traitor!

GLOU.

Unmerciful lady as you are, I'm none.

CORN.

To this chair bind him.—Villain, thou shalt find,—
[Regan plucks his beard.]

GLOU.

By the kind gods, 'tis most ignobly done
To pluck me by the beard.

REG.

So white, and such a traitor!

GLOU.

Naughty lady,
These hairs which thou dost ravish from my chin
Will quicken, and accuse thee: I am your host:
With robber's hands my hospitable favours
You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?

CORN.

Come, sir, what letters had you late from France?

REG.

Be simple-answer'd, for we know the truth.

CORN.

And what confederacy have you with the traitors
Late footed in the kingdom?

REG.

To whose hands have you sent the lunatic king?
Speak.

GLOU.

I have a letter guessingly set down,
Which came from one that's of a neutral heart,
And not from one oppos'd.

CORN.

Cunning.

REG.

And false.

CORN.

Where hast thou sent the king?

GLOU.

To Dover.

REG.

Wherefore to Dover? Wast thou not charg'd at peril,—

CORN.

Wherefore to Dover? Let him first answer that.

GLOU.

I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the course.

REG.

Wherefore to Dover, sir?

GLOU.

Because I would not see thy cruel nails
Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor thy fierce sister
In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.
The sea, with such a storm as his bare head
In hell-black night endur'd, would have buoy'd up,
And quench'd the stelled fires; yet, poor old heart,
He holp the heavens to rain.
If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that stern time,
Thou shouldst have said, 'Good porter, turn the key.'

All cruels else subscrib'd:—but I shall see
The winged vengeance overtake such children.

CORN.

See't shalt thou never.—Fellows, hold the chair.
Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot.
[Gloucester is held down in his chair, while Cornwall plucks out one
of his eyes and sets his foot on it.]

GLOU.

He that will think to live till he be old,
Give me some help!—O cruel!—O ye gods!

REG.

One side will mock another; the other too!

CORN.

If you see vengeance,—

FIRST SERV.

Hold your hand, my lord:
I have serv'd you ever since I was a child;
But better service have I never done you
Than now to bid you hold.

REG.

How now, you dog!

FIRST SERV.

If you did wear a beard upon your chin,
I'd shake it on this quarrel. What do you mean?

CORN.

My villain!
[Draws, and runs at him.]

FIRST SERV.

Nay, then, come on, and take the chance of anger.
[Draws. They fight. Cornwall is wounded.]

REG.

Give me thy sword [to another servant.]—A peasant stand up thus?
[Snatches a sword, comes behind, and stabs him.]

FIRST SERV.

O, I am slain!—My lord, you have one eye left
To see some mischief on thim. O!
[Dies.]

CORN.

Lest it see more, prevent it.—Out, vile jelly!
Where is thy lustre now?
[Tears out Gloucester's other eye and throws it on the ground.]

GLOU.

All dark and comfortless.—Where's my son Edmund?
Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature
To quit this horrid act.

REG.

Out, treacherous villain!
Thou call'st on him that hates thee: it was he
That made the overture of thy treasons to us;
Who is too good to pity thee.

GLOU.

O my follies! Then Edgar was abus'd.—
Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him!

REG.

Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
His way to Dover.—How is't, my lord? How look you?

CORN.

I have receiv'd a hurt:—follow me, lady.—
Turn out that eyeless villain;—throw this slave
Upon the dunghill.—Regan, I bleed apace:
Untimely comes this hurt: give me your arm.
[Exit Cornwall, led by Regan; Servants unbind Gloucester and lead
him out.]

SECOND SERV.

I'll never care what wickedness I do,
If this man come to good.

THIRD SERV.

If she live long,

And in the end meet the old course of death,
Women will all turn monsters.

SECOND SERV.

Let's follow the old earl, and get the Bedlam
To lead him where he would: his roguish madness
Allows itself to anything.

THIRD SERV.

Go thou: I'll fetch some flax and whites of eggs
To apply to his bleeding face. Now heaven help him!
[Exeunt severally.]

Act IV

Scene I. The heath.

[Enter Edgar.]

EDG.

Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd,
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear:
The lamentable change is from the best;
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome, then,
Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace!
The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst
Owes nothing to thy blasts.—But who comes here?
[Enter Gloucester, led by an Old Man.]
My father, poorly led?—World, world, O world!
But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,
Life would not yield to age.

Old Man.

O my good lord,
I have been your tenant, and your father's tenant,
These fourscore years.

GLOU.

Away, get thee away; good friend, be gone:
Thy comforts can do me no good at all;
Thee they may hurt.

Old Man.

You cannot see your way.

GLOU.

I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;
 I stumbled when I saw: full oft 'tis seen
 Our means secure us, and our mere defects
 Prove our commodities.—O dear son Edgar,
 The food of thy abused father's wrath!
 Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
 I'd say I had eyes again!
 Old Man.
 How now! Who's there?

EDG.

[Aside.] O gods! Who is't can say 'I am at the worst?'
 I am worse than e'er I was.
 Old Man.
 'Tis poor mad Tom.

EDG.

[Aside.] And worse I may be yet. The worst is not
 So long as we can say "This is the worst."
 Old Man.
 Fellow, where goest?

GLOU.

Is it a beggar-man?
 Old Man.
 Madman and beggar too.

GLOU.

He has some reason, else he could not beg.
 I' the last night's storm I such a fellow saw;
 Which made me think a man a worm: my son
 Came then into my mind, and yet my mind
 Was then scarce friends with him: I have heard more since.
 As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods,—
 They kill us for their sport.

EDG.

[Aside.] How should this be?—
 Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,
 Angering itself and others.—Bless thee, master!

GLOU.

Is that the naked fellow?
Old Man.
Ay, my lord.

GLOU.

Then pr'ythee get thee gone: if for my sake
Thou wilt o'ertake us, hence a mile or twain,
I' the way toward Dover, do it for ancient love;
And bring some covering for this naked soul,
Which I'll entreat to lead me.
Old Man.
Alack, sir, he is mad.

GLOU.

'Tis the time's plague when madmen lead the blind.
Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure;
Above the rest, be gone.
Old Man.
I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on't what will.
[Exit.]

GLOU.

Sirrah naked fellow,—

EDG.

Poor Tom's a-cold.
[Aside.] I cannot daub it further.

GLOU.

Come hither, fellow.

EDG.

[Aside.] And yet I must.—Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed.

GLOU.

Know'st thou the way to Dover?

EDG.

Both stile and gate, horseway and footpath. Poor Tom hath been
scared out of his good wits:—bless thee, good man's son, from
the foul fiend! Five fiends have been in poor Tom at once; of

lust, as Obidicut; Hobbididence, prince of dumbness; Mahu, of stealing; Modo, of murder; Flibbertigibbet, of mopping and mowing,—who since possesses chambermaids and waiting women. So, bless thee, master!

GLOU.

Here, take this purse, thou whom the heavens' plagues
Have humbled to all strokes: that I am wretched
Makes thee the happier;—heavens, deal so still!
Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he does not feel, feel your power quickly;
So distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough.—Dost thou know Dover?

EDG.

Ay, master.

GLOU.

There is a cliff, whose high and bending head
Looks fearfully in the confined deep:
Bring me but to the very brim of it,
And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear
With something rich about me: from that place
I shall no leading need.

EDG.

Give me thy arm:
Poor Tom shall lead thee.
[Exeunt.]

Scene II. Before the Duke of Albany's Palace.
Enter Goneril and Edmund; Oswald meeting them.]

GON.

Welcome, my lord: I marvel our mild husband
Not met us on the way.—Now, where's your master?

OSW.

Madam, within; but never man so chang'd.
I told him of the army that was landed;
He smil'd at it: I told him you were coming;
His answer was, 'The worse.' Of Gloucester's treachery

And of the loyal service of his son
 When I inform'd him, then he call'd me sot
 And told me I had turn'd the wrong side out:—
 What most he should dislike seems pleasant to him;
 What like, offensive.

GON.

[To Edmund.] Then shall you go no further.
 It is the cowish terror of his spirit,
 That dares not undertake: he'll not feel wrongs
 Which tie him to an answer. Our wishes on the way
 May prove effects. Back, Edmund, to my brother;
 Hasten his musters and conduct his powers:
 I must change arms at home, and give the distaff
 Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant
 Shall pass between us; ere long you are like to hear,
 If you dare venture in your own behalf,
 A mistress's command. [Giving a favour.]
 Wear this; spare speech;
 Decline your head: this kiss, if it durst speak,
 Would stretch thy spirits up into the air:—
 Conceive, and fare thee well.

EDM.

Yours in the ranks of death!
 [Exit Edmund.]

GON.

My most dear Gloucester.
 O, the difference of man and man!
 To thee a woman's services are due:
 My fool usurps my body.

OSW.

Madam, here comes my lord.
 [Exit.]
 [Enter Albany.]

GON.

I have been worth the whistle.

ALB.

O Goneril!

You are not worth the dust which the rude wind
 Blows in your face! I fear your disposition:
 That nature which contemns its origin
 Cannot be bordered certain in itself;
 She that herself will sliver and disbranch
 From her material sap, perforce must wither
 And come to deadly use.

GON.

No more; the text is foolish.

ALB.

Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile:
 Filths savour but themselves. What have you done?
 Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd?
 A father, and a gracious aged man,
 Whose reverence even the head-lugg'd bear would lick,
 Most barbarous, most degenerate, have you maddened.
 Could my good brother suffer you to do it?
 A man, a prince, by him so benefited!
 If that the heavens do not their visible spirits
 Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,
 It will come,
 Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
 Like monsters of the deep.

GON.

Milk-liver'd man!
 That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs;
 Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning
 Thine honour from thy suffering; that not know'st
 Fools do those villains pity who are punish'd
 Ere they have done their mischief. Where's thy drum?
 France spreads his banners in our noiseless land;
 With plumed helm thy slayer begins threats;
 Whiles thou, a moral fool, sitt'st still, and criest
 'Alack, why does he so?'

ALB.

See thyself, devil!
 Proper deformity seems not in the fiend
 So horrid as in woman.

GON.

O vain fool!

ALB.

Thou changed and self-cover'd thing, for shame!
 Be-monster not thy feature! Were't my fitness
 To let these hands obey my blood.
 They are apt enough to dislocate and tear
 Thy flesh and bones:—howe'er thou art a fiend,
 A woman's shape doth shield thee.

GON.

Marry, your manhood now!
 [Enter a Messenger.]

ALB.

What news?

MESS.

O, my good lord, the Duke of Cornwall's dead;
 Slain by his servant, going to put out
 The other eye of Gloucester.

ALB.

Gloucester's eyes!

MESS.

A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse,
 Oppos'd against the act, bending his sword
 To his great master; who, thereat enrag'd,
 Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead;
 But not without that harmful stroke which since
 Hath pluck'd him after.

ALB.

This shows you are above,
 You justicers, that these our nether crimes
 So speedily can venge!—But, O poor Gloucester!
 Lost he his other eye?

MESS.

Both, both, my lord.—
 This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer;
 'Tis from your sister.

GON.

[Aside.] One way I like this well;
But being widow, and my Gloucester with her,
May all the building in my fancy pluck
Upon my hateful life: another way
The news is not so tart.—I'll read, and answer.
[Exit.]

ALB.

Where was his son when they did take his eyes?

MESS.

Come with my lady hither.

ALB.

He is not here.

MESS.

No, my good lord; I met him back again.

ALB.

Knows he the wickedness?

MESS.

Ay, my good lord. 'Twas he inform'd against him;
And quit the house on purpose, that their punishment
Might have the freer course.

ALB.

Gloucester, I live
To thank thee for the love thou show'dst the king,
And to revenge thine eyes.—Come hither, friend:
Tell me what more thou know'st.
[Exeunt.]

Scene III. The French camp near Dover.

[Enter Kent and a Gentleman.]

KENT.

Why the king of France is so suddenly gone back know you the reason?

GENT.

Something he left imperfect in the state, which since his coming forth is thought of, which imports to the kingdom so much fear and danger that his personal return was most required and necessary.

KENT.

Who hath he left behind him general?

GENT.

The Mareschal of France, Monsieur La Far.

KENT.

Did your letters pierce the queen to any demonstration of grief?

GENT.

Ay, sir; she took them, read them in my presence;
And now and then an ample tear trill'd down
Her delicate cheek: it seem'd she was a queen
Over her passion; who, most rebel-like,
Sought to be king o'er her.

KENT.

O, then it mov'd her.

GENT.

Not to a rage: patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen
Sunshine and rain at once: her smiles and tears
Were like, a better day: those happy smilets
That play'd on her ripe lip seem'd not to know
What guests were in her eyes; which parted thence
As pearls from diamonds dropp'd.—In brief, sorrow
Would be a rarity most belov'd, if all
Could so become it.

KENT.

Made she no verbal question?

GENT.

Faith, once or twice she heav'd the name of 'father'
Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart;
Cried 'Sisters, sisters!—Shame of ladies! sisters!

Kent! father! sisters! What, i' the storm? i' the night?
 Let pity not be believ'd!—There she shook
 The holy water from her heavenly eyes,
 And clamour moisten'd: then away she started
 To deal with grief alone.

KENT.

It is the stars,
 The stars above us, govern our conditions;
 Else one self mate and mate could not beget
 Such different issues. You spoke not with her since?

GENT.

No.

KENT.

Was this before the king return'd?

GENT.

No, since.

KENT.

Well, sir, the poor distressed Lear's i' the town;
 Who sometime, in his better tune, remembers
 What we are come about, and by no means
 Will yield to see his daughter.

GENT.

Why, good sir?

KENT.

A sovereign shame so elbows him: his own unkindness,
 That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her
 To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights
 To his dog-hearted daughters,—these things sting
 His mind so venomously that burning shame
 Detains him from Cordelia.

GENT.

Alack, poor gentleman!

KENT.

Of Albany's and Cornwall's powers you heard not?

GENT.

'Tis so; they are a-foot.

KENT.

Well, sir, I'll bring you to our master Lear
And leave you to attend him: some dear cause
Will in concealment wrap me up awhile;
When I am known aright, you shall not grieve
Lending me this acquaintance. I pray you go
Along with me.

[Exeunt.]

Scene IV. The French camp. A Tent.

[Enter Cordelia, Physician, and Soldiers.]

COR.

Alack, 'tis he: why, he was met even now
As mad as the vex'd sea; singing aloud;
Crown'd with rank fumiter and furrow weeds,
With harlocks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,
Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow
In our sustaining corn.—A century send forth;
Search every acre in the high-grown field,
And bring him to our eye. [Exit an

OFFICER.]

What can man's wisdom
In the restoring his bereaved sense?
He that helps him take all my outward worth.

PHYS.

There is means, madam:
Our foster nurse of nature is repose,
The which he lacks; that to provoke in him
Are many simples operative, whose power
Will close the eye of anguish.

COR.

All bless'd secrets,
All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
Spring with my tears! be aidant and remediate
In the good man's distress!—Seek, seek for him;
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
That wants the means to lead it.

[Enter a Messenger.]

MESS.

News, madam;
The British powers are marching hitherward.

COR.

'Tis known before; our preparation stands
In expectation of them.—O dear father,
It is thy business that I go about;
Therefore great France
My mourning and important tears hath pitied.
No blown ambition doth our arms incite,
But love, dear love, and our ag'd father's right:
Soon may I hear and see him!
[Exeunt.]

Scene V. A Room in Gloucester's Castle.

[Enter Regan and Oswald.]

REG.

But are my brother's powers set forth?

OSW.

Ay, madam.

REG.

Himself in person there?

OSW.

Madam, with much ado.
Your sister is the better soldier.

REG.

Lord Edmund spake not with your lord at home?

OSW.

No, madam.

REG.

What might import my sister's letter to him?

OSW.

I know not, lady.

REG.

Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.
 It was great ignorance, Gloucester's eyes being out,
 To let him live: where he arrives he moves
 All hearts against us: Edmund, I think, is gone,
 In pity of his misery, to despatch
 His nighted life; moreover, to descry
 The strength o' the enemy.

OSW.

I must needs after him, madam, with my letter.

REG.

Our troops set forth to-morrow: stay with us;
 The ways are dangerous.

OSW.

I may not, madam:
 My lady charg'd my duty in this business.

REG.

Why should she write to Edmund? Might not you
 Transport her purposes by word? Belike,
 Something,—I know not what:—I'll love thee much—
 Let me unseal the letter.

OSW.

Madam, I had rather,—

REG.

I know your lady does not love her husband;
 I am sure of that: and at her late being here
 She gave strange eyeliads and most speaking looks
 To noble Edmund. I know you are of her bosom.

OSW.

I, madam?

REG.

I speak in understanding; you are, I know't:
 Therefore I do advise you, take this note:
 My lord is dead; Edmund and I have talk'd;
 And more convenient is he for my hand

Than for your lady's.—You may gather more.
If you do find him, pray you give him this;
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
I pray desire her call her wisdom to her
So, fare you well.
If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.

OSW.

Would I could meet him, madam! I should show
What party I do follow.

REG.

Fare thee well.
[Exeunt.]

Scene VI. The country near Dover.

[Enter Gloucester, and Edgar dressed like a peasant.]

GLOU.

When shall I come to the top of that same hill?

EDG.

You do climb up it now: look, how we labour.

GLOU.

Methinks the ground is even.

EDG.

Horrible steep.
Hark, do you hear the sea?

GLOU.

No, truly.

EDG.

Why, then, your other senses grow imperfect
By your eyes' anguish.

GLOU.

So may it be indeed:
Methinks thy voice is alter'd; and thou speak'st
In better phrase and matter than thou didst.

EDG.

You are much deceiv'd: in nothing am I chang'd
But in my garments.

GLOU.

Methinks you're better spoken.

EDG.

Come on, sir; here's the place:—stand still.—How fearful
And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!
The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
Show scarce so gross as beetles: half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire—dreadful trade!
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head:
The fishermen that walk upon the beach
Appear like mice; and yond tall anchoring bark,
Diminish'd to her cock; her cock a buoy
Almost too small for sight: the murmuring surge
That on the unnumber'd idle pebble chafes
Cannot be heard so high.—I'll look no more;
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong.

GLOU.

Set me where you stand.

EDG.

Give me your hand:—you are now within a foot
Of th' extreme verge: for all beneath the moon
Would I not leap upright.

GLOU.

Let go my hand.
Here, friend, 's another purse; in it a jewel
Well worth a poor man's taking: fairies and gods
Prosper it with thee! Go thou further off;
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.

EDG.

Now fare ye well, good sir.
[Seems to go.]

GLOU.

With all my heart.

EDG.

[Aside.] Why I do trifle thus with his despair
Is done to cure it.

GLOU.

O you mighty gods!
This world I do renounce, and, in your sights,
Shake patiently my great affliction off:
If I could bear it longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff and loathed part of nature should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O, bless him!—
Now, fellow, fare thee well.

EDG.

Gone, sir:—farewell.—
[Gloucester leaps, and falls along.]
And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life when life itself
Yields to the theft: had he been where he thought,
By this had thought been past.—Alive or dead?
Ho you, sir! friend! Hear you, sir?—speak!—
Thus might he pass indeed:—yet he revives.—
What are you, sir?

GLOU.

Away, and let me die.

EDG.

Hadst thou been aught but gossamer, feathers, air,
So many fathom down precipitating,
Thou'dst shiver'd like an egg: but thou dost breathe;
Hast heavy substance; bleed'st not; speak'st; art sound.
Ten masts at each make not the altitude
Which thou hast perpendicularly fell:
Thy life is a miracle.—Speak yet again.

GLOU.

But have I fall'n, or no?

EDG.

From the dread summit of this chalky bourn.
Look up a-height;—the shrill-gorg'd lark so far
Cannot be seen or heard: do but look up.

GLOU.

Alack, I have no eyes.—
Is wretchedness depriv'd that benefit
To end itself by death? 'Twas yet some comfort
When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage
And frustrate his proud will.

EDG.

Give me your arm:
Up:—so.—How is't? Feel you your legs? You stand.

GLOU.

Too well, too well.

EDG.

This is above all strangeness.
Upon the crown o' the cliff what thing was that
Which parted from you?

GLOU.

A poor unfortunate beggar.

EDG.

As I stood here below, methought his eyes
Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses,
Horns whelk'd and wav'd like the enridged sea:
It was some fiend; therefore, thou happy father,
Think that the clearest gods, who make them honours
Of men's impossibility, have preserv'd thee.

GLOU.

I do remember now: henceforth I'll bear
Affliction till it do cry out itself,
'Enough, enough,' and die. That thing you speak of,
I took it for a man; often 'twould say,
'The fiend, the fiend:'—he led me to that place.

EDG.

Bear free and patient thoughts.—But who comes here?
[Enter Lear, fantastically dressed up with flowers.]
The safer sense will ne'er accommodate
His master thus.

LEAR.

No, they cannot touch me for coining;
I am the king himself.

EDG.

O thou side-piercing sight!

LEAR.

Nature's above art in that respect.—There's your press money.
That fellow handles his bow like a crow-keeper: draw me a
clothier's yard.—Look, look, a mouse! Peace, peace;—this piece
of toasted cheese will do't. There's my gauntlet; I'll prove it
on a giant.—Bring up the brown bills. O, well flown, bird!—i'
the clout, i' the clout: hewgh!—Give the word.

EDG.

Sweet marjoram.

LEAR.

Pass.

GLOU.

I know that voice.

LEAR.

Ha! Goneril with a white beard!—They flattered me like a dog;
and told me I had white hairs in my beard ere the black ones were
there. To say 'ay' and 'no' to everything I said!—'Ay' and 'no',
too, was no good divinity. When the rain came to wet me once, and
the wind to make me chatter; when the thunder would not peace at
my bidding; there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go to, they
are not men o' their words: they told me I was everything; 'tis a
lie—I am not ague-proof.

GLOU.

The trick of that voice I do well remember:
Is't not the king?

LEAR.

Ay, every inch a king:
When I do stare, see how the subject quakes.
I pardon that man's life.—What was thy cause?—
Adultery?—

Thou shalt not die: die for adultery! No:
 The wren goes to't, and the small gilded fly
 Does lecher in my sight.
 Let copulation thrive; for Gloucester's bastard son
 Was kinder to his father than my daughters
 Got 'tween the lawful sheets.
 To't, luxury, pell-mell! for I lack soldiers.—
 Behold yond simpering dame,
 Whose face between her forks presages snow;
 That minces virtue, and does shake the head
 To hear of pleasure's name;—
 The fitchew nor the soiled horse goes to't
 With a more riotous appetite.
 Down from the waist they are centaurs,
 Though women all above:
 But to the girdle do the gods inherit,
 Beneath is all the fiend's; there's hell, there's darkness,
 There is the sulphurous pit; burning, scalding, stench,
 consumption; fie, fie, fie! pah, pah!
 Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten my
 imagination: there's money for thee.

GLOU.

O, let me kiss that hand!

LEAR.

Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.

GLOU.

O ruin'd piece of nature! This great world
 Shall so wear out to naught.—Dost thou know me?

LEAR.

I remember thine eyes well enough. Dost thou squiny at me?
 No, do thy worst, blind Cupid; I'll not love.—Read thou this
 challenge; mark but the penning of it.

GLOU.

Were all the letters suns, I could not see one.

EDG.

I would not take this from report;—it is,
 And my heart breaks at it.

LEAR.

Read.

GLOU.

What, with the case of eyes?

LEAR.

O, ho, are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse? Your eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a light: yet you see how this world goes.

GLOU.

I see it feelingly.

LEAR.

What, art mad? A man may see how the world goes with no eyes. Look with thine ears: see how yond justice rails upon yond simple thief. Hark, in thine ear: change places; and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief?—Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

GLOU.

Ay, sir.

LEAR.

And the creature run from the cur? There thou mightst behold the great image of authority: a dog's obeyed in office.— Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand! Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back; Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind For which thou whipp'st her. The usurer hangs the cozener. Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear; Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold, And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks; Arm it in rags, a pygmy's straw does pierce it. None does offend, none.—I say none; I'll able 'em: Take that of me, my friend, who have the power To seal the accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes; And, like a scurvy politician, seem To see the things thou dost not.—Now, now, now, now: Pull off my boots: harder, harder:—so.

EDG.

O, matter and impertinency mix'd!
Reason, in madness!

LEAR.

If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes.
I know thee well enough; thy name is Gloucester:
Thou must be patient; we came crying hither:
Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air
We wawl and cry.—I will preach to thee: mark.

GLOU.

Alack, alack the day!

LEAR.

When we are born, we cry that we are come
To this great stage of fools—This a good block:—
It were a delicate stratagem to shoe
A troop of horse with felt: I'll put't in proof;
And when I have stol'n upon these sons-in-law,
Then kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill!
[Enter a Gentleman, with Attendants].

GENT.

O, here he is: lay hand upon him.—Sir,
Your most dear daughter,—

LEAR.

No rescue? What, a prisoner? I am even
The natural fool of fortune.—Use me well;
You shall have ransom. Let me have surgeons;
I am cut to the brains.

GENT.

You shall have anything.

LEAR.

No seconds? all myself?
Why, this would make a man a man of salt,
To use his eyes for garden water-pots,
Ay, and for laying Autumn's dust.

GENT.

Good sir,—

LEAR.

I will die bravely, like a smug bridegroom. What!
I will be jovial: come, come, I am a king,
My masters, know you that.

GENT.

You are a royal one, and we obey you.

LEAR.

Then there's life in't. Nay, an you get it, you shall get it
by running. Sa, sa, sa, sa!
[Exit running. Attendants follow.]

GENT.

A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch,
Past speaking of in a king!—Thou hast one daughter
Who redeems nature from the general curse
Which twain have brought her to.

EDG.

Hail, gentle sir.

GENT.

Sir, speed you. What's your will?

EDG.

Do you hear aught, sir, of a battle toward?

GENT.

Most sure and vulgar: every one hears that
Which can distinguish sound.

EDG.

But, by your favour,
How near's the other army?

GENT.

Near and on speedy foot; the main descry
Stands on the hourly thought.

EDG.

I thank you sir: that's all.

GENT.

Though that the queen on special cause is here,
Her army is mov'd on.

EDG.

I thank you, sir.
[Exit Gentleman.]

GLOU.

You ever-gentle gods, take my breath from me;
Let not my worser spirit tempt me again
To die before you please!

EDG.

Well pray you, father.

GLOU.

Now, good sir, what are you?

EDG.

A most poor man, made tame to fortune's blows;
Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
I'll lead you to some biding.

GLOU.

Hearty thanks:
The bounty and the benison of heaven
To boot, and boot!
[Enter Oswald.]

OSW.

A proclaim'd prize! Most happy!
That eyeless head of thine was first fram'd flesh
To raise my fortunes.—Thou old unhappy traitor,
Briefly thyself remember:—the sword is out
That must destroy thee.

GLOU.

Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough to it.
[Edgar interposes.]

OSW.

Wherefore, bold peasant,
 Dar'st thou support a publish'd traitor? Hence;
 Lest that the infection of his fortune take
 Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.

EDG.

Chill not let go, zir, without vurther 'casion.

OSW.

Let go, slave, or thou diest!

EDG.

Good gentleman, go your gait, and let poor voke pass. An chud
 ha' bin zwaggered out of my life, 'twould not ha' bin zo long as
 'tis by a vortnight. Nay, come not near the old man; keep out,
 che vore ye, or ise try whether your costard or my bat be the
 harder: chill be plain with you.

OSW.

Out, dunghill!

EDG.

Chill pick your teeth, zir. Come! No matter vor your foins.
 [They fight, and Edgar knocks him down.]

OSW.

Slave, thou hast slain me:—villain, take my purse:
 If ever thou wilt thrive, bury my body;
 And give the letters which thou find'st about me
 To Edmund Earl of Gloucester; seek him out
 Upon the British party: O, untimely death!
 [Dies.]

EDG.

I know thee well: a serviceable villain;
 As duteous to the vices of thy mistress
 As badness would desire.

GLOU.

What, is he dead?

EDG.

Sit you down, father; rest you.—

Let's see these pockets; the letters that he speaks of

May be my friends.—He's dead; I am only sorry

He had no other death's-man. Let us see:—

Leave, gentle wax; and, manners, blame us not:

To know our enemies' minds, we'd rip their hearts;

Their papers is more lawful.

[Reads.] 'Let our reciprocal vows be remembered. You have many opportunities to cut him off: if your will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offered. There is nothing done if he return the conqueror: then am I the prisoner, and his bed my gaol; from the loathed warmth whereof deliver me, and supply the place for your labour.

Your (wife, so I would say) affectionate servant,
Goneril.'

O indistinguish'd space of woman's will!

A plot upon her virtuous husband's life;

And the exchange my brother!—Here in the sands

Thee I'll rake up, the post unsanctified

Of murderous lechers: and in the mature time

With this ungracious paper strike the sight

Of the death-practis'd duke: for him 'tis well

That of thy death and business I can tell.

[Exit Edgar, dragging out the body.]

GLOU.

The king is mad: how stiff is my vile sense,

That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling

Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract:

So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,

And woes by wrong imaginations lose

The knowledge of themselves.

EDG.

Give me your hand:

[A drum afar off.]

Far off methinks I hear the beaten drum:

Come, father, I'll bestow you with a friend.

[Exeunt.]

Scene VII. A Tent in the French Camp.

[Lear on a bed, asleep, soft music playing; Physician, Gentleman, and others attending.]

[Enter Cordelia, and KENT.]

COR.

O thou good Kent, how shall I live and work
To match thy goodness? My life will be too short
And every measure fail me.

KENT.

To be acknowledg'd, madam, is o'erpaid.
All my reports go with the modest truth;
Nor more nor clipp'd, but so.

COR.

Be better suited:
These weeds are memories of those worsen hours:
I pr'ythee, put them off.

KENT.

Pardon, dear madam;
Yet to be known shortens my made intent:
My boon I make it that you know me not
Till time and I think meet.

COR.

Then be't so, my good lord. [To the Physician.] How, does the
king?

PHYS.

Madam, sleeps still.

COR.

O you kind gods,
Cure this great breach in his abused nature!
The untun'd and jarring senses, O, wind up
Of this child-changed father!

PHYS.

So please your majesty
That we may wake the king: he hath slept long.

COR.

Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed
I' the sway of your own will. Is he array'd?

GENT.

Ay, madam. In the heaviness of sleep
We put fresh garments on him.

PHYS.

Be by, good madam, when we do awake him;
I doubt not of his temperance.

COR.

Very well.

PHYS.

Please you draw near.—Louder the music there!

COR.

O my dear father! Restoration hang
Thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms that my two sisters
Have in thy reverence made!

KENT.

Kind and dear princess!

COR.

Had you not been their father, these white flakes
Had challeng'd pity of them. Was this a face
To be oppos'd against the warring winds?
To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder?
In the most terrible and nimble stroke
Of quick cross lightning? to watch—,poor perdu!—
With this thin helm? Mine enemy's dog,
Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
Against my fire; and wast thou fain, poor father,
To hovel thee with swine and rogues forlorn,
In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!
'Tis wonder that thy life and wits at once
Had not concluded all.—He wakes; speak to him.

DOCT.

Madam, do you; 'tis fittest.

COR.

How does my royal lord? How fares your majesty?

LEAR.

You do me wrong to take me out o' the grave:—
Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like molten lead.

COR.

Sir, do you know me?

LEAR.

You are a spirit, I know: when did you die?

COR.

Still, still, far wide!

PHYS.

He's scarce awake: let him alone awhile.

LEAR.

Where have I been? Where am I?—Fair daylight,—
I am mightily abus'd.—I should e'en die with pity,
To see another thus.—I know not what to say.—
I will not swear these are my hands:—let's see;
I feel this pin prick. Would I were assur'd
Of my condition!

COR.

O, look upon me, sir,
And hold your hands in benediction o'er me.—
No, sir, you must not kneel.

LEAR.

Pray, do not mock me:
I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less;
And, to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.
Methinks I should know you, and know this man;
Yet I am doubtful: for I am mainly ignorant
What place this is; and all the skill I have
Remembers not these garments; nor I know not
Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me;
For, as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.

COR.

And so I am. I am.

LEAR.

Be your tears wet? yes, faith. I pray, weep not:
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
I know you do not love me; for your sisters
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:
You have some cause, they have not.

COR.

No cause, no cause.

LEAR.

Am I in France?

KENT.

In your own kingdom, sir.

LEAR.

Do not abuse me.

PHYS.

Be comforted, good madam: the great rage,
You see, is kill'd in him: and yet it is danger
To make him even o'er the time he has lost.
Desire him to go in; trouble him no more
Till further settling.

COR.

Will't please your highness walk?

LEAR.

You must bear with me:
Pray you now, forget and forgive: I am old and foolish.
[Exeunt Lear, Cordelia, Physician, and Attendants.]

GENT.

Holds it true, sir, that the Duke of Cornwall was so slain?

KENT.

Most certain, sir.

GENT.

Who is conductor of his people?

KENT.

As 'tis said, the bastard son of Gloucester.

GENT.

They say Edgar, his banished son, is with the Earl of Kent in Germany.

KENT.

Report is changeable. 'Tis time to look about; the powers of the kingdom approach apace.

GENT.

The arbitrement is like to be bloody.
Fare you well, sir.
[Exit.]

KENT.

My point and period will be thoroughly wrought,
Or well or ill, as this day's battle's fought.
[Exit.]

Act V

Scene I. The Camp of the British Forces near Dover.

[Enter, with drum and colours, Edmund, Regan, Officers, Soldiers, and others.]

EDM.

Know of the duke if his last purpose hold,
Or whether since he is advis'd by aught
To change the course: he's full of alteration
And self-reproving:—bring his constant pleasure.
[To an Officer, who goes out.]

REG.

Our sister's man is certainly miscarried.

EDM.

'Tis to be doubted, madam.

REG.

Now, sweet lord,
You know the goodness I intend upon you:
Tell me,—but truly,—but then speak the truth,
Do you not love my sister?

EDM.

In honour'd love.

REG.

But have you never found my brother's way
To the forfended place?

EDM.

That thought abuses you.

REG.

I am doubtful that you have been conjunct
And bosom'd with her, as far as we call hers.

EDM.

No, by mine honour, madam.

REG.

I never shall endure her: dear my lord,
Be not familiar with her.

EDM.

Fear me not:—
She and the duke her husband!
[Enter, with drum and colours, Albany, Goneril, and Soldiers.]

GON.

[Aside.] I had rather lose the battle than that sister
Should loosen him and me.

ALB.

Our very loving sister, well be-met.—
Sir, this I heard,—the king is come to his daughter,
With others whom the rigour of our state
Forc'd to cry out. Where I could not be honest,
I never yet was valiant: for this business,
It toucheth us, as France invades our land,

Not bolds the king, with others whom, I fear,
Most just and heavy causes make oppose.

EDM.

Sir, you speak nobly.

REG.

Why is this reason'd?

GON.

Combine together 'gainst the enemy;
For these domestic and particular broils
Are not the question here.

ALB.

Let's, then, determine
With the ancient of war on our proceeding.

EDM.

I shall attend you presently at your tent.

REG.

Sister, you'll go with us?

GON.

No.

REG.

'Tis most convenient; pray you, go with us.

GON.

[Aside.] O, ho, I know the riddle.—I will go.
[As they are going out, enter Edgar disguised.]

EDG.

If e'er your grace had speech with man so poor,
Hear me one word.

ALB.

I'll overtake you.—Speak.
[Exeunt Edmund, Regan, Goneril, Officers, Soldiers, and Attendants.]

EDG.

Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
For him that brought it: wretched though I seem,
I can produce a champion that will prove
What is avouched there. If you miscarry,
Your business of the world hath so an end,
And machination ceases. Fortune love you!

ALB.

Stay till I have read the letter.

EDG.

I was forbid it.
When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
And I'll appear again.

ALB.

Why, fare thee well: I will o'erlook thy paper.
[Exit Edgar.]
[Re-enter Edmund.]

EDM.

The enemy's in view; draw up your powers.
Here is the guess of their true strength and forces
By diligent discovery;—but your haste
Is now urg'd on you.

ALB.

We will greet the time.
[Exit.]

EDM.

To both these sisters have I sworn my love;
Each jealous of the other, as the stung
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take?
Both? one? or neither? Neither can be enjoy'd,
If both remain alive: to take the widow
Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril;
And hardly shall I carry out my side,
Her husband being alive. Now, then, we'll use
His countenance for the battle; which being done,
Let her who would be rid of him devise

His speedy taking off. As for the mercy
 Which he intends to Lear and to Cordelia,—
 The battle done, and they within our power,
 Shall never see his pardon: for my state
 Stands on me to defend, not to debate.
 [Exit.]

Scene II. A field between the two Camps.

[Alarum within. Enter, with drum and colours, Lear, Cordelia, and their Forces, and exeunt.]

[Enter Edgar and Gloucester.]

EDG.

Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
 For your good host; pray that the right may thrive:
 If ever I return to you again,
 I'll bring you comfort.

GLOU.

Grace go with you, sir!
 [Exit Edgar].
 [Alarum and retreat within. R-enter Edgar.]

EDG.

Away, old man,—give me thy hand,—away!
 King Lear hath lost, he and his daughter ta'en:
 Give me thy hand; come on!

GLOU.

No further, sir; a man may rot even here.

EDG.

What, in ill thoughts again? Men must endure
 Their going hence, even as their coming hither;
 Ripeness is all:—come on.

GLOU.

And that's true too.
 [Exeunt.]

Scene III. The British Camp near Dover.

[Enter, in conquest, with drum and colours, Edmund; Lear and Cordelia prisoners; Officers, Soldiers, &c.]

EDM.

Some officers take them away: good guard
Until their greater pleasures first be known
That are to censure them.

COR.

We are not the first
Who with best meaning have incurr'd the worst.
For thee, oppressed king, am I cast down;
Myself could else out-frown false fortune's frown.—
Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?

LEAR.

No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison:
We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage:
When thou dost ask me blessing I'll kneel down
And ask of thee forgiveness: so we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too,—
Who loses and who wins; who's in, who's out;—
And take upon's the mystery of things,
As if we were God's spies: and we'll wear out,
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones
That ebb and flow by the moon.

EDM.

Take them away.

LEAR.

Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught thee?
He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven
And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe thine eyes;
The goodyears shall devour them, flesh and fell,
Ere they shall make us weep: we'll see 'em starve first.
Come.
[Exeunt Lear and Cordelia, guarded.]

EDM.

Come hither, captain; hark.
Take thou this note [giving a paper]; go follow them to prison:
One step I have advanc'd thee; if thou dost

As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way
 To noble fortunes: know thou this,—that men
 Are as the time is: to be tender-minded
 Does not become a sword:—thy great employment
 Will not bear question; either say thou'lt do't,
 Or thrive by other means.

Capt.

I'll do't, my lord.

EDM.

About it; and write happy when thou hast done.
 Mark,—I say, instantly; and carry it so
 As I have set it down.

Capt.

I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats;
 If it be man's work, I'll do't.

[Exit.]

[Flourish. Enter Albany, Goneril, Regan, Officers, and Attendants.]

ALB.

Sir, you have show'd to-day your valiant strain,
 And fortune led you well: you have the captives
 Who were the opposites of this day's strife:
 We do require them of you, so to use them
 As we shall find their merits and our safety
 May equally determine.

EDM.

Sir, I thought it fit
 To send the old and miserable king
 To some retention and appointed guard;
 Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
 To pluck the common bosom on his side,
 And turn our impress'd lances in our eyes
 Which do command them. With him I sent the queen;
 My reason all the same; and they are ready
 To-morrow, or at further space, to appear
 Where you shall hold your session. At this time
 We sweat and bleed: the friend hath lost his friend;
 And the best quarrels, in the heat, are curs'd
 By those that feel their sharpness:—
 The question of Cordelia and her father
 Requires a fitter place.

ALB.

Sir, by your patience,
I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.

REG.

That's as we list to grace him.
Methinks our pleasure might have been demanded
Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers;
Bore the commission of my place and person;
The which immediacy may well stand up
And call itself your brother.

GON.

Not so hot:
In his own grace he doth exalt himself,
More than in your addition.

REG.

In my rights
By me invested, he compeers the best.

GON.

That were the most if he should husband you.

REG.

Jesters do oft prove prophets.

GON.

Holla, holla!
That eye that told you so look'd but asquint.

REG.

Lady, I am not well; else I should answer
From a full-flowing stomach.—General,
Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony;
Dispose of them, of me; the walls are thine:
Witness the world that I create thee here
My lord and master.

GON.

Mean you to enjoy him?

ALB.

The let-alone lies not in your good will.

EDM.

Nor in thine, lord.

ALB.

Half-blooded fellow, yes.

REG.

[To Edmund.] Let the drum strike, and prove my title thine.

ALB.

Stay yet; hear reason.—Edmund, I arrest thee
 On capital treason; and, in thine arrest,
 This gilded serpent [pointing to Goneril].—For your claim, fair
 sister,
 I bar it in the interest of my wife;
 'Tis she is subcontracted to this lord,
 And I, her husband, contradict your bans.
 If you will marry, make your loves to me,—
 My lady is bespoke.

GON.

An interlude!

ALB.

Thou art arm'd, Gloucester:—let the trumpet sound:
 If none appear to prove upon thy person
 Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
 There is my pledge [throwing down a glove]; I'll prove it on thy
 heart,
 Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less
 Than I have here proclaim'd thee.

REG.

Sick, O, sick!

GON.

[Aside.] If not, I'll ne'er trust medicine.

EDM.

There's my exchange [throwing down a glove]: what in the world he is

That names me traitor, villain-like he lies:
 Call by thy trumpet: he that dares approach,
 On him, on you, who not? I will maintain
 My truth and honour firmly.

ALB.

A herald, ho!

EDM.

A herald, ho, a herald!

ALB.

Trust to thy single virtue; for thy soldiers,
 All levied in my name, have in my name
 Took their discharge.

REG.

My sickness grows upon me.

ALB.

She is not well. Convey her to my tent.
 [Exit Regan, led.]
 [Enter a Herald.]
 Come hither, herald.—Let the trumpet sound,—
 And read out this.

OFFICER.

Sound, trumpet!
 [A trumpet sounds.]

HER.

[Reads.] 'If any man of quality or degree within the lists of
 the army will maintain upon Edmund, supposed Earl of Gloucester,
 that he is a manifold traitor, let him appear by the third sound
 of the trumpet. He is bold in his defence.'

EDM.

Sound!
 [First trumpet.]

HER.

Again!
 [Second trumpet.]

HER.

Again!

[Third trumpet. Trumpet answers within. Enter Edgar, armed, preceded by a trumpet.]

ALB.

Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this call o' the trumpet.

HER.

What are you?
Your name, your quality? and why you answer
This present summons?

EDG.

Know, my name is lost;
By treason's tooth bare-gnawn and canker-bit.
Yet am I noble as the adversary
I come to cope.

ALB.

Which is that adversary?

EDG.

What's he that speaks for Edmund Earl of Gloucester?

EDM.

Himself:—what say'st thou to him?

EDG.

Draw thy sword,
That, if my speech offend a noble heart,
Thy arm may do thee justice: here is mine.
Behold, it is the privilege of mine honours,
My oath, and my profession: I protest,—
Maugre thy strength, youth, place, and eminence,
Despite thy victor sword and fire-new fortune,
Thy valour and thy heart,—thou art a traitor;
False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father;
Conspirant 'gainst this high illustrious prince;
And, from the extremest upward of thy head
To the descent and dust beneath thy foot,
A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou 'No,'

This sword, this arm, and my best spirits are bent
To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak,
Thou liest.

EDM.

In wisdom I should ask thy name;
But since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
And that thy tongue some say of breeding breathes,
What safe and nicely I might well delay
By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn:
Back do I toss those treasons to thy head;
With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart;
Which,—for they yet glance by and scarcely bruise,—
This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
Where they shall rest for ever.—Trumpets, speak!
[Alarums. They fight. Edmund falls.]

ALB.

Save him, save him!

GON.

This is mere practice, Gloucester:
By the law of arms thou wast not bound to answer
An unknown opposite; thou art not vanquish'd,
But cozen'd and beguil'd.

ALB.

Shut your mouth, dame,
Or with this paper shall I stop it:—Hold, sir;
Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil:—
No tearing, lady; I perceive you know it.
[Gives the letter to Edmund.]

GON.

Say if I do,—the laws are mine, not thine:
Who can arraign me for't?

ALB.

Most monstrous!
Know'st thou this paper?

GON.

Ask me not what I know.
[Exit.]

ALB.

Go after her: she's desperate; govern her.
[To an Officer, who goes out.]

EDM.

What, you have charg'd me with, that have I done;
And more, much more; the time will bring it out:
'Tis past, and so am I.—But what art thou
That hast this fortune on me? If thou'rt noble,
I do forgive thee.

EDG.

Let's exchange charity.
I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund;
If more, the more thou hast wrong'd me.
My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.
The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us:
The dark and vicious place where thee he got
Cost him his eyes.

EDM.

Thou hast spoken right; 'tis true;
The wheel is come full circle; I am here.

ALB.

Methought thy very gait did prophesy
A royal nobleness:—I must embrace thee:
Let sorrow split my heart if ever I
Did hate thee or thy father!

EDG.

Worthy prince, I know't.

ALB.

Where have you hid yourself?
How have you known the miseries of your father?

EDG.

By nursing them, my lord.—List a brief tale;—
And when 'tis told, O that my heart would burst!—
The bloody proclamation to escape,
That follow'd me so near,—O, our lives' sweetness!

That with the pain of death we'd hourly die
 Rather than die at once!—taught me to shift
 Into a madman's rags; to assume a semblance
 That very dogs disdain'd; and in this habit
 Met I my father with his bleeding rings,
 Their precious stones new lost; became his guide,
 Led him, begg'd for him, sav'd him from despair;
 Never,—O fault!—reveal'd myself unto him
 Until some half hour past, when I was arm'd;
 Not sure, though hoping of this good success,
 I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last
 Told him my pilgrimage: but his flaw'd heart,—
 Alack, too weak the conflict to support!—
 'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
 Burst smilingly.

EDM.

This speech of yours hath mov'd me,
 And shall perchance do good: but speak you on;
 You look as you had something more to say.

ALB.

If there be more, more woeful, hold it in;
 For I am almost ready to dissolve,
 Hearing of this.

EDG.

This would have seem'd a period
 To such as love not sorrow; but another,
 To amplify too much, would make much more,
 And top extremity.
 Whilst I was big in clamour, came there a man
 Who, having seen me in my worst estate,
 Shunn'd my abhorr'd society; but then, finding
 Who 'twas that so endur'd, with his strong arms
 He fastened on my neck, and bellow'd out
 As he'd burst heaven; threw him on my father;
 Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him
 That ever ear receiv'd: which in recounting
 His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life
 Began to crack: twice then the trumpets sounded,
 And there I left him tranc'd.

ALB.

But who was this?

EDG.

Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent; who in disguise
Follow'd his enemy king and did him service
Improper for a slave.
[Enter a Gentleman hastily, with a bloody knife.]

GENT.

Help, help! O, help!

EDG.

What kind of help?

ALB.

Speak, man.

EDG.

What means that bloody knife?

GENT.

'Tis hot, it smokes;
It came even from the heart of—O! she's dead!

ALB.

Who dead? speak, man.

GENT.

Your lady, sir, your lady: and her sister
By her is poisoned; she hath confess'd it.

EDM.

I was contracted to them both: all three
Now marry in an instant.

EDG.

Here comes KENT.

ALB.

Produce their bodies, be they alive or dead:—
This judgement of the heavens, that makes us tremble
Touches us not with pity. [Exit Gentleman.]

[Enter KENT.]

O, is this he?

The time will not allow the compliment
That very manners urges.

KENT.

I am come

To bid my king and master aye good night:
Is he not here?

ALB.

Great thing of us forgot!

Speak, Edmund, where's the king? and where's Cordelia?

[The bodies of Goneril and Regan are brought in.]

Seest thou this object, Kent?

KENT.

Alack, why thus?

EDM.

Yet Edmund was belov'd.

The one the other poisoned for my sake,
And after slew herself.

ALB.

Even so.—Cover their faces.

EDM.

I pant for life:—some good I mean to do,
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send,—
Be brief in it,—to the castle; for my writ
Is on the life of Lear and on Cordelia:—
Nay, send in time.

ALB.

Run, run, O, run!

EDG.

To who, my lord?—Who has the office? send
Thy token of reprieve.

EDM.

Well thought on: take my sword,
Give it the Captain.

ALB.

Haste thee for thy life.
[Exit Edgar.]

EDM.

He hath commission from thy wife and me
To hang Cordelia in the prison, and
To lay the blame upon her own despair,
That she fordid herself.

ALB.

The gods defend her!—Bear him hence awhile.
[Edmund is borne off.]
[Re-enter Lear, with Cordelia dead in his arms; Edgar, Officer, and others following.]

LEAR.

Howl, howl, howl, howl!—O, you are men of stone.
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so
That heaven's vault should crack.—She's gone for ever!—
I know when one is dead, and when one lives;
She's dead as earth.—Lend me a looking glass;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.

KENT.

Is this the promis'd end?

EDG.

Or image of that horror?

ALB.

Fall, and cease!

LEAR.

This feather stirs; she lives! If it be so,
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.

KENT.

O my good master! [Kneeling.]

LEAR.

Pr'ythee, away!

EDG.

'Tis noble Kent, your friend.

LEAR.

A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all!
I might have sav'd her; now she's gone for ever!—
Cordelia, Cordelia! stay a little. Ha!
What is't thou say'st?—Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low,—an excellent thing in woman.—
I kill'd the slave that was a-hanging thee.

OFF.

'Tis true, my lords, he did.

LEAR.

Did I not, fellow?
I have seen the day, with my good biting falchion
I would have made them skip: I am old now,
And these same crosses spoil me.—Who are you?
Mine eyes are not o' the best:—I'll tell you straight.

KENT.

If fortune brag of two she lov'd and hated,
One of them we behold.

LEAR.

This is a dull sight. Are you not Kent?

KENT.

The same,
Your servant Kent.—Where is your servant Caius?

LEAR.

He's a good fellow, I can tell you that;
He'll strike, and quickly too:—he's dead and rotten.

KENT.

No, my good lord; I am the very man,—

LEAR.

I'll see that straight.

KENT.

That from your first of difference and decay
Have follow'd your sad steps.

LEAR.

You are welcome hither.

KENT.

Nor no man else:—All's cheerless, dark, and deadly.—
Your eldest daughters have fordone themselves,
And desperately are dead.

LEAR.

Ay, so I think.

ALB.

He knows not what he says; and vain is it
That we present us to him.

EDG.

Very bootless.
[Enter a OFFICER.]

OFF.

Edmund is dead, my lord.

ALB.

That's but a trifle here.—
You lords and noble friends, know our intent.
What comfort to this great decay may come
Shall be applied: for us, we will resign,
During the life of this old majesty,
To him our absolute power:—[to Edgar and Kent] you to your
rights;
With boot, and such addition as your honours
Have more than merited.—All friends shall taste
The wages of their virtue, and all foes
The cup of their deservings.—O, see, see!

LEAR.

And my poor fool is hang'd! No, no, no life!
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more,

Never, never, never, never, never!—
 Pray you undo this button:—thank you, sir.—
 Do you see this? Look on her!—look!—her lips!—
 Look there, look there!—
 [He dies.]

EDG.

He faints!—My lord, my lord!—

KENT.

Break, heart; I pr'ythee break!

EDG.

Look up, my lord.

KENT.

Vex not his ghost: O, let him pass! he hates him
 That would upon the rack of this rough world
 Stretch him out longer.

EDG.

He is gone indeed.

KENT.

The wonder is, he hath endur'd so long:
 He but usurp'd his life.

ALB.

Bear them from hence.—Our present business
 Is general woe.—[To Kent and Edgar.] Friends of my soul, you
 twain
 Rule in this realm, and the gor'd state sustain.

KENT.

I have a journey, sir, shortly to go;
 My master calls me,—I must not say no.

EDG.

The weight of this sad time we must obey;
 Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
 The oldest have borne most: we that are young
 Shall never see so much, nor live so long.
 [Exeunt, with a dead march.]

2.13.4 Reading and Review Questions

1. What do his sonnets suggest are matters of importance to Shakespeare? What purpose(s), if any, do they serve? How do you know? How does the subject matter of Shakespeare's sonnets compare with Wyatt's, Surrey's, or Sydney's?
2. With its aristocratic milieu, masques, veils, and people spying on each other, the wit of *Much Ado About Nothing* is based a good deal on sight. What does this play suggest about the problem of seeing? What does it suggest is the relationship (real and ideal) between appearances and reality? What do the play's series of "plays" (masques, acting) suggest about art's relationship to truth and reality?
3. What metaphorical or symbolic purposes does "blindness" serve in *King Lear*, and why? What metaphorical or symbolic purposes does "madness" serve, and why? What connection, if any, exists between them?
4. In *King Lear*, what is the effect of Edmund's viewing himself as a "natural man," that is, a man without the grace that allows humans to distinguish between "right" and "wrong?" What motivates him? How does his character connect with others in the play; consider not only Goneril and Regan but also Edgar and Gloucester.
5. Is there any justice, or moral, in *King Lear*? How do you know?

2.14 KEY TERMS

- The Areopagus
- Allegory
- The Battle of Bosworth Field
- Blank Verse
- Catherine of Aragon
- counter-reformation
- Edward VI
- English Epic
- English Sonnets
- Elizabeth I
- Henry VII
- Henry VIII
- Iambic Pentameter
- King Arthur
- King's Council, or Star Chamber

- London
- Mary I
- Mary, Queen of Scots
- New Men
- ottava rima
- pastoral eclogue
- Petrarch
- Plantagenets
- The Printing Press
- The Reformation
- recognisances
- Renaissance Humanism
- rondeau
- Rhyme Scheme
- English sonnet
- Sonnet Conventions
- Spenserian sonnet
- Spenserian stanza
- terza rima
- The Spanish Armada
- The Wars of the Roses
- Vernacular, or native English, Literature
- William Caxton