

Abstract

Some Shorter Satirical Poems in English from the Thirteenth to the Early Sixteenth Centuries

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The aim of this thesis is to provide a thorough introduction to shorter satirical poetry in Middle English, and also to provide stimulus and material for further study in this somewhat neglected area of medieval English literature. The thesis presents 83 newly transcribed, edited and annotated shorter (approximately 200 ll. or less) poems, which have never before been collected. Strictly political poems, more properly the subject of a separate study, are not included, nor are the poems of Dunbar, Skelton, Henryson and Hoccleve, which are available in excellent editions. The poems are loosely grouped according to the subjects they satirize: clergy, women and marriage, money and venality, rogues and fools, specific people, and medical recipes. A lengthy introduction briefly discusses the problem of defining satire in the Middle English period before going on to discuss the background of medieval satire for each group. For each poem there are notes which clarify difficult points as well as give information on the manuscripts and editions in which the poem appears. Appendix A prints a not hitherto recognized parody of Lydgate's *A Valentine to Our Lady* with the text of Lydgate's poem facing, and discusses some of the difficulties of recognizing parody in Middle English in light of this particular example. Appendix B is an index which attempts to list all non-narrative satirical verse in English which appeared between the thirteenth and early sixteenth centuries. A glossary of difficult words in the texts is included.

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INTRODUCTION

The shorter Middle English satirical poems contain much material of interest to students of medieval English literature and history, yet little critical attention has so far been given to these poems as a group. While reference is often made to such poems in studies on related subjects, such as G. R. Owst's *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England* and V. J. Scattergood's *Politics and Poetry in Fifteenth-Century England*, and all have been printed (with varying degrees of accuracy) since the late nineteenth century, the majority remain poorly edited and uncollected. In contrast to the neglect these shorter satiric and parodic pieces have received, longer poems in which satire predominates, such as *Piers Plowman*, *Mum and the Sothsegger*, and *Winner and Waster*, as well as many of Chaucer's poems, are frequently studied. These seem to offer a larger scope for the study of medieval satire, yet when the shorter poems are looked at as a group they provide a field for study no less broad or diverse. In the general context of Middle English literature the shorter poems are especially important when seen in conjunction with the longer satiric poems, since they frequently treat the same subjects, and so provide a background for these poems as well as a broader perspective on the satirical temper of the age. Whether considered for their own sake or as adjuncts to other works, the shorter satiric poems of the late medieval period form an interesting and important part of Middle English literature.

Any discussion of satire had best attempt to define the term at the outset. The importance of the definition of satire and the satirical is stressed in studies of literary genres or of literature with some claim to the terms; it can hardly be any other way as the term satire is applicable to a variety of literary forms. The word itself is derived from the Latin *satura*, denoting a mixture or mixed dish, although English writers in the Renaissance and after associated satire with

satyr, partly due to orthographic confusion, partly because roughness was thought to characterize both the literary form and the mythical beast.¹

Modern critics on the whole have been less concerned with satire's literary form than with its tone and purpose, and the tendency in criticism has been to increasingly restrictive definitions of satire as a kind of literature which explicitly desires some improvement of morals or conditions, or as being directed at society in general and not at a non-representative individual. While definitions that require satire to be consciously directed at moral or social improvement may be suitable for (and tailored to) post-medieval satires, they should not be applied to the literature of a period which lacked a practical, unified theory of satire as an instrument of reform, and whose writers ridiculed contemporary institutions and figures without the constraints of one.²

Another difficulty in defining Middle English satire is that of distinguishing between satire and complaint. Here we have a problem which is almost the opposite of the one we encounter in applying later definitions of satire to medieval poems, for it is precisely the overtly moralistic qualities of complaint poetry which, according to some critics, disqualify it as satire. Satire by its very nature is a complaint, as a verbal reaction to something or someone the writer finds disagreeable, for whatever reason. Any distinction that can be made between satire and complaint is not relevant to this study.³

Middle English satire thus cannot be adequately defined in terms of either later satire or contemporary complaint. *OED*, however, defines satire as 'A poem, or in modern use a prose composition, in which prevailing vices or follies are held up to ridicule; also, the employment in speaking or writing of sarcasm, irony, ridicule etc. in exposing, denouncing, deriding, or ridiculing folly, vice, indecorum, abuses, or evils of any kind'; it seems to me that Middle English satire

requires a definition of this breadth. One modern critic's description of verse satire is also helpful for illustrating the diversity of the Middle English satire:⁴

...it fluctuates between the flippant and the earnest, the completely trivial and the heavily didactic; it ranges from extremes of crudity and brutality to the utmost refinement and elegance; it employs singly or in conjunction monologue, dialogue, epistle, oration, narrative, manner-painting, character-drawing, allegory, fantasy, travesty, burlesque, parody, and any other vehicle it chooses; and it presents a chameleon-like surface by using all the tones of the satiric spectrum, wit, ridicule, irony, sarcasm, cynicism, the sardonic, and invective.

For the purposes of describing the shorter Middle English poems which concern us here, satire will be defined loosely, following *OED*.

A definition of literary parody can be included within this definition of satire. While it is still based upon the idea of ridicule, the definition of parody must be narrower than that of satire; concerning Middle English parody *OED*'s generous definition again seems to me the most suitable: 'a composition in prose or verse in which characteristic turns of thought or phrase are imitated in such a way as to make them appear ridiculous, especially by applying them to ludicrously inappropriate subjects; an imitation of a work more or less closely modelled on the original, but so turned as to produce a ridiculous effect.' Parody can thus be seen as a more specific type of satire, involving ridicule through imitation of some kind, but as E. G. Stanley has cautioned, 'The dividing-line between linguistic, mimicking mockery and literary parody is not to be discerned readily.'⁵ Another difficulty arises in recognizing parodies of texts or songs which were familiar to medieval audiences but are unknown to us today. Paul Lehmann accepts as parody only intentionally and obviously humorous imitations of texts, views, events and people which may be assumed to be familiar.⁶ While this definition makes the guidelines for determining parody somewhat clearer, it risks excluding parodies of texts, views,

and so on which were not well-known in their day or whose significance has been lost. I therefore prefer to apply *OED*'s definition of parody to the shorter poems, which de-emphasizes the need for the subject parodied to be generally familiar. The definitions I have given here might be thought of as marking off the outer boundaries of satire and, within those boundaries, parody, while avoiding subdivisions and distinctions unnecessary to the topic.

Defining Middle English satire so broadly allows a very large body of Middle English poems to be classified as satirical. (D. S. Brewer, speaking about the association between realism and the comic, has even said that 'It is not unexpected to find that most medieval comedy (perhaps most comedy?) is satirical.')

⁷ Even so, we may assume that the surviving poems represent only a percentage, probably quite a small one, of the satirical verse Middle English writers produced. Such literature tends to be ephemeral, vanishing along with the conditions that caused it to be written. What we have has survived by chance; rarely do the shorter poems exist in more than one manuscript copy. Despite the difference between what was written and what has come down to us, we are still left with an unwieldy amount of satirical material, which has had to be sifted through and arranged. This thesis is concerned only with the 'shorter' poems: by 'shorter' I mean poems of about 200 lines or less (in practice a fairly clear group of surviving poems). I have not treated this as an inflexible rule, though, and if a poem seemed particularly important or interesting and slightly exceeded this length I tended to include it. I have left out those poems which treat exclusively political subjects, as their historical allusions are more properly the subject of a separate study. I have also left out some of the less interesting poems satirizing women or the so-called follies of the age; there are many of these and I thought it unnecessary to include

those which only reiterate what has been said better elsewhere. Short satirical poems by Chaucer, Dunbar and Skelton are not included because they are readily available in excellent editions; these poems are listed in Appendix B. The year 1550 makes a convenient endpoint for my collection, as several manuscripts containing texts I have included appear to date from the mid-sixteenth century, although the poems themselves could very well have been composed before then. I do not intend my collection to reflect the proportions of poems on each subject which survive; instead, I wish to give an overview of shorter verse satire in Middle English, and to allow readers easy comparison of satirical methods and treatments across subjects.

The overall arrangement of the poems is determined by the subjects they satirize. Not wishing to give the impression of hard and fast categorization, I have arranged the poems according to subject group but with consecutive numbering throughout. Once the political poems, which form an extensive group in themselves, are eliminated, the remaining shorter satirical poems tend to fall neatly into six subject areas: women, clergy and clerical matters, money and avarice, rogues and fools, specific people, and medical recipes. No poem falls completely outside these areas, but sometimes a poem belongs to more than one subject area, in which case I have tried to place it on the border between the relevant subject groups where possible. Arrangement by subject, while imposing a modern order on poems which were not usually ordered in such a way in the original manuscripts (although some of the poems on women and the clergy appear grouped in twos or threes in certain manuscripts),⁸ brings out similarities and differences between various treatments of the same subject while allowing comparison between satirical treatments of various subjects. It seems to me the most convenient and sensible arrangement for a collection whose aim is to

demonstrate the scope of shorter Middle English satirical poetry in regard to both its subjects and methods.

Before going on to the literary backgrounds of the subjects themselves, something needs to be said about the satirical methods and then about the forms of the shorter Middle English poems. The methods are varied and by no means always used as primitively as some studies touching on them would suggest.⁹ Although their results are certainly not as polished or sophisticated as most later English verse satire, the methods themselves are often the same. Many of these techniques are also the same as those used in earlier medieval Latin poetry, which in turn seem to derive from methods of classical satire; there are precedents for the Middle English poems in some Old French satire as well.

Chiasmus, inversion, and cataloguing, the methods used in the poems Robbins calls 'the Abuses of the Age',¹⁰ are venerable and prevalent in the English satirical tradition. Many variations on the 'abuses' poem survive; the type is represented in poem 72:

Bissop lorles,
Kyng redeles,
3ung man rechles,
Old man witles
Womman ssamles.
I swer bi heuen kyng
pos bep fiue liper þing.

The inversion on which such poems depend, the 'basic formal principle of "stringing together impossibilities"' (or what the satirist thinks should be impossibilities) has its origins in antiquity.¹¹ Curtius traces its first appearance to Archilochus, a Greek satirist of the seventh century B.C. who was claimed as a model by many Elizabethan satirists.¹² Curtius says of twelfth-century Latin literature that 'The frame of the antique *adynaton* serves both censure of the times and denunciation of the times. Out of stringing together *impossibilia* grows

a topos: "the world upsidedown".¹³ This topos is a dominant one in the shorter Middle English satirical poems.

The rhetorical question is also a popular device in these shorter poems. The stressing of implicit incongruities is used especially to ridicule those who are thought not to live up to their responsibilities in society, a target of satirists in all places and periods. We find, in a poem which criticizes the friars (no. 3), the lines

Men may se by þair contynauce
 þat þai are men of grete penaunce
 And also þat þair sustynauce
 Simple is & wayke.
 I haue lyued now fourty 3eres,
 And fatter men about þe neres
 3it sawe I neuer þen are þese freres,
 In contreys þer þai rayke.

Another satirical method frequently encountered in the Middle English lyric is the use of the proverb as a pithy 'summing up' of the shortcomings that make the subject of the poem worthy of ridicule. The satirical nature of many proverbs--especially those concerning the clergy and women--is apparent from just a brief glance through a dictionary of proverbs. In one poem which uses proverbs to satirize proud spendthrifts (no. 54), nearly every line is proverbial. A stanza from it runs:

Thogh þou haue helpe and hope of truste
 Of lordys and ladyes with þer plesaunce
 Yet beware of had-I-wyste,
 For envy makyth new dystaunce.
 In pryde and pouerte is gret penaunce,
 And yet is daunger most dysese;
þer is commorus enquntaunce
 Wen neyþer of them may odyr plese.

Arthur Pollard has said that "sententiae" or concise generalizing statements...particularly suit moral satire of the kind typified by Johnson's *Vanity of Human Wishes*'.¹⁴ Moral satire is certainly the predominant type in the shorter Middle English poem, and the frequency

with which proverbs are used in satirical lyrics bears out Pollard's statement.

A more difficult satirical device to describe is irony, which was much favored by Middle English satirists. Although they often use it with the delicacy of a bludgeon, it is irony nevertheless, and it makes their satirical points very clearly. The effectiveness of irony depends upon the reader's realization that what is meant is the reverse of what is said. Gilbert Highet says that one of the reasons for using irony is that 'the truth is sometimes so familiar...that people disregard it';¹⁵ irony, by both exaggerating the false and painting it as the truth, makes readers take notice of the truth in a way that simple admonition does not. Poem 62 uses irony for just such a purpose.

Lerne bodyly to lyue.
 by seruaunt, non hyre þou pay;
 Pore ne riche, no 3iftes 3eue,
 But take and gedre al þat þou may;
 þou3 it come wiþ wrong, say not nay,
 But falsely loke þou swere and li3e.
 Þe pore man is the riches pray.
 Lerne þus to lyue bodilye.

An ironic tone prevails in many other poems which do not use irony so explicitly.

Lampoon and invective are perhaps not properly termed satirical techniques, but are better considered as forms of satire making particular use of exaggerating or inappropriately describing certain features of specific people or social groups. Lampoon and invective are sometimes considered separate from satire because they do not seem to express any desire for the improvement of their subjects, only for their harm, but as Claude Rawson said in summing up Robert Elliott's *The Power of Satire*, 'Elliott reaffirmed the primacy of the hurtful and the punitive core [of satire]. Proclamations of moral purpose and disclaimers of personal malice were seen by him as having often a

secondary, self-justifying and *ex post facto* quality...It was precisely because the essential purpose was aggressive that the poet needed to convince himself and others that he was not personally vindictive or anti-social...¹⁶ Following Elliott's argument that in its most primitive form satire sought only to punish and that notions of moral improvement were attendant upon this basic function, lampoon and invective might produce the purest form of satire. Good examples of Middle English poetic invective can be found in poems 75 and 78.

The shorter satiric poems are as varied in form as they are in method. They appear as carols, ballades, epistles, roundels, and other forms, some of which are very unusual and may be unique, particularly in the case of poem 70. No one form is truly predominant, but the carol seems to be found more often than any other, perhaps because the burden afforded the poet a good opportunity to sum up and repeat the point of his satire, as well as further opportunity for irony. The 'destroying' burden, which negates or reverses all that is said in each of the poem's stanzas, is frequently used, particularly in poems concerning women or the foibles of the times.

The forms of the satirical poems might reflect their uses to some degree. Only in certain isolated cases can we know the exact manner of their circulation, as with some political and personal satires which are recorded as being posted on church doors or in other prominent public places. Otherwise we must rely on speculation, but in view of the relationship between the carol form and performance¹⁷ it seems likely that many of the satirical poems in this form were meant to be sung. A few of the satirical carols appear with music or musical arrangement in the manuscript copies.¹⁸ The roundel too might have been meant for performance.

The survival of most of the shorter satirical poems in single manuscript copies makes it very difficult to draw even the most general conclusions about who wrote them, read them, and how they were passed on. In a few instances a manuscript will contain a loose grouping of satirical poems; this might be evidence of a reader's or compiler's interest in satirical poetry in particular, but it does not help us understand how and why the poems were circulated. That the satirical poems did circulate, and that in a few cases we have testimony to their effectiveness, does at least reveal a strong satirical tendency in late medieval English literature. The present collection of poems tries, successfully I hope, to give an idea of the variety of subject, technique and form that tendency encompassed.

* * *

Middle English satirists were highly critical of the clergy, particularly the fraternal orders. Behind Middle English anticlerical satire lay a long tradition of satirical criticism of both the high and low clergy, which seized upon the same faults over and over again--particularly venality, gluttony, pride, lechery, and worldliness. This tradition, carried on mainly in Latin and French, was of great importance to Middle English satirists, since it provided a large collection of established images and arguments which they could borrow and adapt as they liked.

With the spread of Christianity and the institutionalization of the Church in the first centuries after its foundation came a worldliness that many Christians did not welcome.¹⁹ Some of the earliest satire on the clergy is associated with reactions to the Church's growing sophistication; most of it was written by clerics. One of the most severe, and satiric, critics of clerical corruption was St. Jerome, himself an ascetic and an outspoken champion of the ascetic cause. Early in his career Jerome showed concern with the morals of the secular clergy; in an early letter he denounces a corrupt priest in the words of Lucilius, 'Similem habent labra lactucam asino carduos comedente', which he explains by saying '...talisque sit rector quales illi qui reguntur'.²⁰ In the *libellus* for Eustochium,²¹ Jerome divides the clergy into hypocrites and fops, who have in common their desire to seduce women. Later, in the manual for Nepotianus,²² he satirizes the eagerness of clerics to obtain legacies, and adds a satiric portrait of the cleric as glutton. Jerome also criticizes clerics for being little more than businessmen in disguise. In his characterizations of corrupt clerics he borrowed heavily from classical satire, where the ridiculing of low morals, luxurious dress, and gluttony are standard themes.²³ All of these recur in later anticlerical satire, including the Middle English poems. Although it is impossible to show any direct

influence of Jerome in them,²⁴ they are faithful to a satirical tradition in which his work is prominent.

Perhaps more directly influential to Middle English anticlerical satire was the set of homilies on Matthew by the patristic author known as pseudo-Chrysostom.²⁵ While these are not always satirical in themselves, as are most of the anticlerical writings of Jerome, they contain many of the ideas found in Middle English anticlerical satire in general, especially regarding the clergy and avarice, the correct use of alms, and the false redeemers and prophets whose coming is a sign of the last days. Langland quotes from Homily 38 in Passus XV of *Piers Plowman*, in connection with the importance of good priests to a well-ordered society.

Of yet more immediate relevance to Middle English anticlerical satire are the anticlerical satirists writing in France and England in the twelfth century. On the continent and in England at this time the cathedral schools and universities were producing many highly educated clerics who helped to bring about an age of humanism. Among them were writers who brought their familiarity with classical literature, especially classical satire, to bear in their criticism of the clergy. The most notable of these were Serlo of Bayeux, Paganus of Boulay, Bernard of Cluny, and Walter of Châtillon in France; and Henry of Huntington, Gerald of Wales, Nigel Wireker, and Walter Map in England. Many of their poems are attributed by contemporary sources to Goliard, a legendary bishop thought to have initiated an order of fools. In this way twelfth and thirteenth century Latin poems satirizing clerical subjects came to be called 'Goliardic', although the term is also used to refer to drinking and love songs found in the same manuscripts. The Goliardic strain in twelfth and thirteenth century Latin literature is strongly represented in several famous collections of lyrics from this period, including the *Carmina Burana* and

the Latin poems of British Library MS Arundel 384 and Vatican MS Lat. 4389.²⁶

As in Jerome, in the works of these authors we find the standard topics of classical satire used as a basis for criticism of the clergy. Serlo, a canon of Bayeux, wrote satirical invective against his personal enemy, Abbot Gislebert of St. Stephen, Caen, taking him to task for gluttony and worldliness; he wrote a more general piece against the monks as well.²⁷ Paganus of Boulay was a secular clerk with a distrust of the new monastic orders that were being founded in his day, such as the Cistercians; he wrote a satire, *De falsis heremitis qui vagando discurrunt*,²⁸ which attacked contemporary monasticism without naming specific orders or individuals. Bernard of Cluny, a monk, wrote *De contemptu mundi*,²⁹ a general satire which denounces the corruption of the Church and the clergy in its course; in it he included a satirical portrait of a bishop whose main faults are gluttony and love of luxury. Walter of Châtillon too wrote invectives against the clergy, especially the high clergy, often singling out avarice and luxury as their greatest faults.

Of the twelfth-century anticlerical Latin satirists writing in England, Henry of Huntington in his *Satira communis*³⁰ attacked all of the estates; when he comes to the clergy he emphasizes their venality. In his *Speculum Ecclesiae*³¹ Gerald of Wales catalogued monastic depravity. Walter Map's *De nugis curialium* contains a fierce attack on the avarice of the Cistercian order.³² Nigel Wireker in the *Speculum stultorum*³³ combined elements of the beast epic with satirical criticism of the Cluniac order in the tale of an ass, representing a cleric, who seeks to improve his worldly position.

Criticism of the monastic orders formed a large part of twelfth and thirteenth century anticlerical satire. The monastic movement, which had begun to develop rapidly in the fourth century, was largely a reaction to

the Church's growing worldliness and the decline in moral standards some saw as a result;³⁴ its reforming intention was something monasticism had in common with early anticlerical satire. By isolating themselves from the world, in an atmosphere of prayer and simple labor, monks hoped to return to the freedom from secular concerns and temptations which they thought characteristic of the early Church. Unfortunately monasticism suffered from corruptions of its own, and many of the traditional satiric anticlerical types and complaints are found early on in protests against monks who fail to uphold their vows. Once monasteries became established and wealthy institutions with their own internal rivalries and power struggles, these satiric types developed further. To the twelfth-century satirists monasticism usually represented gluttony and luxury above all, but since many of the satirists were monks themselves, it is hard to say how much in their portrayals of monastic corruption is true, and how much is merely a kind of perverse wishful thinking.

There is only one instance in Middle English anticlerical satire where the twelfth-century monastic satirists seem to have had any direct influence; this is the poem known as *The Land of Cockayne* (no. 10),³⁵ which clearly follows the Goliardic tradition. It is probably not a coincidence that the speaker in one of the poems in *Carmina Burana* identifies himself as an 'abbot of Cockayne' (*abbas Cucaniensis*), or that other Goliardic poems appear in the manuscript containing the sole copy of the Middle English poem (BL MS Harley 913, the 'Kildare Manuscript').³⁶ The poem mocks monastic life in its description of an abbey where the monks not only drink and eat constantly, and give themselves over to worldly pastimes and pleasures, but are actually expected to do so. In the context of the poem, the monk who is best at sleeping will most likely become the next abbot (ll. 173-176). The connection between monks and sloth endured throughout the Middle Ages and is found in the personification of Sloth as

a monk by Bosch (tabletop, in the Prado) and in Spenser's portrait of Idleness (*Faerie Queene* I.iv.18-20).

Not much of the surviving shorter anticlerical satire in Middle English is directed so specifically at either monks or priests. The poem sometimes known as *Jolly Jankin* (no. 12), however, might be one instance of where a parish clerk serves as the subject of a satire. Jankin could well be a member of the secular clergy, since monks usually did not celebrate mass for the lay community; if Jankin were a friar this would probably be brought out more specifically. He is probably only in lower orders, where a vow of celibacy was not required, but his behavior during the mass and the poem's hints about his behavior otherwise make a mockery of his being in orders at all, apart from the parody of the liturgy which the poem also contains. If this is the case, the poem criticizes the morals of the lower clergy as well as parodying the mass in part.

Contemporary sermon literature shows that the morals of the secular clergy were much on the minds of some late medieval clerics. Master William Rymyngton delivered two synodal sermons at York in 1372 and 1373, severely criticizing wayward priests; in one of these he said, '...o admirabilis perversio sacerdotum, o abhorribilis confusio curatorum quod a luxuria spurcitiis, ab amplexibus moeretricis, a retinendis publice concubinis ratio non refrenat, auctoritas sacra non revocat, amor Dei non allicit, non repellit timor omnipotentis, et penitus non impedit pudor scandali popularis...' ³⁷ John Myrc, in his manual for parish priests, also complains about wanton clergy, in chapters with such headings as 'The priest as gambler', 'The priest as fornicator', 'The priest as businessman'. ³⁸ In view of the censure of secular clerics here and elsewhere ³⁹ it is strange that we do not have more shorter verse satire directed at them especially. Whether the scarcity of short satirical Middle English poems about the secular clergy is due to the vagaries of

manuscript survival or to the popularity of friars as targets of anticlerical satire is impossible to tell.

Anticlerical satire received fresh impetus when the mendicant orders were established. Like the monastic orders, they began largely in reaction to the established clergy, which in critics' eyes had become too wealthy and too removed from the people. St. Francis began the first mendicant order, which became the Order of Friars Minor, in Italy in 1209-10, while St. Dominic independently founded another, called the Order of Friars Preachers, in Spain in 1216. The Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, known as the Carmelites, was actually founded later but claimed to derive from an earlier order established by the prophet Elijah. The last major mendicant order, the Friars Hermits of St. Augustine, began as an offshoot of the Augustinian canons. A number of other mendicant orders began in the thirteenth century but were not recognized by the Church; these four, sanctioned by the pope, were the most powerful and the most criticized in Middle English antifraternality satire. They shared the objective of evangelical poverty, in which they contrasted fundamentally with the comparatively independent and isolated monastic orders. In embracing secular matters the friars inevitably impinged upon the duties of the secular clergy, especially by preaching and hearing confessions. They received their authority directly from the pope, and so were not part of the Church hierarchy. These things tended to alienate them from both the secular and the regular clergy, and not more than 40 years after the first mendicant order was founded the legitimacy of the mendicants was being seriously questioned.

The first friars to arrive in England were the Dominicans or Jacobins, who landed in 1221. They were followed not long afterwards by the Franciscans, or Minorites, in 1224, the Carmelites in 1240-1, and the Augustinians in 1249. In the space of 30 years the four major orders had

been introduced into the country, and their numbers appear to have increased rapidly, although probably not as rapidly as their medieval critics claimed. The mendicant controversy, which began in Paris in the 1250s, soon followed the friars to England.

The controversy was the culmination of the growing tension between the friars and the secular and regular clergy, who feared the mendicants' increasing influence in the universities, among other things. By 1231 friars occupied three of the twelve chairs in the Faculty of Theology at Paris; in 1250 they seem to have been seeking even more.⁴⁰ In 1252 the masters issued the *statutum de promovendis*, which determined academic advancement within the University and quashed the friars' hope of gaining further chairs. Although the tension between the two factions had already erupted in doctrinal scuffles between the masters and the friars in 1241 and 1247,⁴¹ the issue that brought the conflict to a head was the mendicants' refusal to follow the rest of the University when it voted to strike in 1253. In retaliation the University, not just the Faculty of Theology, expelled and excommunicated the three mendicant masters of theology. The friars appealed to the Pope, who revoked their excommunication and ordered their reinstatement. The University refused. The Pope subsequently censured and suspended the masters of all four faculties from office. They nonetheless refused to relent, and the Pope eventually asked both the masters and the friars to send delegates to Rome, so that some solution could be found.

Many of the ideas expressed in medieval French and English antifraternality satire can be traced back to the polemic generated by the Parisian controversy. The most notable of the friars' antagonists there was William of St. Amour, a master in the Faculty of Theology and the delegate whom the University of Paris sent to Rome in 1254. As a direct result of William's presentation of the University's complaints against the

friars to the papal curia, Pope Innocent IV issued the bull *Etsi animarum*, which placed severe restrictions on the friars' pastoral freedom. They were no longer permitted to hear confessions without the consent of the parish priest; they had to give one-quarter of any burial legacy they might obtain to the same; and they were not allowed to celebrate Mass in their priory churches while it was being celebrated in the parish church.⁴²

Almost immediately after issuing the bull Innocent died, and it was revoked by his successor Alexander IV, who was protector of the Franciscans. William then wrote his main polemical tract against the friars, *De periculis novissimorum temporum*, which led to his banishment from Paris on the orders of Alexander.

In *De periculis* William turned exegesis of a Biblical warning of the apocalypse against the friars. The passage he took to foretell their coming is 2 Tim. 3:1-6, 'Know also this, that in the last days shall come dangerous times. Men shall be lovers of themselves...Having an appearance indeed of godliness but denying the power thereof. Now these avoid. For of these sort are they who creep into houses and lead captive silly women laden with sins, who are led away with divers desires.' William was not the first to use exegesis to criticize the clergy, however; some early Church fathers had in fact read 2 Tim. 3 as a warning against heretical clergymen.⁴³ William was familiar with their exegeses, as his use of the *Glossa ordinaria* as the authority for his own exegesis of the passage shows.⁴⁴ But it was William's association of this passage with the fraternal orders specifically that was to have a lasting influence on later antifraternal literature.

Other masters at the University of Paris also used exegesis to condemn the friars. The friars' wish to become masters in the theology faculty was answered by citation of James 3:1, 'Let not many of you wish to become masters, knowing that you will receive a greater judgment.' To this

William added Matt. 23:8, 'Do not desire to be called rabbi (Master).' 2 Cor. 11:13, 'deceitful workers seduce by their appearance of humility and religion as of the angels', was also applied to the friars; so was Romans 10:15, 'How are men to preach unless they are sent?', for the friars were both outside the Church hierarchy and were not generally invited into parishes to preach. 2 Thess. 3:6 was similarly taken as an indictment against the fraternal orders, 'We declare to you...that you withdraw yourselves from every brother who lives irregularly and not according to the tradition which they have received from us.'

William identified three Biblical types for the friars: the pharisee, the pseudoapostle, and the Antichrist. The Biblical pharisees wanted to be called 'master', as did the friars at the university. The pseudoapostles (so named by William) were the nebulous group of false preachers and prophets to whom the New Testament sometimes refers. Since the friars claimed that they were reviving the way of the true apostles in embracing evangelical poverty, it was natural that William should associate them with the pseudoapostles. The Antichrists were the forerunners of the one great Antichrist, mentioned in 1 John 2:18, '...it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have arisen, whence we know that it is the last hour.' William's association of the friars with the Antichrists, and with the *pseudochristi* and false prophets of Matthew 24 who are also harbingers of the last days, gave serious implications and a sense of urgency to his condemnation of them.

The mendicant controversy at Paris was not confined to ecclesiastical circles; the dispute was soon taken up by the Parisian *literati* as well.⁴⁵ The involvement of such poets as Rutebeuf and Jean de Meun, who had a clerical background himself, guaranteed an influential place in French literature for the polemics of William of St. Amour and his colleagues. Both Rutebeuf and Jean de Meun supported William, although Jean de Meun

wrote in the 1270s, slightly later than Rutebeuf, who wrote during the controversy. Rutebeuf, following William's sermon *De phariseo et publicano*, speaks of pharisees (friars) who dress in russet to appear humble, but are really wolves in sheep's clothing.⁴⁶ Elsewhere he associates the friars with the pseudoapostles, mentioning their false claims to being new apostles.⁴⁷ These and similar associations allow Rutebeuf to conclude, with William of St. Amour, that the friars fulfill the prophecy of 2 Tim. 3 concerning the last times.⁴⁸ Jean de Meun worked on a grander scale in the *Roman de la Rose* than did Rutebeuf in his shorter poems, but he is equally indebted to William's ideas and language, particularly in his creation of Faus-Semblant, who is identified with the mendicants.⁴⁹ Jean also presents Faus-Semblant and the friars as harbingers of the apocalypse; they are the false prophets of Scripture.⁵⁰ Faus-Semblant moreover says that he is one of Antichrist's servants, and that it is now time to wait for his master to come.⁵¹ Such vivid portrayals of friars as false apostles and servants of Antichrist helped to fix the association of friars with apocalyptic themes, and provided an important link between the writings of William of St. Amour and later writers of antifraternality satire.⁵²

While the French poets did much to promote the antifraternality sentiments of William and the masters of the University of Paris, in France and perhaps to some extent in England,⁵³ the most influential attacks on the friars for contemporary English poetry came from Englishmen, namely Archbishop Richard Fitzralph and John Wyclif. Fitzralph wrote and preached against the friars in the 1350s, Wyclif about 30 years later. Fitzralph in investigating the question of the nature of apostolic poverty, initially as part of a papal commission, helped to popularize the notion that natural lordship is dependent solely upon grace and is independent of civil possession. Although he tried to justify both the property of the Church

and the poverty of the fraternal orders, in the end he could not synthesize the view that the Church is subject to natural lordship with the subversive idea that natural lordship does not allow civil property.⁵⁴ Wyclif absorbed from Fitzralph both his theory of lordship as dependent upon grace and his notion of natural possession without civil ownership as the way of the primitive Church. These Wyclif eventually turned into a demand for the disendowment of the Church in order to return it to the purity of its original state.

The charges Fitzralph levelled at the friars in the tract known as *Unusquisque*, in the *De Pauperie salvatoris* and the *Defensio curatorum*, and in his sermons had all been seen before, but Fitzralph used them specifically to demonstrate how the friars usurped ecclesiastical functions. He used exegesis to back up his points, but did not take scriptural passages as prophecy nor Biblical personages as figures. Wyclif, by contrast, believed that the friars foreshadowed the coming of Satan and thus the end of the world, and like William of St. Amour he used figural and prophetic exegesis to support his contentions.⁵⁵ Wyclif differed from William of St. Amour in seeing the friars as a symptom of the corruption within the Church, not as an outside threat to it. In the writings of Wyclif and his followers the antifraternality first voiced by William more than a century earlier became part of a more extensive protest calling for the destruction not only of the mendicant orders but of the visible Church.

The influence of Wycliffite thought can be seen in many of the shorter Middle English antifraternality poems (including nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the present collection), as it can in several of the longer satirical poems of the period, such as *Piers the Plowman's Crede*, *Jack Upland*, *Friar Daw's Reply*, and *Upland's Rejoinder*. Apart from no. 4, which attacks the Franciscans in particular, the poems tend not to differentiate the four

orders beyond naming them for the sake of making the CAIM acronym in one instance (no. 3, ll. 110-16). The acronym itself, frequently encountered in Wycliffite writings,⁵⁶ serves to blend the four orders into one; it stands for the order of Caim or Cain, who supposedly founded it. The poems' criticisms of the friars are often general, concentrating on traditional anticlerical complaints about gluttony, lechery, worldliness, and other shortcomings, but they do occasionally show familiarity with the tenets of a certain order. 'Be thow barfot, be thow shod' in no. 1 (l. 2), for example, refers to the controversial Franciscan tenet that members of this order should not wear shoes. It was a common medieval belief that a Franciscan friar could be identified by his bare feet.⁵⁷ Poem 2, the companion piece to no. 1 (they appear together in the same hand on a flyleaf of a fifteenth-century copy of *Poor Caitiff*), refers to the friars' expensive and superfluous garments,

þan þei loken on my[n h]abete
 And sein 'Forsope, withoutton gyes,
 Where it be russet, blake or white,
 It is worþe alle oure werynge cloþes.'
 I seye I [beg] not for me,
 But for them þat haue none;
 þei seyne 'þou hauist to or þre,
 3euen hem þat nedith þerof oone.' (ll. 21-28)

The Franciscan Constitutions of 1260 state that friars' garments should be poor in both cost and color, and that no friar shall have more than two habits (this was later emended to no more than two new habits a year in the Constitutions of 1292).⁵⁸ A piece of Wycliffite criticism of the friars focuses similarly on their manner of dress,⁵⁹

And so of clothing thei don agenst this reule in many
 maneres; for men seen that the kyng or the emperour my3tte
 with worschipe were a garnement of a frere for goodnesse of
 the cloth, and namely of such freris as schulden most kepe
 povert of crist...

What really sets the Middle English antifraternial poems apart from other Middle English anticlerical poems, though, is the allegation that

friars are *penetrantes domo*, 'creepers into houses'. This allegation appears in the works of William of St. Amour and Wyclif, from whom its use in these poems ultimately derives. In poem 3, the charge is implicit in the way the speaker dwells on the friars' methods of gaining entry into homes by beguiling housewives with finery, household items, and smooth talk. He says,

pai dele with purses, pynnes, and knyues,
With gyrdles, gloues for wenches and wyues
Bot euer bacward þe husband thryues
þer pai are haunted till. (ll. 37-40)

and from this concludes,

Were I a man þat hous helde,
If any woman with me dwelde,
þer is no frer but he were gelde
Shuld com within my wone. (ll. 185-88)

The fear of the friar as seducer shown here and elsewhere echoes the Biblical description of the *penetrans domo*, 'For of these sort are they who creep into houses and lead captive silly women laden with sins, who are led away with divers desires' (2 Tim 3:1-6). The reference to Paul is explicit in poem 2, '...mennes howsis 3e persen/As Poul berip wittnes' (ll. 14-15). But while the poems seem to associate the friars with the apocalypse in using the image of the *penetrans domo*, they contain no other apocalyptic connotations. The poems tend to concentrate instead on the practical difficulties the friars present, appealing to any uneasy feelings about the friars which both noblemen and commoners might have had, and to inconsistencies between the practice of some friars and what must have been popular beliefs about the premises of mendicancy. While the poems are seemingly aimed at common men, who might worry that their wives would buy too many pins and knives from itinerant friars even if they were not seduced by them, the poems would have resonance too for the nobility, who often employed friars as confessors in their households where they were in

regular and close contact with its female members.⁶⁰

Poem 4, which specifically attacks the Friars Minor, does not characterize them as *penetrantes domos* but criticizes them for their depictions of Christ's passion and certain other religious events.⁶¹ Wright and Halliwell thought the poem attacked miracle plays (*Rel. Ant.* I, p. 322), but several of the scenes described would make dramatic representation difficult. Lines like 'þer comes one oute of þe skye in a grey gown/As it were an hoghyerd hyand to toun' (ll. 19-20) seem to fit pictorial representation better. Robbins suggested this in his notes to the poem, and remarked that the paintings Franciscans used to adorn their churches would be likely subjects for the poem's satirical descriptions.⁶² More recent research has identified one of the scenes in a Franciscan wall painting, although not in any surviving English church, and has in any case shown that the poem's descriptions satirize important scenes in Franciscan lore.⁶³ Although early Franciscans in England were punished for decorating their churches and for allowing pictures to appear in them,⁶⁴ the Franciscans in particular came to be known for using pictures in their churches to illustrate the gospel for the illiterate. The Wycliffites, on the other hand, were known for their abhorrence of images and representations of any kind. They feared that the representational aspect of pictures and statues would not be understood by unlearned men and women, who would worship the objects themselves.⁶⁵ They were similarly concerned that unlettered people would believe some supernatural power rested in images of Christ and the saints.⁶⁶ Margaret Aston has in fact said that 'opposition to images can be regarded as one of the most consistent features of the Lollard heresy, and was a criterion for distinguishing its adherents at the beginning of the movement and its end.'⁶⁷ An anti-Lollard poem (no. 13) lends support to this view in its attack on Wycliffite iconoclasm, which often involved the actual breaking up, burning, or

beheading of religious statues.

The less literal iconoclasm of poem 4 works by describing Franciscan images from the standpoint of someone who does not understand their significance; consequently they seem blasphemous. Since several of the scenes depict important events in Franciscan legend, this has the effect of discrediting the order for those who realize the significance of the scenes. Even if their significance is lost on the reader the satire is still effective, since it presents the Franciscans as blasphemers. In his study of the antifraternality tradition in medieval literature, Szittyá takes the poem's insinuations of blasphemy further, seeing them as echoes of Wyclif's antifraternality apocalypticism.⁶⁸ Any evidence in Middle English verse of the apocalypticism so long associated with antifraternality polemic is welcome, since it indicates that antifraternality and apocalypticism were still associated by late medieval English writers (an association that has particular bearing on *Piers Plowman*), but it is unlikely that poem 4 provides it. Szittyá asserts that the poem's descriptions of the scenes do not merely mock them but deliberately read them as scenes of the apocalypse. He says that the scenes contain '...a figure who is said to perform miracles to lend conviction to the claim that he is a god; who can suspend the laws of nature; who flies, who finally obtains, by deception, the submission of the church and prelates to his power' which are 'all features of the medieval legends of Antichrist.'⁶⁹ Yet the poem never refers, either explicitly or implicitly, to the performance of miracles by a false god, nor does it mention the suspension of the laws of nature beyond what might be inferred from the flying friar. If the flying friar is a depiction of the levitation of St. Francis from Franciscan legend, as Beverly Brian has suggested,⁷⁰ it would be difficult not to describe the picture as the poem does if it is to be deliberately misunderstood; there is nothing in the speaker's description of a flying friar that

implies a more general suspension of natural law, or necessarily associates him with Antichrist. Similarly there is nothing in the poem implying that the Pope's submission to the friar in ll. 26-30 is obtained by deception.

A better case can be made for antifraternality apocalypticism in three of Dunbar's poems, *The Fen3eit Friar of Tungland*, *The Antechrist*, and *How Dunbar Wes Desyrd to be Ane Freir*. The first two of these, both dream visions, concern John Damian, an Italian or French alchemist and medical doctor of sorts whom James IV made Abbot of Tungland in 1504. Damian attempted to fly, with disastrous results, from Stirling castle in 1507. In *The Fen3eit Friar* Dunbar describes his dream as being 'off sonis of Sathanis seid' (l. 4). Kinsley suggests that this might refer to the custom of presenting devils in mystery plays in feathered costume,⁷¹ but in light of Dunbar's poems known as *The Antechrist* and *How Dunbar Wes Desyrd...*, the reference to 'sons of Satan's seed' is more likely an echo of the antifraternality notion of friars as harbingers of Antichrist and the apocalypse. In *The Antechrist* a flying friar (again a reference to Damian) mates with a she-dragon in the clouds and fathers the Antichrist. Here Dunbar spells out the apocalyptic connection, 'And syne thay [Antichrist's servants] sall discend with reik and fyre/And preiche in erth the Antechrystis impyre;/Be than it salbe neir this warldis end' (ll. 36-38). In *How Dunbar Wes Desyrd...*, also a dream vision, the figure that appears to Dunbar as St. Francis and urges him to become a friar turns out to be a fiend, and so this poem too hints at a connection between friars and Antichrist. In each of these poems Dunbar makes a specific reference to fiends, Satan, and the apocalypse in connection with a friar; antifraternality apparently retained an apocalyptic tinge at least into the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

Of the Middle English satirical poems with specifically antifraternality leanings (which include nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8), one claims to be

written by a friar (no. 2), and another by a postulant who left a mendicant order before taking his vows (no. 3), but the odds are against either claim being literally true. Rather, from the evidence of several other medieval poems in Latin as well as English, the assumption of a friar's role by a poem's speaker was something of a satirical convention in medieval literature.⁷² None of these poems shows the kind of detailed knowledge of the fraternal orders we might expect if they really had been written by friars; none of the 'feneit friars' even specifies his order. In this they contrast with the twelfth- and thirteenth-century monastic satirists, whose writing shows some depth of knowledge about monasticism and particular monastic orders. The appeal of such a convention for antifraternals satirists must have been great, since it would allow them to give substance to otherwise hearsay claims about the friars. The speaker in poem 2 is ostensibly a friar, while the speaker in poem 3 makes it clear that his knowledge of the friars' abuses derives from his experience as a postulant, 'I was a frere ful many a day/perfor þe soþe I wate' (ll. 159-60). Dunbar in the poem *How Dunbar wes Desyrd to be ane Frere*⁷³ also claims to have been a friar, or to have imitated one; he says,

Als lang as I did beir the freris style
 In me, God wait, wes mony wrink and wyle,
 In me was falset with every wicht to flatter
 Quhilk mycht be flemit with na haly watter.
 I wes ay reddy all men to begyle. (ll. 41-45)

Some have taken these lines as evidence that Dunbar was actually once in orders, or that he at least did travel about in friars' clothes, both of which are unsupported by what is known about his life.⁷⁴ In light of the many other appearances of the 'feneit friar' in medieval satirical poetry, it is more probable that Dunbar is simply using a convention of antifraternals poetry.

The amount of Middle English antifraternals satire that has survived shows that the friars had attained a certain ecclesiastical and popular

influence in the period between their introduction into England in the mid-thirteenth century and the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, when most of the poems were written. At the outset the friars seem to have been held in esteem by both the aristocracy and the commons. From the beginning individual friars were chosen for confessors at court and by magnates.⁷⁵ Adam Marsh, a Dominican, was an important member of Henry III's entourage, and was trusted enough to be sent on diplomatic missions abroad.⁷⁶ At the opposite end of the social scale, the monk Thomas Walsingham tells how Jack Straw said he would have liked to keep no other ecclesiastics in this world apart from the mendicant friars.⁷⁷ The early friars were held in respect by the secular and regular clergy as well, many of whom would become the friars' bitter enemies later in the medieval period. Enlightened English bishops, Grosseteste foremost among them, saw the first English fraternal orders as a powerful instrument for moral and disciplinary reform in their dioceses. Grosseteste himself was a patron of the Franciscans less than nine years after their arrival.⁷⁸ The eagerness of bishops to use the friars as tools for reform, when the parochial clergy often lacked the competence or the desire to preach and confess to the extent prescribed by the Lateran Council of 1215, gave the friars great freedom. It took time for the parochial and regular clergy to openly resent and resist the friars' privileged status.⁷⁹

The friars' reputation apparently changed as time went on. They grew yet more popular; efforts made in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries to enlarge the space for the congregation in mendicant churches shows that more people were coming under their influence. On the other hand the friars were being criticized increasingly for their lack of humility, ostentatious buildings, and avariciousness, among other things.⁸⁰ Matthew Paris, who became one of the friars' bitterest opponents, wrote in his *Historia Anglorum* of how poor, humble, and useful they were immediately

after their introduction into England.⁸¹ Poem 4 begins by saying that the Friars Minor '...waxyn are thus hauteyn that sometime weren under' (l. 2). For their pride the friars were sometimes physically attacked. An entry in the *Croniques de London* for the reign of Edward II says, 'At the same time the preaching friars fled because they feared maltreatment and ruin, because the commonalty bore with them very reluctantly, on account of their proud behavior, for they did not behave as friars ought.'⁸² In 1385 a proclamation of Richard II states '...we have understood, that some persons of our kingdom of England, by the instigation of the evil spirit...do and daily strive to do harm and scandal to our beloved in Christ, the religious men, friars of the order of minors...openly and secretly stirring up our people against them to destroy the houses of the said friars, tearing their habits from them, striking some, and ill-treating them against our peace'.⁸³

The proclamation of Richard II suspects a conspiracy of some kind against the Friars Minor, although the conspirators are not identified. It does not say that certain persons attack the friars, but that certain persons instigate attacks on friars; preaching would have been a very effective means of doing this. Wycliffite preachers, similar to the mendicant orders in their devotion to preaching and spreading the gospel among the unlettered, would have had ample opportunity to conflict with the friars. Although Wycliffite criticism of the clergy was by no means confined to the mendicant orders, the friars are more frequently attacked in Wycliffite writings and sermon literature than other religious orders,⁸⁴ and whether or not the Wycliffites made a concerted effort to discredit the friars, a special animosity existed between them.

To some extent the fortunes of the Franciscans in medieval England were bound up with the changing political climate of the time. They were accused, probably with some grounds, for spreading the rumor that Richard

II was alive and living in Scotland during the early years of Henry IV's reign, and many took part in popular insurrections against the new Lancastrian regime. In 1401 eight Franciscan friars were among those hanged, drawn, and beheaded for treason at Tyburn.⁸⁵ One claimed Richard II as 'furtherar and promoter' of the order, and others showed similar loyalty to him.⁸⁶ An interesting point in their trial is the language in which the charges against them were couched,

Ye bith enditid that ye in ipocrisie and flaterieng and fals lif, haue prechid fals sermons; wherynne ye saide falsli that king Richard livith, and haue excited the peple to seche him in Scotland--Also, ye in your ypocrisie and fals lif, haue herd fals confessiouns, wherynne ye haue enioyned to the peple in wey of penaunce to seche king Richard in Walis--Also, ye with your fals flaterieng and ypocrisie, haue gadrid a gret summe of money with begging, and sent it to Oweyne of Glendoure, a traitour, that he sholde come and destroy Englund...

The charges of treason are combined with the usual antifraternality charges of irresponsible preaching and flattery, failure to live up to the mendicant rule, giving penance improperly, and misuse of the right to beg. That these antifraternality charges would be included in a legal indictment, even though the indictment itself is concerned with treason, shows how pervasive antifraternality notions had become by the early fifteenth century. Henry IV was careful to limit the growth of the Franciscans as much as possible, at least early in his reign; while the Patent Rolls for the reigns of Henry III, the three Edwards, and Richard II contain 112 entries relating to property grants for the Franciscans, there are three such entries in only the first year of Henry IV's reign, with very few entries appearing again until later years.⁸⁷

It appears, then, that the antifraternality fostered by the Middle English satirical poems affected the way in which the fraternal orders were perceived and treated by both the commons and the nobility. Unfortunately we have no Middle English poems written by friars in their own defense, but we do have a poem (no. 13) written from the orthodox point of view against

the Lollards, who were among the friars' chief detractors. It does not explicitly defend the established clergy but is more concerned with the political implications of Lollardy. The poem is structured around an attack on Sir John Oldcastle, a Lollard knight who was instrumental in the Lollard rising of 1414 (puns on his name are found at ll. 33 and 57). He was probably still at large when it was written, since it does not mention his capture and execution in 1417. An intriguing allegation which the poem makes against Oldcastle is that his involvement with Lollardy is beneath his dignity as a knight, 'I trow þer be no kni3t alyue/þat wold haue don so open a shame/For þat crafte to studi or scriue/Hit is no gentel mannes game' (ll. 73-76). Possibly the preponderance of artisans and similarly humble people in the movement made Oldcastle's association with it particularly odious.⁸⁸ Otherwise the poem criticizes his disloyalty to the king, which the poet associates with his Lollard beliefs. Hoccleve too wrote on the subject, but his remonstrance to Oldcastle⁸⁹ is more concerned with the knight's own heresy than with the heresy of Lollardy in general.

Whether they wrote against friars, Lollards, or other clerics, satirical poets in medieval England wanted the clergy to return to a former, more perfect state. For those who wrote against the friars and corrupt orthodox clerics, this meant stricter moral regulations and possible the abolition of the mendicant orders altogether; for those whose subject was Lollardy it meant the suppression of dissent towards reform. Earlier anticlerical satirists writing in Latin had the same concerns and complaints; the tradition of anticlerical satire extends back to St. Jerome and beyond. If the satirists are to be believed an age of uncorrupted clergy never existed; in any case there seems never to have been an age in which the clergy has been free of satirists' attention.

The antifeminist bias in shorter Middle English satirical poems is very strong. Like clerics, women were the butt of much medieval humor, which reinforced the notion that women by nature are sly, quarrelsome, vain, and lecherous. If these feminine faults were already commonplaces in the Middle Ages, satirists in medieval England (and one may assume their audiences) showed no signs of tiring of them; antifeminist satire was apparently produced steadily throughout the period, appearing initially in Latin but later in Anglo-Norman and English, as well.

Very little English material directly refuting the negative, satirical view of women has come down to us from medieval times; of the 403 works included in F. L. Utley's survey of English writing on women from the early Middle Ages to 1568, only 85, or roughly 20 percent, defend women.⁹⁰ Since some defenses were ironic,⁹¹ the amount of material directly supporting women is actually even less than this. In France women had a champion in the poet Christine de Pisan, who defended her sex against the sharp antifeminist satire of Jean Clopinel de Meun in the *Roman de la Rose*, precipitating the literary and academic debate over women's merits which came to be known as the *querelle des femmes* or *querelle de la rose*.

The *querelle* was known in England, in literary circles at least--Chaucer probably alludes to it in the *Wife of Bath's Prologue* and in the *Nun's Priest's Tale*, and his statement in the Prologue to *The Legend of Good Women* could conceivably have been devised along the lines of the *querelle* to make it seem as though a similar dispute was taking place in the English court. Somewhat earlier the author of *Cleanness* refers to 'Clopyngnel''s 'clene Rose' (*Cleanness* l. 1057),⁹² probably in answer to Christine's charge in *L'Epistre au Dieu d'Amours* that Jean de Meun's poem encouraged immorality.⁹³ Hoccleve translated *L'Epistre* into English as *The Letter of Cupid*.⁹⁴ Despite its currency, the English never seem to have taken up the *querelle* with the same zest as the French, perhaps because

medieval England never produced a Christine de Pisan, but probably because the *querelle* was taken less seriously in England than on the continent. No English equivalent of the *querelle* existed, at least not one of which we know. It seems that most of the Middle English material relating to the *querelle* is closely related to French material (Hoccleve's translation, for example); if medieval English writers took an interest in the quarrel, they did so more as spectators than as participants. The question of women's worth was in no way ignored by Middle English poets, however. Apart from short poems, such as no. 30, several debate poems, such as Dunbar's *The Merle and the Nightingale*,⁹⁵ concern the merit of women, pretending to weigh their positive characteristics against the negative ones--that the negative view of women will prevail is never really in doubt.

The antifeminist satirist in the later Middle Ages had a long tradition on which to draw. Among the satirists who preceded him were anonymous aphorists, Goliardic clerks, classical authors, Church fathers, and preachers. Through the last two of these, satire against women gained the implicit sanction of the medieval Church, which did nothing to impede antifeminist writers and preachers even if it did not openly encourage them. One of the writers who did most to support and advance the tradition of antifeminist satire was St. Jerome, who was known in medieval England for his criticism of women; Jankin in the prologue to *The Wife of Bath's Tale* has a 'book of wikked wyves' containing Jerome's *Adversus Jovinianum*, his vitriolic rejection of the assertion that virginity is not necessarily superior to marriage.

For Jerome the works of Horace, Persius, Juvenal, and other classical authors⁹⁶ were models which he adapted to his own militantly ascetic ends. At the bottom of Jerome's asceticism lay Christian doctrine, and it was from this base that Jerome launched his satirical attacks upon women. His

misogynist polemic derived largely from his campaign for ecclesiastical reform;⁹⁷ he saw women as a threat, perhaps as the major threat, to the purity of the Church. Women were dangerous in two ways: as wives, by taking men away from the clerical orders, and as nuns, by failing to live up to their vows. In the *libellus* for Eustochium Jerome satirized nuns who cohabited with men in supposedly spiritual unions:⁹⁸

Whence has a plague of *agapetae* [debauched nuns] entered the churches? Whence comes a new kind of unmarried wife? Indeed, whence a novel genus of concubine? I shall add more: whence come monogamous prostitutes? They [a nun and her male companion] live in the same house, in the same bedroom, often in the same bed, and they call us suspicious if we think anything of it. A brother deserts his virgin sister, a virgin scorns her celibate brother and, although they pretend to be devoted to the same ideal, they seek the spiritual solace of outsiders in order that they may at home have carnal relations.

In the same letter, Jerome takes to task nuns who are not debauched but who seek fame through excessive self-deprivation or worse, by pretended deprivation:⁹⁹

Indeed there are some who disfigure their faces that they may appear in the eyes of men to be fasting. These women, as soon as they see someone, begin to moan, lower their brow and covering their face, free hardly one eye for seeing; their dress is drab, their girdle of plain material, their hands and feet filthy, while their belly alone is aboil with food, because no one can see it.

Secular women, in Jerome's opinion, were even worse. He saw in marriage not only the seduction of men away from the redemptive love of Christ, but the encouragement of women's sensual nature. Women to Jerome were particularly susceptible to worldly luxury, and their corruption could only be checked by extreme asceticism.¹⁰⁰ Because he saw marriage as a perversion of the true Christian life for both men and women, it is not surprising that for the most part Jerome's attacks on secular women are also attacks on marriage.¹⁰¹ In Book One of his polemical work *Adversus Jovinianum* he counters Jovinian's anti-ascetic view that virginity is not superior to marriage by amassing misogynistic material from earlier antifeminist writers and fashioning it into a satirical attack on the

institution of marriage. Similar attacks are often found in patristic writings; the *molestiae nuptiarum* or evils of marriage were used by the Fathers to show, albeit from a more worldly than spiritual viewpoint, the benefits of virginity for women. Jerome is working along these familiar lines, but while he is concerned to show in *Adversus Jovinianum* that virginity is superior to marriage for women, it is the pitfalls of marriage for men, not the pitfalls of marriage for women, that he emphasizes. He includes an excerpt from Theophrastus' satiric description of marriage which, as David Wiesen points out, is not entirely germane to an argument for women's virginity since it stresses what a burden women are to men in marriage.¹⁰² Jerome was either so involved in the rhetoric of the antifeminist tradition that he did not notice this, or enjoyed satiric portrayals of women so much that the incongruity between his argument and his examples did not matter to him.

In his polemics against women Jerome also drew heavily on the works of earlier Christian antifeminist writers, Tertullian in particular, and made use of antifeminist material found in the Bible, especially in the epistles of Paul. While Paul wrote 'There is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus' (Gal. 3:28), he also gave the Christian ascetics, and Jerome as their most prominent spokesman, reason for condemning marriage when he wrote 'It is good for a man not to touch a woman' (1 Cor. 7:1) and 'I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn' (1 Cor. 7:8-9). Exegesis of Genesis, especially of Eve's role in the fall of man, did not seem to play a major part in Jerome's antifeminism, although it was a question that exercised his contemporaries Ambrose and Augustine,¹⁰³ and was an important point in the *querelle des femmes*.

Medieval English preachers were also concerned with women's faults and with the difficulties marriage presents. Indeed, as Owst has pointed out, the language of satirical poems and of sermons on these subjects is often strikingly similar.¹⁰⁴ The exact relationship between the satirical poems and sermon literature is difficult to determine and too complex to be explored here, but it does seem that many of the satirical poems were heavily influenced by preaching, or were written for didactic purposes, or both. A list of womanly faults taken from sermons would find many correspondances with such a list taken from the shorter satirical poems. Women's fashions, especially the headgear known as horns, came in for a great deal of criticism in the sermons as well as the poetry; an anonymous preacher, for instance, describes women 'with there gay heddes sett up on hy3e and hurned as an unreasonable best',¹⁰⁵ recalling Lydgate's *Horns Away* and other poems against this style (e.g. nos. 27 and 28). The legendary wilfulness of women was similarly criticized in sermons and poems; John Bromyard, compiler of the *Summa predicantium*, saw in women (as Owst puts it) 'a certain unnatural condition of contrariety and wilfulness.'¹⁰⁶ This alleged defect of the female character is treated in numerous satirical poems, such as one criticizing husbands for allowing their wives to 'wear the breeches' in the household (no. 33). Sermons dwelt on women's liberality, deceit, and pride, all of which are common components of poems satirizing women. Whether or not preaching directly influenced these poems, it certainly helped to create an atmosphere in which antifeminist satire flourished.

As in Jerome and much sermon literature, marriage is a prominent theme in Middle English antifeminist poetry (see nos. 29, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, and 37). Since the majority of medieval women married, marriage and widowhood are important components of satire on women. The emphasis in the shorter Middle English poems is different from Jerome's emphasis in his

condemnation of marriage--women are portrayed more as burdens to men, and not so much as corrupters of men, in their rôle as wives. The poems are closer to sermons in concentrating on the practical difficulties marriage presents. Occasionally in a shorter satirical poem we find the idea that study and marriage are incompatible, but in these poems generally the danger of women lies in making their husbands' lives miserable rather than in tempting them away from study or ascetic piety. While marriage is still much-criticized in Middle English satirical poetry, and while women are still seen as the reason it deserves criticism, its faults are described in more worldly, less spiritual terms.

Marriage also provided satirical poets with a framework in which they could display women's faults to full advantage. Frequently Middle English antifeminist poems were written as warnings to men not to marry, or at least to consider well before doing so (e.g. nos. 32, 33, 34, and 36). The idea that marriage would ruin a man's life was no doubt backed up by the low position marriage occupied in the medieval Church's hierarchy of continency, where virginity was the highest state, followed by chaste widowhood and then by marriage. Despite Paul's statement that it is better to marry than to burn, marriage was still a distant third to virginity. As Doris Stenton remarked, the 'unnatural admiration of virginity' which medieval ecclesiastics promoted reduced the esteem of the married state. To them and those influenced by them marriage was valuable only as a means of avoiding sin for people too weak to remain virgin.¹⁰⁷ Margery Kempe apparently worried that being married and a mother would prevent God from loving her as much as he did maidens; in one of her visions He assures her that 'þerfor is it no synne to þe, dowtyr, for it is to þe rapar mede 7 meryte, 7 þow xalt haue neuyr þe lesse grace, for I wyl þat þow bryng me forth mor frwte', and 'þow þe state of maydenhode be mor parfyte 7 mor holy

þan þe state of wedewhode, 7 þe state of wedewhode mor þarfyrte þan þe state
[of] wedlake, 3et dowtyr I lofe þe as wel as any mayden in þe world.'¹⁰⁸

The emphasis in Middle English satirical poetry on the practical difficulties of marriage reflects, however remotely, the theme of the *molestiae nuptiarum*, which has a scriptural basis in I Cor. 7:28, '...Yet those who marry will have worldly troubles, and I would spare you that.' The theme itself is much older than the New Testament, though, and patristic elaborations of Paul's words were mixed with rhetoric on the evils of marriage taken from Greek tragedy and Epicurean, Stoic and Cynical philosophy. From as early as the fifth century B.C. the *molestiae nuptiarum* was a standard rhetorical topic.¹⁰⁹ *Halī Meīðhad* contains a passage on the evils of marriage for women which Bella Millett says was probably included 'because he [the treatise's author] saw it as an effective means of appealing to an unsophisticated audience and an excuse for displaying his rhetorical skill'.¹¹⁰ Although unlike *Halī Meīðhad* Middle English poems mocking marriage inevitably take the husband's side, the same can be said of their use of the *molestiae nuptiarum* theme.

Widows as well as wives were the objects of medieval antifeminist satire; the time-honored type of the easily consoled widow found a receptive audience in medieval England and France. Two of the best known and most influential satirical portraits of women in the Middle Ages are of widows--Jean de Meun's *la Vieille* and Chaucer's *Wife of Bath*--and the dominant character among the three women in Dunbar's *A Tretis of Tua Mariit Wemen...* is a widow, as is Skelton's *Eleanor Ruming*. Some shorter Middle English satirical poems show the same attitude to widows as these fuller characterizations, portraying widows as wilful, wily, avaricious, and lecherous (e.g. no. 29). Widows are criticized for the same faults as wives, but their position as widows, with their greater experience and freedom, magnifies these faults in them.

The notion that widows should be faithful to their husbands' memory doubtless colored the attitude of medieval satirists. The Roman ideal of a woman dedicated to a single husband, the *univira*, was taken up by Jerome in *Adversus Jovinianum* in his accounts of virtuous widows like Porcia and Dido (according to Jerome, Dido threw herself onto the pyre of her husband Sychaeus to avoid a second marriage).¹¹¹ In one of his epistles, to the recently widowed Furia, Jerome even likens remarriage to a dog returning to its own vomit.¹¹² Yet the Church allowed for, and even seems to have encouraged the remarriage of widows,¹¹³ and in the higher ranks of society in the Middle Ages their remarriage was often politically expedient. In twelfth-century England widows were classed with heirs and heiresses in the king's wardship as sources of income about which the king must be kept fully informed,¹¹⁴ and were apparently so exploited politically that in the following century one of the provisions of Magna Carta guaranteed their right not to remarry at all.¹¹⁵

At the lower levels of society there was also enormous pressure on widows to remarry. Their dower, marriage settlement, and the land they customarily received on the death of their husbands made them attractive prospects for suitors. Chaucer's Wife of Bath, who is well aware of what she stands to gain materially from each of her husbands, also recognizes Jankin's possible motives in marrying her: when he strikes her she responds '...And for my land thus hastow mordred me?' (*WofBP*, l. 801). Some widows escaped the marriage market by entering the convent, but this was more prevalent among widows of the nobility, who often founded convents to which they could retire in widowhood,¹¹⁶ than among non-aristocratic widows. The latter, particularly if they had families to raise, must have been willing enough to remarry.

Another factor that probably influenced medieval satirists' views of widowhood was the relative freedom the widow enjoyed compared with either

wives or nuns. In medieval England a woman was under the guardianship of her father or lord until she married, when her husband became her guardian. As a rule a woman passed into the guardianship of a husband before she reached the age of 21, and only when she became a widow was she most likely to be out of guardianship.¹¹⁷ As a nun a woman was no less restricted than she would have been as a wife, although the restrictions on her were of a different nature.¹¹⁸ Generally speaking it was only as a widow that a woman without a husband could receive the sanction of medieval English secular society. It is perhaps significant that the widows satirized in Middle English poems are never portrayed as indigent. If we are allowed to infer from characters like the Wife of Bath, who was a weaver,¹¹⁹ and from medieval documentation which shows that some women were active in the medieval marketplace (mostly as brewers and bakers),¹²⁰ it seems probable that women who followed trades while married often continued to do so in widowhood. The medieval widow moreover was free to choose her next husband. Her autonomy in these matters put her in an unusually powerful position for a woman.

The combination of her unaccustomed social freedom and the wisdom born of past marriage made the widow a particularly dangerous woman from the point of view of the medieval satirist. Older widows (of which, again, *la Vieille* and the Wife of Bath are prototypes) who had been married several times and had a broad experience of men and the world were portrayed as slier and wiler than the average wife. In the *Lamentations of Matheolus*, written in Latin early in the fourteenth century and translated into French not long after, the writer bewails the marriage he made with a widow when he was young and vulnerable.¹²¹ Older widows in medieval literature also serve as duennas to younger women, which gives them the opportunity to pass their knowledge on--*la Vieille*, the Wife of Bath, and Dunbar's Widow in *A Tretis of Tua Mariit Wemen...* all instruct or claim to have instructed

younger women in how to deceive men.¹²² They did not provide the kind of 'school for wives' medieval men sought.

Although few shorter Middle English poems satirizing religious women have come down to us, one medieval satirist at least did not overlook those women who shunned married life for the convent or cloister. *The Land of Cockayne* (no. 10) primarily satirizes monks but includes a satiric description of nuns who revel in their wantonness along with, and as much as, their male counterparts. Religious women were taken to task for many of the same faults as secular women--vanity, love of luxury, quarrelsomeness, and lechery--but they had taken vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, which exaggerated these faults in them.¹²³ Female religious do not figure as prominently in satirical criticism of the clergy as one might expect; satires involving nuns treat them more as women with the usual 'womanly' weaknesses than as religious who deliberately use their position to deceive others and advance themselves, as clerics are usually portrayed in anticlerical satire.

Other medieval European literatures contain non-satirical short poems, known variously as *chansons de nonne*, *Klosterlieder*, and *Nonnenklagen*, that specifically lament the nun's state. The concept of the nun unwillingly professed made its way into some late fifteenth-century English poetry;¹²⁴ the view in these poems of nuns as 'cloistered lovebirds', in Eileen Power's phrase, ties in with their portrayal as wantons in what little English satirical poetry dealing with nuns there is. In most nun's laments the unhappy woman is rescued from her misery by a lover, or manages to take a lover without leaving the convent, or is able to run away to search for a lover. In both the satirical poems and the nun's laments, religious women are shown as unable to control their desires, whether the object is love, luxury, or gossip. It is a view of religious women which Jerome, despite great differences of time and culture, would surely have endorsed.

Much of the antifeminism expressed in Middle English satire was probably reflexive, but even this shows how deeply ingrained antifeminism was in medieval English culture. Notwithstanding the exalted position of the Virgin Mary in the medieval Church (which presented women with an unattainable ideal) and the important but mainly unrecognized rôle women played in medieval society, Middle English satirists followed the traditional portrayals of women as a necessary evil, at best. Women in the satires are daughters of Eve rather than sisters of Mary; according to Middle English satirists the latter were scarce indeed.

* * *

Although avarice and venality figure prominently in satirical criticism of the clergy and women, money and its related sins were often subjects of satire themselves. The power of money was recognized in medieval English literature; apart from its prevalence in the shorter poems and its appearance throughout Chaucer, *Piers Plowman* deals extensively with the double nature of meed or reward ('money' in its broadest sense), while less complex works like *Mum and the Sothsegger* and *Winner and Waster* are concerned more strictly with the ill effects money has on medieval society. The shorter poems cannot explore the social repercussions of money in the depth of *Piers Plowman* or even *Winner and Waster*, but they nonetheless show the same concern with the ways money affects man's behavior towards his fellow men. As might be expected, in the medieval English's satirist's opinion the social effects of money are never positive. Money meant increased status and to some extent power to subvert the existing social order, something satirists of any age seldom condone; money also acted as a spur to other sins besides greed, and especially to pride, the deadliest sin of all.

Satire on avarice existed long before Paul's famous dictum in 1 Tim. 6:10, 'Love of money is the root of (all) evils' (*Radix malorum est cupiditas*), which was taken so much to heart by medieval social critics. The power of money to buy influence and respect, and to pervert justice, was a subject favored by Horace, Persius, and Juvenal. Juvenal in his first satire wrote of money's power to bestow dignity on the vile, and to absolve criminals from justice.¹²⁵ Elsewhere, and often, he satirizes the excess and vanity wealth encourages.¹²⁶ Horace satirized venality less caustically, especially in *Sermones* I.1, II.3 and II.5, although he treats greed and its consequences in other of his satires and epistles as well. In his sixth satire Persius advocates a moderate approach to spending and avoidance of the ways of both the miser and the spendthrift. Horace and

Juvenal sometimes personify money: Juvenal simply as Money, whom men revere almost as a god; Horace as Queen Money, who is able to confer high-born wives, friends and charm on those she favors.¹²⁷ Both satirists link avarice to Rome. Juvenal's third satire is an attack directed specifically at the venality of Roman life, while Horace often contrasts Roman urban life unfavorably with life in the country, particularly in *Epistulae* I.14. Their satires on Roman corruption would find a receptive audience in critics of Rome as seat of the papal curia many centuries later.

The works of Horace, Persius, Juvenal, and other classical authors who wrote in a satirical strain were known, directly and indirectly, by medieval authors. Venality satire might in fact have been the type of classical satire introduced earliest to medieval Europe. Raby has suggested that Adalbaro of Laon's *Carmen ad Rotbertum*, written in 1017 during the Investiture Contest and containing recollections of the classical Latin satirists, marks the return of formal satire to European literature,¹²⁸ while Yunck similarly suggests that the polemic of the Investiture Contest, in which ecclesiastical reforms centralized Church finances, initially gave rise to the eleventh-century revival of interest in the Roman satirists.¹²⁹ Abundant evidence of this renewed interest can be found in the writings of the Goliardic clerks, whose satirical verse against venality drew on the tradition of Roman avarice which Yunck says was 'so commonplace between 1100 and 1300 that it achieved proverbial status.'¹³⁰ Rome, seat of the papal court, again became the symbol of venality which it had been for Horace and Juvenal.

A blend of pagan and Christian traditions of money satire, both having Rome as their focus, can be seen in early medieval vernacular satire on venality. Although less vernacular satire than Latin satire was written on money, it was still plentiful. Money satire starts appearing in French in the late twelfth century, and is fairly common by the mid-thirteenth

century. The shorter type of poem is rare in vernacular French money satire of this period, however; such satire occurs mainly within longer didactic poems. The early thirteenth-century *Roman de carité*, for instance, tells the story of an old woman who is ignorant of the ways of the papal courts and takes a case to be tried at Rome. Slightly later Rutebeuf satirized the avarice of the Roman curia, partly in connection with his defense of William of St. Amour in the conflict between the University of Paris and the friars, who were supported by Pope Alexander IV. Rutebeuf used the character of Dan Denier to personify money; the figure seems to have been common property at the time, since it also appears in songs associated with other minstrels, in a fabliau, and in a verse treatment of the seven deadly sins.¹³¹ Dan Denier looks back to Horace's Regina Pecunia and the characters St. Nummulus, Albus, Rubicundus, and Munera of medieval Latin clerical satire,¹³² and forward to Fauvel and Lady Meed as well as to Sir Peny, Dan Denier's Middle English counterpart.

Like Dan Denier, many of the satirical concepts involving money found in the French vernacular poems appear later in the Middle English poems. The notion that money can buy anything is present in both the French and English poems, which often use similar descriptions of what can be bought. The catalogue of money's powers in a French poem is reminiscent of poem 38:

With him [Money] you can buy greatcoats and mantles of ermine, Gascon horses and beautiful women. He causes the orphan to be disinherited, the excommunicated to be absolved, the villain to receive justice, injuries to be pardoned...Money makes a courtier of a peasant, a gay man of a melancholic, a wit of a sot...If you have any business at Rome, don't go without him, or you will fail; but if you have him I will be security for your success.¹³³

Jubinal prints another poem making similar claims for money's influence.¹³⁴ In a curious French poem recounting a debate between Dan Denier and a sheep on their respective merits,¹³⁵ Denier's claims become a diatribe on the power of money over all people, regardless of sex, age, or class. The same idea recurs frequently in the Middle English poems, such as nos. 38, 39,

and 41, but the English poems on the whole tend to be much shorter than the French. The English poems also tend to satirize avarice apart from broader didactic concerns, but they are no less moralistic for this.

The earliest contexts of English vernacular money satires are political instead of religious. From the evidence of the shorter Middle English poems directed against avarice vernacular money satire in England continued to be written from a primarily political or social point of view. Like most French money satire, the earliest Middle English satire on avarice is found in a long didactic poem, and is on the whole more like the earlier French poems than the Middle English poems that follow it. Written about 1308, it uses a beast fable to attack governmental corruption. A fox ('that lithersome grome') and a wolf are used to represent those in society's higher ranks who prey on humbler men.¹³⁶ Another contemporary poem known as *The Song of the Husbandman*, written against Edward II's bribe-taking counsellors, also contains venality satire.¹³⁷ The earliest medieval venality satire was stimulated by and directed at clerical corruption, but as secular institutions became consolidated, gaining prominence and power, they too came under attack. It was a small step from criticism of ecclesiastical to secular courts, with courtiers and lawyers replacing clerks and ecclesiastical jurists. The Middle English satirists seem to have developed this later secular form of venality satire either directly from Latin or through Old French poetry, or both.

The impetus behind venality satire in the vernacular languages differed somewhat from that behind earlier clerical satire on venality. Ecclesiastical corruption was attacked because it warped Church policy and led to unfair preferments and the like, and secular corruption was often satirized for similar reasons, but broad and rapid changes in the medieval economy were responsible for much of the vernacular satire criticizing money. In the French and Middle English poems feudally-minded men comment

on the rise of an economy based on money instead of the exchange of goods and services as much as they condemn avaricious personalities. The ways of a money economy, which encouraged credit, debt, and the charging of interest, were alien to men who had known little but a feudal, barter economy.

These new ways were also wrong in terms of medieval monetary ethics. Lauro Martines has written 'As attested by the performance of its poets, communal society was still struggling to absorb the moral consequences of money and credit mechanisms into its religious view of the world.'¹³⁸ Late medieval ideas about prodigality and avarice were drawn from Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*, or from works such as Albertus Magnus' *Ethica* which were influenced by Aristotle.¹³⁹ The Aristotelian concept of avarice appeared in popular religious treatises and penitential manuals intended for use by parish priests (such as *Jacob's Well* and Grosseteste's *Templum Domini*).¹⁴⁰ Apart from the traditional condemnation of avarice as one of the seven deadly sins, medieval preachers and poets had to consider the ethical implications of money in a society many thought to be in decline. One sermon blames the 'vaynglorie' of the rich for the plight of the poor; it 'makes theym to cost more then they may geve to make grete festes, and parties to holde. And thus they oversett the pore, and putt be-nethe and robben hem that luytill have, to maynten wyth ther astate.'¹⁴¹ Another makes nearly the same allegation,

'And thow3e thei [the rich] have never so moche, 3it thei wyl be in dett and come more behynde in one 3ere then he may com before in v. 3ere after. And the speciall cawse is for to mayntayne theyre pride...Then commythe mynstrells and cowrtyers, and thei schall have grete 3yftes. And ther goe ther expences a-vey, be-cawse thei wolde be magnyfyed, and to bere their name a-bowte of grete worchype.'¹⁴²

There is a breakdown of societal obligations, and money and pride are seen to be the reasons for it.

In the Middle English satirical lyrics love of money is likewise seen to be the root of most, if not all, evil. In the shorter satirical poems pride appears to be the sin most allied to greed, since a greedy man has the means to satisfy his pride through expenditure and ostentation. Costly array is seen in turn as an outward sign of the avariciousness that results from pride of life. This attitude to expensive apparel was supported by and perhaps derived from New Testament attitudes concerning wealth. The parable of Lazarus (Luke 16) was seemingly a popular text for sermons. Instructions with a Wycliffite sermon on *Homo quidam erat diues qui induebatur purpura et biss* (Luke 16:19) say 'In this gospel may prestes telle of false pruyde of ryche men, and of lustful lyf of myhty men of pis world...'¹⁴³ Much earlier, from an orthodox viewpoint, the cleric Henry of Langenstein wrote 'He who has enough to satisfy his wants and nevertheless ceaselessly labors to acquire riches, either in order to obtain a higher social position, or that subsequently he may have enough to live on without labor, or that his sons may become men of wealth and importance--all such are incited by a damnable avarice, sensuality, and pride'.¹⁴⁴ These passages make the same connections between avarice, pride, and social pretensions as some of the shorter Middle English satirical poems, and show that the moral basis for criticism of avarice to a great extent lay in its relationship to pride. R. A. Shoaf even says that the supremacy of money in the economies of the Italian city states from the late thirteenth century onwards led to a revision in the order of the seven deadly sins, so that avarice came to share the primary position with pride.¹⁴⁵

Two of the shorter poems criticizing avarice make some reference to the connection between avarice and pride. No. 38, one of the 'Sir Peny' poems, describes him thus,

Sir Peny gers in riche wede
 Ful mani go and ride on stede
 In þis werles wide;
 In ilka gamin, and ilka play,
 Þe maystri es gyfen ay
 To Peny for his pride. (ll. 89-93)

Poem 41 says that money is responsible for the rich clothes of gallants,

In kynges corte, wher Money dothe route
 Yt makyth the galandes to iett,
 And for to were gorgeouse ther gere,
 Ther cappes awry to sett. (ll. 9-12)

While allowing social ostentation, Money also allowed a degree of real social mobility. Late medieval sumptuary laws show the uneasiness of the aristocracy about the social pretensions of the rising classes.¹⁴⁶ The reasoning that lay behind such legislation is summed up neatly by Hoccleve in his *Regement of Princes*,¹⁴⁷

Som tyme, afer men myghten lordes knowe
 By there array, from oper folke, but now
 A man schal stody and musen a long throwe
 Whiche is whiche: o lordes, it sit to yowe
 Amende þis, for it is for youre prowre.
 If twixt yow and youre men no difference
 Be in array, the lesse is youre reuerence.
 (ll. 442-448)

Owst cites Rypon and an anonymous preacher as witnesses of the growth of a more general social pride and ambition among society's lower orders. One sermon echoes Hoccleve, 'Now is the knave clothed as was formerly the knight, and the servant girl her mistress. It is a grave mistake!'¹⁴⁸ Yet the sumptuary laws were almost wholly ineffective¹⁴⁹ and the power of money to buy the status conferred by costly array prevailed. As the shorter poems stress, money rules emperors and popes as well as common people, implying that the influence of money is stronger than any other.

The notion that money makes its own laws is related to the idea that money rules kings. In many shorter poems satirizing money the corruption of the courts is mentioned (e.g. nos. 38A and B, 39, 41, and 42), and the main subject of *London Lickpenny*

(no. 50) and *A Satire on the Consistory Courts* (no. 49) is legal corruption. *London Lickpenny* is concerned with bribery in the secular courts at Westminster, while the earlier *Satire on the Consistory Courts* concerns the corruption of ecclesiastical judges. The *Satire* has no specific locale, but *London Lickpenny* takes place in England's largest and capital city. Much of the poem is devoted to criticizing the extravagance and avariciousness of city merchants and vendors, and the city itself becomes a symbol of the venality it harbors. In this *London Lickpenny* is strongly reminiscent of earlier Latin and Old French satires on Rome, in which the city is symbolic of the corruption of the papal curia. The poem's use of a naive and impoverished narrator who foolishly seeks justice in court also recalls the *Roman de carité*. Whether or not the author of *London Lickpenny* wrote the poem with parallels between the papal curia and the courts at Westminster in mind, his impulses were the same as those of the clerics who wrote the earlier anti-Roman satires.

A Satire on the Consistory Courts, lacking a specific locale, does not belong to the anti-Roman tradition. The poem ridicules the corruption of the consistory or ecclesiastical courts, which existed to punish 'spiritual' crimes; it differs from *London Lickpenny* and the *Roman de carité* in its portrayal of the speaker as a man who sees himself as unjustly ruined by the courts instead of as someone who seeks justice but cannot obtain it without bribery. The ecclesiastical courts were especially severe in their punishment of lechery, of which the speaker in the *Satire* has been accused. Chaucer wrote of an archdeacon in *The Friar's Tale* that he was,

...a man of heigh degree
 That boldely dide execucioun
 In punysshynge of fornicacioun
 Of wicchecraft, and eek of bawderye...
 Of usure, and symonye also.
 But certes, lecchours dide he grettest wo.

(D 1302-10)

H. A. Kelly finds a similar preoccupation with lechery in the records of the Official of Rochester (the consistory judge of that district); in two-thirds of all *ex officio* charges (charges made on the basis of a usually anonymous complaint) fornication is mentioned specifically.¹⁵⁰ Consistory courts were also known for venality, and their summoners for making false charges in return for bribes.¹⁵¹ The speaker of the *Satire* is being forced to marry his partner in crime; he claims that he has been unjustly accused ('bac-bite', l. 34), and must bribe the judges if he wants to save his name, 'Al heo buep redy myn roupes to rede,/Per Y mot for menske munte sum mede,/And þonkfulliche hem þonke' (ll. 28-30).

Apart from poems which bemoan the consequences of venality for society (e.g. nos. 37, 38A and B, 39, 40, 41, 42 and 43) is a group of poems attacking acquisitiveness on a more personal level (nos. 44, 45, 46 and 47). These focus on the executor as a symbol of the venal world which will swallow up man's wealth once he is gone; they remind readers that earthly goods will pass beyond their control after death, and that wealth is best used during life for causes that will benefit their immortal souls. Poem 44 warns 'Haue þi sowle in þi mynd/þe secators be ryght onkynd' (ll. 5-6); poem 47 is yet more explicit about their nature, 'Too secuters and an overseere make thre theves'. The attitudes to wealth these poems show can be found in English as early as Ælfric;¹⁵² *Ancrene Riwe* also considers transitory worldly wealth in contrast to the riches of the everlasting soul.¹⁵³

Avarice, and by association, money, were seen by Middle English satirists as causing breakdowns in relationships between individual men and women, social groups, and man and God. There was probably no greater threat to the medieval status quo than the rise of a money economy and the changes in the medieval social fabric which it fostered, but the ultimate implication of the medieval satirist's criticisms of wealth is that riches

on earth are enjoyed at the expense of the soul, and of eternal happiness. Avarice not only warps the legal and ecclesiastical bonds that hold society together, but worst of all it makes people less mindful of the better life that is to come.

* * *

Given the close relationship medieval men saw between pride, money, and the changing social order, it is not surprising that criticism of extravagance plays a large rôle in poems satirizing estates, types, and individuals. Extravagance is often signalled in the poems by expensive clothing which is inappropriate to the low social status of the person who wears it (see nos. 53, 57, 58 and 59). We have noted how this particular manifestation of pride in society's lower ranks upset the aristocracy and clergy, but we have not looked at the way medieval satirists used clothing to symbolize the wantonness, lawlessness, and foolishness they ascribed to people who pretended to the higher ranks of society. In the shorter poems these people are usually young men whom the satirists accuse of bringing the country into ruin by pursuing worldly pleasures and riotous living. The 'gallants' are always impoverished, despite their stylish clothes, but their lawlessness is a more direct offense against society than either their poverty or their ostentation. Fine clothes, revelry, and lawlessness are not unconnected; as V. J. Scattergood has said, 'The dissipated life of pleasure gallants determined to lead ruined their fortunes and once they were impoverished they could only turn to crime for a living.'¹⁵⁴

The most sustained attack on gallants among the shorter Middle English poems is found in an early fourteenth-century satire on retainers (no. 52). The position of retainer apparently carried with it some prestige and was a source of pride; it also seemed to afford opportunities for gluttony and drunkenness. The poet sketches a picture of retainers as good-for-nothings,

Who so rykenep wip knaues huere coustage--
 þe luperneſſe of the ladde, þe prude of þe page--
 þah he 3eue hem cattes dryt to huere compenage,
 3et hym ſhulde arewen of þe arrerage. (ll. 29-32)

They 'drynkep er hit dawe' (l. 14); goblins use retainers' capacious stomachs as storehouses (l. 16). Christ never rode a horse not because he

was humble but because he could not stand the company of a groom (ll. 33-35). The retainers described in this poem, which emphasizes their slovenliness as well as their pride, are very similar to Lydgate's 'froward knave' Maymound in poem 51. He too is a retainer or at least a household servant, since

He can abedde an horskembe weell shake,
Lyk as he wolde coraye his masteris hors,
And with his on hand his masteris doublet take,
With the tother preuyly kutte his purs. (ll. 33-6)

Maymound is a glutton and a drunkard; he squanders his money on gambling; 'Vnthrifft and he be togydre met'. Unlike the retainers in other poems Maymound is not criticized for expensive dress; his extravagance lies solely in his wanton behavior. Another, later portrayal of a retainer is found in Skelton's *The Bowge of Court*. The courtier Ryotte shares nearly all the characteristics of the late medieval gallants in the shorter poems,¹⁵⁵ and Skelton even refers to him at one point as 'a rusty gallande' (l. 345), but Ryotte belongs equally with the rogues who populate much of early Renaissance literature. In creating Ryotte Skelton drew on a convention of Middle English satirical poetry that was to become very prevalent in the Renaissance; the distinction between the medieval gallant and the Renaissance rogue is largely one of time rather than characteristics.

Most satirists describe the gallant as a fool; his behavior, if sometimes criminal, was foolish by late medieval standards, as were his fashionable clothes. His constant revelling, like his hose so tight that it rips when he bends his knee, and his doublet that barely covers his backside, is presented in the poems as a ridiculous extreme. Barbara Swain included in her definition of the fool he who 'transgresses or ignores the code of reasoned self-restraint under which society attempts to exist'.¹⁵⁶ She points out that during the fifteenth century the term 'fool' was used

more often in reference to 'erring man' than in earlier times,¹⁵⁷ and notes that poems listing follies (e.g. no. 72) from the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries show how completely the fool could be defined as the opposite of the upright man.¹⁵⁸ Enid Welsford also saw a connection between fools and knaves, and pointed out that the terms were often coupled together in late medieval times, although sometimes more emphasis was laid on the distinctions rather than the similarities between them.¹⁵⁹ The equation of fool and knave was important to religious moralists such as Sebastian Brant, author of *Das Narrenschiff*, and his English translator Alexander Barclay; the knave in neglecting his soul neglected his ultimate self-interest, and nothing could be more foolish than that.¹⁶⁰

Of Middle English writers Lydgate seems to have been especially interested in the fool as a symbol of moral lassitude. Apart from his portrait of Maymound, he wrote a didactic poem on four things that make a man a fool¹⁶¹ and a poem known as *The Order of Fools* (no. 68), which touches on a variety of moral follies. It is in this last poem that Lydgate examines fools and folly most thoroughly. His concept of the fool is much the same as Brant's and Barclay's; above all the fool is a sinner either unaware of his sin or unwilling to amend it. 'More than a fooll, braynles, maad, and wood/Is he that neuer wyl forsake his synne' Lydgate writes (no. 68, ll. 18-19). The poem describes each kind of fool belonging to the Order, called several times a 'frary', almost certainly a backhanded swipe at the friars (Lydgate was a Benedictine monk).

Lydgate might have been inspired for the structure of his poem by the 'orders of fools' or *sociétés joyeuses* that existed in late medieval and early modern France. These societies were made up of young men who wore the traditional fool's costume of eared hoods and bells and celebrated customs associated with mockery and social criticism, such as the *charivari*.¹⁶² Other orders of fools exist in medieval literature, and

these too might have influenced Lydgate. The mythical Goliardic order was an order of fools, and Burnellus the Ass in *Speculum Stultorum* founds an order of asses who adopt all the follies of the existing monastic orders. The mythical and literary orders of fools are probably manifestations of the same impulse to reversal and mockery the clergy showed in institutions like the Feast of Fools and the Boy Bishop.

The 'iij skore and thre' fools in Lydgate's poem represent the range of human vices and follies, but they are only abstractions of human behavior; they are not characters with identifiable social rôles. Brant's *Narrenschiff*, Barclay's *Ship of Fools*, and the anonymous *Cocke Lorelles Bote*, on the other hand, present folly in terms of social rôle or occupation; these poems are estates satires, while *The Order of Fools* is not. The symbol of the foolish man in itself is not humorous in these poems; their humor lies in the realistic description of folly in reference to contemporary society.¹⁶³ This is also true of the shorter Middle English poems that criticize foolish or knavish behavior in certain social groups, tradesmen and craftsmen in particular. In the poem known as *A Satire on the People of Kildare* (no. 71), people belonging to various social groups are mocked for shortcomings associated with their occupations. The single surviving version of the poem is incomplete, but even so it includes several mendicant orders, monks, nuns, priests, merchants, tailors, sutters, skimmers, butchers, bakers, brewsters, hucksters, and wool-combers. All are described realistically. The hucksters provide a vivid example,

Hail be 3e, hokesters, dun bi þe lake,
 Wip candles and golokes and þe pottes blak,
 Tripis and kine fete and schepen heuedes;
 Wip the hori tromcheri hori is 3ure inne. (ll. 103-6)

The social groups satirized in this poem are similar to those present on

Cocke Lorell's boat or mentioned in the second chapter of *Das Narrenschiff* and *The Ship of Fools*,

Here shall Jack/charde/my brother Robyn hyll/with Myllers
and bakers that weyght and mesure hate/All stelynge taylors: as
soper: and Manshyll/Receyve ther rowme:¹⁶⁴

Three of the shorter Middle English poems satirize a single trade. One, by Lydgate, concentrates on millers and bakers (no. 69). Here Lydgate seems to suggest an 'order of fools' drawn only from these two trades,

Let mellerys and bakerys gadre hem a gilde,
And alle of assent make a fraternite;
Vndir the pillory a litil chapell bylde,
The place amorteyse and purchase liberte
For alle thoo that of ther noumbre be. (ll. 17-21)

Another poem (no. 81) names a 'Baker Bellami' and warns him that the pillory awaits him if he does not make 'goud lof'. A third poem satirizes blacksmiths. The poet's description of the smithy and its noise is again highly realistic, as well as formally inventive; much of the poem's humor lies in the realism of his treatment of foolish behavior, in this case the blacksmiths' night work which keeps the poet awake. The poem might be a parody of battle scenes in alliterative romances, as Elizabeth Salter has suggested,¹⁶⁵ but it also satirizes a specific trade.

Whether a fool is a Maymound, a cheating baker, or a blacksmith who works nights, he is ridiculous not because of who he is, but because of what he does. This is the essential link between fool literature and estates satire, in which realism plays such an important part. Jill Mann has said that estates satire is relevant to contemporary social life rather than to the world of eternal human types,¹⁶⁶ and it is just this kind of relevance we find in the shorter Middle English poems pointing up the foolishness of gallants, tradesmen, and craftsmen. Lydgate's *Order of Fools* is an exception, since this poem solely concerns types and so has much more in common with medieval treatments of the seven deadly sins than with estates satire. In the end, though, all of the shorter satirical

poems on fools and estates are concerned with bringing about a well-ordered society, whether they conceive of it in terms of eternal types or the contemporary social structure.

* * *

The surviving Middle English satires directed at specific people are not numerous, but they do show that satire was used as a means of personal ridicule in late medieval England. Apart from these poems (which include nos. 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80 and 81) sufficient testimony has been preserved in public records and personal correspondence to show that such satire was very much feared by both the commons and the aristocracy. By 1450 the practice of posting libels and lampoons in public places had apparently become so common that Henry VI issued a proclamation forbidding it.¹⁶⁷ John Pigott records that in 1448 bills were posted on the gates of St. Paul's 'writen to this effecte'¹⁶⁸

But Suffolke, Salesbery and Say
Be don to deathe by May
England may syng well away.

This rhyme, and others like it which have not been recorded, might have been part of a campaign against members of Henry's government which led to his ban on the posting of satirical and libellous bills. Satirizing powerful members of the aristocracy always had its risks; earlier in the medieval period satirical poems written in French by the poet Luc de Barre against Henry I of England caused the king to order him 'to be deprived of his sight for having ridiculed him in songs, and engaged in rash enterprises against him.' When mitigation of the poet's punishment was suggested, the king replied 'This humorous poet made scurrilous songs about me, and sang them aloud to bring me into contempt, thus often making me a laughing-stock of malicious enemies.'¹⁶⁹

Non-aristocratic victims of personal satires also sought retribution against the authors. William Paston took a certain Walter Aslak to court for

...purposyng and jmaginyng to putte William Paston in drede and intollerable fere to be slayn and mordered in þe seyde forme wyth force and ageyn þe kynges peas...in hese owne persone and by Richard Kylllyngworth, þat tyme hese seruaunt, to þe seyde William Paston swiche and so many manaces of deth and dismembryng maden and puttyn by certeyns Englishe billes rynged in partye, and vp-on þe yates of þe chyrche of þe Frere

Menures of Norwiche and þe yates of þe same cité called Nedeham yates and Westewyk yates, and in othre places wyth-inne þe sayd cité by þe seyð Walter and Richard sette, makyng mension and beryng þis understondyng þat þe seyð William and hese clerkes and seruauntes schuld be slayn and mordered...¹⁷⁰

Many of the surviving Middle English satires, like those of Walter Aslak, make violent threats (e.g. nos. 75 and 77). The link between satire (whose false etymology, noted earlier, made it a form of *satyr* on account of its roughness) and violence is apparent in at least one other tradition as well: in ancient Irish law satire is sometimes connected with crimes such as bodily harm, sexual attack on the wife of another man, or stealing another's cattle.¹⁷¹ But personal satires did not have to threaten bodily harm to be taken seriously; if publicized, the ridicule they ensured was alone a powerful means of coercion. The more value a society places on the opinions of others, the more the members of that society will avoid ridicule and the 'bad name' it can bring.¹⁷² Medieval communities recognized this in their use of certain forms of public mockery to enforce norms: the pillory, the skimmington or skimmity ride, the cucking stool, burning in effigy, and the *charivari* in France, to name a few. Satirical attacks on individuals follow the same principle in publicly shaming their victims. Like the skimmity ride, *charivari*, and burning in effigy, some of the Middle English satirical attacks set up an image of the victim which they treat contemptuously. The poet in no. 75, for instance, associates his victims with animals, describing Bamber's 'gotes beard' (l. 12), and a 'harlot hierman's' 'calves snowte' (l. 18), while 'Hanokyn Attilbrigge' is implicitly compared to a beaten cur (ll. 21-2). Ion Clerke of Toryton in poem 78 is presented as a keeper of swine, a job he is made out to enjoy; 'No man may hym benyme ne lett/The messe of þe sow taylor' (ll. 29-30).

A poem against 'Frere Gastkyn' (no. 79) has much in common with more general anticlerical satires, especially in its accusations of apostasy (l. 6) and disapproval of the friar's vagrancy (ll. 21-2). Yet it is directed

specifically at Gastkyn, and seems to refer to some dispute in which he had his share of supporters (ll. 2-3). The poet makes his disregard for retribution clear in the lines 'Show thys I care not to whome/Priour *ve* / *episcopo*' (ll. 19-20). The poem appears with accompanying music in the manuscript (BL MS Royal App. 58), and must have been sung. Many satires, like the unfortunate Luc de Barre's, were probably publicized in this way. A satirical song that became popular would ensure public ridicule as much as or even more than a posted bill. C. R. Baskervill said of the Elizabethan period that 'To be made the hero of comic ballads hawked and sung about the streets...was regarded as the natural penalty of becoming ridiculous or notorious';¹⁷³ and while in this era printing would have facilitated the spread of satirical ballads, the tendency to compose and sing them was surely not new. Late in the sixteenth century a woman named Anne Wrigglesworth was reprimanded in court for making this libellous rhyme about her neighbors:

Yf I had as faire a face as John Willms
 his daughter Elizabeth hasse
 Then wold I were a taudrie as Goodman
 bolts daughter Marie dosse;
 And if I had as mutche money in my pursse
 as Cadmans daughter Margaret hasse,
 Then wold I have a basterd lesse
 Then Butlers mayde Helen hasse

She admitted to saying the rhyme, but protested that she did not make it up.¹⁷⁴ Once a satirical rhyme became current it would be very difficult to trace its composer, particularly if the rhyme was a standard formula into which relevant names were inserted, as the one in Anne Wrigglesworth's case seems to be.¹⁷⁵

Victims were not always named in personal attacks. Poem 80 is an instance of a satire which seems to be directed at a particular person but does not name him (at least not in its present form); he might have been recognizable from hints in the poem or knowledge of the author's circle of

acquaintances. Leaving the subject's name out of a personal satire in this way did not necessarily protect the author from libel proceedings if discovered. A case that came before the Star Chamber in 1632, although much later than the satires discussed here, neatly illustrates the route of transmission of a personal satire in which the victims, a man of the 'holie Brotherhood', and one Martha Osmonton, were identifiable through description alone:¹⁷⁶

The song was begun in Rymes alehouse by a servant of one Martin; Turpin gave a quart of wine to a scribe to write it down; Martin and two others set it to 'the tune of the Watch Currants and Tom of Bedlam'; and Turpin showed it to three people, including the widow Palmer when he went to buy sugar in her shop. No names were called, but it was understood who were meant, partly from the description of Martha, 'Her face is long, her browes are black, her high wooden heeles they are in fault'.

A more literary form of personal satire has also come down to us, unhappily with as little success as the popular lampoon, in the flyting. This was a stylized contest of abuse between two poets, which James Kinsley has defined as 'a blend of primitive literary criticism and lampoon'.¹⁷⁷ It recalls in some ways the contests between poets in Irish mythology,¹⁷⁸ and an incident reported in the late fourteenth century when the Welsh poet Daffyd ap Gwilym composed a satire on a rival poet, who fell dead after hearing it recited.¹⁷⁹ The flyting retains the crude abusiveness of most personal satires, as well as their element of violent threatening, but in the flyting the abuse and threats appear in a context which allows us to question their seriousness.

*The Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie*¹⁸⁰ provides the most complete, and perhaps finest, example of the genre; it consists of Dunbar's challenge and Kennedy's reply, and a long attack by each poet. It is not known whether this flyting continued in other poems now lost. Dunbar might have been involved in another flyting with a certain Mure, since Dunbar writes that he 'indorsit myn indyting/With versis off his awin hand wryting'.¹⁸¹ Skelton's flytings against Garnesche also survive, but we do not have the

poems to which he is replying.

In one instance (poems 22 and 23) a dispute very like the flyting takes place between fictitious people and is apparently a purely literary exercise. The poems are in the form of epistles, exchanged between two quarreling lovers, in which a good deal of satirical personal abuse is hurled back and forth. Being in this form the poems also parody the verse love epistle, usually written to express love-longing and not the loathing which the disenchanted lovers claim to feel for each other. The two poems often approach the hyperbole and crudity of Dunbar's and Skelton's flytings, although they are much shorter. In poem 23 the woman is described as having 'pappys like a water bowge' (l. 21); her 'camusyd nose' is so wide that her nostrils are 'Vnto the chyrch a noble instrument/To quenche tapers brennyng afore the roode' (ll. 24-5). The woman speaking in poem 22 says of any subsequent mistress her ex-lover might take 'I wolde hyr no more harme but hangyd on the morn/That hath ij good eyen and ichese here suche a make,/Or onys wold lyft vp here hole for youre sake!' (ll. 33-5). Literary style is a point of contention; in poem 23 the man says to his former mistress,

Me semyth by youre contenance ye be wondyr nyce
 You for to medyl wth any retorucion
 To me ye haue sent a lettre of derusion
 Endyghted ful freshly with many coryous iclause
 Werfore I thanke you, as I fynde cause.

The Ynglysch of Chaucere was nat in youre mynd,
 Ne Tullyus termys, wyth so gret elloquence;
 But ye as vncurtes and crabbed of kynde
 Rolled hem on a hepe, it semyth by the sentens
 (ll. 4-11)

The poems also insult by twisting phrases found in medieval love poetry so that their meaning becomes derisive instead of complimentary. The standard description of the beloved's 'freshness', for example, is applied to the man in no. 22 as 'Most fresch of contenance, euyne as an oule/Ys best and most fauoryd of ony odyr foule' (ll. 6-7), while the woman is called a

'...fresch floure, most plesant of pryse/Fragrant as fedyrfoy to mannys inspeccion' (ll. 1-2).

Flytings delight in the rhetoric of abuse, and their rhetorical inventiveness was undoubtedly a large part of their appeal to medieval audiences, as it is to readers today. Any such appeal would derive from the flyting's mimicry of personal satire, where abuse, whether or not rhetorically novel, was an effective means of coercion or punishment. While it is hard to determine to what degree flytings were intended as serious indictments and to what degree as mere entertainment, in their use of insults and threats they build upon the ancient foundations of personal satire.

* * *

Very few instances of Middle English satire on medicine have survived. While medieval France had a strong tradition of medical satire,¹⁸² this does not appear to have been the case in England, although there is some evidence that a similar tradition in Scotland survived into the seventeenth century.¹⁸³ Owst wrote that the little that can be gleaned from sermon literature relating to medicine indicates a general attitude of suspicion towards physicians and their cures.¹⁸⁴ A long poem on the times of Edward II¹⁸⁵ contains a passage to the effect that false physicians extort money from the sick and make them worse instead of better; it begins:

And 3it ther is another craft that toucheth the clergie
 That ben thise false fisiciens that helpen men to die;
 He wole wagge his urine in a vessel of glaz
 And swereth that he is sekere than euere 3it he was,
and sein,
 'Dame, for faute of helpe, thin housebonde is neih slain.'

The poem goes on to describe how the physician uses the wife's money to buy good victuals for himself and only rinds and roots for her husband, who grows steadily more ill from his treatment. We find similar portrayals of physicians in the early fifteenth-century Croxton Play of the Sacrament,¹⁸⁶ where the doctor is accused of killing his patients or making their illnesses worse; in *Piers Plowman* (B.VI, ll. 273-4), where Hunger says that physicians cause more death than natural causes; and in the early sixteenth century in Heywood's *The Four PP*,¹⁸⁷ where an apothecary tells how he helps men to die.

The two poems included here, nos. 82 and 83, are alike in being burlesques of medical recipes and not satires of physicians themselves, or of medicine in a broader sense. In this they resemble Henryson's *Sum Practisis of Medecyne*,¹⁸⁸ which is also primarily a burlesque of medicinal recipes. The Croxton Play of the Sacrament too contains a very brief medical recipe, recited by the doctor in defense of his ability to cure, but it calls for ingredients that might be found in any medieval cure and

is not itself a burlesque.¹⁸⁹ In his portrait of the Doctor of Physic in the General Prologue, Chaucer mentions 'letuaries' or medicinal syrups (l. 426) and the physician's close relationship with apothecaries (ll. 425-8); he also lists some of the preparations used to treat skin diseases in his description of the Summoner (*Gen. Pro.* ll. 629-633). But nowhere apart from poems 82 and 83, and *Sum Practisis*, do we find burlesques of the recipes themselves.

Poem 82, like *Sum Practisis*, mocks medical preparations by listing fantastic ingredients which are manifestly impossible to obtain: the 'ney3yng of a mere', 'the oyll of a mytys too', the 'ly3the of a glaweworme in the derke', underscoring the impossibility of the recipe's claim as 'a good medesyn yff a mayd have lost her madened to make her a mayd ageyn'. The poem might be a comment on the impossible claims and ineffectiveness of medical recipes and doctors' potions at the time, or it might be a parody of another recipe seriously claiming the ability to restore maidenhood.

Poem 83, calling itself 'a good medesyn for sore eyen', mocks medical recipes not by requiring impossible ingredients but by calling instead for treatment which would more probably destroy sight than restore it. While many of the Middle English prescriptions preserved in the margins and on the endleaves of manuscripts might seem harmful to modern readers, this prescription surpasses them in its outrageous advice, and fits well with the tradition holding that doctors do more harm than good. It is interesting that in his dietary Andrew Boorde, a physician of the early seventeenth century, recommends caution in dealing with the eyes and says that often the best treatment for eye problems is to let them resolve themselves.¹⁹⁰

If there was a reaction against physicians in late medieval England, it probably was not an extensive one; certainly the bad physician failed to capture the medieval English satirist's imagination in the same way the

wayward cleric, the domineering woman, and the spendthrift gallant did. Not much can be discovered of the general attitude towards physicians and medicine from these poems, beyond a glimpse of suspicion at the effectiveness of medical recipes, perhaps along with a comment on the foolish hopes of people who put too much faith in them.

Notes

¹ Much has been written since the late nineteenth century on the derivation of the word *satire*; brief and helpful discussions appear in R. C. Elliott, *The Power of Satire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1960), pp. 102-4; Ronald Paulson, *The Fictions of Satire* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins P, 1967), pp. 4-7; and Michael Seidel, *The Satiric Inheritance* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1979), pp. 5-10.

² *Pace* P. S. Miller, 'The Medieval Literary Theory of Satire and its Relevance to the Works of Gower, Langland and Chaucer' (unpub. Ph.D. dissertation; The Queen's University of Belfast, 1982). While Gower, Langland and Chaucer could conceivably have known of and attempted to follow a unified theory of satire, there is no evidence in the present collection of poems to show that their authors were affected by theoretical concerns.

³ For an attempt to differentiate satire from complaint, see John Peter, *Complaint and Satire in Early English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1956), especially pp. 9-10.

⁴ A. Melville Clark, *Studies in Literary Modes* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1946), p. 32.

⁵ E. G. Stanley, 'Parody in Early English Literature', *Poetica* 27 (1988), p. 1.

⁶ Paul Lehmann, *Die Parodie im Mittelalter* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1963), p. 3.

⁷ D. S. Brewer, 'Notes Towards a Theory of Medieval Comedy', afterword, *Medieval Comic Tales* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1972), p. 144.

⁸ Such as poems against the friars in BL MS Cotton Cleop. B ii (nos. 3 and 4), or against women in Bodleian MS Eng. poet. e 1 (nos. 33, 37, etc.).

⁹ To cite just two examples, Matthew Hodgart dismisses virtually the whole of Middle English political satire as less than skillful in comparing

it to late thirteenth-century Provençal satire (Hodgart, *Satire* (Weidenfeld, 1969), pp. 48-51); and Alvin Kernan refers to the 'artistic clumsiness' of medieval English satirists and says that even the best of them are dull, humble, and plain, since this was what was expected of them (Kernan, *The Cankered Muse* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1959), p. 45.

¹⁰ R. H. Robbins, ed., *Historical Poems of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1959), p. 327.

¹¹ E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, tr. Willard R. Trask (London: Routledge, 1953), p. 95.

¹² Elliott, pp. 133-7.

¹³ Curtius, p. 96.

¹⁴ Arthur Pollard, *Satire* (1970; London: Methuen, 1973), p. 61.

¹⁵ Gilbert Highet, *The Anatomy of Satire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1962), p. 55.

¹⁶ Claude Rawson, ed., *English Satire and the Satiric Tradition* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984), p. v. Wyndham Lewis expressed similar opinions on the place of moral purpose in satire; see his essay 'The Greatest Satire is Nonmoral' in *Modern Essays in Criticism: Satire*, ed. Ronald Paulson, pp. 66-79. His argument was first expressed in *Men Without Art* (London, 1934).

¹⁷ R. L. Greene, *The Early English Carols*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1977), pp. xliii-lxxx.

¹⁸ See, for example, BL MS Addit. 5665, fols. 49^v and 50^v, and Bodleian MS Eng. poet. e 1, fol. 13.

¹⁹ Herbert B. Workman, *The Evolution of the Monastic Ideal* (London: Kelly, 1918), pp. 6-10.

²⁰ Letter 7.5 (*PL*, vol. 22, cols. 340-1). As Wiesen notes, Ferdinand Cavallera suggested that Jerome really intends to ridicule the local bishop in these lines (see Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme, sa vie et son oeuvre*, 2 vols. (Louvain and Paris: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1922), I, p. 22, n. 3).

²¹ Letter 22 (*PL*, vol. 22, col. 394).

²² Letter 52.6 (*PL*, vol. 22, col. 532).

²³ See in particular Horace, *Satires* II.2, II.4, II.8; *Epistles* I.5, I.6; Juvenal, *Satires* I, IV, V, XI.

²⁴ However, Bernhard Bischoff has said that a Latin satire against a bishop found in MS. Vat. Lat. 4389 was known as the work of Jerome; see his 'Vagantenlieder aus der Vaticana', *Zeitschr. für roman. Philologie* 50 (1930), pp. 76ff.

²⁵ *PL* 56.

²⁶ Goliardic poems were regularly the subject of anthologies, according to evidence presented by A. G. Rigg ('Medieval Latin Poetic Anthologies' I and II in *MS* 39 (1977), 281-330 and *MS* 40 (1978), 387-407 respectively). His articles provide an extensive list of other manuscripts containing collections of Goliardic poems.

²⁷ T. Wright, ed., *Anglo-Latin Satirical Poets and Epigrammatists of the Twelfth Century* (2 vols.), Rolls Ser. 59 (1872), ii, pp. 251-54.

²⁸ Ed. Wilhelm Meyer, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur mittellateinischen Rythmik* (Berlin, 1905).

²⁹ Ed. H. C. Hoskier (London: Quaritch, 1929), Bk. II, ll. 790ff.

³⁰ Wright, ed., *Anglo-Latin Satirical Poets...*, ii, pp. 164-66.

³¹ Ed. J. S. Brewer, *Geraldus Cambrensis Opera*, Rolls ser. 21d (1861).

³² Ed. and trans. M. R. James, rev'd C. N. L. Brooke and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1983). In *De nugis curialium* the Cistercians are singled out for criticism; Gerald of Wales specifically names Cistercians and Cluniacs in *Speculum ecclesiae*; Nigel Wireker, who was a Cistercian monk, satirized the Cluniac order in the *Speculum stultorum*.

³³ Ed. J. Mozley and R. Raymo, *U. of Cal. English Studies* 18 (1960).

³⁴ Wiesen, p. 67.

³⁵ *Pace* G. V. Smithers, who maintains that the poem is a parody of

medieval conceptions of paradise (J. A. W. Bennett and G. V. Smithers, eds., *Early Middle English Verse and Prose*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), p. 137. For some arguments refuting Smithers, see E. G. Stanley, 'Parody in Early English Literature', *Poetica* 27 (1988), pp. 7-10.

³⁶ *Carmina Burana*, ed. Hilka and Schumann, no. 222. Among other poems in Harley 913 are a Latin poem against the abbot of Gloucester, a Latin parody of divine service, a Latin Drunkard's Mass (*missa de potatoribus*), and the Middle English *Satire on the People of Kildare* (no. 71).

³⁷ Robert O'Brien, ed., 'Two Sermons at York Synod of William Rymyngton, 1372 and 1373', *Cîteaux* 19 (1968), p. 49. Owst translates '...O marvellous perversion of the priesthood! O abominable confusion of the *curati*, whom from the obscenities of lechery, the embraces of the prostitute and the public keeping of harlots reason does not restrain, nor fear of the almighty repel, and shame of public scandal fails to prevent...' (*Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England*, 2nd ed., p. 274).

³⁸ John Myrc, *Instructions for Parish Priests*, E.E.T.S. e.s. 96 (1905).

³⁹ See Owst, *Literature and Pulpit*, p. 249-53 for further examples.

⁴⁰ M.-M. Dufeil, *Guillaume de Saint-Amour et la polémique universitaire parisienne 1250-1259* (Paris: Picard, 1972), p. 83.

⁴¹ Dufeil, pp. 5, 24-25.

⁴² Penn R. Szittyá, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1986), pp. 15-16.

⁴³ Under 2 Tim. 3 the *Glossa ordinaria* cites Augustine, *De verbis Domini*; Ambrosiaster, *Commentarius in epistulas Paulinas*; Chrysostom, *Homilia in epistolam II ad Timotheum*; and Jerome, *Epistola ad Ctesiphontem*.

⁴⁴ Szittyá, p. 7.

⁴⁵ Szittyá, p. 184.

⁴⁶ *Du Pharisien*, in E. Faral and J. Bastin, eds., *Oeuvres complètes de*

Rutebeuf (Paris: Picard, 1969), ll. 48-61. For a close examination of the echoes of William of St. Amour in Rutebeuf, see Faral and Bastin, i, pp. 227-407, and also Arié Serper, *Rutebeuf: Poète satirique* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1969), pp. 33-44.

⁴⁷ *Des Jacobins*, ed. Faral and Bastin, ll. 59-60; *La Bataille des vices et vertus*, ed. Faral and Bastin, ll. 39-45.

⁴⁸ *La Bataille des vices...*, ed. Faral and Bastin, ll. 147-48.

⁴⁹ For many instances of borrowings from William of St. Amour in the *Roman de la Rose*, see the edition of Ernest Langlois (Paris: S.A.T.F., 1921), iii, pp. 316-29.

⁵⁰ *Le Roman de la Rose*, ed. Langlois, ll. 19345-50.

⁵¹ *Le Roman de la Rose*, ed. Langlois, ll. 713, 845.

⁵² The antifraternalism of Rutebeuf and Jean de Meun had much influence on later medieval French poets. For a list of their works and editions, see Szittyá, pp. 190-191, n. 26.

⁵³ The partial Middle English translation of the *Roman de la Rose* contains Jean de Meun's attacks on the friars and an account of their enmity with William of St. Amour (Benson et al., eds., *Romaunt of the Rose*, Frag. C. ll. 6551-7212).

⁵⁴ James Doyne Dawson, 'Richard Fitzralph and the Fourteenth-Century Poverty Controversies', *JEH* 34 (1983), p. 341.

⁵⁵ Szittyá, pp. 166-7.

⁵⁶ See Szittyá, p. 196 for the association of the CAIM acronym with Wycliffite literature.

⁵⁷ Bare feet were only implied in the Franciscan Rule by an exception: 'Those who are obliged by necessity may wear shoes' (A. G. Little, *Studies in Franciscan History* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1917), p. 56). Drawings of the Friars Minor in the contemporary manuscript of Matthew Paris' *Chronicle* show them with bare feet (see the reproductions in *Brit.*

Soc. Franc. Stud. v., and in the illustrated edition of Green's *Short History of the English People*); the Public Records show that Minors went 'discalceati' in contrast to the Preachers in the reign of Henry III (P.R.O. Liberate Rolls, 17 Hen. III m. 7); and the Preachers c. 1243 admitted that the Minors went 'nudi pedes et viliter tunicati cinctique funiculis' (Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora* iv, p. 279).

⁵⁸ Little, p. 61.

⁵⁹ F. D. Matthew, ed., *English Works of Wyclif Hitherto Unprinted*, E.E.T.S. 74 (1880), p. 50.

⁶⁰ See notes to poem 4 for details of these.

⁶¹ David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1949), I, p. 181.

⁶² R. H. Robbins, ed., *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1959), p. 335.

⁶³ Beverly Brian, 'Franciscan Scenes in a Fourteenth-Century Satire', *MÆ* 41 (1972), 27-31.

⁶⁴ J. S. Brewer, *Monumenta Franciscana*, 2 vols., Rolls Ser. 4a (1858), I, p. xix.

⁶⁵ Margaret Aston, *Lollards and Reformers* (London: Hambledon, 1984), p. 139.

⁶⁶ Aston, p. 139.

⁶⁷ Aston, p. 136.

⁶⁸ Szittyá, pp. 216-17.

⁶⁹ Szittyá, p. 217.

⁷⁰ Brian, p. 29.

⁷¹ James Kinsley, ed., *The Poems of William Dunbar* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1979), p. 344.

⁷² A. G. Rigg, 'William Dunbar: The "Fenyeit Friar"', *RES* n.s. 14 (1963), p. 270. The tradition apparently predates the poems Rigg

discusses; see *Carmina Burana*, ed. Hilka and Schumann, no. 222, 'Ego sum abbas Cucaniensis'.

⁷³ Ed. James Kinsley, *The Poems of William Dunbar* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1979), no. 55.

⁷⁴ Rigg, 'William Dunbar: The "Fenyeit Friar"', p. 272.

⁷⁵ Knowles, I, p. 181.

⁷⁶ Knowles, I, p. 181.

⁷⁷ Thomas Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, Rolls ser. 28 (1863), vol. 2, p. 10.

⁷⁸ Knowles, I, p. 180.

⁷⁹ Knowles, I, p. 183.

⁸⁰ For some instances see Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, years 1291-1292.

⁸¹ Ed. Frederick Madden, Rolls ser. 44 (1866), vol. 2, p. 109.

⁸² Ed. George James Aungier, Camden Soc. 28 (1844), p. 54 (20 Ed. II).

⁸³ Thomas Rymer, *Foedera*, ed. 1742 (facs. ed., Gregg, 1967), vol. III, iii, p. 178.

⁸⁴ See Szittyá, p. 182.

⁸⁵ John Silvester Davies, ed., *An English Chronicle of the reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, V, and VI*, Camden Soc. 64 (1856), p. 23.

⁸⁶ Davies, pp. 23-24.

⁸⁷ Brewer, *Monumenta*, I, p. xxxvii.

⁸⁸ M. C. Seymour, ed., *Selections from Hoccleve* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981), p. 130.

⁸⁹ Ed. Seymour, *Selections*, p. 61.

⁹⁰ Suzanne W. Hull, *Chaste, Silent and Obedient* (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1982), p. 111.

⁹¹ For example, see Lydgate's *Doubleness* (ed. H. N. MacCracken, *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, 2 vols., E.E.T.S. e.s. 107 (1911), vol. 1,

438-42).

⁹² Ed. Malcolm Andrew and Ronald Waldron, *The Poems of the Pearl Manuscript* (Exeter: Exeter Med. Texts, 1987), pp. 111-184.

⁹³ Ed. Maurice Roy, *Oeuvres Poétiques de Christine de Pisan*, S.A.T.F. 21 (1891), II, pp. 1-27 (esp. ll. 389-95).

⁹⁴ Ed. F. J. Furnivall and I. Gollancz, *Hoccleve's Works: The Minor Poems*, rev. J. Mitchell and A. I. Doyle, E.E.T.S. 61/73 (1970), pp. 72-91.

⁹⁵ Ed. Kinsley, pp. 60-3.

⁹⁶ David S. Wiesen, *St. Jerome as a Satirist* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1964), pp. 8-12.

⁹⁷ Wiesen, p. 123.

⁹⁸ Letter 22.14 (*PL*, vol. 22, cols. 402-3); translated in Wiesen, p. 123.

⁹⁹ Letter 22.27 (*PL*, vol. 22, cols. 412-13); translated in Wiesen, p. 125.

¹⁰⁰ Wiesen, p. 119.

¹⁰¹ See Wiesen, Chap. 4.

¹⁰² Wiesen, p. 158.

¹⁰³ M.-T. d'Alverny, 'Comment les théologiens et les philosophes voient la femme'. *C.C.M.* 20 (1977): 108.

¹⁰⁴ G. R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1961), pp. 385ff.

¹⁰⁵ Owst, p. 400.

¹⁰⁶ Owst, p. 389.

¹⁰⁷ Doris Stenton, *The English Woman in History* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1957), p. 45.

¹⁰⁸ S. B. Meech and H. E. Allen, eds., *The Book of Margery Kempe*, E.E.T.S. 212 (1940), Bk. I, Ch. 21.

- 109 Bella Millett, ed., *Hali Mei had*, E.E.T.S. 284 (1982), xxxiv-xxxv.
- 110 Millett, p. xxxviii.
- 111 *Adversus Iovinianum*, l. 43 (PL, vol. 23, cols. 273-4).
- 112 Letter 54.14 (PL vol. 22, col. 557).
- 113 After 1 Tim. 5: 3-16.
- 114 Stenton, p. 38.
- 115 Stenton, p. 51 (Magna Carta 4.8).
- 116 Angela M. Lucas, *Women in the Middle Ages* (Brighton: Harvester, 1983), p. 31.
- 117 Stenton, p. 30.
- 118 On the equation of virginity and independence for women in the Middle Ages, see Lucas 30.
- 119 'Of clooth-makyng she hadde swich an haunt/She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.' *Pro.* 447-8 (Larry D. Benson et al., eds., *The Riverside Chaucer* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1987). All subsequent references to Chaucer's works are made to this edition). On the trade of weaving in medieval England see D. W. Robertson, 'And for my Land Thus Hastow Mordred Me?...', *Chaucer Review* 14: 403-20.
- 120 Stenton, p. 83.
- 121 Beatrice Gottlieb in Julius Kirshner and Suzanne F. Wemple, eds., *Women of the Medieval World* (New York: Blackwell, 1985), p. 343.
- 122 La Vieille:
 Mes tens jolis est touz alez,
 E li vostres est a venir...
 E vous baigneriez en l'esture
 Ou Venus les dames esture...
 Bien sai le brandon sentireiz;
 Or vous lo que vous atireiz
 Ainz que la vous ailliez baignier,
 Si con vous m'orreiz enseignier;
 Car perilleusement s'i baigne
 Jennes on qui n'a qui l'enseigne;
 Mais, se mon conseil ensivez,
 A bon port estes arivez.
- (Guillaume de Lorris and Jean Chopinel de Meun, *Le Roman de la Rose*, ed. Ernest Langlois, 5 vols. S.A.T.F. 61 (1921), III, p. 255, ll. 12742-12760.)

The Wife of Bath:

'Now herkneth hou I baar me proprely
 Ye wise wives that kan understonde
 Thus shuld ye speke and bere hem wrong on honde,
 For half so boldely kan ther no man
 Swer and lyen, as a womman kan.
 I say nat this by wyves that been wyse,
 But if it be whan they hem mysavyse.
 A wys wyf, if that she kan hir good,
 Shal beren hym on honde the cow is wood,
 And take witesse of hir owene mayde
 Of hir assent.'

(*Wife of Bath's Pro.*, ll. 224-234)

The Widow of *A Tretis of Tua Mariit Wemen...*:

Unto my lesson 3e lyth, and leir at me wit
 Gif you nought list be forleit with losingeris
 untrew:
 Be constant in 3our governance and counterfeit gud
 manneris
 Thought 3e be kene, inconstant and cruell of mynd...

(Ed. James R. Kinsley, *The Poems of William Dunbar* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1979), p. 50, ll. 257-60.

¹²³ Langland sharply satirizes nuns in his description of a convent where Wrath is potager (B, V, ll. 153-65), while Chaucer describes the Prioress in the *General Prologue* (ll. 118-62) in more gently ironic terms.

¹²⁴ Power, p. 509. Longer English poems incorporating the idea of the unhappy nun include *The Court of Love*, Lydgate's *The Temple of Glas*, Lyndesay's *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaits*, and *The Kingis Quair*.

¹²⁵ Juvenal, *Satire I*, esp. ll. 43-50, 101-112.

¹²⁶ See esp. *Satires V* and *XIV*.

¹²⁷ Juvenal, *Satire I*, ll. 113-118; Horace, *Epistles*, I.6.

¹²⁸ Raby, *Secular Latin Poetry*, i, pp. 311-12.

¹²⁹ J. A. Yunck, *The Lineage of Lady Meed* (Notre Dame, IN: U of Notre Dame P, 1963), p. 61.

¹³⁰ Yunck, p. 93. For some examples see *Carmina Burana*, ed. Hilka and Schumann, I, i *Utar contra vitia, Roma tenens moreum*, and an early version of the Gospel of Mark Silver. See also the Gospel of Money (pr. Lehmann, *Parodistische Texte*, pp. 7-12), the Penny Catechism (pr. Lehmann,

Parodistische Texte, pp. 15-16), the 'Versus de Nummo' (ed. Wright, *Latin Poems Commonly Attributed to Walter Mapes*, p. 355), and Wright and Halliwell, eds., *Reliquiae Antiquae* ii, p. 108.

131 Yunck, pp. 211-212, 215-216.

132 Cf. *Carmina Burana*, I, i, 1, and the 'Munera' litany in *Speculum Stultorum*.

133 John A. Yunck, 'Medieval French Money Satire', *MLQ* 21 (1960), 73. The quotation is Prof. Yunck's translation of P. Legrand d'Aussy's rendition of a passage from an Old French poem into modern French. Unfortunately, in his *Fabliaux et contes*, Prof. Legrand d'Aussy gives neither the original text nor his source.

134 A. Jubinal, ed. *Jongleurs et Trouvères* (Paris, 1835), pp. 94-100.

135 A. Jubinal, ed. *Nouveau recueil de contes, dites, fabliaux, et autres pièces* (Paris, 1839), ii., pp. 264-72.

136 Thomas Wright, ed., *The Political Songs of England...*, pp. 195-205.

137 Wright, ed., *The Political Songs of England...*, pp. 149-152.

138 Lauro Martines, *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy* (New York: Vintage, 1980), p. 85.

139 Thomas Bestul, *Satire and Allegory in Wynnoure and Wastoure* (Lincoln, NB: U of Nebraska P, 1974), p. 5.

140 Bestul, p. 10.

141 BL MS Royal 18.B.xxiii, fol. 152, quoted in Owst, *Literature and Pulpit*, p. 311.

142 MS Linc. Cath. Lib. A.6.2, fol. 21^v, quoted in Owst, *Literature and Pulpit*, p. 311.

143 Anne Hudson, ed., *English Wycliffite Sermons*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), p. 226.

144 *Tractatus bipartitius de contractibus emptionis et venditionis*, i,

12, quoted in R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, 2nd ed., (London: Murray, 1936), p. 35.

145 R. A. Shoaf, *Dante, Chaucer and the Currency of the Word* (Norman, OK: Pilgrim, 1983), p. 8.

146 *Statutes 37 Edw. III*, cc. 8-15. See also May McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1959), p. 346; E. F. Jacob, *The Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1961), pp. 386ff.

147 Ed. F. J. Furnivall, *The Regement of Princes and Fourteen Minor Poems*, E.E.T.S. 72 (1897), p. 346.

148 MS Harley 4894, fol. 27, quoted in Owst, *Literature and Pulpit*, p. 314.

149 McKisack, p. 346.

150 Henry Ansgar Kelly, 'Clandestine Marriage and Chaucer's *Troilus*', *Viator* 4 (1973), p. 440.

151 Kelly, p. 440.

152 See, for example, no. V in *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies*, ed. Malcolm Godden, E.E.T.S. ss 5 (1979).

153 Ed. Mabel Day, E.E.T.S. 225 (1952), p. 40.

154 v. J. Scattergood, 'Skelton's "Ryotte": "A Rusty Gallande"', *N&Q* 219 (1974), 85.

155 For the similarities between Ryotte and Middle English gallants see Scattergood, 'Skelton's "Ryotte"', pp. 83-5.

156 Barbara Swain, *Fools and Folly* (New York: Columbia, 1932), p. 1.

157 Swain, p. 10.

158 Swain, p. 15.

159 Enid Welsford, *The Fool* (London: Faber, 1935), pp. 236-7.

160 Welsford, pp. 236-7.

161 H. MacCracken, ed., *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, II, E.E.T.S. 192 (1934), p. 208.

162 Welsford, p. 203.

163 Swain, p. 131.

164 Ed. and trans. Edwin H. Zeydel (New York: Columbia UP, 1944); also trans. Alexander Barclay (*The Shyp of Folys*, London, 1509; facs. ed. Amsterdam: Da Capo, 1970).

165 Elizabeth Salter, 'A Complaint Against the Blacksmiths', *L&H* 5 (19XX), 194-215.

166 Jill Mann, *Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1973), p. 2.

167 Rymer, vol. V, ii, pp. 24-5.

168 C. L. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1913), p. 370. For further examples of politically motivated personal attacks on prominent figures, see R. M. Wilson, *The Lost Literature of Medieval England*, 2nd. ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1961), pp. 193ff.

169 Wilson, p. 188 (from Ordericus Vitalis: 'Quin etiam indecentes de me cantilenas facetus coraula composuit, ad iniuriam mei palam cantuit, maliosque michi hostes ad cachinnos ita sepe prouocauit.' Marjorie Chibnall, ed. and trans. *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, 6 vols. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1968-78), 6: 354).

170 Norman Davis, ed., *Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1971-6), no. 5 (1: 7-9)

171 R. C. Elliott, *The Power of Satire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1966), pp. 24-5.

172 Elliott, p. 69.

173 C. R. Baskervill, *The Elizabethan Jig* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1929), pp. 66-7; quoted in Douglas Gray, 'Rough Music: Some Early Invectives and Flytings', in Claude Rawson, ed., *English Satire and the Satiric Tradition* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984), p. 26.

- 174 Baskervill, pp. 66-7
- 175 Baskervill, p. 67.
- 176 Baskervill, p. 67.
- 177 Kinsley, ed., p. 282.
- 178 Elliott, pp. 62-4.
- 179 Elliott, p. 34.
- 180 Ed. Kinsley, no. 23.
- 181 Ed. Kinsley, no. 26, ll. 14-15.
- 182 Denton Fox, ed., *The Poems of Robert Henryson* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1981), p. 475. Fox gives a comprehensive list of medieval French literature satirizing medicine.
- 183 Fox, pp. 475-6.
- 184 Owst, *Literature and Pulpit*, p. 349.
- 185 Thomas Wright, ed., *The Political Songs of England...*, Camden Soc. (1839), p. 333, ll. 211-6.
- 186 Ed. Norman Davis, *Non-Cycle Plays and Fragments*, E.E.T.S. s.s. 1 (1970), no. VI, ll. 608-21.
- 187 Ed. Frederick S. Boas, *Five Pre-Shakespearean Comedies* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1970), ll. 151-186.
- 188 Ed. Fox, p. 179.
- 189 Ed. Davis, ll. 585-7,
- I haue gyuen hyr a drynke made full well
Wyth scamoly and with oxennell
Letwyce, sawge and pympernelle
- 190 Ed. F. J. Furnivall, *Andrew Boorde's Introduction and Dyetary*, E.E.T.S. e.s. 10 (1870), p. 101.

TEXTS

Treatment of the Texts

In the texts the spelling of the manuscripts has been reproduced. Where the text has been emended, the rejected manuscript forms are shown at the foot of the page and added or altered words placed in square brackets in the text. Scribal interlineations and additions appear in curved brackets; conjectural reconstructions of words made illegible through manuscript deficiency appear in angle brackets. Abbreviations are expanded with notice, according to the practice of the scribe in his spelling of the same or similar words in full. In instances where final flourishes might represent -e, contractions of u, n, m or i, or might simply be otiose strokes, the practice of the scribe in spelling the same or similar words is followed. Where there is no scribal precedent, flourishes are treated as -e only where this preserves the metre, and are not expanded as abbreviations of u, n or m except where this preserves the rhyme; they are, however, always expanded as abbreviations of i where the ending -ion is apparently intended. Word division is regularized silently according to *OED*. Punctuation and capitalization of proper names are introduced following modern usage, but reflect the intention of the manuscripts as far as this can be determined.

1

pou þat sellest þe worde of God,

Be þou berfot, be þou schod,

Cum no more here!

'In principio erat verbum'

Is þe worde of God, all and som,

5

þat þou sellest, lewed frere.

Hit is cursed symonie

Eþer to selle or to bye

Ony gostly þinge;

þerfore, frere, go as þou come,

10

And hold þe in þi hows at home

Til we þe almis brynge.

Goddis lawe 3e reuerson

And mennes howsis 3e persen,

As Poul berip wittnes.

15

As mydday deuelis goynge abawte,

For money lowle 3e lowte,

With flattering bop more and lesse.

Allas, what schul we freris do
 Now lewed men kun holy writ?
 Alle abowte whire I go
 Bei aposen me of it.
 Ben wondrip me þat it is so, 5
 How lewed men kun alle wite.
 Sertenly we be vndo
 But if we mo amende it.
 I trowe þe deuel brow3t it aboute
 To write þe gospel in Englishe, 10
 For lewed men ben nowe so stowt
 þat þei 3euen vs neyper fleche ne fishe.
 When I come into schope
 For to say '*In principio*',
 þei bidine me 'Goo forþ, lewed poppe!' 15
And worche and win my siluer so.
 Yf Y sae hit longop not
 For prestis to worche where þei go,
 þei leggen for hem holi writ
 And sein þat Seint Polle did soo. 20
 þan þei loken on myn [h]abete
And sein 'Forsope, withoutton opes,
 Where it be russet blake or white,
 It is worþe alle oure werynge clopes.'
 I seye I [beg] not for me, 25
 Bot for {þem} þat haue none.
21 myn habete] MS my nabete 25 I beg not] MS I not

bei seyn 'þou hauist to or þre;
 Zeuen hem þat nedith þerof oone!
 þus oure disseytis bene aspiede,
 In þis maner and mani moo.

30

Fewe men bedden vs abyde
 But hey fast þat we were goo.
 If it goo forþe in þis maner,
 It wole done vs myche gyle;
 Men schul fynde vnneþe a frere
 In Englonde wipin a whille!

35

Preste ne monke ne 3it chanoune,

Ne no man of religioune,

Gyfen hem so to deuocioune

As done þes holy frers.

For somme gyuen ham to chyualry,

5

Somme to riote and ribaudery,

Bot frers gyuen ham to grete study

And to grete prayers.

Whoso kepes þair reule al,

Boþe in worde and dede,

10

I am ful siker þat he shal

Haue heuen blis to mede.

Men may se by þair contynaunce

Þat þai are men of grete penaunce,

And also þat þair sustynaunce

15

Symple is and wayke.

I haue lyued now fourty 3ers,

And fatter men about þe neres

3it sawe I neuer þen are þes frers

In contreys þere þai reke.

20

Meteles, so megre are þai made,

And penaunce so puttes ham doune,

Þat ichone is an hors lade

When he shal trusse of toune.

Allas, þat euer it shuld be so-- 25

Suche clerkes as þai about shuld go

Fro toune to toune by two and two,

To seke þair sustynaunce.

By God þat al þis world wan,

He þat þat ordre first bygan, 30

Me thynk certes it was a man

Of simple ordynaunce.

For þai haue nought to lyue by;

þai wandren here and þere,

And dele with dyuers marcerye 35

Right as þai pedlers were.

þai dele with purses, pynnes, and knyues,

With gyrdles, gloues for wenches and wyues,

Bot euer backward þe husband thryues

þer þai are haunted till; 40

For when þe gode man is fro hame,

And þe frere comes to oure dame,

He spares nauþer for synne ne shame

þat he ne dos his will.

If þai no helpe of houswyues had, 45

When husbandes are not inne,

þe freres welfare were ful bad

For þai shuld brewe ful þynne.

Somme frers beren pelure aboute,

For grete ladys and wenches stoute 50

To reute with þair clopes withoute,

Al after þat þai ere.

For somme vaire and somme gryse,

For somme bugee and somme byse,

And also many a dyuers spyse,

55

In bagges about þai bere.

Al þat for women is plesand

Ful redy certes haue þai,

Bot lytel gyfe þai þe husband

þat for al shal pay.

60

Trantes þai can and many a iape,

For somme can with a pound of sape

Gete him a kyrtell and a cape,

And somewhat els þerto;

Wherto shuld I opes swere,

65

þer is no pedler þat þak can bere

þat half so dere can sell his gere

þen a frer can do.

For if he gife a wyfe a knyfe

þat cost bot penyys two,

70

Worþe ten knyues, so mot I thryfe,

He wyl haue er he go.

Iich man þat here shal lede his life,

þat has a fayre doghter or a wyfe,

Be war þat no frer ham shryfe

75

Nauper loude ne stille;

þof women seme of hert ful stable,

With faire byhest and with fable,

þai can make þair hertes chaungeable,
And þair likyngis fulfill.

80

Be war ay with þe lymitour,
And with his felawe bape;
And þai make maystries in þi bour,
It shal turne þe to scape.

Were I a man þat hous helde,

85

If any woman with me dwelde,
þer is no frer bot he were gelde

Shuld com within my wones;

For may he til a woman wyne

In priueyte, he wyl not blynne

90

Er he a childe put hir withinne,

And perchaunce two at ones.

þof he loure vnder his hode,

With semblaunt quaynte and mylde,

If you him trust or doo him gode,

95

By God þou ert bygylde!

þai say þat þai distroye synne,

And þai mayntene men most þerinne,

For had a man slayn al his kynne,

Go shryue him at a frere;

100

And for lesse þen a payre of shone,

He wyl assoil him clene and sone,

And say þe synne þat he has done

His saule shal neuer dere.

It semes soþe þat men sayne of hayme

105

In many dyuers londe,
 þat þat caytyfe cursed Cayme
 First þis ordre fonde.

Nou se þe soþe whedre it be swa
 þat frer Carmes come of a K, 110

þe frer Austynes come of A,
 Frer Iacobynes of I;
 Of M comen þe frer Menours--
 þus grounded Caym þes four ordours
 þat fillen þe world ful of errours 115
And of ypocrisy.

All wyckednes þat men can tell
 Regnes ham among;
 þer shal no saule haue rowme in hell,
 Of frers þer is such þrong. 120

þai trauele þerne and bysily
 To bryng done þe clergye;
 þai speken þerof ay vilany,
And þerof þai done wrong.
 Who so lyues oght many þers 125

Shal se þat it shal fall of frers
 As it dyd of þe Templers
 þat woned here vs among.
 For þai held no religioune,
 Bot lyued after lykyng; 130

þai were distroyed and broght adoune
 þurgh ordynance of þe kyng.

þes frers haunten a dredful þing
 þat neuer shall come to gode endyng:
 O frer for eght or nyen shall syng, 135
 For ten or for elleuen;
And when his terme is fully gone,
 Conscience þen has he none
 þat he ne dar take of ychone
 Markes sixe or seuen. 140
 Suche annuels has made þes frers
 So wely and so gay,
 þat þer may no possessioners
 Mayntene þair array.

 þam fell to lyue al on purchase, 145
 Of almes geten from place to place,
And for all þat þam holpen has
 Shuld þai pray and syng;
 Bot now þis londe so negh soght is
 þat vnneþe may prestes seculers 150
 Gete any seruice for þes frers,
And þat is wondre þing.
 þis is a quaynt custome
 Ordeyned ham among,
 þat frers shall annuel prestes bycome 155
And so gates sell þer song.

 Ful wysely can þai preche and say,
 Bot as þai preche noþing do þai;
 I was a frere ful many a day,

Perfor þe soþe I wate. 160

Bot when I sawe þat þair lyuyng

Acordyd not to þair preching,

Of I cast my frer cloping

And wygh<t>ly went my gate.

Oþer leue ne toke I none 165

Fro ham when I went,

Bot toke ham to þe deuel ychone,

þe priour and þe couent.

Out of þe ordre þof I be gone,

Apostota ne am I none; 170

Of twelue moneþes me wanted one

And odde days nyen or ten.

Away to wende I made me boune

Or tyme come of professioune;

I went my way þurghout þe toune 175

In syght of many men.

Lord God þat with paynes ill

Mankynde boght so dere,

Let neuer man after me have will

For to make him frere! 180

Of þes frer mynours me thenkes moch wonder,
 þat waxen are þus hauteyn þat somtyme weren vnder.
 Among men of holy {chirch} þai maken mochel blonder;
 Nou he þat sytes vs aboue make ham sone to sonder!
 With an O and an I, þai preysen not Saynt Poule; 5
 þai lyen on Seyn Fraun[co]ys, by my fader soule!

First þai gabben on {God}, þat all men may se
 When þai hangen him on hegh on a grene tre,
 With leues and with blossemes þat bright are of ble;
 þat was neuer Goddes son, by my leute. 10
 With an O and an I, men wenen þat þai wede
 To carpe so of clergy; þai can not þair crede.

þai haue done him on a croys fer vp in þe skye,
 And festned on him wyenges as he shuld flie.
 þis fals feyned byleue shal þai soure bye, 15
 On þat louelych lord so forto lye.
 With an O and an I, one sayd ful still,
 `Armachan distroy ham, if it is Goddes will!'

þer comes one oute of þe skye in a grey goune,
 As it were an hoghyerd hyand to toune. 20
 þai haue mo goddes þen we, I say by Mahoune,
 All men vnder ham þat euer beres croune.
 With an O and an I, why shuld þai not be shent?
 þer wantes noght bot a fyre þat þai nere all brent.

6 Frauncoys] MS fraunocys

Went I forther on my way in þat same tyde, 25
þer I sawe a frere blede in myddes of his syde.
 Boþe in hondes and in fete had he woundes wyde;
 To serue to þat same frer þe pope mot abyde.
With an O and an I, I wonder of þes dedes,
 To se a pope holde a dishe whyl pe frer bledes. 30

A cart was made al of fyre, as it shuld be;
 A grey frer I sawe þerinne--þat best lyked me.
 Wele I wote þai shal be brent, by me leaute;
 God graunte me þat grace þat I may it se.
With an O and an I, brent be þai all, 35
And all þat helpes þerto faire mot byfall.

þai preche all of pouert bot þat loue þai noght,
 For gode mete to þair mouþe þe toune is þurgh soght.
 Wyde are þair wonunges and wonderfully wroght;
 Murdre and horedame ful dere has it boght. 40
With an O and an I, for sixe pens er þai fayle,
 Sle þi fadre and iape þi modre and þai wyl þe assoile!

Flen, flyys, and freris *populum Domini male cedunt;*

Thystlis and breris *crescentia gramina ledunt.*

Christe, nolens guerras, sed cuncta pace tueris,

Destrue *per terras* breris, flen, fly3es, and freris!

Flen, fly3es, and freris, foul falle hem thys fyften 3eris,

5

For non þat her ys lovit flen, fly3es, ne freris.

1 Flen, flyys, and freris] fflyes fles and frer<es> 4 freris] flateryng
freres 5-6] *om.*

He that harbor[y]th a frere harborythe fesyke,
And he þat harborythe a farte harbor[y]the the kolycke;
But whate he be þat wylle leve in helthe and good quarte,
Loke well þat he harborow neythyr frere nor farte!

Freers, freers, wo 3e be,
Min[i]stri malorum;
 For many a mannis soule brynge 3e
Ad penas infernorum.
 Whan seyntis felle fryst from heuen, 5
Quo prius habitabant,
 In erthe leyfftt þ[ei] synnus [seuen]
Et fratres communicabant.
 Falnes was þe fryst floure
Quem fratres pertulerunt, 10
 For falnes and fals error
Multi perierunt.
 Freers, 3e can weyl lye
Ad falundum gentem,
And weyl can blere a mannus ye 15
Pecunias habentem.
 Yf þei may no more geytte,
Fruges petunt isti,
 For falnes walde þei not lette,
Qui non sunt de grege Cristi. 20
 Lat a freer off summ ordur
Tecum pernoctare,
 Odur þi wyff or þi daugtur
Hic vult violare,
 Or þi sunm he weyl prefur, 25
Sicut furtam fortis.
2 ministri] MS ministri **7 þei]** MS þo **seuen]** MS vij

God gyffe syche a freer peyn

In inferni portis!

pei weyl assaylle boyth Iacke and Gylle,

Licet sint predones;

30

And parte off pennans take hem tulle,

Qui sunt latrones.

per may no lorde of pis cuntre

Sic edificare

As may þes freers were þei be,

35

Qui vadunt mendicare.

Mony-makers I trow þei be,

Regis proditores;

perfore yll mowyth þei thee,

Falsi deceptores!

40

Fadur fyrst in Trinite,

Filius atque Flamen.

Omnes dicant Amen.

Lyarde es ane olde horse and may no3t wele drawe,
 He sall be putt into þe parke holyn for to gnawe;
 Barefote withowttyn schone þare sall he goo,
 For he es ane olde horse, and may no more doo.
 Whills þat Lyarde myght drawe, þerwhills was he luff<ed>, 5
 þay putt hym to prouande, and þerwyth he prouede.
 Now he may noghte do his dede, as he myght b<yforn>;
 þay lyg byfore hym pese-straa, and beris away <þe corn>.
 þay lede hym to þe smethy, to pulle of his schone,
 And puttis hym to grenwode, þer for to gone. 10
 Wha so may noghte do his {dede}, he sall to parke
 Barefote withowtten schone, and ga with Lyard<e>.
 Take hym vnto his pilche, and to his Paternoster,
 And pray for hym þat may [not] do, for he es bot a wast<ur>.
 Forþi serue þou thy wyfe, as þi couaunde wa<s>, 15
 Or gete hir anoper, and bryng hym to þi place.
 þou made in thi forwarde to bedd and to bourde,
 þou may noghte for schame agayne say þat w<ord>.
 Alle þe wyfes of þis land, þay ere at assente,
 þay hafe purcheste þam a parke at þe parlement; 20
 þe kynge hase þam grauntide by þe comon la<we>,
 þat alle sall into þe parke þat may not wele dra<we>;
 He þat may not do his dede on evyn nor on <morowe>,
 He sall be put into þe parke, with mekill <harde sorowe>.
 He þat may wele do his ded<e> in a fourtenyghte...> 25
 He sall be at hame w<ith skill...>

14 not] MS om.

He þat faylis <in þre wekes...>

He sall <be put...>

He þat <may...>

He sall be geldid or he go of bathe his balloke stonys; 30

And pulled of his schone, and putt to þe pasture,

Fro þe tym of Michelmes till it be after Ester.

When þat he hase trauelde þer þe wynter halfe 3ere,

Than he sall be takyn owte, and mad a sekke fer[m]ere

In þe howse of dyng, thriste in þat abbaye, 35

Be he anes thedir broghte he commes neuer awaye.

Smale swywynges men thedir sall be fettyn

[.....]

þay sall be brynte on þe hippe, chapmans merke,

Bothe in froste and in snawe to ga with Lyarde. 40

Alle þat passe þe age of þre score of 3ere

þat may noghte in bedd do salle be a frere.

þay sall were non oper serke bot þe harde hayere,

And 3itt sall þay be coussid awaye at Appilby faire;

As wyfes makis bargans, a horse fer a mare, 45

þay lefe þer þe febill and brynges ham þe freche ware.

Clense wele 3our eghne, and standis on bakke,

For here es comene a presepe, swylke men to take.

Eleuyn myle on lenghe þe parke es mett,

And twenty on brede þe some es sette; 50

And 3itt it is filled fro þe [one] syd to þe toper,

And 3itt standis perowtt twenty wayne fopire.

3it þer sall into þe parke many on maa,

Of euerilke towne in Yrlande ane or twa.

34 fermere] MS ferere 38] MS om. 51 one] MS to

Þe laste man in þe parke was a graye frere, 55
 Þer in he dwelte þe wynter halfe 3ere,
 And euer more after barefote he gose;
 And the gray freris, for þat sorye lose,
 [Hase] þam vmbythoght, and sworne ilkan to oper,
 Sall neuer no counte-betyn man bycomen þer broþer; 60
 Bot if he may wele swyfe, and bere hym aryghte,
 Twyse or thrise {at þe leste} on a schorte somer nyghte,
 þat þan he sall þe habete take, and bycom þer broþer,
 <And þus> þay hafe mad þer house of on and of oper.
 <Þay mak a>ll þaire howses of gud swyuers, 65
 <.....dise do>wne þe parke for loue of þe wyfes.
 <.....3it h>afe I noght done,
 <.....kene f>orthir wold I sone,
 <.....hase t>akyne þam to gone.
 <.....to f>eche þair broþer home. 70
 And now hafe þay sworne by God and Sayne Iohn
 þat þay wille byg þam a house of lym and of stone;
 þay sett vp and lete crye in euerylke a townne.
 For þer solde come to þe house men of relegeon;
 Be he monke, be he frere, be he chonoun, 75
 þay chalange hym for broþer þat beris any crownne.
 The mayster of þe parke ansuerde with 'Naye,
 þare es a frere in þis parke of 3our abbaye,
 For he myghte noghte do bot ones in a 3ere,
 Wyfes tuke hym þe horne and made hym fosterer.' 80
 'Ful falle hym,' sayde þe freres, 'þat euer was he borne!
 He es bot a lewed frere; he had neuer crown sch<orne>;

And þat sall we proue by a gud skill--
 Wyfes þat hase geese, þay knawe þis fulle wele--
 Tak a ganedir þat may not trede and pulle <hym> in the crownne, 85
 Iwysse, a better trede-foullle schalle no<ne> be in þe towne.
 And swa it faris by freris þat hase a croun schorne,
 þay fare like þe comon bulle þat gase in mens corne.
 Mete and drynke þay hafe ynoghe, bot swyuyng <þam> wantis,
 And for þay go so seldom to þay gete grete {sayntis}.' 90
 'Santis in the deuels name!' said þe parkere,
 'þe frere sone of Oxenforthe was hanged for a m<are>,
 And als I come hamewarde, anoper I mett
With a rape abowte his nekke to þe gebette.
 Oper sayntis gett þay none, þerfor þay will noghte thee, 95
 And þerfore þay clyme alle to God one a schorte tree.'
 'By God, þou lyes!' said þe frere, 'and þat will I pr<oue>,
 And þerto fighte within lystis I wagge to the my gloue.
 Byd þam þi brepir make þam reddy, if þat þay will fyghte,
 For þay sall be assayllede within this fourtenyghte.' 100
 Than þay busked and made þam bowne on euerylk a syde,
 Agaynes þe nexte Mononday in þe Whytsontyde.
 Twenty thowsand þer come of flaterande freris,
 And als many agaynes þam alle of parkers.
 þan smalle swywyng men sett vp a crye, 105
 'God and Sayne Silvester send vs the maystrye!
 Send þe maystry todaye to vs in þis place.'
 'Sayne Frauncesse,' said þe freris, 'gyff 3ow sory grace,
 And sende vs þe maystry, men of relygeon!'
 þay made assawte to the parke and drewe it alle down, 110
 þay pulled þam alle downe and mad it fulle playne,

And lete alle sory swywers gang ham agayne.

Twenty thowsand of þe werste stale sone awaye,

þe freris went ham agayne to þer abbaye.

And now ere sary swywers brokyn owte of bande, 115

þay fill alle full this Ynglande, and many oper lande.

In euerilk a toune þer as many one,

And euerilk wyfe wenys hirselfe þat scho hafes one;

Scho will saye to hirselfe, when scho es in bedde,

'Myn husbande hase bene in þe parke, I laye myn hede to wedde. 120

When he commes to þe bedde he slomers one slepe;

I wold þat Sayne Silvester had hym þan to kepe.'

When maydens ere maryede, it es þaire maste karke

Lesse þay be maryed to men þat hase bene in þe parke.

For þus faris þe worlde, for it es possebylle 125

Euer a faire and a fowlle, a fresche and a febyll.

All Lyardes men, I warne 3owe byfore,

Bete þe cownte with 3our neffes whene 3e may do no more.

Thus endis Lyarde, at þe laste worde,

Yf a man thynke mekill, kepe somewhate in horde. 130

Vncomly in cloystre, I coureu ful of care,
 I loke as a lurdeyn (and listne til my lare);
 þe song of þe ce-sol-fa dos me syken sare,
 And sitte stotiand on a song a moneth and mare.
 I ga gowlende abowte also dos a goke; 5
 Mani is þe sorwfol song I si[n]gge vpon mi bok.
 I am holde so harde vnnepes dar I loke;
 Al þe mirthe of þis mold for God I forsoke!
 I gowle on my grayel and rore als a roke;
 Litel wiste I þerof qwan I þerto toke. 10
 Summe notes arn shorte and somme a long noke,
 Summe kroken awayward als a fleshoke.
 Qwan I kan mi lesson mi meyster wil I gon
 þat heres me mi rendre; he wenes I haue wel don.
 'Qwat hast þu don, Dawn Water, sin Saterdai at non? 15
 þu holdest nowt a note by God in riht ton!
 Wap me, leue Water, þu werkes al til shame,
 þu stomblest and stikes fast as þu were lame!
 þu tones nowt þe note ilke be his name,
 þu bitist asonder bequarre, for bemol I þe blame. 20
 Wep þe, leue Water, þu werkes al to wondre
 Als an old cawdrun bigynnest to clondre.
 þu tuchest nowt þe notes, þu bites hem on sonder,
 Hold vp! For shame! þu letes hem al vnder.'
 þanne is Water so wo þat wol ner wil he blede, 25
And wendis him al William and bit him wel to spede.
 6 singge] MS sigge

'God it wot,' seys William, 'perof hadd [I] nede,
 Now wot I qwou iudicare was set in þe crede!
 Me is wo so is þe be þat belles in þe walmes;
 I donke vpon Daudid til mi tonge talmes. 30
 I ne rendrede nowt sithen men beren palmes.
 Is it also mikel sorwe in song so is in salmes?'
 'Ya, bi God, þu reddis, and so it is wel werre,
 I solfe and singge after and is me neuere þe nerre.
 I horle at þe notes and heue hem al of herre; 35
 All þat me heres wenes þat I erre.
 Of bemol and of beqarre, of boþe I was wol bare
 Qwan I wente out of þis word (and liste til mi lare)
 Of ef-fa-u[t]3 and c-la-mi ne cud Y neuere are;
 I fayle fast in þe fa, it files al mi fare, 40
 3et þer ben oper notes, sol and vt and la,
And þat froward file þat men clepis fa.
 Often he dos me liken ille and werkes me ful wa,
 Mi3t I him neuere hitten in ton for to ta.
 3et þer is a streinant wit3 to longe tailes, 45
perfore has vre mayster ofte horled mi kayles.
 Ful litel þu kenes qwat sorwe me ayles;
 It is b[u]tt childe game þat þu wit3 Daudid dayles.
 Qwan ilke note til oper lepes and makes hem a sawt,
 þat we calles a moyson in ge-sol-re-ut3 en hawt. 50
 Il hayl were þu boren 3if þu make defawt,
 panne sais oure mayster, "que wos ren ne vaut".

27 hadd I] MS haddi 39 ef-fa-ut3] MS effau3 44 Mi3t I] MS mi3ti 48 butt]
 MS bitt

Fur in see bi west Spaygne
 Is a lond ihote Cokaygne;
per nis lond vnd[er] heuen riche
 Of wel of God nil hit iliche.
 þo3 peradis be miri and bri3t, 5
 Cokaygn is of fairir si3t.
 What is per in peradis
 Bot grasse and flure and grene ris?
 þo3 per be ioi and gret dute,
per nis mer but frute; 10
per nis halle, bure, no bench;
 Bot watir [manis] þurs[t] to quench.
 Bep per no men bot two--
 Hely and Enok also.
 Elinglich mai hi go 15
 Whar per wonip men no mo.

 In Cokaigne is met and drink
 Wipvte care, how, and swink.
 þe met is trie, þe drink is clere,
 To none, russin, and sopper. 20
 I sigge, for sob, boute were,
per nis lond on erþe is pere.
Vnder heuen nis lond, iwisse,
 Of so mochel ioi and blisse.

vnder] MS vnd 12 manis þurst to] MS man is thursto

þer is mani swete si3te; 25
 Al is dai, nis þer no ni3te.
 þer nis baret noþer strif;
 Nis þer no dep ac euer lif.
 þer nis lac of met no clop;
 þer nis man no womman wrop. 30
 þer nis serpent, wolf, no fox;
 Hors no capil; kowe no ox.
 þer nis schepe, no swine, no gote,
 No non horw3, la, God it wote,
 Noþer harace noþer stode-- 35
 þe lond is ful of oþer gode.
 Nis þer flei, fle, no lowse
 In clop, in toune, bed no house.
 þer nis dunnir, slete, no hawle,
 No non vile worme no snawile; 40
 No non storme, rein, no winde.
 þer nis man no womman blinde,
 Ok al is game, ioi, and gle;
 Wel is him þat þer mai be.

 þer beþ riuers gret and fine 45
 Of oile, melk, honi, and wine;
 Watir seruip þerto no þing
 Bot to si3t and to waussing.
 þer is [mani] maner frute;
 Al is solas and dedute. 50

per is a wel fair abbei
 Of white monkes and of grei;
per bep bowris and halles--
 Al of pasteus bep þe walles--
 Of fleis, of fisse, and rich met 55
 þe likfullist þat man mai et.
 Fluren cakes bep þe schingles alle,
 Of cherch, cloister, boure, and halle.
 þe pinnes bep fat podinges,
 Rich met to prince3 and kinges; 60
 Man mai þerof et ino3
 Al wip ri3t and no3t wip wo3.
 Al is commune to 3ung and old,
 To stoute and sterne, mek and bold.
per is a cloister fair and li3t, 65
 Brod and long, of sembli si3t;
 þe pilers of þat cloister alle
 Bep iturned of cristale,
 Wip har [b]as and capitale
 Of grene iaspe and rede corale. 70
 In þe praer is a tre
 Swipe likful forto se--
 þe rote is gingeuir and galingale,
 þe siouns bep al sedwale,
Trie maces bep þe flure, 75
 þe rind canel of swet odor,

þe frute gilofre of gode smakke.

Of cucubes þer nis no lakke.

þer bep rosis of rede ble,

And lilie likful forto se.

80

þai faloweb neuer dai no ni3t;

þis a3t be a swet si3t.

þer bep iiij willis in þe abbei--

Of triacle and halwei,

Of baum and ek piement,

85

Euer ernend to ri3t rent;

Of þai stremis al þe molde

Stonis preciuse and golde.

þer is saphir a[nd] vniune,

Carbuncle and astiune,

90

Smaragde, lugre, and prassiune,

Beril, onix, topasiune,

Ametist and crisolite,

Calcedun and epetite.

þer bep briddes mani and fale--

95

prostil, þruisse, and ni3tingale,

Chalandre, and wedwale,

And oper briddes, wip<out> tale,

þat stinteb neu[er] bi har mi3t

Muri <to> sing dai and ni3t.

100

89 and] MS a 99 neuer] MS neu

3ite I do 3ow mo to witte--

pe gees irostid on pe spitte

Flee3 to pat abbai, God hit wot,

And gredip 'Gees! Al hote, al hot!'

Hi bringep garlek gret plente,

105

pe best idi3t pat man mai se;

pe leuerokes pat bep cup

Li3tip adun to [manis] mup

Idi3t in stu ful swipe wel,

Pudrid wip gilofre and canel.

110

Nis no spech of no drink,

Ak take ino3 wipvte swink.

Whan pe monkes geeþ to masse,

Al pe fenestres pat bep of glasse

Turnep into cristal bri3t

115

To 3iue monkes more li3t.

Whan pe masses bep iseiid

And pe bokes up ileiid,

pe cristal turnip into glasse

In state pat hit raþer wasse.

120

pe 3ung monkes euch dai

Aftir met gob to plai;

Nis þer hauk no fule so swifte

Bettir fleing bi pe lifte

108 manis] MS man is

þan þe monkes hei3 of mode 125
 Wip har sleuis and har hode.

Whan þe abbot seep ham flee,
 þat he holt for moch glee,
 Ak napeles al þer amang
 He biddip ham li3t to euesang. 130
 þe monkes li3tip no3t adun
 Ac furre fleep in o randun.

Whan þe abbot him iseep
 þat is monkes fram him fleep,
 He takeþ maidin of þe route 135
 And turnip vp hir white toute,
 And betip þe taburs wip is hond
 To make is monkes li3t to lond.

Whan is monkes þat iseep,
 To þe maid dun hi fleep, 140
 And gep þe wench al a bute,
 And þakkep al hir white toute,
 And sip aftir her swinke
 Wendip meklich hom to drink
 And gep to har collacione, 145
 A wel fair proçessione.

Anoper abbei is þerbi,
 For sob, a gret fair nunnerie,

Vp a riuer of swet milke,
 Whar is plente gret of silk. 150
 Whan þe [someris] dai is hote,
 þe 3ung nunnes takip a bote
 And dop ham forþ in þat riuer
 Boþe wip oris and wip stere.
 Whan hi bep fur fram þe abbei 155
 Hi makip ham nakid forto plei,
 And lepip dune into þe brimme
 And dop ham sleilich forto swimme.
 þe 3ung monke[s] þat hi seep,
 In dop ham, vp and forþ hi fleep 160
 And commip to þe nunnes anon,
 And euch monke him takeþ on
 And snellich berip forþ har prei
 To þe mochil grei abbei,
 And techip þe nunnes an oreisun 165
 Wip iambleue vp and dun.

 þe monke þat wol be stalun gode
 And kan set ari3t is hode,
 He schal hab, wipoute danger,
 xij wiues euch 3ere, 170
 Al pro3 ri3t and no3t pro3 grace,
 For to do himsilf solace;
 And þilk monke þat slepip best

151 someris] MS somer is 159 monkes] MS monkep

And dop is likam al to rest,
 Of him is hoppe, God hit wote, 175
 To be sone uadir abbot.
 Who [so] w[i]l com þat lond to,
 Ful grete penance he mot do--
 Seue 3ere in [swineis] dritte
 He mote wade, wol 3e witte, 180
 Al anon vp to þe chynne--
 So he schal þe lond winne.
 Lordinges, gode and hend,
 Mot 3e neuer of world wend,
 Fort 3e stond to 3ure cheance 185
And fulfille þat penance,
þat 3e mote þat lond i-se
And neuer more turne a 3e.
Prey we God so mote hit be;
 Amen, per seint charite. 190

Finit

11

Be God and Saint Hillare,
Mi clerk was of il lare!
Wan he red Hillar
Long in is pisal,
I swere be my chattar,
I wold pat Sis Allkar,
Riht with hir ers bar,
Had pist in by wisal!

5

Kyrie, so kyrie, Iankyn syngyt merie with Aleyson!

As I went on 301 day in owre proressyon,

Knew I ioly Iankyn be his mery ton.

[Kyrieleyson].

Iankyn began be offys on be 301 day,

And 3yt me þynkyt it dos me good, so merie gan he say

5

'Kyrieleyson'.

Iankyn red be pystyl ful fayre and ful wel,

And 3yt me þinkyt it dos me good as euere haue I sel.

[Kyrieleyson].

Iankyn at be sanctus crakit a merie note,

10

And 3yt me þinkyt it dos me good; I payid for his cote.

[Kyrieleyson].

Iankyn crakit notis an hunderid on a knot,

And 3yt he hakkyt hem smallere þan wortis to be pot.

K[yr]ieleyson].

15

3 Kyrieleyson] MS om. 9 Kyrieleyson] MS om. 12 Kyrieleyson] MS om. 15 Kyrieleyson] MS K.

Iankyn at þe angnus beryt þe pax brede;

He twynkelid but sayd nowt and on myn fot he trede.

[Kyrieleyson].

Benedicamus domino; Cryst fro schame me schylde!

Deo gracias þerto; alas I go with [c]hylde!

20

K[yrieleyson].

13

Lo, he þat can be Cristes clerck
 And knowe þe knottes of his crede
 Now may se a wonder werk,
 Of harde happes to take goud hede.
 The dome of deth is heuy drede
 For hym þat wol not mercy crie;
 þan is my rede, for mucke ne mede,
 þat no man melle of Lollardrye.

5

I say for meself yut wist I neuer,
 But now late what hit shuld be,
And by my trouth I haue wel leuer
 No more kyn þan my a.b.c.
 To lolle so hie in suych degre
 Hit is no perfit profecie,
 Sauf seker sample to þe and me
 To bewar of Lollardrie.

10

15

The game is no3t to lolle so hie
þer fete failen fondement,
And yut is a moch folie
 For fals beleue to ben Brent.
þer þe Bibell is al myswent,
 To iangle of Iob or Ieremye
 þat construen hit after her entent
 For lewde lust of Lollardie.

20

Hit is vnknedly for a kni3t 25

pat shuld a kynges castel kepe

To bable þe bibel day and ni3t,

In restyng tyme when he shuld slepe,

And carefoly away to crepe

F[ro] alle þe chief of chiualrie. 30

Wel aught hym to waile and to wepe

pat suych lust hap in Lollardrie.

An old castel and not repaired,

With wast walles and woves wide;

þe wages ben ful yuel wared 35

With suich a capitayn to abide,

pat rereth not for to ride

Agayns þe kyng and his clergie.

With priue peyne and pore pride

þer is a poynt of Lollardrie. 40

For many a man withyn a while

Shal aby his gult ful sore;

So fele gostes to begile

Hym aught to rue euermore.

For his sorowe shal he neuer restore 45

pat he venemed with enuye,

But ban þe burthe pat he was of bore

Or euer had lust in Lollardie.

30 fro] MS for

Euery shepe þat shuld be fed in felde
 And kepte fro wolfes in her folde, 50
 He nedeth neþer spere ne shulde
 Ne in no castel to be wholde,
 For þer þe pasture is ful colde,
 In somer seson when hit is drie,
 And namly when þe soyle is solde 55
 For lewde lust of Lollardie.

An olde castel draw al don
 Hit is ful hard to rere hit newe,
 With suych a congregacion
 þat cast hem to be vntrewe. 60
 When beggers mow neþer bake ne brewe
 Ne haue wherwith to borow ne bie,
 þan mot riot, robbe, or reve
 Vnde þe colour of Lollardie.

That castel is not for a kyng 65
 þer þe walles be ouer throwe,
 And yut wel wors abidyng
 Whan þe captayn awaye is flowe,
 And forsake spere and bowe
 To crepe fro kni3thode in to clergie. 70
 þer is a bitter blast yblowe
 To be bawde of Lollardie.

I trowe þer be no kni3t alyue
 þat wold haue don so open a shame;

For þat crafte to studi or scribe 75
 Hit is no gentel mannes game
 But if hym lust to haue a name
 Of pelour vnder ipocrasie,
 And þat wer a foule defame
 To haue suych lose of Lollardie. 80

And, perde, lolle þei neuer so long
 Yut wol lawe make hem lowte;
 God wol not suffre hem be so strong
 To bryng her purpos so abowte.
 With saunz faile and saunz doute 85
 To rere riot and robberie,
 By reson þei sul not long route
 While þe taile is docked of Lollardie.

Of þe hede hit is las charge
 When grace wol not be his gide, 90
 Ne suffre hym for to lepe at large,
 But heuely his hede to hide.
 Where shuld he oper route or ride
 Aggayns þe chief fo chiuallrie,
 Not hardi in no place to abide 95
 For alle þe sekte of Lollardie.

He wor ful lewde þat wolde byleue
 In figure mad of stok or ston,
 Yut fourme shuld we none repreue
 Neþer of Marie ne of Ion, 100

Petre, Poul, ne oper none
 Canonised by clergie;
 þan þe seyntes euerychon
 Be litel holde to Lollardie.

A God, what vnkyndly gost 105
 Shuld greue þat God grucched nou3t?
 Thes Lollardes, þat lothen ymages most,
 With mannes handes made andwrou3t,
 And pilgrimages to be sou3t--
 þei seien hit is but mawmentrie. 110
 He þat þis lose first vp brou3t
 Had gret lust in Lollardie.

And namly Iames among hem alle,
 For he twyes had turnement;
 Moch mischaunse mot him befalle 115
 þat last beheded hym in Kent,
 And alle þat were of þat assent
 To Crist of heuen I clepe and crie,
 Sonde hem þe same iugement,
 And alle þe sekte of Lollardie. 120

For þat vengans agayns kynde
 Was a poynt of cowardyse,
 And namly suych on to bete or bynde
 þat mi3t not stand, set, ne rise.
 What dome wold ye hym deuyse, 125
 By lawe of armes or gentrie,

But serue hym in þe same wise
And alle þe sekte of Lollardie.

When falsnes faileþ frele folie
Pride wol persyn sone among; 130

þan willerdome with old enuy
 Can non oper way but wrong,
 For synne and shame with sorowe strong,
 So ouerset with avutrie,

þat fals beleue is fayn to fong 135
 þe lewde lust of Lollardie.

And vnder colour of suich lollyng
 To shape sodeyn surrection
 Agaynst oure liege lord kyng,
With fals ymaginacion, 140

And for þat corsed conclusion
 By dome of kni3thod and clergie
 Now turneth to confusion
 þe sory sekte of Lollardie.

For holy writ berith witnes, 145

He þat fals is to his kyng,
 þat shamful deth and hard distres
 Shal be his dome at his endyng;
 þan double deth for suych lollyng
 Is heuy when we shul hennes hye. 150

Now Lord þat madest of nou3t all thingis
 Defende vs all fro Lollardie!

[I] haue a lady where so she be
 That seldom ys the souerayn of my thought;
 On whos beawte when I beholde and se,
 Remembryng me how well she ys wrought,
 I thanke fortune that to hyr grace me brought, 5
 So fayre ys she, but nothyng angelyke.
 Hyr bewty ys to none other lyke.

For hardely and she were made of brasse,
 Face and all, she hath ynowgh fayrenesse;
 Hyr eyen byn holow and grene as any grasse, 10
 And rauynnysshe yelow ys hyr sonny tresse.
 Therto she hath of euery comlynesse
 Suche quantyte yeuyn hyr by nature
 That with the leest she ys of hyr stature.

And as a bolt hy[r] browes byn ybent, 15
 And byttyll-browyd she ys also withall,
 And of hir wytte as sympyll and innocent
 As ys a chylde that can no good at all.
 She ys nat thyk, hyr stature ys but small;
 Hyr fyngers byn lytyll and nothyng long; 20
 Hyr skyn ys smothe as any oxys tong.

Therto she ys so wyse in dalyaunce,
 And besette hyr wordis so womanly,

1 I] *Space left for decorated initial* 15 hyr] MS hys

That hyr to here hit doth me dysplesaunce,
 For that she seyth ys sayde so connyngly 25
 Then when that there be mo then she and I,
 I had leuer she were of talkyng styll
 Then that she shuld so goodly speche spyll.

And slowth noone shall haue in here entresse,
 So dylygent ys she and vertulesse; 30
 And so besy, ay, all good to vndresse
 That as a she-ape she ys harmelese;
 And as an hornet meke and pytelesse,
With that she ys so wyse and circumspecte
 Than prudent, noone hyr foly can infecte. 35

Ys hit nat ioy that suche oone of hyr age
Withyn the boundys of so gret tendyrnesse,
 Shuld in her werke be so sad and sage?
 That of the weddyng sawe all the noblesse
 Of Quene Iane, and was tho as I gesse 40
 But of the age of yeres x and fyue?
 I trowe there ar nat many suche alyue!

For as Jhesu my synfull sowle saue,
 There nys creature in all thys world lyuyng
 Lyke vnto hyr that I wold gladly haue, 45
 So pleseth myn hert that goodly swete thyng

Whos sowle in haste vnto Hys blysse bryng
That furst hyr formyd to be a creature,
For were she wele of me I dyd no cure.

Explicit the dyscryuyng of a fayre lady

My fayr lady so fressh of hewe,
 Good thryft come to your goodly face
 Of colourys like the noble newe,
 As bryght as bugyl or ellys bolace.
 So weel were he that myght purchace
 At good leyser with hire to been,
 Hire semly cors for to embrace
 Whan she hath on hire hood of green.

5

For yif I shuld hire al discrye
 Fro the heed to the novyl and so forth down,
 I trowe there is noon suych alyve.
 For to begynne at hire motle crown--
 The whyght flekkyd with the brown,
 Shoorn as a sheep with sherys keen--
 There is noon so fayr in al our town
 Whan she hath on hire hood of green.

10

15

The kyrspe skyn of hir forheed
 Is drawyn vp and ontrustily bownde
 Of colourys dunne, yelewe pale, and reed,
 And therwithal hire cheekys been rownde.
 A reynbowe hew so fayr she is fownde,
 For whan the sunne shyneth sheen,
 Allas she gevith myn herte a wownde
 Whan she hath on hire hood of green.

20

Here smothe browys blake and fyn 25
 Arn soft and tendir for to fele
 As been the bruskelys of a swyn;
 Here iowys been rownde as purs or bele,
 That though hire herte were made of stele,
 And I ne myght hire nevir seen, 30
 Yit must I love hire evir wele
 Whan she hath on hire hood of green.

Here greet shulderys square and brood,
 Here breestys vp bere hire bely so large,
 For vpon hire is a greet carte lood-- 35
 She is no bot, she is a barge!
 A stouht that no man may charge,
 Whoos boody may not suffysed been,
 And evir abrood she beryth hire tarage
 Vndir hire daggyd hood of green. 40

This fair floure of womanheed
 Hath too pappys al so small
 Bolsteryd out of lenth and breed,
 Lyche a large campyng ball.
 There is no bagpipe halff so tall, 45
 Nor no cormyse for sothe, as I ween,
 Whan they been ful of wynde at all
 And she haue on hire hood of green.

And forth to speke of hire entraylle--

Liche a cow hire wombe is gert, 50

Rympled liche a nunnys veylle,

And smothe berdyd liche a gete.

Hire teeth been whight as ony iete,

And lych a seergecloth hire nekke is clene;

And for to kepe hire from the heete 55

She weryth a daggyd hood of grene.

Hire skyn is tendyr for to towche

As of an howndfyssh or of an hake,

Whoos tew[c]hyng hath coost many a crowche.

Hire pylche souple for to make, 60

Wheer ovir many an hed hath ake

In skorn whan she lyth on the splene;

And yit she shal hym clene out shake

Vndir hire daggid hood of grene.

Hire buttokkys ar not lowe sunke, 65

But brood as is a Spaynych stede.

For febylnesse she is nat shrunke;

Man may that se thoroughout hire wede.

Hire crowpe doth the semys shrede

Whan they so streyght lasyd been. 70

Now good thryfft haue he for hys mede

That best can shakyn hire hood of green.

Hire lemys not smal but liche a spere,
 But iumbelyd but lyke as is an olyvaunt,
 The greet clocher vp for to bere-- 75
 A belfrey for the body faunt.
 Or ellys for to pley at the <...>,
 Or for an hasard of heigh tene.
 So weel were he that had a graunt
 To towche hire daggyd hood of grene. 80

This is the lady that I serve
 That hath so many men on honde,
 For of hire can no man thank deserve
 That trottyth on the drye londe.
 But on them she wyl haue a bonde 85
 As weel of bayard as of brende;
 And yit for sorell she wyl stonde,
 Though men hire daggyd hood wolde rende.

In cherysshying of the yemanry
 She hath weykyd many a bowe; 90
 But moost she lovith specially
 Hym that can shote bothe styffe and lowe.
 And but the deer by ovirthrowe
 The arwe was nat fyled kene,
 And to the deth she can weel blowe 95
 Whan she hath on hire hood of grene.

Hire watir lyme is maad ful weel
 Bothe for the cormeraunt and the suyte;
 The botoore that etith the greet eel
 Is cause yit he wyl his rochys byte. 100

The semewe with his fetherys whyte,
 Nor the caldmawe nouthir fat nor lene,
 Gooth nat from hire panteer quyght
 Whan she hath on hire hood of grene.

Of huntynge she beryth the greet pryse, 105
 For buk or doo, bothe hert and hynde;
 But whan she dotyth and wyl be nyse
 Maale deer to chaase and to fynde,
 That can hym feede on bark or rynde,
 And in hire park pasturyd been, 110
 That weel can beere with a tynde
 Vndir hire daggyd hood of green.

This souereyn lady moost enteer
 On hobying whan she lyst to fare,
 With hire brood serkelys hire behynde, 115
 To make the larke for to dare,
 That fro hire granys and hir snare
 Goth not away that comyth between
 The thruschylcok nor the feldfare,
 Whan she hath on hire hood of green. 120

It is deynty of this flowyr
 That is so boold vpon hire braunche,
 And wyl abyde euery schowyr;
 Whoos truste may noo stormys staunche,
 But the flood wyl ovirlaunche
 That no man may wade, it is so kene;
 It wyl not palle in hire haunche
 Whan she hath on hire hood of green.

125

Now what she beryth I wyl yow telle,
 Although I can not armys blase,
 Nor to the fulle rynges hire belle
 That is so wrymplyd as a mase.
 So longe a man may loke and gase
 To telle what shuld hire baggys been,
 Whoos fenestrall were hard to glase
 Whan she hath on hire hood of green.

130

135

Hire cote armure is duskyd reed,
 With a boordure as blak as sabyll--
 A pavys or a terget for a sperys heed,
 Wyde as a chirche that hath a gabyll.
 For whoo shall iustyn in that stabyll
 But he be shodde he is not sene.
 Litel morell were not abyll
 Whan she hath on hire hood of grene.

140

Hire cote armure though it be rente, 145
 Yit turnyd she nevir the bak;
 Though many a robe hath be shente
 On hire sarpelere and on hire sak,
 Evir moore she stood for al the wrak,
 And for shot she lyst not to fleen. 150
 A castyng dart took no tak
 Vndir hire daggyd hood of green.

Now fareweel hert and haue good dey;
 Of yow me lyst nat moore to endight,
 Colowryd lyche a rotyn eey 155
 In morwe among your pylwys whight.
 The blak crowe moote yow byght,
 Your byl clothyd thirke and onclene.
 A froward velym vpon to wryt
 Whan she hath on hire hood of grene. 160

Now fareweel fayr and fressh so cleer,
 For whom I may noo mone take;
 Thowh I se yow not of all this yeer,
 I cannot moorne for your sake
 Tyl euery foul chesyth hys make, 165
 And the nytynggale that syngeth so sheen,
 And that the cokkow me awake
 To loke vpon your hood of grene.

To saie you are not fayre I shal belye you,
And yf I praise your beautie then I floute you;
Yf I desire your loue you saie I doe but trie you;
Speake! Faire or foul, I am sure to goe without you.

Whane þes thyngis foloyng be done to owr intent,
 þan put women in truste and confydent.

When nettuls in wynter bryng forth rosys red,
And al maner of thorn trys ber fygys naturally,
And ges ber perles in euery med,
And laurell ber cherys abundantly,
And okis ber datis very plentuosly, 5
And kyskys gyfe of hony superfluens,
 þan put women in trust and confydens.

Whan box ber papur in euery lond and towne,
And thystuls ber berys in euery place,
And pykis haue naturally fethers in þer crowne, 10
And bullis of þe see syng a good bace,
And men be þe schypis fyschys do trace,
And in women be fownd no incypyens,
 þan put hem in trust and confydens.

Whan whytyngis do walke forestis to chase hertys, 15
And heryngis þer hornnys in forestis boldly blow,

1 bryng forth] bere 0 2 thorn trys] thornys 0 a thorne R 3 ges] bromes 0
 gresse R 4 laurell] lorellis 0 om. R abundantly] in the [his 0] croppis
 so hie 0 R 5] om. R very] om. 0 6 kyskys] lekis 0 of] om. 0 R
 superfluens] in [ther 0] superfluens 0 R 7 women in] in a woman your 0 R
 (thus in other stanzas except as noted) 0 15 whytyngis] whityng 0
 forestis] in forestis 0 R 16 þer] in parkys [their R] 0 R in forestis]
 om. 0 R

And marmsattis morn in moris and in lakys,
And gurnardis schot rokis owt of a crose bow,
And goslyngis hunt pe wolfe to ouerthrow,
And spratis ber sperys in armys of defens, 20
 pan put women in trust and confydens.

Whan swyn be conyng in al poyntis of musyke,
And assis be docturs of euery scyens,
And kattis do hel men be practysyng of fysyke,
And boserds to scryptur gyfe ony credens, 25
And marchans by with horne in sted of g[r]otis and pens,
And pyys be mad poetis for per eloque[n]s,
 pan put women in trust and confydens.

Whan spawyns byld chyrchys on a hyth,
And wrenys cary sekkis onto pe myll, 30
And curlaws cary tymber howsys to dyth,
And semavs ber butter to market to sell,
And wodkokis wer wodk[n]yfys cranis to kyl,
And gren fynchys to goslyngis do obedyens,
 pan put women in trust and confydens. 35

26 grotis] MS gotis 27 eloquens] MS eloques 33 wodknyfys] MS wodkyfys
 17] And flownders morehennes in fennes enbrace 0 and marlyngis moore
hennys in moores doon vnbrase R 18 rokis] rullions 0 R 19 goslyngis] gren ges 0
 20 spratis] sperlyngis 0 R ber] Rone with 0 in armys of] in
harnes to 0 and armour for R 27] as in first st. 0 R 29 on a hyth] and
stepullis [on R] hie 0 30 cary] beren R 31 tymber howsys to dyth] clothes
horsis for to drye 0 32 ber] bryng 0 31-35] defective in R 33 wodkokis] woddowes 0
cranis] theves 0 33 gren fynchys] griffons 0 35] as in first
st. 0 ...women your trust and confidence R

Whan crowbis tak samon in wodis and parkis,
And be tak with swyftis and shaylys,
And cammels in þe eyer tak swallows and larkis,
And sche-myse move movntans with wagyng of þer taylis,
And schypmen tak a ryd in sted of sayllis,
And whan wyfvys to þer husbondis do no offens,
 þan put women in trust and confydens.

40

Whan hantlopis sermovnte eglys in flyght,
And swans be swyfter þan haukis of þe tower,
And wrennys sei[s] goshaukis be fors and myght,
And musketis mak ver gese of crabbis sower,
And schyppis seyl on dry lond, sylt gyfe flower,
And apis in Westmynster gyfe iugment and sente[n]s,
 Than put women in trust and confydens.

40

45 seis] MS sei 48 sentens] MS sentes
 36-37] defective in R 36 samon] wodcokis O R 37 be tak] haris ben taken O
 swyftis and] swetnes of O <...>esse of R 38 in the eyer] with ther here O
 larkis] perchis O 39 move movtans] mowe Corn O wagyng] wafeyyng O 40]
 whan dukkis of the dunghill sek the blod of haylis O 41 And] om. O wyfvys]
 shrewed wyffis O 42] as in first st. O 46 sower] full sowre R 47 on] ouer
 R sylt] and flyntis R 48 apis] marmesettis R in] at R 49 put women in] in
 women give R

18

Herfor and therfor and therfor I came,
 And for to praysse þis prety woman.

Ther wer iij wyllly, [3] wyly þer wer:
 A fox, a fryyer, and a woman.

Ther wer 3 angry, 3 angry þ<er wer>:
 A wasp, a wesyll, and a woman.

Ther wer 3 cheteryng, iij cheteryng þer wer: 5
 A peye, a iaye, and a woman.

þer wer 3 wold be betyn, 3 wold be betyn þer wer:
 A myll, a stokefysche, and a woman.

19

Care away, away, away,
 Murnynge away;
 Y am forsake, another ys take,
 No more murne Yc may!

I am sory for her sake,
 Yc may wel ete and drynke;
 Wanne Yc sclepe Yc ma<y> not wake,
 So mucche on here Yc þenke.

I am brout in suche a bale
 And brout in such a pyne,
 Wanne Yc ryse vp of my bed
 Me liste wel to dyne.

5

I am brout in suche a pyne,
 Ybrout in suche a bale,
 Wanne Yc haue ryche god wyne
 Me liste drynke non ale.

10

Lord, how shall I me complayn
 Vnto myn own lady dere,
 For to tell her of all my payn
 That I fele this tyme of the yere?
 My love, yf þat ye will here,
 Thowgh I can no songis make,
 So your love changith my cher
 That I slepe I cannot wake.

5

Thowgh love do me so mykyll wo,
 I love you best; I make a vowe
 That my shoo byndith my litill too
 And all my smarte is for you.
 For sothe me thynkith it will me slo
 But ye sumwhat my sorow slake;
 But barefot to my bedde I goo,
 And whan I slepe I cannot wak.

10

15

Whosoeuer wyst what lyff I lede
 In myn abseruance in dyuersiteis,
 From tyme that I go to my bedde
 I ete no mete tyll that I rise.
 Ye myght tell it for a gret enprise
 That men thus morneth for your sak;

20

3 all] om. 5 will here] wyll hit here 8 That I] That when I cannot] may
 not 9 Thowgh love do me] Your lovfe dose me 12 smarte] lowf swyt hit 15
 But] That cannot] may not 18 dyuersiteis] dyueris wyse 22 men thus
 morneth] þis morn

So mykyl I thynk on your seruice
That whan I slepe I cannot wak.

In the mornyng whan I shall rise 25
Me lyst right well for to dyne,
But comonly I drynk non ale, ywis,
Yf I may get any good wyne.
To mak your hart to me enclyne
Suche tormentis to me I take; 30
Syngyng dothe me so myche pyne
That whan I slepe I cannot wak.

I may vnneth boton my slevis
So myn armes wexith more;
Vnder my hele is pat me grevis, 35
For at my hart I fele no sore.
Euery day my girdyll goth owt a bore;
I clynge as doth a wheton cake,
And for your love I sigh so sore
That whan I slepe I cannot wake. 40

My dublet ys norowar than it was
To love you first whan I began;
Hit must be wyder by my lace
In eche a stede by a spanne.
My love, sith I becam your man 45
I haue riden thorow many a lake;

24 cannot] may not 27 ywis] om. 30 tormentis] turment 32 cannot] may not
40 cannot may not 41 norowar] more 44 a stede] a ppas and stede

On myleway mornnyng I cam,
 Yet whan I slepe I cannot wak.

Thus in langowr I am lent
 Longe or you do so for me; 50
 Take good hed to myn entent,
 For this shall my conclusion be:
 Me thynkith I love as well as ye,
Neuer so quaynt thowgh ye it mak,
 By this ensample ye may se 55
 That whan I slepe I cannot wak.

21

[B]e pes! 3e make me spille my ale!
 Now thyngke 3e this ys a fayre ray?
 Let go, Y say! Straw for 3oure tale!
 Lef werke, a tventy a deuell way!
 Wen 3e that euerybody lest to play?
 Abyde awyle! What haue 3e hast?
 Y trow for all 3our gret afray
 3e will not make to huge a vaste!

5

'After asay then may 3e wette!
 Why blame 3e me withovte offence?'
 'Ywisse, wanton, 3e shull not 3ette!
 A kan 3e that? Nov gode go hens!
 What do {ye} here within ovre spence?
 Recke 3e not to make vs shende?
 Y wolde not 3ette for furty pence
 My moder cam in or that 3e wende!'

10

15

'Cum kys me!' 'Nay!' 'Be God 3e shall!'
 'Be Criste Y nelle! What see the, man?
 3e hert my l{e}gge a3enste the walle!
 Ys this the gentry that 3e can?
 Take to 3ev all and be stille than!
 Now haue 3e leyde me vn the flore,
 But hadde Y wyste when 3e bygan
 Be Criste Y wolde haue schytte the dore!'

20

1 Be] MS *Space left for decorated initial*

To my trew loue and able--
 As the wedyr-cok he is stable--
 Thys lettre to hym be delyueryd.

[V]nto you, most froward, þis lettre I write,
 Whych hath causyd me so longe in dyspayre;
 The goodlynesse of your persone is esye to endyte,
 For he leuyth nat þat can youre persone appayr--
 So comly, best shapyn, of feture most fayr--
 Most fresch of contenaunce, euyne as an oule
 Ys best and most fauoryd of ony odyr foule.

5

Youre manly visage shortly to declare:
 Youre forehed, mouth, and nose so flatte,
 In short conclusyon, best lykened to an hare
 Of alle lyvyng thyngis, saue only a catte.
 More wold I sey yf I wyst what!
 That swete vysage ful ofte is beshrewyd
 Whan I remembrere of som baud so lewd.

10

The proporcion of your body comende wele me aught
 Fro the shuldre down behynde and beforne;
 Yf alle the peyntours in a land togedyr were soght

15

1 Vnto] MS *space left for decorated initial*

A worse coude þey nat portrey, þogh alle þey had it sworn.

Kepe wele your pacience, þogh I sende you a skorne;

Your garmentis vpon you ful gayly they hynge 20

As it were an olde gose had a broke wynges;

Your thyghes mysgrowen, youre shankys mych worse;

Whoso beholde youre knees so crokyd,

As ych of hem bad odyr Crystis curse

So go they outward; your hammys ben hokyd-- 25

Such a peyre chaumbys I neuer on lokyd!

So vngoodly youre helys ye lyfte,

And youre feet ben crokyd with euyl thryfte.

Who myght haue the loue of so swete a wyght,

She myght be ryght glad þat euer was she born; 30

She that onys wold, in a derk nyght,

Renne for your loue tyl she had caught a thorn--

I wolde hyr no more harme but hangyd on the morn

That hath ij good eyen and ichese here suche a make,

Or onys wold lyft vp here hole for youre sake! 35

Youre swete loue, wyth bloody naylys,

Whyche fedyth mo lyce than quaylys.

[T]o you, dere herte, variant and mutable,
Lyke to Cary[b]dis whych is vnstable--

O fresch floure, most plesant of pryse,
Fragrant as fedyrfoy to mannys inspeccion,
Me semyth by youre contenance ye be wondyr nyce
You for to medyl with any retorucion;
To me ye haue sent a lettre of derusion 5
Endyghted ful freshly with many coryous iclause,
Werfore I thanke you, as I fynde cause.

The Ynglysch of Chaucere was nat in youre mynd,
Ne Tullyus termys, wyth so gret elloquence;
But ye as vncurtes and crabbed of kynde 10
Rolled hem on a hepe, it semyth by the sentens;
And so dare I boldly, withoute ony offence,
Answere to your lettre as fallyth to the purpose;
And thus I begynne construe ye the glose.

Cryst of hys goodnesse and of hys gret myght 15
Formyd many a cryator to walke on the ground;
But he that beholdyth you by day and by nyght
Shal neuer haue cause in hert to be iocound,

i To] MS *space left for decorated initial* ii Carybdis] MS Caryldis 16
cryator MS tryatour

Rememberyng your grete hede and your forhed round,
 Wyth staryng eyen, visage large and huge, 20
 And eyper of youre pappys like a water bowge.

Youre camusyd nose with nose-thryllys brode--
 Vnto the chyrch a noble instrument
 To quenche tapers brennyng afore the roode--
 Ys best apropred, at myn avysament; 25
Your leud lokyng, doble of entent,
 Wyth courtly {loke} al of saferon hew
 That neuer wol fayle, þe colour is so trew;

Your babyrlyppys, of colour ded and wan,
 Wyth suche mouth lyke to Iacobys broper, 30
 And yelow tethe, not lyk to the swan,
 Set wyde asondyr as yche cursed oper--
 In al a lond who cowde fynde suche anoper
 Of alle feturys so ungoodly for to se,
With brethe as swete as ys the elder tre. 35

Youre body ys formyd al in proporcion,
With hangyng shuldres wauyng with euery wynde,
 Smal in the bely as a wyn tonne,
 Wyth froward fete and crokyd bak behynde;
 He that you wold haue alway in mynde, 40
 And for your loue wolde breke on oure reste,
 I wold he were locched with Lucifer the depeste!

And of youre atyre shortly to devyse--

Your templers colured as þe lowcraꝝ,

With dagged hood leyd on pancake-wyse, 45

Your bolwerkys, pectorellys, and al your nyce aray--

Treuly me semyth ye ar a {louely} may!

And namely on halyday whan ye tryp and daunce

As a wylde goos kepyng your contenaunce.

Adew, dere herte, for now I make an ende 50

Vnto suche tyme that I haue better space;

The pyp and þe pose to you I recvmend,

And God of hys mercy graunte you so mykyl grace

In peradyse onys to haue a restyng place

Vp by the nauel, fast by the water gate, 55

To loke after passage whan it cometh late.

Youre owne loue, trusty and trewe,

You haue forsake cause of a newe.

War yt, war yt, war yt wele,
 Wommen be as trew as stele.

Stel is gud, I sey no odur,
 So mown women be Kaymys brodur;
 Ylk on lere schrewenes at odur;
 Wommen be as trew as stele.

Stel is gud in euery knyfe, 5
 So kun þo women both flyt and stryfe;
 Also þei cun ful wele lye;
 Women] [be as trew as stele].

Stele is gud in euery nedyll,
 So be þes women both fales and fekyll, 10
And of þer <ars evy>n ryght brytyll;
 [Women be as trew as stele].

Stele is both fayr and bryght,
 So be þes women by candylllyght;
And som wyll both flyn and fyght; 15
 [Women be as trew as stele].

Stel is gud in lond and wattyр,
 So cun þo wommen both dem and flatyr,
And yyt for ned to play þe faytur;
 [Women be as trew as stele]. 20

8 be as trew as stele] MS vt supra 12] MS om. 16] MS om. 20] MS om.

O mosy quince hangyng by youre stalke,
 The whyche no man dar pluk away ner take
 Of all the folk that passe forby or walke,
 Youre flowres fresshe be fallyn away and shake.

I am ryght sory, masteras, for your sake! 5

Ye seme a thyng that all men haue forgotyn;
 Ye be so rype ye wex almost rotyn.

Wyne, women, worshyp, vnweldy age
 Make men to fonne for lak in theyre resons.

Elde causeth dulnesse and dotage, 10

And worshyp chaunge of condicions;
 Excesse of wyne blyndeth theyre dyscrecions,
 And all bookis that poetis made and radde
 Seyen women most make men madde.

Youre vgly chere deynous and froward; 15

Youre grene eyen frownyng and nat glad;
 Yowre chekis enbonyd lyke a melow costard;
 Colour of orange your brestys satournad
 (Gylt opon warantyse the colour wyll nat fade);

Bawsyn-buttockyd, belyed lyke a tonne; 20

Men cry 'Seynt Barbara!' at lowsyng of your gone.

My louely lewde masterasse, take consideracion--

I am so sorowfull there as ye be absent;

The flowre of the barkfate, þe fowlst of all the nacion;

To loue yow but a lytyll hit [is] myne entent.

25

The swert hath yswent yow, the smoke hath yow shent;

I trowe ye haue be layde opon som kylne to dry.

Ye do me so moche worshyp there as ye be present;

Of all wemen I loue yow best-- a thowsand tymes fy!

Welcome be 3e when 3e goo,
 And farewel when 3e come!
 [So faire as 3e] per be noo mo,
 As brith as bery brovne.

I love 3ow verryly at my too
 Nonne so moch yn al þis toune;
 I am right glad when 3e wil goo
 And sory when 3e wil come.

5

And whan 3e be ovth fare
 I pray for yow, sertayn,
 þat neuer man, horsse, ne mare
 Brynge yow to town ageyn.

10

To praye youre bewte I ne dare
 For drede that men wille seyn;
 Farewelle! No more for you I care,
 But pray yow of my songe have no desdeyn.

15

3 So faire as 3e] MS om., but given in repeat of refrain

Lord þat lenest vs lyf ant lokest vch an lede,
 For te cocke wip knyf nast þou none nede!
 Boþe wepmon ant wyf sore mo we drede,
 Lest þou be sturne wip strif for bone þat þou bede
 In wunne, 5
 þat monkune
 Shulde shilde hem from sunne.

Nou haþ prude þe pris in euervche plawe;
 By mony wymmon vnwis Y sugge mi sawe,
 For 3ef a ledy lyue is leid after lawe 10
 Vch a strumpet þat þer is such drahtes w[i]l drawe.
 In prude
 Vch a screwe wol hire shrude,
 þah he nalbe nout a smoke hire foule ers to hude.

Furmest in boure were boses ybroht; 15
 Leuedis to honoure ichot he were wroht.
 Vch gigelot wol loure bote he hem hadde soht;
 Such shrewe fol soure ant duere hit haþ aboht.
 In helle
 With deueles he shule duelle, 20
 For þe clogges þat cleueþ by here chelle.

Nou ne lackeþ hem no lyn boses in to beren;
 He sitteþ ase a slat swyn þat hongep is eren.
 Such a ioustynde gyn vch wrecche wol weren;

Al hit comeþ in declyn, þis gigelotes geren.

25

Vp olofte

þe deuel may sitte softe,

Ant holden his halymotes ofte.

3ef þer lyp a loket by er ouper e3e,

þat mot wip worse be wet for lac of oper le3e.

30

þe bout ant þe barbet wyþ frountel shule fe3e;

Halbe he a fance filet he halt hire hed he3e,

To shewe

þat heo be kud ant knewe

For strompet in rybandes rewe.

35

þou þat werred þe crowne of thornes
 Fell do^vne þe pryde of wommens hornes,
 And suffre hem [no] lenger with longe tayles,
 Ne none oþer vicyous entayles
 Of noþer of males ne femayles, 5
 Ne hodes ne tyres lyche carrake-sayle[s],
 Lord, for þy peyneful passyoun,
 To save oure soule frome dampnacioun!

Man, be war of þin wowyng,
For weddyng is þe longe wo!

Loke er þin herte be set;
Lok þou wowe er þou be knet;
And if þou se þou mow do bet,
Knet vp þe heltre and let here goo.

Wyuys be boþe stowte and bolde; 5
Her husbondis aþens hem durn not holde,
And if he do his herte is colde,
How so euere þe game go.

Wedowis be wol fals, iwys,
For [þei] cuþ boþe halse and kys 10
Til onys purs pikyd is,
And þey seyn 'Go boy, goo!'

Of madenys I wil seyn but lytil,
For þey be boþe fals and fekyl,
And vnder þe tayl þey ben ful tekyl. 15
A twenty deuel name, let hem goo!

As I cowth walke because of recreacion,

[Be a grene wode syde as I kan],

I herde a meruolse comynycac[i]on

Betwene a clerke and a husbandeman.

To talke of loue þis clerke begane,

5

[And sade 'Wethur þou wylte or non,

I moste nede blame me noo man]

Quia amore languio.'

The husbandeman to hym can say,

Wenyng to corekt hys insolens,

10

'Falsehode in felychype wole the betray

3ofe þou to wome[n] gyf credens.

Therefore res[t]rane þe fro þair presens,

And yf þou wylte couer þiselfe fro woe,

Truly I know no bettur defense

15

Bot turne vp hyr haltur and let hyr goe.'

'How schulde I do so then?' sayd þe clerke,

'Thay wolde me lose with all þair mayn.

Syth I fynde no faute yn worde nor werke

Withowte a cause I may not compla[yn]e.

20

I moste nede loue þat louyth agayn;

I wer not kynde bot I dyde soo.

To turn my herte þou [l]abste in vane,

Quia amore languio.'

2] MS As I kan be a grede wode syde 3 comynycacion] MS comynycacon 6, 7]
MS *interposed* 12 women] MS wome 13 restrane] MS resrane 20 complayne] MS
complante 23 gabste] MS labste

'Set auyse þe bettur and do be counsell, 25
 And do no lengur in women tryste;
 Thow wenis þat þai be in þe gospell,
 Hyt ys nat all tru þat peryth in glasse.
 Women can schaw a dowbull face,
 And qwer thay say lyttyl þai thynke moe; 30
 As sone as þou maste reseue þi place--
 Turn vpe hyr haltur and let hyr goo!'

'Perauentur', sayd þe clerke, 'a mys-fenyng fabull,
 A womanse godenes soo to defame.
 Thou fondyst neuer woman variabull; 35
 Tham to depreue þou arte to blame.
 Thynke on þi modur and avoyd schame
 Bycause of hyr loue and othur moe;
 For qwyll I lyf I wyll do þe same,
Quia amore languio.' 40

That husbandeman sayd 'Womon ys wariat;
 By daly e[x]periens hyt may be preuyt.
 For be a womanse false delysyn
 Mony a god man hase byn myscheuyt.
 3yf I say trouth be not dysgreuyt, 45
 And take thys for a conclisin þerto:
 Thy louely louyng schall neuer be releuyt
 Bot þou turn vpe hyr haltur and let hyr goe.'

The clerke vnward and sayd, 'In bokys I fynde

That Gode made woman for mannys relefe;

50

Then shoe ys turnd all agaynys kynde,

3ef schoe be cause of mannys myschefe.

Therfor reherse no sych myspreue;

For wethur þou tell me trouth or noe,

Thou scalte nat make me mysebeleue,

55

Quia amore languio.'

A lettre sende by on yonge woman to anodur, whiche aforetyme were felowes togeder.

My loving frende, amorous Bune,

I cum ambelyng to you by the same tokyn

That you and I haue be togeder

And settyn by the fire in colde wether,

And wyth vs noo moo but our Gullett

5

Wyth all the knakis in hur buggett;

Hur trumpett and hur merye songe

Nowe for to here, I thinke itt longe.

Come amble me to hur, I you praye,

And to Agnes Irpe as bright as daye.

10

I wolde you were here to lokke our gatis,

Butt alas itt ys to farre to the iakis.

Farewell faire Agnes Blackamoure;

I wolde I hadde you here in stoore,

For you wolde come with all your harte;

15

Farewell, farewell, my ladye darke!

Commande me to Wyllium, I you desyre,

And praye hym to wyshe vs some of his fyre,

For we haue nonu butt a coole or a stykke,

And soo we dryve awaye the weke.

20

And commande me also [to] the roughe Hollye

That turnethe itt ofte into Godis bodye;

And to all your odur felowes besyde

21 to] MS I

As well as I hadde ther names discryed;
And praye Iohn Cossall to be goode and kynde, 25
 For the nexte yere he wyl be blynde;
And bydde Humffrey doo hym noo shrowed turne,
 {For then Sir Iohn muste hym worune};

And commande me to Thomson, that talle man,
 Whiche shulde haue a lather to pisse in a can; 30
And also to Nicholas with the blake berde,
 On whome to loke itt makis me afferde.
 My uncle³ and my aunte be merye and glade,
And thankis be to God, I am nott sadde,
And Christoffer, your frende, ys off goode cheere 35
And many tymes he wissheth hym ther.

Faire tokens I wolde haue sende,
 Butt I lakked money for to spende.
 And thys fare you well the goode Newe Yere;
 I pray you be merye and off good cheere, 40
And for the love of swete Seynt Denyes,
 Att thys my letter thinke noo vnkyndnes,
 For to make you all merye I doo ryme
 And nowe to leave I thinke itt tyme.

Att nyne off the clokke thys was wrytten; 45
 I wolde you were all beshetyn!

Of life and deth nowe chuse the;
There is the woman, here is the galowe tree.
Of booth choyce harde is the parte;
The woman is the warsse, drive forthe the carte.

Nova, noua, saw yow euer such?

The most mayster of þe hows weryth no brych!

Dayly in Englond meruels be fownd,

And among maryd peple haue such radicacyon

Qwyth to þe vttermost exp[re]sse may no thong,

Ne pene cane scribull þe totall declaracyon;

For women vpon þem tak such domynacyon,

5

And vpon þemself þei tak so mych,

þat it causyth þe mayster to abuse a brych.

Syns þat Eve was procreat owt of Adams syde

Cowd not such newels in þis lond be vnetyd;

þe masculyn sex with ryghtnesse and prid

10

With þer femals þat altercatt, þerself beyng schentyd,

And of þer owne self þe corag is abatyd;

Wherfor it is not acordyng to syth to mych

Lest þe most mayster may wer no brych.

Yt is sene dayly both in borows and townys,

15

Wheras þe copule han mad oburgacyon,

þe gowd wyff ful hummaly to hyr spowse gaue gownys,

Wyth [þ]yng is oryginat of so greet presumpcyon,

þat often tymys þe goodman is fal in a consumpcyon;

Wherfor, as I seyde, suffer not to mych

20

Lest þe most mayster wereth no brych.

18 þyng] MS yng

Nat only in Englonde but of euery nacion
 þe femynyng wyl presume men forto gyd,
 3et God at þe tym of Adam's creacyon
 Gaue man superiorite of þem in euery tyd. 25
 But now-a-deys women is fyxyd such pryde,
And vpon þemself wyl tak so mych
 þat it constreynyth þe most mayster to wer no brych.

But mayny women be ryght dylygent
And so demver þer husbondis aforne, 30
 For of cryme or falt þei be innocent,
 Butt falser þan þei be wer neuer borne.
 For wantenly þer husbondis þei wyl so dorne
 þat owther þei wyl mak hym nothyng rych,
 Or ellys þe most mayster to wer no brych. 35

An adamant stone it is not frangebyll
With nothyng but with mylke of a gett;
 So a woman to refrayne it is not posybyll
With wordis except with a staffe þou hyr stret<t>.
 For he þat for a fawt hys wyff wyl not bett, 40
 Where sche offendyt hym very mych,
 þe gyder of hys hows must nedis wer no brych.

A scald hed maye be coueryd and not sene,
And many thyngis mo may be sonne hyddyn;
 But þe hod of a... syr, 3e wott what I mene, 45
 Wych with too hornys infeckyde was and smyttyn.

By surgery to be helyd it is forbyddyn,
 For þei haue such an yssue abow þe cheke
 þat it constreynyth þe most master to wer no bryke.

Wherfor þe maryd men þat with wyvys be acommoryd, 50
 Dysplease nott yowr wyuys whom þat 3e haue,
 For whan þei be angry or sumwhatt dysplesyd
 þei wyl gyffe a man a mark þat he xal ber it to hys grafe!
 Whobeit þe husbondis honeste to saue,
 Clokydly withowt þei obey very mych, 55
And inwerdly þe most mayster wer no brych.

Was not Adam, Hercules, and mythy Sampson,
 Dauyd þe kyng, with oper many mo,
 Arystotyll, Vergyll by a womans cauylacion
 Browt to iniquyte and to mych woo? 60
 Wherfor, 3e maryd men, ordur 3e soo
 þat with 3owr wyfvys 3ow stryfe not to mych,
 Lest þe most mayster wer no brych!

34

If thou art young then marry not, ekit;
If thou art old thou hast more rite,
For young men's wives <will not be taught>,
And olde men's wives be good for naught.

Leve lystynes to me,
 Two wordys or thre,
 And herkenes to my songe,
 And I schall tell 3ow a tale
 How x wyffys satt at þe nale, 5
 And no man hem amonge.

'Sen we haue no other songe,
 Talys lett vs tell
 Off owre hosbondes ware,
 Wych of hem moste worthy ere 10
 To day to bere the bell,
 And I schall nowe begyn att myne.
 I knowe the mett well and fyne,
 The len3te of a snayle;
 And euer he warse is from day to day. 15
 To grete God euer I pray
 To gyve hym evyle hayle!'

The secund wyffe set her nere,
 And seyde 'By the rode, I haue a ware
 That is two so mene; 20
 I mett hym in þe morowe tyde
 When he was in his moste pryde,
 The len3te of iij bene.
 Hawe schuld I be spered with þat?
 I wold Gybbe owre catt 25

Were cord thereon!

By Sayn Peter owte of Rome,

I se neuer a wars lome

Stondyng opon mone.'

The iij wyffe was full woo, 30

And seyð þat 'I haue one of thoo

That no3te is at nede.

Owre syre breche, when hit is torn,

His pencyll pepyth owte before

Lyke a war brede. 35

Hit growethe all within þe here;

Eychon se I neuer ere;

Stondyng opon schare.

3ett the schrewe is hodles

And of all thyng goodles; 40

There; Cryste gyve hym care!'

The iiij wyffe of the floke

Seyd 'Owre syre syde coke.

Fayn wold I skyfte!

He is longe and he is smalle, 45

And 3ett hath þe sydefalle.

God gyve hym sory thryfte!

The leste fyngere; on my honde

Is more; þan he whan he dothe stond.

Alasse, þat I am born! 50

Sory mowtyng com there; on;

He schold a be a womon
Had he be eere born.'

The v wyffe was full fayn
When sche hard her felawys playn, 55
And vp sche gon stond.

'Now 3e speke of a tarse,
In all þe world is not a warse
þan hathe my hosbond.

Owre syre bradys lyke a dere; 60
He pysses his tarse euery 3ere
Ry3te as doth a boke.

When men speke of archery
He mot stond faste there by
Or ellys hys schote well troke.' 65

The vj wyffe hy3te sare;
Sche seyð 'My hosbondys ware
Is of good asyse.

He is whyte as ony mylke,
He is softe as ony sylke, 70
Iett sertus he may not ryse.

I lycke hym vp with my hond
And pray hym þat he woll stond,
And 3ett he lythe styll.

When I se þat all is no3te 75
I thynke mony a thro tho3te,
Bot Cryste wote my wyll!'

The vij wyffe sat on the bynch,
 And sche cast her legge on wrynch,
 And bad 'Fyll the wyne! 80

By Seynt Iame of Galys,
 In England ne in Walys
 Is not a wars þan myne.
 When owre syre comys in
 And lokes after þat sory pyne 85
 þat schyld hengge bytween his leggis,
 He is lyke, by the rode,
 A sory laueroke satt on brode
 Opon two adyll eggis.'

The viij wyffe was well ita3te, 90
 And seyde 'Seldom am I sa3te,
 And so I well may.

When the froste fresys,
 Owre syris tarse lesys
 And all way gose a way. 95

When the 3eke gynnys to synge,
 Then the schrewe begynnys to sprynge
 Lyke a humbulbe.

He cowres vp on othere two;
 I know not the warse of tho. 100
 I schrew hem all thre.'

The ix wyffe sett hem nyre,
 And held a mett vp on hyre,
 The len3te of a fote.

'Herere is a pyncell of a fayrere len3te, 105

But he berys a sory stren3te;

God may do boote!

I bow hym, I bend hym,

I stroke hym, I wend hym;

The deuell mot hym sterve! 110

Be he hote, be he cold,

Tho I torn hym two fold

3ett he may not serue.'

The x wyffe began her tale,

And seyde 'I haue on of the smale, 115

<W>as wydowed away.

Off all no3tes it is no3te,

Sertis and hit schuld be bo3te,

He is not worth a nay!'

Know or thow knytte;

Prove or thow preyse yt.

3yf þou know or þou knyht,

þan mayst þou abate;

And 3yf þou knyht er þou knowe,

5

Than yt ys to late.

Therefore avyse þe er þou þe knot knytte,

For had-y-wyst commeth to late for to lowse yt.

Of all creaturs women be best--

Cuius contrarium verum est.

In euery place ye may well se

pat women be trew as tirtyll on tre,

Not liberall in langag but euer in secrece,

And gret ioy among them is fore to be.

The stedfastnesse of women wil neuer be don, 5

So gentyll, so curtes pei be euerich on;

Mek as a lambe, styll as a stone;

Crockyd ne crabbyd fynd ye none.

Men be more combres a thowsandfold,

And I mervill who pei dare be so bold 10

Ageynst women fore to hold,

Seing them so patient, soft, and cold.

Fore tell a woman all yowr counsayle,

And she cane kepe it wonder weyle;

She had leuer go qwyck to hell 15

pan to hire neyborys she wold it tell.

Fore by women men be reconsyled;

Fore by women was neuer man begiled;

16 neyborys] neyghbowr B

Fore by women was neuer man betraied;
 Fore by women was neuer man bewreyed. 20

Now sey well by women or ellis be styl,

Fore they neuer displeasid man by per will;

To be angry ore wroth pei cannot skyl

Fore I dare sey they thynk no ill.

Trow ye pat they lyst to smatter, 25

Ore ageynst per husbondis to clatter?

Nay, pei had leuer fast bred and water

Then fore to presse in such a matter!

Thowe all pe pacience in pe world wer drownd

And nonne were left here on the grownd, 30

Ageyn in women it myght be fownd,

Such vertu in them doth abownd.

To the taverne pei will nat goo,

Nore to pe alehowse neuer pe moo;

Fore God wott per hartis shulbe woo 35

To spend per husbondis money soo!

If here were a woman ore a mayd

pat list forto go freshly arayd,

Ore with fyne kerchefis to go displaid,

Ye wold saie pei be provd; it is evil said. 40

19-20] For they be of pe condicion of curtes gryzell/For they be so meke 7
 mylde B 23 cannot] can no B 25 they] women B 28 presse] dele B

38A

In erth it es a litill thing,
 And regnes als a riche king
 Whare he es lent in land.

Sir Peni es his name calde;

He makes both 3ong and alde

5

Bow vntill his hand.

Papes, kinges, and emp[er]oures;

Bisschoppes, abbottes, and priowres;

Person, prest, and knyght;

Dukes, erles, and ilk barowne;

10

To serue him er þai ful boune

Both bi day and nyght.

Sir {Peni} chaunges mans mode,

And gers þam o[f]t do doun þaire hode

And to rise him ogayne.

15

Men honors him with grete reuerence,

Makes ful mekill obedience

Vnto þat litill swaine.

In kinges court es it no bote

Ogaines Sir Peni forto mote,

20

So mekill es he of myght.

7 emperoures] MS empoures oft] MS ot

He es so witty and so strang
 þat be it neuer so mekill wrang
 He will mak it right.

With Peny may men wemen till 25
 Be þai neuer so strange of will,
 So oft may it be sene.
 Lang with him will þai noght chide,
 For he may ger þam trayl syde
 In gude skarlet and grene. 30

He may by both heuyn and hell,
 And ilka thing þat es to sell.
 In erth has he swilk grace
 He may lese and he may bind;
 Þe pouer er, ay, put bihind 35
 Whare he cumes in place.

When he bigines him to mell,
 He makes [waik] þat arewas fell,
 And [meke] þat bald has bene.
 All þe nedes ful sone er sped, 40
 Bath withowten borgh and wed,
 Whare Peni gase bitwene.

Þe domesmen he mase so blind
 þat he may noght þe right find,

38, 39 waik, meke] MS *trans.*

Ne þe suth to se. 45

Forto gif dome þam es ful lath
 þarwith to mak Sir Peni wrath;
 Ful dere with þam es he.

þare strif was þem makes pese;
 Of all angers he may relese 50
 In land whare he will lende.
 Of fase may he mak frendes sad;
 Of counsail thar þam neuer be rad
 þat may haue him to frende.

þat sire es set on high dese, 55
 And serued with mani riche mese
 At þe high burde.

þe more he es to men plente,
 þe more 3ernid alway es he,
 And halden dere in horde. 60

He makes mani be forsworne,
 And sum life and saul forlorne
 Him to get and wyn.

Oþer god will þai none haue
 Bot þat litil round knaue 65
 þaire bales forto blin.

On him halely þaire hert es sett;
 Him forto luf will þai noght let

Nowþer for gude ne ill.

All þat he will in erth haue done,

70

Ilka man grantes it ful sone

Right at his awin will.

He may both lene and gyf;

He may ger both sla and lif,

Both by frith and fell.

75

Peni es a gude felaw;

Men welcums him in dede and saw

Cum he neuer so oft.

He es nocht welkumd als a gest,

But euermore serued with þe best

80

And made at sit ful soft.

Who so es sted in any nede,

With Sir Peni may þai spede,

Howsoeuer bytide;

He þat Sir Peni es withall

85

Sal haue his will in stede and stall

When oþer er set byside.

Sir Peny gers in riche wede;

Ful mani go and ride on stede

In þis werldes wide;

90

In ilka gamin and ilka play

þe maystri es gifen, ay,

To Peny for his pride.

Sir Peny ouer al gettes þe gre
 Both in burgh and in cete, 95
 In castell and in towre;
 Withowten owper spere or schelde
 Es he þe best in frith or felde,
 And stalworthest in stowre.

In ilka place þe suth is sene-- 100
 Sir Peni es ouer al bidene
 Maister most in mode.
 And all es als he will cumand;
 Ogains his steuyn dar no man stand,
 Nowper by land ne flode. 105

Sir Peny mai ful mekill availe
 To þam þat has nede of cownsail,
 Als sene es in assise.
 He lenkithes life and saues fro ded,
 Bot luf it noght ouerwele, I rede, 110
 For sin of couaityse.

If þou haue happ tresore to win,
 Delite þe noght to mekill þarin,
 Ne nything þareof be;
 Bot spend it als wele als þou can, 115
 So þat þou luf both God and man
 In perfite charite.

God grante vs grace with hert and will
þe gudes þat he has gifen vs till
Wele and wisely to spend;
And so oure liues here forto lede
þat we may haue his blis to mede
Euer withowten end.

120

In erth there ys a lityll thyng
 That reynes as a grete kyng
 There he is knowen in londe.
 Peny is hys name callydde,
 Ffor he makyth both yong and olde
 To bowe onto hys hande.

5

Pope, kyng, and emperoure,
 Byschope, abbot, and prioure,
 Person, preste, and kny3t,
 Duke, erle, and baron,
 To serue Syr Peny are they bovn
 Both be day and ny3th.

10

Peny chaungis ofte mennys mode
 And gerris them do of ther hode,
 And ryse hym ageyn;
 Men doth hym all obedyens
 And full grete reuerens,
 That lytyll rovnde swayn.

15

In a courte hit is no bote
 Ageyn Syr Peny for to mote,
 For hys mekyll my3th;

20

He is so wyse and so strange,
 Were hit neuer so mekyl wrang,
 He wyll make hit ry3th.

With Peny men may women tyll 25
 Be they neuer so strang of wyll,
 So ofte hyt may be sene;
 Ageyn hym they wyll not chyde,
 Ffor he may gar them trayle syde
 In buaret and in grene. 30

When Peny begynnys to spelle
 He makyth them meke þat arewe[s] fell,
 Full ofte hit is isene;
 The nedis are full sone spedde
 Both without borow or wedde, 35
 There Peny goeth betwene.

Peny may be both heuyn and helle
 And all thyng þat is to selle,
 In erth hath he þat grace;
 Ffor he may both lose and bynde, 40
 The pors is ay set behynde
 þere Peny comes in place.

Peny is set on hye dese
 And seruid at the best messe
 32 arewes] MS are were

A<tt>e the hygh borde. 45

Men honoure hym as a man

Yff he litell gode can,

Hyt he is in horde.

Peny doth 3yt well mare--

He makyth men have moch care 50

Hym to gete and wyne.

He garrith men be forsworen,

Souls and lyfe be forlorn

Ffor covetyse of syn.

The dede that Peny wyll have done, 55

Without let hyt spedys sone

At hys owen wyll.

Peny may both re<v>e and gyffe;

He may gar sle, he may gar lyfe,

Both gode and yll. 60

Be he neuyr so strang a thefe,

Peny that is man full lefe,

pay borowe hym to lyve;

Peny is a gode felowe

Bo<t>h with hygh and with lowe, 65

And coometh for to gyffe.

He is a redy massyngere

When he come far or nere

An erande for to do;

Come he erly or late, 70
 Hym is warned noper dore ne 3ate
 That he comes onto.

Other thyng wyll they not have
 But that lityll rovnde knave
 That condyteth ech man. 75

Peny hath do all treson
 Both is cite and in tovn,
 In castell and in toure;
 When Peny comyth with schylde and spere
 He wynnys the gre in ylke a were, 80
 And in ylke a boure.

With reson may ye well se
 That Peny wyll mayst[er] be,
 Prove nowe man of mode.
 Peny rydys crowne be crowne 85
 Ouyr all in ylke a tovn,
 On land and eke on flode.

He makyth the fals to be sovnde
And ryght puttys he to the grownde,
And fals lawys ryse;
This may 3e fynde yf ye wyll loke
Wretyn all without the boke,
Ryght on this wyse.

Go bet, Peny, go bet, go,
 For þou mat makyn bope frynd and fo.

Peny is an hardy kny3t,
 Peny is mekyl of my3t,
 Peny of wrong he makyt ry3t
 In euery cuntre qwer he goo.

þow I haue a man islawe, 5
And forfetyd þe kyngis lawe,
 I xal fyndyn a man of lawe
 Wyl takyn myn peny and let me goo.

And if I haue to don fer or ner,
And Peny be myn massanger, 10
 þen am I non þing in dwer;
 My cause xal be wol idoo.

And if I haue pens bope good and fyn,
 Men wyl byddyn me to þe wyn;
 'þat I haue xal be þi[n],'
 Sekyrly þei wil seyn so. 15

15 þin] MS þi

And qen I haue non in myn purs,
Peny bet ne peny wers,
Of me þei holdyn but lytil fors--
'He was a man, let hym goo!'

40

Syng we alle and sey we þus,
 'Gramersy myn owyn purs.'

Qan I haue in myn purs inow,
 I may haue boþe hors and plow,
And also fryndis inow,
 þrow þe virtu of myn purs.

Qan my purs gynny3t to slak, 5
And þer is nowt in my pak,
 þey wil seyn 'Go, farwil Iak,
 þou xalt non more drynke with vs!'

þus is al myn good ilorn,
And myn purs al totorn; 10
 I may pleþ me with an horn
 In þe stede al of myn purs.

Farwil hors, and farwil cow,
 Farwil carte, and farwil plow;
 As I pleyid me with a bow 15
 I seyð 'God! Qat is al þis?'

Money, money, now hay goode day!

Money, where haste thow be?

Money, money, thow goste away

And wylt not byde wyth me!

Aboue all th[y]ng thow arte a kyng,

And rulyst the world ouer all;

Who lakythe the, all ioy, parde,

Wyll sone they frome hym shall.

In euery p[la]ce thow makyste solas,

5

Gret ioye, sporte, and velfare;

When money ys gone comforte ys none,

But thought, sorowe, and care.

In kyngis corte wher money dothe route,

Yt makyth the galandes to iett,

10

And for to were gorgeouse ther gere,

Ther cappes awry to sett.

In th[e] heyweyes ther ioly palfreys

Yt makyght to lepe and praunce;

It maket iustynges, pleys, dysguysynges,

15

Ladys to synge and daunce.

1 thyng] MS thng **5 place]** MS palce **13 the]** MS they
Repetition of the burden is indicated in the manuscript by 'money.'
following stanzas 1-9, 11 and 12; and 'money &c.' following stanzas 10 and
13-20.

For he that alway want{yt}h money
 Stondyth a mated chere,
 Can neuer wel syng, lang daunce nor sprynge,
 Nor make no lusty chere. 20

At cardes and dyce yt bereth the pryce
 At kyng and emperoure;
 At tables, tennes, and al othere games
 Money hathe euer the floure.

Wythe squyer [and] knyght and euery wygh[t]e 25
 Money maketh men fayne,
 And causeth many in sume compeney
 The[r] felowes to dysdayne.

In marchandys who can deuyse
 So good a ware, I say? 30
 At al tymys the best ware ys
Euer redy money.

Money to i[n]cresse marchandys neuer to cease
 Wyth many a sotell wyle;
Men say the[y] wolde for syluer and golde 35
 Ther owne faders begyle.

Women I trowe loue money also
 To by them ioly gere,

25 and] MS and & **wyghte]** MS wyghe 28 ther] MS they 33 incresse] MS
 icresse 35 they] MS the

For that helpythe and oft causethe
Women to loke full fayre. 40

In Westmynster Hall the criers call,
The sergeauntes plede apace;
Attorneys appere, now here, now ther,
Renning in euery place.

Whatesoeue[r] he be and yf that he 45
Whante money to plede the lawe,
Do whate he cane in ys mater than
Shale not proue not worthe a strawe.

I know yt not but well I wotte
I haue {harde} oftyntymys tell, 50
Prestes vse thys guyse ther benefyce
For mayeny to bey and sell.

Craftysmen that be in euery cyte,
They worke and neuer blynne;
Sum cutte, some shaue, some knoke, sum graue 55
Only money to wyne.

The plowman hymselfe dothe dyge and delue
In storme, snowe, frost, and rayne
Money to get with laboure and swete,
Yet small geynes and mucche peyne. 60

45 whatesoeuer] MS whate so euery

And sume for money lye by the wey
 Another mannes purse {t}[o] gett,
 But they that long vse yt amonge
 Ben hangyd by the neke.

The beggers eke in euery strete 65
 Ly walowyng by the wey;
 They begge, the[y] crye of the[m] cume by,
 And all ys but for money.

In euery coste men loue yt moste,
 In Ynglonde, Spayne, and France; 70
 For euery man lackyng yt than
 Is clene owte of cou{n}tenaunce.

Of whate degre so euer he be
 Or werteouse conyng he haue,
 And wante mone[y] yet men wyl sey 75
 That he ys but a knaue.

Where indede, so God me spede,
 Sey all men whate they cane,
 Yt ys allwayes sene nowadays
 That money makythe the man! 80

42

Now go, gyle, gyle, gyle,

Now go, gyle, gyle, go.

Gyle and gold togedere arn met,

Coueytise be hym is set;

Now ha3t gyle leyd his net

To gyle bope frynd and fo.

per is non will an wor3t aschelle

5

But he cum plete with wryt or bylle

His neybowris for to spylle,

And opere men to werkyn wo.

Coweytise in herte is lent,

Ry3t and reson away is went;

10

Man be war þou be not schent,

Gyle wil þi herte slo.

Now ha3t gyle got hym gre

Bope in town and in cete;

Gyle gob with gret mene

15

With men of lawe and opere mo.

Trewpe, heuene mot he wyne,

Gyle xal in helle brenne;

He þat made al man kynde

Amend hem þat mys han do!

20

He þat owith mych and hath nowght,
And spendith mych and gettith nowght,
And lokith in his purse and fyndith nowght,
 He may be right sory and say nowght.

He þat sweryth till no man trist hym, 5
And lyeth till no man beleve hym,
And boroith till no man will lend hym,
 He may go þer no man knoith hym.

1, 2] *transposed* CH 4 right sory] worye C and] thowe he H 8 He may] lett
 hym H þer] to þat place þat H

Man be war, þe way ys sledur;
 Thy sowle sall go þou wottis not wedur,
 Body and sowle and al togedur:
 Lytyll ioeye ys son done.

Haue þi sowle in þi mynd; 5
 þe secators be ryght onkynd.
 Man be þi own freynd:
 Lytyll ioeye ys son done.

In holy bok yt ys wreten 10
 þat sely sovle ys son forgotten,
And trev yt ys for to seken:
 [Lytyll ioeye ys son done].

Her ys a song for me;
 Syng another for the. 15
 God send vs love and charite!
 [Lytyll ioeye ys son done].

45

Do, mon, for þiselffe wyl þou art olyue,
 For he þat dose aftur þu dethe
 God let him neuer thryue!

46

Man, if þow wys arte,
 Of þy gode take þy parte
 Or þow hens weende;
 For if þowe leue þy parte
 In þe sekutours warde, 5
 þy parte no parte at þe latter ende.

1] Wyse mon if þou art H 5 warde] awarde H 0 7 latter] last H 0

47

Too secaturs and an ouerseere make [thre] theues.

thre] MS thre iij

I herd a playnt of grete pyte,
 burgh a park as I con passe,
 Of a gome þat gayned no gle,
 And 3et he g[le]myd as any glas.
 All in wo wrapped he was;
 þat wye wepyd as he were wode.
 Full ofte he sykyd and sayd 'Allas,
 þat ony kynde man wantys gode!'

5

Vnder a holy I me hyd
 Of þat hathell more to here,
 How he hys care so kyndly kyd,
 With cold carpyng and vnclere.
 He prayd to God bryng hym on bere
 As He bo3t hym with Hys blode,
 Saue desteny of Oure Dryghtyn dere;
 Allas, þat kynde man wantys gode.

10

15

'Svm tyme' he sayd, 'I was a syre,
 þer wold no <pite> w[ith]in me synk.
 With gentylnen was my desyre
 At dees to dyne and eke to drynk.
 And now I am a ruful rynke,
 But He me rych þat raght on rode.
 þerfore I say ry3t as me thynke,
 Allas, þat kynde man wantys gode.'

20

4 glemyd] MS ge[le]myd 18 within] MS w in

'And þus for wontyng of worldes wele 25

<.....>

<.....>

Sum tyme held I festys fele,

But now me faylys of þat fytt;

I trowe þat knot was on me knyht 30

Or þat kyrk had caght my code.

þerfo I syng and say it 3yt,

Allas, þat kynde man wantys gode.'

'When wyes walke vnto þo wyne

þen as a wiche I walke away. 35

þat puttes me to pytous pyne;

I haue no penyes for to pay,

But as foule dos in a fray,

Or ellys þo fysch þat fayles fode.

þerfore I syng and eke I lay, 40

Allas, þat kynde man wantys gode.'

'Haue cayteuys nobu[1]ys in a kest

þat my3t a kyndom cach fro care,

Or 3et of florens ful þo fyst,

For it schal ne þo bettur fare. 45

þat makys me for to drowpe and dare;

I may not stand as þere [I] stode.

42 nobu[ys] MS nobuys 47 I] MS om.

perfore I syng with sykyng sare,
 Allas, pat kynde man wantys g<ode>.'

Mornyng <w.....> 50

But take þo grace pat God has <.....>

And thank Hym oft as <þ.....>

Of al pat euer He has me sente,

And aske mercy in myne entente 55

Of hym pat bo3t me with hys blod,

þe blys of heuyn pat we my3[t] hent

pat schall us neuer want gode.

Explicit

Ne mai no lewed lued libben in londe,
 Be he neuer in hyrt so hauer of honde;
 So lerede vs biledes.

3ef Ich on molde mote wip a mai,

Y shal falle hem byfore e lurnen huere lay 5

And rewen alle huere redes.

Ah, bote Y be þe furþe day on folde hem byfore

Ne shal Y nout so skere scapen of huere score;

So grimly he on me gredes

þat Y ne mot me lede þer wip mi lawe, 10

On alle maner opes þat heo me wulleþ awe,

Heore boc ase vnbredes.

Heo wendeþ bokes vnbrad

Ant makeþ men a moneþ a mad;

Of scape Y wol me skere 15

Ant fleo from my fere;

Ne rohte hem whet yt were

Buten heo him had.

Furst þer sit an old cherl in a blake hure,

[O]f alle þat þer sitteþ semeþ best syre 20

Ant leyþ ys leg o lonke.

An heme in an herygoud wip honginde sleuen,

Ant mo þen fourti him byfore my bales to breuen
 In sunnes 3ef Y songe.
 Heo þynkes wip heore penne on heore perchemyn 25
 Ant sayen Y am breued ant ybrought yn,
 Of al my weole wlonke.
 Alle heo bueþ redy myn rouþes to rede;
 þer Y mot for menske munte sum mede
 Ant þonkfulliche hem þonke. 30
 Shal Y þonke hem þer er Y go?
 3e, þe maister ant ys men bo!
 3ef Y am wreint in heore write
 þenne am Y bacbite,
 For moni mon heo makeþ wyte 35
 Of wymmene wo.
 3et þer sitteþ somenours syexe oþer seuene,
 Mysmotinde men alle by here euene,
 Ant recheþ forþ heore rolle.
 Hyrdmen hem hatieþ ant vch mones hyne, 40
 For euer uch a parossh heo polkeþ in pyne
 Ant clastreþ wip heore colle.
 Nou wol vch fol clerik þat is fayly
 Wende to þe bysshop ant bugge bayly;
 Nys no wyt in is nolle, 45
 Come to countene court couren in a cope
 Ant suggen he hap priuilegie proud of þe pope,
 Swart ant al toswolle.
 Aren heo to swolle for swore?
 3e, þe hatred of helle beo heore! 50

For þer heo beodeþ a boke
 To sugge ase Y folht toke;
 Heo shulen in helle on an hoke
 Honge þerefore!

þer stont vp a 3eolumon, 3e3eþ wip a 3erde, 55
 Ant hat out an heh þat al þe hyrt herde,
 Ant cleopeþ Magge ant Malle;
 Ant heo comeþ bymodered ase a mor hen,
 Ant scrynkeþ for shome, ant shomeþ for men,
 Vncomely vnder calle. 60

Heo biginneþ to shryke and scremeþ anon,
 Ant saiþ by my ga[b]byng 'Ne shal hit so gon,
 Ant þat beo on ou alle,
 þat þou shalt me wedde ant welde to wyf!'
 Ah, me were levere with lawe leose my lyf 65
 þen so to fote hem falle!

Shal Y to fote falle for mi fo?
 3e, monie byswykeþ heo swo!
 Of þralles Y am þer þrat
 þat sitteþ swart ant forswat; 70
 þer Y mot hente me en hat
 Er Ich hom go.

Such chaffare Y chepe at the chapitre
 þat makeþ moni þryue-mon vnþenfol to be,
 Wip þonkes ful þunne. 75

62 gabbyng] MS galbyng

Ant sebbe Y go coure at constory

Ant falle to fote vch a fayly,

Heore is þis worldes wyne.

Seppen Y pleide at bisshopes plee,

Ah, me were leuere be sonken y the see,

80

In sor wipouten synne.

At chirche ant þourh cheping ase dogge Y am dryue,

þat me were leuere of lyue þen so for te lyve,

To care of al my kynne.

Atte constorie heo kenneþ vs care

85

Ant whissheþ vs euele ant worse to fare.

A pruest proud ase a po

Sebbe weddeþ vs bo;

Wyde heo worcheþ vs wo

For wymmene ware.

90

In London there I was lent,
 I saw myselfe where trouthe shuld be ateynte;
 Fast to Westminstar Ward I went,
 To a man of lawe to make my complaynt.
 I sayd 'For Mari's love, that holy seynt, 5
 Have pity on the powre that would procede.
 I would gyve sylvar but my purs is faynt;
 For lacke of money, I may not spede.'

As I thrast thrugheout the thronge
 Amonge them all, my hode was gonn. 10
 Netheles I let not longe
 To Kyngs Benche tyll I come.
 Byfore a iuge I kneled anon;
 I prayd hym for Gods sake he would take hede.
 Full reuefully to hym I gan make my mone; 15
 For lacke of money I may not spede.

Benethe hym set clerks, a great rout;
 Fast they writen by one assent.
 There stode vp one, and cryed round about
 'Richard, Robert, and one of Kent!' 20
 I wist not wele what he ment,
 He cried so thike there indede.

1 there I was lent] once my stepps I bent **2]** where trouthe in no wyse
 should be faynt **7]** *om.* **10 amonge them all]** by froward chavnce **15]** *om.* **17**
hym] them **20 one]** Iohn

There were stronge theves shamed and shent,
But they that lacked money mowght not spede.

Vnto the Comon Place Y yowde thoo, 25
Where sat one with a sylken houde.
I dyd hym reverence as me ought to do;
I tolde hym my case as well as I coude,
And seyde, 'All my goods by nowrd and by sowde,
I am defrawd with great falshed.' 30
He would not geve me a momme of his mouthe;
For lake of money I may not spede.

Then I went me vnto the Rollis,
Before the clerks of the Chauncerie.
There were many quitollis, 35
But I herd no man speke of me.
Before them I knelyd vpon my kne,
Shewyd them myne evedence and they began to reade.
They seyde treuer things might there nevar be,
But for lacke of money I may not spede. 40

In Westminster Hall I found one
Went in a longe gowne of ray;
I crowched, I kneled before them anon;
For Marys love of helpe I gan them pray.

23] *om.* 29 all] how by nowrd and by sowde] were defravded me by falshood
30] *om.* 31] I gat not a mvm of his mouth for my meed 35] where many I
found earnyng of pence 36 I herd no man speke of] none at all once
regarded 37 Before them I knelyd] I have them my complaynt 38] they lyked
it well when they had it reade 39] *om.* 43 them] hym 44] *om.*

As he had be wrothe he voyded away; 45

Bakward his hand he gan me byd.

'I wot not what thow menest,' gan he say.

'Ley downe sylvar, or here thou may not spede.'

In all Westminstar Hall I could find nevar a one

That for me would do, thowghe I shuld dye. 50

Without þe dores were Flemings grete woon;

Vpon me fast they gan to cry,

And sayd 'Mastar, what will ye copen or by?

Fine felt hatts, spectacles for to rede!'

Of this gay gere a great cawse why 55

For lake of money I might not spede.

Then to Westminster Gate Y went,

When the sone was at highe prime.

Cokes to me they toke good entent,

Called me nere for to dyne 60

And proferyd me good brede, ale, and wyne.

A fayre clothe they began to sprede,

Rybbes of befe, bothe fat and fine;

But for lacke of money I might not spede.

Into London I gan me hy; 65

Of all the lond it beareth the prise.

45] I wot not what thou meanest, gan he say 46] to get me thence he dyd me bede 49] within this hall nether rych nor yett poore 50] which seing, I hat me out of the doore 51 vpon me fast they gan] where flemyngis began on me for 54] om. 55] lay down your sylver and here you may speede 59] om. 61, 62] trans.

'Hot pescods!' one gan cry,
 'Strabery rype!' and 'Chery in the ryse!'

One bad me come nere and by some spice.

Pepar and saffron they gan me bede,

70

Clove grayns and flowre of rise;

For lacke of money I might not spede.

Then into Chepe I gan me drawne,

Where I saye stond moche people.

One bad me come nere and by fine cloth of lawne,

75

Paris thred, coton, and vuple.

I seyde there vpon I coude no seyle;

I am not wont thereto, indede.

One bad me by an hewre my hed to hele;

For lake of money I might not spede.

80

Then went I forth by London stone,

Thrwghe out all Canywike Strete.

Drapors to me they called anon;

Grete chepe of clothe they gan me hete.

Then come there one, and cried 'Hot shepes fete!'

85

'[F]isshes faire and grene!' another began to grete.

Bothe melwell and makarell I gan mete,

But for lacke of money I myght not spede.

86 Fishes] MS Risshes

70] *om.* **74]** one ofred me velvet sylke and lawne **75]** *om.* **76]** an other he
 taketh me by the hande **77]** here is parys thred the fynest in the land **78]**
 I never was vsd to such thyngis in dede **83]** *om.* **85]** one cryde makere
 rysses grene an othere gan greete **86]** one bad me by a hood to cover my
 head

Then I hied me into Estchepe;
 One cried 'Ribes of befe and many a pie!' 90
 Pewtar potts they clatteryd on a heape;
 Ther was harpe, pipe, and sawtry.
 'Ye by cokke!' 'Nay by cokke!' some began to cry.
 Some sange of Ienken and Iulian to get themselvs mede.
 Full fayne I wold hadd of that mynstralsie, 95
 But for lacke of money I cowld not spede.

Into Cornhill anon I yede,
 Where is moche stolne gere amonge.
 I saw wher henge myne owne hode
 That I had lost in Westminstar amonge þe throng. 100
 Then I beheld it with lokes full longe;
 I kenned it as well as I dyd my crede.
 To by myne owne hode agayne me thought it wrong,
 But for lacke of money I might not spede.

Then came the taverner and toke m[e] by þe sleve, 105
 And seyde, 'Ser, a pint of wyn would yow assay?'
 'Syr,' quod I, 'it may not greve,
 For a peny may do no more then it may.'
 I dranke a pint and therefore gan pay;
 Sore ahungred away I yede. 110
 Forwell, London Lykkepeny, for ones and eye!
 For lake of money I may not spede.

105 me] MS my

92 sawtry] mynstralsye 95] om. 100 in Westminstar] om. 101] om.

102, 103] trans. 111] om.

Then I hyed me to Byllingesgate;
 [One] cried 'Wagge wagge, gow [we] hens!'
 I praye[d] a bargeman for Gods sake 115
 That [he] would spare me myn expens.
 He sayde 'Ryse vp man, and get the hens!
 What wenist thow? I will do on ye no almes dede!
 Here scapeth no man bynethe ij pens.'
 For lacke of money I myght not spede. 120

Then I conveyed me into Kent,
 For of the law would I medle no more.
 Bycaws no man to me would take entent,
 I dight me to the plowe even as I did before.
 Ihesus save London, that in Bethelem was bore, 125
 And every trew man of law, God graunt hym so{u}ls med;
 And they that be othar, God theyr state restore,
 For he that lackethe money with them he shall not spede!

114 One] MS And we] MS *om.* 115 prayed] MS praye 116 he] MS they
 114 Wagge wagge, gow [we] hens] *loo go we hence* 117] *om.*
 118, 119] *trans.* 123 the plowe even as] do as I 125 save London] *om.* 126]
 save London and send trew lawyers there mede 127] *om.*

A froward knave pleyedly to descryve,
 And a sloggard schortly to declare;
 A precious knave that castith hym neuer to thryve--
 His mouth weel weet, his slevis riht thredbare--

A turnebroche, a boy for Hogge of Ware, 5
 With louryng face, noddying and slombryng;
 Of newe crystened and callid Iakke Hare,
 Wich of a bolle can plukke out the lynyng.

This boy Maymond ful styborne of his bonys 10
 Sloggy on morwen his lemes vp to dresse;
 A gentel harlot chose out for the noonys
 Sone and cheeff eyr onto Dame Idylnesse;
 Cosyn to Wecok, brother to Reklesnesse,
 Wich late at eve and morwe at his rysyng
 Ne hath no ioie to do no besynesse 15
 Saue of a tancard to plukke out þe lynyng.

A boy Chekrelyk was his sworn brother
 Of euery dyssh a lypet out to take,
 And Faffyntycol was also another 20
 Of euery brybe the caryage for to make;
 And he can weell waytyn on an oven cake,
 And of newe ale been at the clensyng,
 And of purpos his th[ur]st for to slake
 Kan of a pecher plukke out the lynyng.

24 **thurst]** MS thrust
 2 **schortly]** plainly H 3 **hym]** om. L 5 **Hogge]** wat H of] at L V 6 **louryng]**
 loury L V 9 **Maymound]** om. L 10 **Sloggy]** Slulgy H 11 **out]** om. H 19
Faffyntycol] ffansiticol L 20 **for]** om. L

This knave be leyser wil don al his massage 25
 And holde a tale with euery maner wight,
 Ful pale dronken, weell vernysshed of visage,
 Whos tonge ay faileth whan it draweth to nyht.
 Of o candell he weneth too were lyght;
 As barkyd leder his face ys schynyng; 30
 Glasy-eied wol cleyme of dewe right
 Out of a bolle to plukke out the lynyng.

He can abedde an horskembe we<e>ll shake
 Lyk as he wolde coraye his masteris hors;
 And with his on hand his masteris doublet [t]ake, 35
 And with the tother preuyly kutte his purs.
 Alle sweche knavis shul haue Cristys curs
 Erly on morwe at ther vprysyng!
 To fynde a boy I trowe ther be non wors
 Out of a pot to plukke out the lynyng. 40

He may be sold vpon warantyse
 As for a truaunt that nothyng wil doon.
 To selle hors provendre is his chef marchaundise,
 And for a chevesaunce can pluke of ther shoon,
 And at the dys pley the mony soon; 45
 And with his wynnyngis he maketh his offryng

35 take] MS shake

25 al] om. L 29 he] om. H L V 31 eied] yen H 35 MS shake] take H L V 38
 ther] his L 40 pot] cuppe H L 43 to selle] selle his H L 44 ther shoon]
 his shoon H his hors shoon L 45 the mony soon] his mony a noon H

At the ale stakes, sitting ageyn the moon,
Out of a cuppe to plukke out the lynyng.

Wassail to Maymond and to his iousy pate!
Vnthryfft and he be togedre met. 50

Late at eve he wol onspere the gate
And grope on morwe yif Riggis bak be wet,
And yif the bak of Togace be out het;
His heuy nolle at mydmorwe vplyfftyng,
With onwasshen handis, not lased his doublet, 55
Out of a bolle to plukke out the lynyng.

The following three stanzas appear in L and V only (the base text is L):

Off al thi warde thou art made officeer
That no man passe withoute licence of the;
Erly on morwe or than the day be cleer
To cast thi cheenys redy wolt thou be. 60
Thei be nat made of iren nor of tre--
Thyn ars cheef smyth on morwe at the risyng;
Weel the bet thou maist thi chene lat flee
For out of a boll wele canst thou plukke the lynyng.

And when thou hast weel vernysst thi pate 65
To take a sleep in hast thou wolt th<ou> dresse;

47 the (1)] *om.* L 49 Wassail to Maymond and to his] Now wesseil vnto thi L
V 50 he be togedre] thou togidre be L 51 he] thou L V Riggis] V has
marginal gloss *n. canis* 53 Togace] H has interlinear gloss *the cat* 56 to]
can L

But woo is he that nyht shal be thi mate,
 Thi organys so hi<gh> begynne to syng ther messe
 With treble, meene, and tenor discordyng, as Y gesse,
 That al the hoggis that been aboute liggyng 70
 To synge with the thei gynne hem thidir dresse,
 Which of a pott so wele canst plukke [the] lynyng.

Yit wassayl and ch[a]yn be thi thrift
 With al thyn organys and thi melodye;
 Ful wele a cuppe of good ale canst thou lift 75
 And drynk it of and leve the cuppe drye.
 I wolde thi chenys had chenyd vp the weye
 Between the cuppe, whan thou art liftyng,
 And thi mouth, for thou art euyr drye
 Out of a pott to plukk out the lynyng. 80

Of rybaud³ Y ryme ant rede o my rolle,
 Of gedelynges, gromes, of Colyn and of Colle,
 Harlotes, horsknaues, in pate and by polle;
 To deuel Ich hem tolyure ant take to tolle!

þe gedelynges here gedered of Gonnylde gnoste; 5
 Palefreiours ant pages, ant boyes wiþ boste,
 Alle weren yhaht of an horse þoste.
 þe deuel huem afretþe, rau oþer aroste!

þe shuppare þat huem shupte to shome he huem shadde,
 To flos and to fleye, to tyke and to dadde; 10
 So seyþ Romaun³ who so ryht radde:
 Fleh com of flore, ant lous com of ladde.

þe harlotes buep horlynges ant haunteþ þe plawe;
 þe gedelynges buep glotouns ant drynkeþ er hit dawe.
 Sathanas huere syre seyde on is sawe, 15
 Gobelyn made is gerner of gromene mawe.

þe knaue crommeþ is crop er þe cok cawe;
 He momeleþ and moccheþ ant marreþ is mawe.
 When he is al forlaped ant lad ouer lawe,
 A doseyn of doggen ne myhte hyre drawe. 20

þe rybaud³ aryseþ er þe day rewe;
 He shrapeþ on is shabbes ant draweþ huem to dewe.

Sene is on is browe ant on is e3ebrewewe,
 pat he louseþ a losynger, ant shoyeþ a shrewe.

Nou beþ capel-claweres wiþ shome toshrude, 25
 Hue boskeþ huem wyþ botouns ase hit were a brude,
 Wiþ lowe lacede shon of an hayfre hude,
 Hue pykeþ of here prouendre al huere prude.

Whoso rykeneþ with knaues huere coustage,
 þe luperneþse of þe ladde, þe prude of þe page, 30
 þah he 3eue hem cattes dryt to huere companage,
 3et hym schulde arewen of þe arrerage.

Whil God wes on erþe ant wondrede wyde,
 Whet wes þe resoun why he nolde ryde?
 For he nolde no grom to go by ys syde, 35
 Ne grucchyng of no gedelyng to chaule ne to chyde.

Spedeþ on to spewen ase me dop to spelle;
 þe fend ou afretie wiþ fleis ant wiþ felle.
 Herkneþ, hideward horsmen, a tidyng Ich ou telle,
 pat 3e shulen hongen ant herbarewen in helle! 40

[I]n a chambre, as I stode,
 There lordys were and baronis bold;
 I saw a knyght were an hode
 Was write with lettres al of gold;
 That word I began faste to beholde, 5
 Weper it were Ynglysch or what langage;
 It was the word that I of tolde
 That seruice is non eritage.

That word I gan faste devise,
 And thocht it was sothly sayde, 10
 For I haue sen men in seruise
 Lyke lordys gon arayd;
 And sythen with a lytyl brayde
 Ther lordys han deyde for age,
 Pan waxe the pouerayle dysmayde, 15
 For seruise is noon eritage.

Somme man wole not hys neyghbour knowe
 Whan he is put in hys seruice,
 Whan he is out and is ful lowe
 Than wole hys neyboure hym dyspice; 20

1 In] MS *space left for decorated initial*
 4 Was write with] A reson wryton on S 5 I began faste to] fast I can S
 8 That] *om.* S 9 gan] can S 12 gon] pere haff bene S 13 sythen with]
 sone w^t yn S 14 Ther] *om.* S had deyde for] haff deyde be kynd off S 15
 the pouerayle] pere pore 7 all S 18 hys] his S

Than must he p[ri]uyly hym dysgyse
 And abate hys hye corage,
 Forthy thynk on this yf þou be wyse,
 þat seruice is noon eritage.

Trust þe not to mych to þy seruice, I rede, 25
 Lenger þan þou may weel trauayle;
 For whan þou may nat stonde in stede,
 Ne noght may thy master avayle,
 þan he wole wythouten fayle
 Wax wery of the and wythdraw thy wage; 30
 Forþy yong men I you counsayle,
 Thynke þat seruice is noon eritage.

What is a prouder thyng or a worse
 Than a knave w^uithouten drede
 Whan he is vp vpon hys masters horse? 35
 To herkyn þis shal be thy mede--
 He shal alighten ayen, so God me spede,
 Agayn to be put a page;
 þerfore lestenyth and take good hede,
 þat seruice is noon eritage. 40

21 priuyly] MS puyly
 21 p[ri]uyly hym] hym porely S 22 hye proude S 23 thynk on this yf þou
 be wyse] man thenke on þis wyse S 25 Trust þe not to mych to þy
 seruice] To seruyce neuer man trust S 26 Lenger þan þou may weel] No
 longur þen he mey S 27 þou] he S 28 Ne] Nor S may thy master] his
 maystur he may S 29 he wole] wyll his maystur S 30 of the] om. S thy]
 his S 32 Thynke] om. S 36 thy] his S 39 þerfore lestonyth and] for
 þey will not S

Wele is hym that can a crafte,
 And he wolle se it more or lasse
 For yf hys seruice be hym rafte,
 He may leue in clennessse;
 He may leue withoute dystresse; 45
 Connyng is syker stage,
 And seruice is no sykyrnesse;
 Thynke it is noon eritage.

I holde hym a fole, so haue I blysse,
 That for hys seruice berith hym to hye; 50
 And namely in the world pat now is
 That turneth al day wondyrlye;
 For I can ylke day wole aspye
 Of gret gentelyemen and page
 Lesyth per seruice wondyrlye, 55
 For seruice is noon eritage.

42 se] use S 43 For *om.* S 44 leue] trawell S 45 He] And S may] *om.* S
 leue] luyf in hose S 46 Connyng is syker] for connyng is a S 47 is] as
 S 48 Thynke it] þen þenke þat seruece S 50 for] in S 52 turneth
 alday] euery day turnus S 54 gret gentel yemen] grete lordes S 55 per
 seruice wondyrlye] here offece sodenly S
The next two stanzas follow in the Advocates manuscript only:

Neuer þo lesse yett most men serve,
 And þei þat serve, have þis in mynde:
 Yee {wol} not how sone ye mey ouerswarve,
 And for yowr service be byhynde; 60
 þerefore be trewe, corteyse, and kynde,
 And helpe yowreselfe with maryage,
 For lordeschyppe turnus as dos þo wynde
 And servyce is non heritage

þere is no service vnto triste, 65
 Safe only Goddis, I vndertake;
 He had neuer servande þat I wiste
 þat his lordchippe was lyght to slake.
 His servande will he not forsake
 þog[h] he wax pore and far in age; 70
 For þis avavnte I dare wele make--
 His service is gud heritage!
 Explicit

[L]ord, what is thys world wele!
 Rychesse, reu[e1], and rych aray;
 Al day to spende and not to spele,
 Wel sone were it and wastyth away.

Whan Plente may no lenger pay, 5
 What wyght wole wyth hym abyde?
 A drede-ful man, bothe nyght and day,
With heuye hert hys hede must hyde.

Al is for defaute of grace
 That God grucchyth oure gouernaunce; 10
 Whan mesure may not medyl in place
 Good reule is oute of remembraunce.
 What is to man mor grevaunce
 Than sodeynly fro manhode falle?
 In pride is sympyl preueaunce 15
 Ther pouerte is steward of halle.

But who that can in somer seson
 Gader or grype or pat he grynde,
 In wynter tyme, by wey of reson,
 Shuld not be ferre behynde. 20

For per pat mesure is in mynde
 Good reule may not longe fayle;

Lord God, what y[s] þis wordys fare

But ryal reuel and gret aray?

Euyr spend and nothyng spare--

Sone wyl hyt wast and were way.

When Plente may no lenger play

5

And Gode hym grechyth of hys gouernans,

þat mesur may no lenger pay;

Gode rule ys not of remembrauns.

When plente may no lenger pay

H[o] schal þan wyth hym abyde?

10

A dredful man bope ny3t and day

With careful hert hys hed m[ay] hyde;

But now on dayes hyt dos betyde

For unto man hyt ys gret greuans

Fro hys worschyp þ[u]s forto slyde

15

For caus gode rule ys out of remembrans.

Ho so wyl yn þe somur sosen

Gadur and grype or þat he grynde,

þe wynter aftyr, be weye of reson,

He wyl not be ful far behende.

20

þus mesur, man, haue yn þy mynde:

þurgh gode rule and iust puruyans

1 ys] MS y 10 Ho] MS he 12 may] MS mya 15 þus] MS þs

Hyt ys no craft to be to kynde;
 Thynk on gode rule and gode gouernans.

With wele and worshyp and gode welefare, 25
 Mekyl wast {and} letyll wyne,
 Sone yt wyl make an howsolde bare
 With gret spendyng out and yn;
 Tryst better þyselſe þen þy kyn,
 For to a man hyt ys ful gret greuans 30
 Sodenly from manhede for to ryn
 For caus of gode rule and gode gouernans.

Auſe þe, man, or þou begyn
 þ[en] þou haue no nede for to playn;
 Loke what astate þat þou stondys yn, 35
 For pouerte ys a preuy payn!
 þof þou wene þat hope to þe be gayn
 Of lordys and ladeys and her plesans,
 Yf þou ber þe {þe} h{y}er for payn
 þen is gode rule out of remembrans. 40

It is no crafte to be to kynde
For scoryng on þe countretayle.

But wele and worshyp with welfare 25
Moche waste and lytyl wyne,
Wel sone bryngyth an housold bare
With large spendyng withouten and inne.
Thanne be avysed or þou begynne
That þou haue no nede to pleyn; 30
Se what estate þou stonde inne
For pouerte is a priuy peyn.

Thogh þou haue helpe and hope of truste
Of lordys and ladyes with þer plesaunce,
Yet beware of had-I-wyste, 35
For envy makyth new dystaunce.
In pryde and pouerte is gret penaunce,
And yet is daunger most dysese;
þer is commorus enquentauce
Wen neyþer of them may odyr plese. 40

In pryde and pouerte ys grete dys[e]se
 þerfore be war of haddywyst,
 For noþer of þem may oþer plese;
 Euery man may not haue hys owen lyst.
 In God þerfor put all þy tryst,
 For old envy makyth newe dystayns;
 I hold þat man ry3t wele iblyst
 þat on gode rule can remembrauns.

45

But had-I-wyst comyth euer to late
 Whan per lackyth bothe lok and key;
 What nede is it {to} spare the yate
per nothyng is lefte in the wey?

Wyth a penylese purse to pley 45
 Lete se who can be pepyl plese;
 Summe man had as lef dey
 As longe to lyue in suche dysese.

A bare berde wyl sone be shaue
per no here is lefte aboute; 50
 I mene be hym that mych wold haue
 And is not ellys but pore and proude,
 But redy to ryot in euery route,
 To ley to wedde bothe potte and panne.
 Whan the fere is c[l]ene blowen oute 55
 Where shal we go dyne thanne?

Ha[d-Y-]wyst comys euer to late
 Whan þer lakkyd boþe lok and keye; 50
 What nedyth a man to spar þe 3ate
 Whan þer ys nothyng yn þe weye?
With a penyles purs for to pleye
 Lat se ho can þe pepul amawns;
Sum man had as lefe to dye 55
 F[or] on gode rule he has no remembrauns.

A bare berd wyl sone be shaue
 þer as ys but lyttyl here abut;
 I mene by þem þat mekyll wold haue
 And bene boþe pore and eke prowde, 60
 Redy to ryd yn euery rowte.
 Hyt ys now but newe aquentaunce;
 They ley to wed boþe pan, lauo[r], and spoute
With þem gode rule ys not of remembrans.

Sum pepyl þat leuyn now on dayes 65
Ar mekyl set on galantnesse;
I lekken þem trully vnto þe wawes
Of þe se þat ar full of trowbulnesse.
Haue þey here pryde and ryalnesse
þey rech ne ne nym of plesans, 70
þe end þerof wyl amer to heuynesse
Becaus gode rule ys out of remembrans.

What nedys a man to delue depe

per as ys no sede for to sowe?

pe pot ys esy for to kepe

75

When pe fatt ys ouer blowe.

Neper for hye ne for lowe

Combur not þyselſe with lewode gouernans;

To mych bend may breke þy bowe,

perfor an gode rule haue [tho]u remembrans.

80

What nede is it to delue depe
 Whan per is no sede to sowe?
 Þe pot is esy for to kepe
per þe fatte is ouer blowe. 60
 Neper for the kyte nor for the crowe
 Encombyr not þyn owne neste;
 To mych bonde wyl breke the bowe
 Whan þe game is alper beste.

Ensample men may se al day, 65
 Yet kepe I no man defame;
 Hye housold and grete aray
 Ys lordys lyf and ladyis game.
 Whan gladness growyth into grame
 And thanne for nede begge and borowe, 70
per pryde is before and after shame,
 Fro solace into sodeyn sorowe.

And that is hevy for to here
 Of hym alwey that man hath be
 And may no lenger mak good chere; 75
 By my trouth it is gret pite!
 Yet shuld worshyp know and se
 And help hevy herte at nede,
 Lest he falle in þat same degre,
 For happis is euer worse than drede. 80

He þat hys worschyp here wyl haue
 And lyf aftyr hys owne degre,
 In honeste hys worschyp most he saue
 And yn heuyn shal be hys prosp[er]yte
 Now God þat dyed on a tre
 3yf us grace to do afterer hys ordynans;
 þys tale I tell by 3ou and me
 For ensampl of gode gouernans.

85

Explicit

He that is bothe chek and mate

It is ful heuy to restore;

Whan al is go it is to late

To weshe and wepe after more.

Than be avysed well before

85

That the fyrst d[r]aught be weel drawe,

For whan the game is lo[re]

by part is not worthe an hawe.

Now he that worshyp wol haue

And loue after hys degre,

90

In manhod his state to saue--

God graunte hym here prosperite!

Plesaunce, pouer, and plente

Wyth al honest ordinaunce,

his wolle seruice you both and me

95

To be ensample of good gouernaunce.

This worlde is ful of stablenesse,
 Ther is perinne no variaunce;
 But trowth, feith, and gentlenesse,
 Secrenesse and assuraunce,
 Plente, ioye, and al plesaunce-- 5
 Be ensample who can have rewarde,
 Variably by resemblaunce
 Right as þe crab goth forewarde.

þer is now founde no falsnesse,
 Right is so my3ty of puissaunce; 10
 Feith hath exiled dow[b]lennesse;
 Fortune chaungeth not hir chaunce.
 Byhest abideth on constaunce;
 Frenship is founde no coward.
 Light with derke hath accordaunce 15
 Right as þe crabbe goth foreward.

Princes sustene Rightwesnesse;
 Knyghthode in trouth hath whet his launce.
 Law hath putte mede in grete distresse
 And avoyded hir acqueyntance. 20
 Periurye in Engelond and in Fraunce
 Is fled beyonde Mount Godarde;
 Iurours with trouth hath aliaunce
 Right as þe crab goth forewarde.

11 dowblennesse] MS dowlennesse
7 Variably] verrayly T A H **8 Right]** So T A H (and throughout except as
 noted) **13 on]** in T A H

Sergeantis, pleders of feithfulnesse, 25

Han made on guerdon a diffiaunce;

Consistories for holynesse

Betwene hem and mede is gret dystaunce.

Flaterie hath lost his contenaunce;

Plente is founde non nygarde. 30

Scar[si]tee is gon vnto myschaunce

Right as þe crabbe goth forewarde.

Eche man hath ynowe richesse;

Pore folke fele no greuaunce.

Presthode lyveth in perfitnesse, 35

Kan in litel have suffisaunce.

Religion hath non attendaunce

Vnto þe worlde, but al vpwarde--

To þe ensample in substance,

Right as þe crab goth forewarde. 40

Take hede also by avysenesse--

Wymmen fro Cartage to Custaunce

Ibanshed have newfanglenesse,

Put in a place perseueraunce.

In clergie is perfite governaunce; 45

Mesoure with marchaunt³ is a chef stewarde;

Wight halt trewly ther balaunce,

Right as þe crab goth forewarde.

31 Scarsitee] MS scaristee
 25 feithfulnesse] Kyndenesse T A 29 lost] left H 31 vnto] to T Hy 33
 ynowe] ynough of H folke] pepull Hy 36 Can] And cane T H A 39 þe] gyf T
 A H Hy 40 Right] Howe T A H 42 Custaunce] Fraunce H 44 Put] And putte H
 in a] om. T A H E his] om. E 45 is] hath H 47 wight] Iuste weight H
 trewly ther] iustly the H

Prince3, þe reuerence to expresse
 Of euery þing by contenance-- 50
 Endement double is chef maistras,
 Fals compassing by disseyaunce,
 Which causeth alwey grete disturbaunce,
 French, English, Narman and Picard.
 þe heuenly signe maketh demonstraunce 55
 Right as þe crab goth forewarde!

49 Prince3] Prince T A Perantifrasim H **reuerence]** reuers T A *om.* H 50
euery] yche T A matiers of longe H **contenance]** contynuaunce T A H 51
chef] a H 52] *om.* H 53] Trew people to sette at distaunce H 54] To
 please al folk it is ful hard H 56 **forewarde]** bakward T A 56] How worldly
 thynges goo forward H

Al Rightwesnesse doth now procede,
 Sitte crowned lich an emperesse;
 Law hath diffied Guerdon and Mede,
 And sette vp Trouth as a goddesse.

God Feith hath outrayed dowblenesse,
 And Prudence sith al þing aforne
 Keping þe ordre of stablenesse,
 Conveyed by lyne right as a ramys horne.

5

Princes of custome mentene right indede,
 And prelatis lyven al in holinesse;
 Knyghthode wol suffre no falshede,
 And pristhode hath refused al richesse.

10

Religious of verray perfitenesse,
 With vertures by an high vpborn;
 Envye in cloistres hath non encresse,
 þer love conueyed as right as a rammes horne.

15

Marchants of lucre take non hede,
 And vsure ligh fetered in distresse;

1 Rightwesnesse] ryctous thing the quhilk Ba **2 Sitte]** And fayth ys L is
 Ba an] unto an Ba **3 diffied]** dystroyed L **Guerdon]** waryson Hy comytye L
Mede] al mede H A **4 And]** om. Ba H A T vp] om. L as] on heyght as H A hy
 lyke L om. Hy **5 outrayed]** contraryede H A put away all L flyttin with
 fraud and Ba **6 And]** om. L þing] tyme L thingis that cumis Ba **7 Keping þe
 ordre]** Following the trace Ba T of] of pertye Ba H A **8 Conveyed]** Als evin
 be lyne Ba (*throughout*) **10 al in holinesse]** in clyne parfitnes Ba in
 pertytnes L H A T lyven] be L **11 Knyghthode]** knyghtis luvis God wat but
 litill Ba **12 pristhode]** prestys L Ba al] om. Hy **13 perfitenesse]** parfytte
 holynes L levis in holines Ba **14]** Thay bene in vertew and full fair
 vpborne Ba ben ay wp welle borne L **15 cloistres hath non encresse]** court
 can no man se incress Ba **16 þer love conueyed]** conveyde they bene A ys
 conveyd T **lucre]** wynny[n]gys L **non]** now non H A T bot litill Ba **18 And]**
 For L Thair Ba yfeteryd T **ligh]** is Ba in strong L with Ba

And forto speke or write of wemenhede,
 þey ban[i]shed han from hem newfanglenesse; 20

And laborers don ay hir bysinesse
 þat of þe day þey wol non oure be lorn,
 With swote and travaile evoydyng ydelnesse;
 Conveyed by lyne right as a rammes horne.

Pore folke pleyne hem for no nede, 25
 þese riche men don so grete almesse;

Plente doth eke þe hongre fede,
 Clothe þe naked and his wrecchednesse,
 And Cherite is now a chef maistresse;
 Sklaundre fro his tonge hath pulled oute þe þorne; 30

Detraccion his language doth repressse;
 Conueyed by lyne right as a rammys horne.

Ypocrisye changed hath his wede,
 Take an habite of vertous gladnesse;
 Disseyte dar not abrode his wynges sp[r]eede, 35
 Nor Dissymilyng oute of his hornes dresse;
 For trouth of kynde wol shewe his brightnesse

20 banished] MS bashed
 19 or] and H L or write] *om.* Hy L also Ba 20 ban[i]shed han] haue banned
 Hy from hem] *om.* Hy 21-24 *trans. with 45-48]* Ba 21 And laboreres don ay]
 Lauboraris wirkis with all Ba ay] trewly H L A T sore Hy 22] Day nor
 nyght nor hour can be forborne Ba þey wol] *om.* Hy 23 with swote and
 travaile evoydyng] Bot swynk and sueit to voyd Ba ydelnesse] all ydullness
 L Ba 24 right] is ryght L 25 Pore] The pore L pleyne hem] complenis now
 bot Ba 26 þese] That H A T The L Ba so] nowe so Hy done so grete almess]
 gives ay seik almonss as I gess Ba 27 Plente] with plenty Ba doth eke]
 eche day doth A H *om.* L eke þe hongre] ay the hungry they do Ba and his]
 in his H A L T in thair Ba 29 And] *om.* L 30 his] hir Ba pulled] plucked E
 H Hy A L T oute] *om.* Hy L 31 his language doth repressse] doth hys langage
 oppresse L 31] Discretioun dois all hir laws express Ba 33-40] *om.* Ba 34
 Take] And chose hym L 35 abrode] *om.* L 36 of] *om.* E H Hy A L T his] *om.* H

Withoute eclipsing, þogh falsnesse hedde it sworne,

And forto efferme þis dite by processe,

Hit is conveyed by lyne right as a rammes horne.

40

Oute of þis londe and elles God forbede

Outelawed byn feynyng and falsnesse,

And flaterie is fled by verray drede;

Riche and pore han chose hem to sadnesse.

Wymmen lefte pryde and take hem to mekenesse,

45

Whos pacience is now wette and shorn;

Pere tonges haue no tarage of sharpenesse

Conveyed by lyne right as a rammes horn.

So now remembre and prudently take hede

How vertu is of vices a maistrasse;

50

Oure feith not halteth but leueth on his crede;

Þorgh right beleve the dede bereth witnessse.

38 eclipsing þogh falsnesse hedde it] ony clepyng þe false haue L **it]** *om.*
 Hy **39 And]** *om.* H A **for]** *om.* L **to]** *om.* Ha **this dite by proces]** þis dedys be
 good proses L **by]** trewly by H A **41 Out]** Put out Hy **and]** or Ba **42]** Ys
 fled all faynyng falsnesse L Baneist is fraud falsheid and fekilnes Ba
Outlawed ben feyneng and falsnesse] Feynynges outelawede and alsoo H A
and] of Hy **43 And]** *om.* Ba H A **for]** and that for Ba **drede]** shame and drede
 H A **44 Riche]** Both riche Ba **hem to]** to hem L takin thme to Ba *om.* Hy **45**
Wymmen] Thay haif By **left pride]** haue lost pride L **take]** chosyn Hy
 drawyth L **mekenesse]** holynes L **46 now]** bot newly Ba **newe both L 47**
tarage] tuiching Ba **49 So now]** Princis H L A Ba **of vices a maistrasse]** a
 for wyse lyke a godes L vice a he goddess Ba a vyces duchesse T a
maistrasse] cheef maystresse Hy lady and maistresse E Ba Ha Hy L T a
 duchesse H A **51 leueth on his crede]** we leif evin as our Ba **but]** *om.* Hy
his] owr L **52]** In wird and dede as wark beiris Ba **the dede bereth]** ther
 of owr dedys bere nowe L

Eretykes han lefte her frawdnesse,
 Weded þe cocle from þe pure corne;
 þus eche estate is gouerned in sothnesse;
 Conueyed by lyne right as a rammes horne.

55

53 Eretykes] All ipocritis Ba **lefte]** loste E Hy Ha L **54]** Thus weidit is
 the poppill fra the corne Ba **weded]** And wede L **from]** owt of L **pure]** *om.*
 Hy L **55]** Now ych a state ys grownddyd be sothfastnes L **þus eche]** And
 every Ba **in sothnesse]** as I gess Ba

The following stanza appears at the end of L:

Frerys of lordis take non hede
 To plese þem for no worldly ryches,
 And chastyte hath now sowyn hys seyð
 Among nunnys of grete holynesse;
 Faytowr lyith bown, flater~~y~~ng in derknesse;
 Thus ysall falsyd [be] put abak and lorne,
 That nothyng ys to hus trewenesse;
 Con~~w~~ayd be lyne as ryght as a ramys horn.

60

62 be] MS *om.*

57

Flescly lustes and festes,
 Furrer of ferly bestes,
 [Costefull crouperers with crestes--
 Fules pat it first fonde.]

Robes made of scredes,
 Grisely othes and great medes,
 Flaterers and false dedes,
 Has schent Englund.

5

3, 4] MS *transposed*

[R]eligious pepille leuyn in holynesse

Seruiabli withowte transmutac[i]on

Enuy exilid is [for] gentylnesse,

And for ypcrosye ys set deuocion.

In lawe trouthe hathe his du[r]acion; 5

All dowblenesse venquesschid bi right at þe desire;

Stablenessse foundon and spesialli in atire.

Amongge the comyns pride is now exilid;

Louers vsyn no fayned countenaunce;

In knyghthod largese n[e]wli ys reuyued; 10

Ho can in court fynd eny variaunce?

[Prestus in litille han there suffisaunce;

Conschiaunce with marchaundice is cheffe lord and syre;]

And stablenessse foundun and spesialli in atire.

Humblesse the nam of rigour hath ow3t rased, 15

Which grauen was in femynyte.

Frenchip and kynred togederis ben enbrasid;

Bovnte his s[ojournant] hath bewte.

Fals daunger ys fled and benygnyte

Of envi hath quenched þe sotell fire; 20

And stablenessse foundon and spesialli in atire.

1 Religious] MS Space left for decorated initial **2 transmutacion]** MS
transmutacon **3 for]** MS for fro **5 duracion]** MS duacion **10 newli]** MS nwli
12, 13] MS *trans.* with a, b in margin **18 sojournant]** MS sugenaunsse

Consciens rounyng in eueri path and strete;
 Vnabelite woll take on hym no charge;
 Coueitice with falshode neuyr more to me[te],
 And playn prechorws there to sey at large. 25
 Aliauns put disdeyne in seruage;
 Law so parfit pat woll chaunge for no hire;
 And stabilnesse found and speciali in atire.

No cvne reynyngge but suche as kepith wighte;
 Favell hathe lost his tongge and countenaunce; 30
 Parfitte trust and speciali ow3t of syght;
 Periuri is fled for forthe in to F{r}aunce;
 Wommanhode hatyng oure aqueyntaunce;
 Freris to flatur han lost pere desire;
 And stablenesse foundon and speciali in atire. 35

In eche matire mede is now forsake;
 Lordis gamys cherished to pere availe;
 Iurerrours woll forswere gold for to take;
 No fals marchaundice sold at retaile;
 Wiffis answer not at pe counturtaile; 40
 All true laborerres paide daili pe hire;
 And stabilnesse foundon speciali in atire.

All these ligh[t]li shole tornyn vp-so-dovne,
 Ne were of women þe perfight stablenesse.

Ho can fynd more comfortable sovn

45

Than is þere vois in eche nede and distresse?
 For þei eryl þe well of comfort and mekenesse,
 Ner the wisdomes all we were in þe myre;
 And perfit stablenesse of suche as were atire.

[Y]e proude galonttis hertlesse,
 With your hygh cappis witlesse,
 And youre schort gownys thriftlesse,
 Haue brought this londe in grethenynesse.

With your long peked schone, 5
 Therfor your thрифte is almost don,
 And with youre long here into your eyen
 Han brough[t] this lond to gret pyne.

Ye poepeholy prestis full of presomcion,
 With your wyde fueryd hodes voyd of discrecion, 10
 Vnto your owyn prechyng of contr{ar}y condicion,
 Which causith the people to {haue} lesse deuocion.

Avauncid by symony in cetees and townys,
 Make shorter your taylis and broder your crownyng;
 Leue your schort stuffide dowbelettis and your pleytid gownys, 15
 And kepe your owyn howsyng and passe not your boundis.

Repreve non other men, and I schall tell you whye--
 Ye be so lewyd yourselfe there settithe no man you bye.
 Yt is not but a schame; Y wold be callyd holly
 Or worse dysposyd people leuyth not vndir the skye. 20

First make fre yourselfe that now to syne be bounde;

Leue syne and drede it, than may ye take on hand

Othir to repreue, and that I vndirstonde.

Ye may amende al other and bryng pese to lond.

60

Hey priuet3 gritliche;
Hey robbet3 holliche;
Hey endet3 shameliche;
Hey drawep dredfulliche.

61

It is a wonder, be þe rode,
When too hedys loke in a hode;
And in þis worlde kan I no rede,
Whan too tunges speke in on hede.

Lerne bodyly to lyue.

By seruaunt non hyre þou pay.

Pore ne riche no 3iftes geue,

But take and gedre al þat þou may.

þou3 it come wiþ wrong, say not nay, 5

But falsely loke þou, swere and li3e.

þe pore man is the riches pray;

Lerne þus to lyue bodilye.

There market-beteres gadre in þrong,

Loke þat company þou lede. 10

Stalworþly mayntene wrong,

So may þou wyne moche mede.

To rene fro pore take non hede,

Do as þou þou3t neuere to dye.

Say noþer Paternostre ne Crede; 15

Lyue þou in ese bodyly.

Rechelesly þe gouerne;

Day and ny3t walke late.

At cokes, host[el]ry, and tauerne,

þou3 þat no man opere hate, 20

Go not er þou make debate.

To lewed, lettred, and clergye,

Do no reuerence to non astate,

þan men wole drede þe bodylye.

The[y] þat þe good wolde teche, 25
 Rebuke hem and foule despise;
 Byd hem go to þe chirche and preche.
 Folwe fooles and fle fro wyse.
 3eue no doom in ri3t assyse;
 Fle fro troupe and þou hym spyse. 30
 Loke þou be proudest in alle gyse;
 þan men wole prayse þe bodylye.

Loke þou haue sorwe sad
 Whan þou seest folk haue welfare.
 Loke þou be mery and glad 35
 Whan þou wost folk haue sorwe and care.
 Fede non hungry ne cloþe no bare;
 Lete herberweles þerout ly.
 Visite no syke and prisoners spare;
 Loue þyseluen þus bodyly. 40

3if þy man be a good seruant
 þat þe were lop to forgo,
 Stele þyn owen good fro his hand;
 Bere on hym he stal it so.
 Bryng hym in prisoun tho, 45
 Longe there for to lye,
 Til he be fayn for sorwe and wo
 To swere to serue þe bodylye.

And 3if þou haue a damysele
 þat serueþ þe wel, of trewe lynage, 50
 Fonde to make herewombe to swelle;
 Make no fors of no maryage.

And 3if she grucche wip þe to rage
 And alway fro þe wole wrye,
 Bete herew and geue herew non oper wage, 55
 And lyue in lustes bodylye.

Thus make þe byknowe;
 After þy dede resceyue thy name.
 So shal þyn horn oft blowe,
 And hunte after his owen shame. 60
 3e, þou3 þou be of feble fame,
 Berew good visage, þy nou3t aspye;
 Make þerof but rape and game
 In fleschly lustis bodylye.

At masse, at matyns rule 3ow so: 65
 Leue dewe deuociounw 3ow byhynde.
 Speke no good of frend ne foo;
 Lete non skorneles fro 3ow wende.
 Loke no man be thy frende;
 Lete no man thryue but do hem nye;
 Kepe hem pore and to þe bende, 70
 þen wole þey drede þe bodylye.

A man þat xuld of trewþe telle,
 With grete lordys he may not dwelle.
 A trewe story, as klerkis telle;
 Trowþe is put in lowe degre.

In laydyis chaumberis cometh he not;
 þer dar trewþe settyn non fot.
 þow he wolde, he may not
 Comyn among þe heye mene.

5

With men of lawe he ha3t non spas;
 þey louyn trewþe in non plas.
 Me þinketh þey han a rewly grace
 þat tre[w]þe is put at swych degre.

10

In Holy Cherche he may not sytte;
 Fro man to man þey xuln hym flytte.
 It rewit me sore in myn wytte;
 Of tre[w]þe I haue gret pete.

15

Relygiuus þat xulde be good,
 If trewþe cum þer I holde hym wood;
 þey xuldyn hym rynde, cote and hood,
 And make hym bare for to fle.

20

A man þat xulde of trewþe aspye,
He must sekyn esylve
In þe bosum of Marye,
For þere he is, for soþe.

As I me lend to a l[o]nd,
 I herd a schepperde makyng a schowte;
 He gronyd and seyde with sory syghyng,
 'A Lord, how gos þis word abowte!

It gos ful wrong, ho so it w5yst;
 A frend ho may ken fro his foo?
 To hom I may trewely trost,
 In fayth I fynde but fewe of þo.
 Þe soþe me þinkyt, if I xulde say,
 Trewe frendis arn fewe withoutyn dowte; 10
 Alle half frendis, [wo] worth hem ay;
 A Lord, how gos þis word abowte!

Alle trewe frendis, wol worth hem ay,
 In wel, in wo, in hert, in þowth;
 It must be soþ þat alle men say: 15
 He was neuere good frend was wrop for nowth.
 Now wel, now wo; now frend, now foo;
 Now lef, now þef; now in, now out;
 Now cum, now go; now to, now froo;
 A Lord, how gos þis word abowte! 20

Þe werst wytis herte of alle mankende;
 Alle wykkyd tungis ay worth hem woo;
 1 lond] MS lend 11 wo] MS wel

þei arn ful fay[n] fals talis to fynd;

þei gref me þus I may not goo.

But God of hem þou take sum wreche,

25

And arest hem alle be rowt

þat false arn and fayre cun speke;

A Lord, how gos þis word abowte!

Fulfyllyd ys þe profe[s]y for ay
 þat Merlyn sayd and many on mo:
 Wysdam ys wel ny away;
 No man may knowe hys f[r]end fro foo.
 Now gyllorys don gode men gye;
 Ry3t gos redles all behynde;
 Truthe ys turnyd to se trechery;
 For now þe bysom ledys þe blynde.

5

Now gloserys full gayly þey go;
 Pore men be perus of þis land;
 Certis sum tyme hyt was not so,
 But sekyr all þis ys synnys sande.
 Now maynt[en]erys be made iustys,
 And lewde men rewle þe law of kynde;
 Nobullmen be holdyn wyse;
 For now þe bysom ledys þe blynde.

10

15

Truthe is set at lytyl prys;
 Worschyp fro us longe hath be slawe;
 Robberys now rewle ry3twysenesse,
 And wywnerys with her sothe sawe.
 Synne sothfastnesse has slawe;
 Myrth ys now out of mannys mynde;
 þe drede of God ys al to drawe;
 For now þe bysom ledys þe b[l]ynde.

20

1 profesy] MS profey 4 frend] MS fend 13 mayntenerys] MS maynt erys 24
 blynde] MS bynde

Now brocage ys made of sy[n]cer[n]ys, 25

And baratur ys made bayly;

<k....ch.....de.....>

<.....>

Flatererys be made kyngus perys;

Lordys be led all out of kynde; 30

Pore men ben kny3htus ferys;

For naw þe bysom ledys þ[e] blynde.

The cons[is]tery ys combryd with coueytyse,

For trouth ys sonkyn vndur þe grounde;

W[ith] offycyal nor den no fouour þer ys, 35

But if Sir Symony shewe þem syluer rovnde.

þer among sp[irit]ualte it ys founde,

For pete ys clen[e] out of þ[er] mynde.

Lord, whan þy will is al[wa]ys confounde,

For now þe bysom ledys þe blynde. 40

He ys louyd þat wele can lye,

And þeuys tru men honge.

To God I rede þat we cry

þat þis lyfe last not longe!

þ[e] werld is turnyd up so doun among, 45

For frerys ar confessourys ageyn[st] kynde

To þe chefe ladyes of þis londe;

þerfor þe bysan ledys þe blynde.

25 syncernys] MS sycerys 32 þe] MS þis 33 consistery] MS constery 35
 With] MS W 37 spiritualte] MS spualte 38 clene] MS clent þer] MS þ 39
 always] MS alys 45 þe] þer 46 ageynst] MS ageyn a

Lordys þe lawe þey lere,
 <.....> 50
 Iaperys syt lordys ful nere;
 Now hath þe deuyll all hys deuys;
 Now growyth þe gret flour-de-lys.
 Wymmonnys wyttis ar full of wynd;
 Now ledres l[e]dyn þe leward at her debres; 55
 For caus þe bysom led[y]s [þe] blynde.

 Now prelatis don pardon selle,
 And Holy Chyrche ys chaffare.
 Holynes comyth out of helle,
 For absolucions waxyn ware. 60
 Gabberys gloson eu[er]ywhare,
 And gode feyth comys all byhynde.
 Ho shall be leuyd þe se þe wyll spare,
 For now þe bysom ledys þe bleynde.

 The grete wyll þe [se] spare; 65
 þe comanys loue not þe grete;
 þerfor e[u]ery man may care
 Lest þe wade growe euer þe whete.
 Take hede how synne hath chastysyd Frauns
 Whan he was in hys fayrest kynde; 70
 How þat F[la]nnndrys hath myscha[un]ys,
 For caus þe bysam ledyth þe blynde.

54 ledyn] MS lodyn 55 ledys] MS ledqs þe] MS om. 60 euerywhare] MS
 euywhare 64 se] MS se þe 66 euery] MS emery 70 Flannndrys] MS Falnndrys
 myschaunys] MS myschamys

perfor euery lord ordur avauns,
And styfly stond yn ych a stoure.
Among 3ou make no dystaunes,
But lordys buskys 3ou out of boure.
For to hold vp þis londus honour,
With strenkyth our enmys for to bynde,
þat we may wyne þe heuynly tour;
For here þe bysom ledys þe blynde.

75

80

Lex is layde and lethyrly lukys.
Iusticia is exylde owt of owre bowkys.
Paciencia is plukytt þat mony men hym lothys.
Fides is sybles and goys in torynde clothys.
Caritas is lowkyde and knokytt full smawyll. 5
Verus is noght vsyde nothyng att all.
Humilitas is hyden; he wyll noght be seyne.
Castitas is pusonde, as mony men wen[e].
Veritas is demytt to hange on the ruyde.
Verecundia was drownytt at þe laste fluyde. 10
Go, þat few freyndys may a man fynde,
For *rectus iudicium* comys so farre behynde.
Frans is fykyll as a fox and renys in þis lande.
Furor is hys freynde, as I vndyrstande.
Decepcion is his chamerlan, haif heire of no dowtte. 15
Detraccion is of his counsell; I beshrew þat rowtte!
Falsus iudicium is a lordschype of hys.
Violencia berys hys swerde; he may noght mysse.
Inuidia is als vmpeire qwen þai begyn to stryfe.
Syche anothyre felyschype God latt þam neuer th[r]yfe! 20

Lex is layde downe;

Veritas is full small;

Fides is oute of town;

Caritas is gon withall.

The ordre of foolis ful yore agoon begonne,
 Neuly professed encreseth the kovent;
 Bachus and Iuno haue set abroche a tonne
 And brouht þe braynes onto the exegent.
 Markolff, the foundour, patroun and president, 5
 Noumbre of this frary told iij skore and thre,
 Echon <r>egistred be greet avysement;
 Endors<e> ther patent that they shal neuer the!

Cheef of alle folys men in bokys redeth,
 Able in his foly to holde res<y>dence>, 10
 Is he that nuither loveth God <ne> d<re>deth,
 Nor to his chirche hath noon advertence,
 Nor to his seyntys doth no reuerence,
 And hath dysdeyn of folk in poverté,
 To fader, moder doth no benyvolence-- 15
 Aseele his patent, for he shal neuere the.

The sixte fooll this frary to begynne,
 More than a fooll, braynles, maad and wood,
 Is he that neuer wyl forsake his synne,

1 ful] well X ago] om. N ful yore] fele yere Y 2 encreseth] encresyd Y
 3 a (2)] the AH om. Y 4 þe] theyr AH braynes] brawnces Y the] om. AHNY
 5 the] theyr AHXY 6 told] om. AN told is Y is H 7 greet] good X 8
 that] for X they] om. Y 9 Cheef of alle folys] The chief of folis AH
 chyffe of folis N 10 Able] And able AH And moste Y 12 his] the X 13
 his] om. XY doth] will do 14 and] om. Y hath] also hath AH om. N of] to
 AHNX 15 Fader, moder] fader and moder AHNX fader ne moder Y doth] will
 do14, 15] trans. H 16 Aseele] Enrolle vp AH 18 maad] om. N 19 his] om.
 NX

Nor he that can nouht nor lerne wil no good, 20
 Nor he that hath two facys in on hood,
 May ben enrollid in this fraternyte;
 Cherl of condicioun and born of gentyll blood
 May cleyme of riht that he shal neuer the.

The tenthe fooll may hoppe vp on the ryng, 25
 Foote al afforn and lede of riht the daunce:
 He that al yeveth and kepeth hymself nothyng;
 A double herte, fair feyned contenance,
 A pretens face treble in his dalyaunce,
 Tonge spreynt with sugre, þe galle kept secre. 30
 A perlous mouth is wers than spere or launce;
 Thogh they be cherished, God let hem neuer the!

Off this fraternyte there is mo than oon
 Prouerbe seyde in old language,
 'Tendre broweys skalte with a mary boon 35
 For feble stomakys is holsom in potage.'
 The mary is good, the boon doth but damage;
 In symulacyoun ys fals duplycyte.
 Who leueth the mary braideth on dotage
 And cheseth the boon, God let hym neuer the! 40

20 Nor he] *om.* X And he Y can nouht nor lerne wil] neuer wil lere AH 21
 Nor] And XY 23 condicioun] condicions AHX 24 of riht] by tytle of ry3t Y
 25 vpon] on HX 26 Foote] ffotis N A foote Y afforn] before Y 27 yeveth]
 rewyth N 28 herte] hert with AHY 29 A] And a AH pretens] pitous NY
 treble] troubil AHY 31 perlous] pilous AH 32 Thogh] thought N There Y
 33-40] *stanza om.* N 33 there] *om.* Y 34 prouerbe] A proverbe AH old] ful
 old AH 35 Tendre] That tendre AH 39 mary] mary and Y

A face vnstable, gasyng est and south,
 With loude lauhtres entrith his language;
 Gapeth as a rook, abrood goth iowe and mouth,
 Lyk a iay enfomyned in hys cage;
 Malapert of cheer and off vysage 45
 Cometh to counsail or he callyd be;
 Of ech thyng medlith, his thrifft lith in morgage
 Devaunt a knave that schall neuer the.

In the book of prudent Cypryan
 Wich callid is a gardeyn of his flours, 50
 He seith a pulteer that selleth a fat swan
 For a goselyng that greseth on bareyn clours;
 And he that casteth his cloke away in shours
 Out of the tempest whan he may [nat] fle;
 Or whan that sperado loveth paramours; 55
 On of the nombre that schall neuer the.

And he also that halt hymselff wys
 Wich in werkyng hath noon experience,
 Whos chaunce goth nouter on synk nor sis,
 With ambes as encreseth his dyspence; 60
 A foltyssh face rude of elloquence,

54 nat] MS *om.*

42 entrith] outrith A vttrith H vtteryng Y 43 rook] koke Y goth] both N
 goth both Y 44 enfamyned] iangel yng AH ensameled Y 46 cometh] And cometh
 AHY 47 ech] euery Y lith] is Y in] to AH 48 Devaunt] Avaunte AHN A
 devawt Y 49 prudent] prudence N 50 his] *om.* AHY 52 that greseth] grased
 Y 54 may] may not AHY 55 that] the Y sperado] spado AHN spowse Y 56 On
 of the nombre] Is oon of theym AH On of hem N Is soon of the nowmbre Y
 57] MS defect. N 57 wys] so wise AH 58 in] in his Y 59 whos] who H on] yn
 N 60 With] But with AHY 61 face] face and AH

Bosteth with bordas and at a brout wil fle;
 'Tween wolle and gossomer is a gret difference,
 Stuff for a chapman that is nat lyk to the.

I redde also of other foolys twoo: 65

Thyng to chalenge to wich he hath no right,
 And he in trouthe is a more fooll also
 Wich al requereth that cometh in his sight.

And he is a fooll wich onto euery wight
 Telleth his counsaill and his preuytee; 70

Who sekith werre and hath hymselff no myht
 It were gret mervail that euer he sholde the.

Another fool with counterfeet vysage
 Is he that can falsly fage and feyne,
 Where that he be old or yong of age 75

Seith he is syk and felt no maner peyne;
 And he that doth his owne wyf dysdeyne
 And halt another of what estat she be,
With other foolys embrace hym in þe cheyne;
 A warantyse that he shall neuer the. 80

Off this frary mo foolys to expresse
 He that is to euery man contrarye,

62 bosteth] bosters AH bordas] boreas AH bouids N browes Y at] om. N
 63 a] om. AY 64 of] for NY is nat lyk to] shal neuer Y 65 I] And I Y 66
 to (2)] om. Y 67 more] om. Y 68 in] into Y 69 wich onto] the whiche to A
 whiche to H whych N þe which vnto Y 71 Who] And he þat Y 72 mervail]
 rewpe A wounder H that] and Y 73-80] sub. 11. 113-20 Y 74 can falsly]
 falsely wil AHN fage] flater AH 75 where] whether AHN 77 dysdeyne]
 disseyue N 78 she] he AHN 79 þe] a H 80 A] ffor AH that] for N

And he that bosteth of his cursidnesse,
 And he also that doth prolonge and tarye,
 With fair hestis from his promys to varye, 85
 Breeffly to telle I can noon other see;
 He lyk a fugytyff that fleeth to seyntwarie
 For dred of hangyng, for he schal neuer the.

He is a fooll eek as Senek seyth
 That longe delaieth his purpos for to speede; 90
 A gretter fooll he that breketh his feith,
 And he is a fooll that doth no shame drede,
 And he that hoteth and faileth his frend at nede,
 Whos promys braideth on duplycyte;
 An hardy mous that is bold to brede 95
 In cattys eris, that brood shal neuer the.

And he is a fooll that also yeveth credence
 To newe rumours and euery foltyssh fable;
 A dronklew fool that spareth for no dispence
 To drynke a taunt tyl he slombre at þe table; 100
 Among alle foolys that fool is most coupable
 That is acursed and hath therof deynte;

83 also] *om.* Y doth] doth þere in Y 85 fair] fayrer Y false N from his
 promys to] and from his AH 86 Breeffly] Besely N 87 He] He is AHY that
 fleeth] fleyng Y seynt warie] santuarie N 88 for] and yit AH *om.* Y 89
 He] And he Y eke] *om.* Y 90 delaieth] taryeth Y 91 gretter] grete N
 fooll] foole is AHNY 92, 93] *trans.* H 92 fooll] foole also AH doth] *om.* N
 93 hoteth and faileth his frend] behoteth his frend and fayleth Y faileth]
 faylyth by N 94 Who] Whos AHNY on] in Y 95 An] And a Y 96 In] In the Y
 that brood shal] may Y 97 also] *om.* AHY 98 foltyssh] foles Y 99
 dronklew] dronglew N dronken HY 100 slombre] slep AHN 101 coupable]
 culpable AHN countable Y

A pore beggere for to be vengable;
 Purs penylees in plees may neuer the.

And he that holdeth a quarel ageyn right, 105
 Halt his purpos stiborne ageyn resoun;
 And he is a fooll that is ay glad to fyght
 And to debate seketh occasioun;
 Abit so longe tyl he be bete doun,
 Dronke, lame that he may nat fle; 110
 And who reioissheth to soioure in prosoun,
 Enrolle hym vp for he schall neuer the.

A lusty galaunt that weddit an old wicche
 For gret tresour because his purs is bare;
 An hungry huntere þat handeth hym a bicche 115
 Nemeþ of mouth for to mordre an hare;
 Nyht riotours that wil no wareyn spare
 Withoute licence or ony lyberte,
 Tyl sodeyn perel brynge hem in þe snare;
 Appreperatyf that they shal neuer the. 120

Who doth amys and lauheth hymself to scorne
 Or come to counsail or that he be callyed;
 Or loude lawheth whan he sholde morne,

103 for] *om.* AHNY 104 Purs penylees in plees] A purs penyles in ple Y
 With purs penyles AH Purs penyles N 106 halt] holde N holdyng AH *om.* Y
 107 is a fooll] *om.* Y 109 Abit] And bydyth Y 110 lame] and lame AH 111
 who] whoso AHN he þat Y reioissheth] requyrith H soioure] lye Y 113-120]
 st. *om.* H subst. st.]* Y 115 handeth] holdyth N hym] hym on A 117
 riotours] motoners A 118 ony] *om.* 121-128] *om.* Y 121 and] or N 123
 lawheth] laughyng AH sholde] doth N

Among alle folis of riht he may be stallyd
 Purposeth his viage whan his hors is gallid, 125
 Plukketh of his schoon toward his iourne;
 Forsaketh fressh wyn and drynkith ale appallid;
 Swich foltyssh tast, God let hem neuer the.

And he pat is a ryotour all his lyff,
 And hath his felawe and neihebour in despiht, 130
 And woundeth hymself with his owne knyf;
 Of o candel he weneth two were lyght;
 Slepeth a day and waccheth al the nyght;
 Alle masse doon longe or he redy bee;
 Suych on may cleyme be very title of riht 135
 To been a brother of them shal neuer the.

Who halt al his þe tresour pat he wissheth,
 And gadreth gossomer to pakke it for wolle;
 And he is a fool affore þe net that fissheth;
 And he is a fool pat doth þe fetherys pulle 140
 Of fatte caponis vp-mewed to the fulle,
 And hath no thyng but bonys for his fee.

stallyd] scallid H 125 **Purposeth]** That purposith AH 126 **Plukketh]** And plukkith AH 127 **Forsaketh]** Who forsakyth AH **fressh]** *om.* AH 128 **tast]** fooles AH 130 **hath]** *om.* N 132 **he]** *om.* AHN 133 **waccheth]** worcchis N 134 **Alle masse]** All mass be N That al messes be AH 137] Who holdith it tresour that that he wysshith A that that wisshith H Who holdyth hys tresoure pat he wisseth N 138 **gadreth]** gadrith hym AHN **wolle]** hys wolle N 139 **that]** *om.* HN **fissheth]** wisshith H 142 **And]** *om.*

Nullatensis asselyd hath a bulle
 To alle suych <t>hat noon of hem schall the.

Whan þe gand<r>e greseth on the grene 145
 The sleyhty fox doth hir brood beholde;
 He taketh þe fatte, casteth away the lene,
 And Isigr[i]mus, cheef wardeyn of the folde,
 Takith to his larder at what pris they be sold;
 Grettest lambre, oon or two or thre; 150
 In wynter nyhtes þe frostis be<en> so colde
 The shepperde slepeth; God let hy<m> neuerer the.

A foreyn lyknesse wiche shal no <man> displese
 By a straunge vnkouth comp<a>rysoun;
 Whan þe belleweder pastureth at his ese, 155
 Though al þe flok haue but sma<l> foysoun;
 Slepeth at leiser, maketh noyse n<o>n nor soun,
 Careth for no more so he haue plente;
 Alle tho that make suych a departysion
 Amonge her sogettys, God let h<e>m neuerer the. 160

With ful wombe they preche of abstynence,
 Ther botel fild with fresshe wyn or good ale;
 Love weell rownyng, loutyng, and reuerence;
 Newe fals report with many glosyng tale;

148 Isigrimus] MS Isigrmus

143 a] his AHN 147 and] *om.* N 148 Isigrimus] Sigrimis AH *om.* N wardeyn]
 wardor N 149 they be sold] he wold AH 150 Grettest lambre] Of grettest
 lambern A Of gretter lambern H or(1)] *om.* AH 151 the] *om.* H 155
 pastureth] grasith AH 157 Slepeth] He slepith AH 158 Careth] And carith
 AH 159 Alle tho] Altho AH 163 weell] *om.* AHN

The iay more cherished than <p>e nyhtyngale. 165

Tabourerys with ther d<u>plycyte

Plese more this daies whan <st>uffed is ther male,

Farsed with flater yng; God let hem neuer the.

To gete this frary a confirmacyoun

Of somme vnthryffty bysshop Nullatense, 170

And graunteth hem a generall pardoun

With a patent to begge ther dyspence,

Erly and late to walke with lycence

With open walet freely in ech contre,

Ther bulle <a>sselyd; concludyng in sentence 175

Noon of th<at> ordre is neuer lyk to the.

The following stanzas conclude A and H only (text is from A, with variants from H):

Paterfamilias wise and expert of old

Shul sette botailles atwixt derk and light;

So prudently governe his houshold

To knowe a flight drake from a sterre bright. 180

Owlis and hakkis of custom flee be nyght;

Late plukke theyr feders that they may nat flee,

For false nyght runner han hyndred many a wight;

Al suche be iolie whestelours; God lete hem neuer the.

166 duplycyte] morkis and false duplicite AH 168 Farsed with] with farced
 AH 169-176] om. AH 176 that] al pys N 179 his] theyr 181 custom]
 reason 183 runners] rowners 184 be iolie] benche

Late Ianus Bifrens have non enteresse 185
 Whiche in an hoode can shewe a dowble face;
 Voyde camelyon whiche of newfangilnesse
 Eche colour seyn the same he dothe embrace;
 And salamandre most felly doth manace
 With his creckettis; lierne this of me: 190
 Wher they abide or breede in any place
 Lord of that houshold is never like to the.

Swiche a frary requyrith Goddis curse,
 And I beshrewe al suche counsaillours
 Kan kisse with Iudas and kut a mans purse, 195
 Further a netle and cast out rose flowres,
 With bury dookis strowed bien theyr boures;
 Theyr hoked arwes doth euer bakward flee;
 Swiche false erwygges, suche covert losengeours,
 Asseale vp theyr patent for they shal neuer the. 200

*Y substitutes the following stanza for ll. 113-20:

And he þat is a lowde lyar alle his lyffe,
 And with grete othes holdeth his residens,
 And of oon vnthryfty tale maketh fowre or fyue, 115
 Thou3t he in cunnyng haue noon experiens;
 And alle Robynhodes rouers þat haue no consciens
 To robbe trewe peple a-londe or on see,
 With hores, hasarderes to hold here resydens,
 Honge þem vp for þey shall neuer thee. 120

Put out his hed, lyst nat for to dare
 But lyk a man vpon that tour to abyde;
 For cast of eggys wil not oonys spare
 Tyl he be quaylled, body, bak, and syde,
 His heed endooryd and of verray pryde. 5

Put out his armys, shewith abrood his face;
 The fenestrallys be made for hym so wyde
 Cleymyth to been a capteyn of that place.

The bastyle longith of verray dewe ryght
 To fals bakerys. It is trewe herytage 10

Severall to them (this knoweth euery wyght),
 Be kynde assyngned for ther sittynge stage
 Wheer they may freely shewe out ther visage.

Whan they take oonys there possessioun,
 Owthir in youthe or in myddyl age, 15
 Men doon hem wrong yif they take hym doun.

Let mellerys and bakerys gadre hem a gilde
 And alle of assent make a fraternite.

Vndir the pillory a litil chapell bylde;
 The place amorteyse and purchase liberte 20

For alle thoo that of ther noumbre be,
 Whatevir it coost. Afftir that they wende,
 They may cleyme be iust auctorite
 Vpon that bastile to make an end.

Swarte smekyd smebes smateryd wyth smoke
 Dryue me to deth wyth den of here dyntes!
 Swech noys on nyghtis ne herd men neuer;
 What knauene cry and clateryng of knockes!
 Þe cammede kongons cryen after 'Col, col', 5
And blowen here bellewys þat al here brayn brestes.
 'Huf, puf' seyth þat on; 'haf, paf' þat oper.
 Þei spyttyn and spraulyn and spellyn many spellles;
 Þei gnauen and gnacchen, þei gronys togydere,
 And holdyn hem hote with here hard hamers. 10
 Of a bole hyde ben here barmfellys;
 Here schankes be schakeled for þe fere flunderys.
 Heuy hamerys þei han þat hard ben handled;
 Stark strokes þei stryken on a stelyd stokke.
 'Lus, bus', 'las, das' rowtyn be rowe; 15
 Swech dolful a dreme þe deuyl it todryue!
 Þe mayster longith a lityl and lascheth a lesse,
 Twyneth hem tweyn and towchith a treble.
 'Tik, tak', 'hic, hac', 'tiket, taket', 'tyk, tak',
 'Lus, bus', 'l[a]s, das'; swych lyf þei ledyn. 20
 Alle cloye-merys, Cryst hem gyue sorwe;
 May no man for brenwateris on nyght han hys rest!

Hail Seint Michel, wiþ þe lange sper!

Fair bep þi winges vp þi scholder.

þou hast a rede kirtil anon to þi fote;

þou ert best angle þat euer God makid.

þis uers is ful well iwro3t,

5

Hit is of wel furre ybro3t.

Hail Seint Cristofre, wiþ þi lang stake!

þow ber ur louerd Ihesu Crist ouer þe brod lake.

Mani grete kunger swimmeth abute þi fete;

Hou mani hering to peni at West Chep in London?

10

þis uers is of Holi Writte;

Hit com of noble witte.

[Hail] Seint Mari bastard, þe Maudleinis sone!

To be wel iclopid wel was þi wone.

Thou berist a box on þi hond ipeintid al of gold;

15

Woned þou wer to be hen, 3iue us sum of þi spicis.

þis uers is makid wel,

Of consonans and wowel.

Hail Seint Domnik, with þi lang staffe!

Hit is at þe our end crokid as a gaffe.

20

þou berist a bok on þi bak, Ic wen hit is a bible;

þo3 þou be a gode clerk, be þou no3t to hei3.

13 Hail] MS om.

Trie rime, la, God hit wote,
Soch an opir an erthe I note.

Hail Seint Franceis, wip þi mani foulis! 25
Kites and crowis, reuenes and oules,
Fure and [twen]ti wild ges and a poucok;
Mani bold begger siwip þi route.
þis uers is ful wel isette,
Swiþe furre hit was ivette. 30

Hail be 3e, freris, wip þe white copis!
3e habbiþ a hus at Drochda war men makip ropis.
Euir 3e bep roilend þe londis al aboute;
Of þe watir daissers 3e robbip þe churchis.
Maister he was swiþe gode 35
þat þis sentece vnderstode.

Hail be 3e, Gilmins, with 3ur blake gunes!
3e leuith þe wildirnis and fillith þe tunis.
Menur wipoute and Prechur wipinne;
3ur abite is of gadering, þat is mochil schame. 40
Sleilich is þis uers iseiid,
Hit wer harme adun ileiid.

Hail 3e holi monkes, wip 3ur corrin!
Late and rape ifillid of ale and wine.
Depe cun 3e bouse, þat is al 3ure care; 45

Wip Seint Benetis scourge, la, me 3e disciplineþ.

Takeþ he{d} al to me,

þat þis is sleche 3e mow wel se.

Hail be 3e, nonnes of Seint Mari house!

Goddes bourmaidnes and his owen spouse. 50

Ofte mistredip 3e 3ur schone, 3ur fete bep ful tendre;

Dapeit þe sotter þat tawith 3ure leþir.

Swipe wel 3e vnderstode,

þat makid þis ditee so gode.

Hail be 3e, prestis, wip 3ur brode bokes! 55

þo3 3ur crune be ischaue, fair bep 3ur crokes,

3ow and oper lewid mendelep bot a houue,

Whan 3e delip holi brede 3iue me botte a litil.

Sikirlich he was a clerk,

þat wrothete this craftilich werk. 60

Hail be 3e, marchans, wip 3ur gret packes

Of draperie, auoir-de-peise, and 3ur wol sakes!

Gold, siluer, stones, riche markes and ek pundes;

Litil 3iue 3e þerof to þe wrech pouer.

Slei3 he was and ful of witte, 65

þat þis lore put in writte.

Hail be 3e, tailurs, wip 3ur scharpe schores!

To mak wronge hodes 3e kittip lome gores.

A3ens midwinterer hote bep 3ur ne[dl]es,

69 nedles] MS neldes

þo3 3ur semes semip fair, hi lestip litil while. 70

þe clerk þat þis baston wrow3te,
Wel he woke and slepe ri3te now3te.

Hail be 3e, sutters, wip 3our mani lestes!
Wip 3our blote hides of selcup bestis,
And trobles and treisuses, bochevampe and alles. 75
Blak and loplich bep 3ur tep; hori was þat route.
Nis þis bastun wel ipi3te,
Euch word him sitte ari3te.

Hail be 3e, skimmers, wip 3ure drence kiue!
Whoso smillip þerto, wo is him aliue. 80
Whan þat hit þonnerip, [3e] mote þerin schite;
Dapeit 3ur curteisie, 3e stinkeþ al þe strete.
Worþ hit wer þat he wer king
þat ditid þis tri þing.

Hail be 3e, [bochers], wip 3ur bole ax! 85
Fair bep 3ur barmhatres, 3olow bep 3ur fax.
3e stonðip at þe schamil, brod ferlich bernes;
Fleiis 3ow folowithe, 3e swolowip ynow.
þe best clerk of al þis tun
Craftfullich makid þis bastun. 90

81 3e] MS þ 3e 85 bochers] MS potters

Hail be 3e, bakers, with 3ur louis smale
 Of white bred and of blake, ful mani and fale!
 3e pincheþ on þe ri3t white a3en G[o]ddes law;
 To þe fair pillori Ich rede 3e tak hede.

This uers is iwrow3te so welle, 95
 þat no tung iwis mai telle.

Hail be 3e, brewesters, wip 3ur galuns,
 Potels and quarters ouer al þe tounes!
 3ur þowmes berip moch awai, schame hab þe gyle;
 Beþ iwar of þe coking-stole, þe lak is dep and hori. 100
 Sikerlich he was a clerk
 þat so sleilich wro3te þis werk.

Hail be 3e, hokesters, dun bi þe lake!
 Wip candles and golokes and þe pottes blak.
 Tripis and kine fete and schepen heuedes; 105
 Wip þe hori tromcheri hori is 3ure inne.
 He is sori of his lif
 þat is fast to such a wif.

Fi a debles, kaite[f]s þat kemip þe wolle!
 Al þe schindes of þe croun ahei3 opon 3ur sculle. 110
 3e maki{d} me sech a goshorne ouer al þe woves;
 þerfor Ich makid on of 3ou sit opon a hechil.
 He was noble clerk and gode
 þat þis dep lore vnderstode.

Makip glad mi frendis, 3e sittip to long stille; 115

Spekip now and gladieþ, and drinkeþ al 3ur fille.

3e habbeþ ihird of men lif þat wonip in lond;

Drinkip dep and makip glade, ne hab 3e non oþer nede.

þis song is yseid of me;

Euer iblessid mote 3e be. 120

72

Bissop lorles,

Kyng redeles,

3ungman rechles,

Old man witles,

Womman ssamles.

5

I swer bi heuen kyng,

pos beþ fiue liþer þing!

73

Liper lok and tuinkling,

Tihing and tikeling,

Opin brest and singing,

peise midoutin lesing

Arin toknes of horeling.

5

74

'Luffe, luffe, where es þi reste?'

'Of Englond I am outkeste

Thurgh Sur Envye.'

Thise longe berdes to myddis þe breste

Has putt luffe oute of his neste

5

Thurgh felonye.

Loke out here Maier, with thy pillid pate,
 And see wich a scrowe is satt on thy gate,
 Warnyng the of hard happes;
 For and yt lukke thow shalt haue swappes!

Therefore I rede kepe the at home, 5
 For thow shalt aby, for yt is dome,
 Or els kest on a cote of maile--
 Trust well therto without faile.

And great Golias, Iohn Esex,
 Shall haue a clowt with my karylle ax 10
 Where euer I may him shaue;
 And the hosteller Bamber with his gotes beard,
 Once and yt hap shall be made afeard,
 So God {mote} me save.

And 3it with thy catchpolles hope I to mete 15
With a fellow or twayne in the playne strete,
 And her crownes brake.
 And pat harlot hierman, with his calves snowte,
 Of buffetis full sickerly shall bern a rowte
 For his werke sake. 20

And yet shall Hanokyn Attilbrigge
 Full 3erne for swappes his tayle wrigge,
 And yt hap aryte.

And other knaves all on hep
 Shall take knockis full good chep 25
 Some one wynter nyte.

But now I pray to God al myte
 That whatsoeuer 3ou spare,
 That mucche sorow to him be dite
 And well mote he fare. 30

Amen quod he pat beshrewd the Maiers very visage

76

Miles Rogerus, by ten mile wons he to neer vs.

Omnibus austerus fuerat, quod scit bene clerus.

Ut rosa pulcher heri marcet terrore seueri

Simplicis armigeri. Of falsnes was he neuer weri.

Si modicus natus, tamen asper ad alta leuatus;

5

Sic sublimatus, dicebat: 'Who dar arat us?'

Blandilocus, cupidus, partie radians quasi sidus;

Ut lupus hic rapidus dixit: 'Dar no man abid us?'

Tum cum vi regis tum cum velamine legis,

Pauperis ipse gregis, in il tyme flithe hys segis.

10

Versus compositi de Roger Belers

Young men of Waterford, learne now to play,
 For youre mareis plowis ilai be th[e] way;
 Secure 3e 3ure hanfelis þat lang habith ilei,
 And fend 3ou of the Powers that walkith bi the wey,
 I rede;

5

For if hi takith 3ou on and on
 From ham scapith ther never one;
 I swer bi Christ and St. Jon
 That of goth 3ur hede.

Now hi w[a]lkith etc.

10

Synge and blow, blow wel blow,
 Synge wen so Y blow [...]

Ion Clerke of Toryton, I dar awow,
 He ys my lordys kynne;
 For he hath ikepte þe gryte sow
With alle my lady swyne.

Yite þerof ys no wonder 5
 Alle the towne ys my lorde vnder,
 And beth hys bounde blode;
 What he commandeth, in goud fay,
 They dar now3t ones say nay
 For the best balle in her hode. 10

Sythyn Ion ys but yong
 And {ys} my lordys hyne,
 Hyt ys no wonder þow he scour þe gonge
 And kepe my lordys swyne.

But by that hys berde be fulle grow 15
 Adon to hys brest,
 He wil loke to lye lowe
 And sumwhat have hys rest.

And amonge alle my lordes blode

Hyt wil now3t passy[n] thre

20

That wil conne lesse goode

And cherle be ther þan he.

And þow hys hert be now3t al ysett

To kepe þe gryte bore,

He wil lerne euer lenger þe bett

25

A3enst he wexyt hore.

And therfor he schalle fare þe bett;

Therof he schalle now3t fayle;

No {man} may hym benyme ne lett

The messe of þe sow tayle.

30

Frere Gastkyn, wo þou be
Qui manes hic in patria;
 For all þat here supporthyth þe
 þou makyst þe way *ad Tartara*.

Tartara ys a place trewly 5
Pro te et consimilibus,
 For hym þat lyvyth in apostasy
 Absentyd a *claustralibus*.

A fysche to lyve allways yn lond 10
Quid vero mirabilius;
 A frere sertayn þat so doth stond
 <.....a>mend et mane tuis *frottibus*.

Lest þe devyll for þe do send
 To present þe *demonibus et fac cum consilio,*
 For he þat mayd þis renne 15
 Wold all such were *in pelago*

In a bote ful of holys,
Vt ibi cum doloribus;
 þer my³th he stere and blowe þe colys
 Tyll he wer *sub flumi[ni]bus*. 20

20 *fluminibus*] MS flumibus

Show thys I care not to whome,

Prio[r] vel episcopo,

For ilk shuche frer[e] schold byde at home,

Non vagans hic in seculo.

Quoth Raff Drake

Burgeys, thou haste so blowen atte the cole
 That alle thy rode is from thine face agoon,
 And haste [so] many dos shotte and istoole
 That fleesh vppon thy carkeys is theyre noon.
 There is nought lefte but empty skynne and bone! 5
 Thou were a trewe swynkere atte the fulle,
 But nowe thy chaum[bis] tookes been echon
 Peesed and fleedde and of her laboure dulle.

Thy warderer, that was wonte for to be
 Mighty and sadde and grene in his laboure, 10
 So wery is of superfluite
 He wolle no more be none ratoure.
 Himselfe he is thy verrey accusoure,
 For so sayne they that knewe his impotence
 As welle as ye, my maister reueloure; 15
 Nowe been ye apte to lye in contynence.

Thy pilers of thyne body in apperence
 Been sufficiaunt to vtwarde iuggement,
 But they been feynt and weike in existence,
 For that her stufte iwastede is and spente; 20
 And yette þou haste a desirous talente
 For to fullefille that þat wol not be.

3 so] MS do so 7 chaumbis] MS chaumbris

For loue of God be nat impaciente,
 But what that I shalle say nowe herken me.

Whanne thou lay atte the stronde haue remembrance 25
 Oones howe þat ye tooke a maladie,
 Off whiche thou feltest so feruent greuaunce
 That verrely thou weneste for to dye;
 And alle was for excesse of venerye,
 And that thyselpe beknewe vnto the route 30
 Of hem that weren in this companye,
 Of whiche myselpe was oon, hit is none doute.

And ther with God thou madest forwarde
 That if him liste to helth the restore,
 Thou woldeste neuere shethen afterwarde 35
 So vsely as thou didest byfore;
 And vnto vs thou crideste euermore,
 'Frendes, beeth ware of excesse and onterage!
 Namely of shote, for it smerteth so soore
 That it to man deth paieth for his waige.' 40

Fulle ruly was th[i] face for to byholde,
 And dedely was thy drery countenance,
 And brethedeste oute sighes depe and colde,
 So that it were a sorowe and a penaunce
 A man to haue alle the circumstaunce. 45

Not kanne my witte remembre al thinges,

41 thi] MS thise

But this I woote wele--that thy recemb{1}aunce
 Was like to oon of the thre dede kinges.

And euere syne the same similitude
 Seiourneth hath with the, not wote I why, 50
 But if I shulde in archerie conclude
 As that abouen somewhat tolde haue I,
 It is none nede forbeden hastely
 A man to venire whiche that may not stonde,
 Ne the for to dispenden largely, 55
 For spare mote [the] thy poore baggefonde.

Bakere Belami,
War the fram the pillori!
But pou make goud lof
Sent Marie worth ye wroth.

A good medesyn yff a mayd have lost her madened to make her a mayd ageyn.

Yff a 3ong woman had a c men take,

I can her ageyne a mayd make,

With a lytylle medesyne

That ys wertows frely fyne,

So that she wylle yt take.

5

She must be wondyrly fed

And leyd in an esy bed

In a hot hows;

She must be wondyrly fed and welle

Wythe good chekenys and grewell,

10

And wythe good fat swynys sowse.

She must have <.....> and a lowse

Wyth the sownd of a belle;

She must have the ney3yng of a mere,

And ix li. of gnattys smere,

15

And do as I yow telle.

She must have allso

The oyll of a mytys too,

With the kerke of a henne;

And the ly3the of a glaweworme in the derke,

20

With ix skyppys of a larke,

And the lanche of a wrenne.

She must have of the wyntyrs ny3hte
vij myle of the mone lych3,
Fast knyht in a bladder;
3e must medyl ther among
vij Wellsshemens song,
And hang yt on a lader.

25

She must have the left fot of an ele,
Wyth the krekyng of a cartwhele
Wele hoylyd on a herdyll;
3e must cast therupon
The mary of a whe3stone,
And the lenthe of Iudas gerdyll.

30

A good medycyn for sor eyen

For a man þat is almost blynd:

Lat hym go barhed all day agey[nst] þe wynd

Tyll þe so3ne be sette;

A<t eve>n wrap hym in a cloke,

And put hym in a hows full of smoke,

5

And loke þat euery hol be well shett;

<And> whan hys eyen begyne to rope,

Fyll hem full of brynston and sope,

And hyll hym well and warme;

And yf he se not by þe next mone,

10

As well at mydny3t as at none,

I schal lese my ry3t arme!

NOTES ON THE TEXTS

In the notes, manuscripts containing the poem concerned are listed first, followed the poem's number in the *Index of Middle English Verse* and the printed editions known to me. The edition I found most helpful in understanding the poem, where relevant, is printed in bold typeface. Difficult phrases are explained in the notes but difficult words have been placed in the glossary.

1

Cambridge, St. John's College, MS G 28 (James 195), fol. i^v. *IMEV* 3697. Previously printed in James, *Cat.*, p. 320; Robbins, *Hist. Poems*, p. 166; Utley, *Harv. Theol. Rev.* 38, p. 144; Kaiser, *Med. Eng.*, p. 323; Person, *Camb. ME Lyr.*, pp. 41-2. Poem 1 is a companion piece to poem 2.

The poem is a repudiation of the friars; the speaker, directly addressing a friar, refuses him entry into his house on the grounds that friars are simoniacal.

2 berfot...schod There was some controversy in the Middle Ages over whether friars should go barefoot or wear shoes (see F. L. Utley, *Harv. Theol. Rev.* 38, p. 144). However, the Franciscan Constitutions of 1354 say that going unshod was a distinguishing mark of that order (A. G. Little, *Studies in English Franciscan History* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1917), pp. 55-6). Cf. *Pierce the Plowman's Crede*, ll. 298-300,

Fraunces bad his breperen barfote to wenden
Nou han þei buclod schon for bleynyng of her heles
And hosen in harde weder y-hamled by þe ancle

3 no more Robbins reads 'neuere'.

4 In principio... The first words of the Vulgate Old Testament and of John 1, often used as a text by friars. Cf. *Jack Upland*, ll. 240-243,

For ye win more by yeare
with *In principio*
than ever your patrons made

Chaucer in describing the Friar mentions his use of 'In principio' (*Pro.* I.254); in *NPT* Chaucer also quotes 'In principio' when Chauntecleer glosses *In principio/Mulier est hominis confusio* as 'Womman is mannes joye and al his blis' (*NPT* ll. 3162-3, 3166).

7-9 Hit is cursed symonie...gostly þinge A belief associated with Wycliffite doctrine. See Herbert E. Winn, ed., *Wyclif: Select English*

Writings (London: Oxford UP, 1929), p. 77, 'Also, alle symonyentis pat bien or sillen spiritual þingis for temporal þingis unlefful, ben cursed solemneli, bope bi Goddis lawe and mannis.' Cf. *Jack Upland*, ll. 342-346.

14 mennes howsis 3e persen A reference to 2 Tim. 3:6 (*ex his enim sunt qui penetrant domos*), the exegesis of which played a major rôle in condemnations of the friars from the time of William of St. Amour, especially by Wyclif and his followers (see Intro., pp. 18, 22-3, for further discussion).

16 mydday deuelis A reference to Ps. 90:6 (*daemonio meridiano*); Wyclif used this phrase as an epithet for the friars (*Trialogus*, pp. 453-5; *Sermones* IV, pp. 191-2).

18 With Robbins omits this word.

Cambridge, St. John's College, MS G 28 (James 195), fol. i^v. *IMEV* 161. Previously printed in Robbins, *Hist. Poems*, pp. 166-8; Utley, *Harv. Theol. Rev.* 38, p. 145; Kaiser, *Med. Eng.*, p. 323; Person, *Camb. ME Lyr.*, pp. 42-3; Davies, *Med. Eng. Lyr.*, pp. 265-6. Poem 2 is a companion piece to poem 1.

This poem is written in the voice of a friar replying to the rejection in poem 1. He laments the spread of knowledge of 'holy writ' among common people, who can then refute him.

2 Now lewed men kun holy writ In the somewhat idealized scenario (from the antifraternal viewpoint) of this poem, 'lewed' or uneducated men have been made familiar with scripture as expounded by itinerant antifraternal preachers, presumably Wycliffites. Bringing scripture to the unlearned, mainly through preaching in the vernacular, was one of Wyclif's chief aims (see Workman, II, pp. 201-219). A rudimentary grounding in scripture, according to the poem, enables common people to see through the false guise of holiness assumed by the friars, and gives them scriptural grounds for refusing the friars alms.

9-10 I trowe þe deuel...To write þe gospel in Englishe Not necessarily a reference to the Wycliffite Bible; parts of the both the Old and New Testaments had previously been translated into English (see Sven L. Fristedt, *The Wycliffite Bible* (Stockholm: Stockholm Stud. in Eng., 1953), I, p. 1). Wyclif evidently was familiar with them, from 'his remarks on the ability of secular lords to study them, and on the horrors of bishops and friars at this achievement' (Margaret Aston, 'Wyclif and the vernacular' in *Studies in Church History 5: Ockham to Wyclif*, ed. A. Hudson and M. Wilks (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), p.284).

14 ...in principio See poem 1, l. 4n.

18 For prestis to worche where bei go The larger question of the disendowment of the Church is touched on here: in the Wycliffite view all endowment of the Church is wrong, and so friars (and all clergy) have no right to expect alms or other support from the community, beyond what is necessary for their survival (see Hudson, *PR* p. 338). The ideal Wycliffite clergy would be satisfied with this provision, and would if necessary do physical labor for their sustenance (Hudson, *PR* p. 341 and note). Cf. *The Plowman's Tale*, ed. Skeat, l. 1159.

20 ...Seint Polle did soo Acts 18:3, 'And because he was of the same trade he stayed with them, and they worked, for by trade they were tentmakers', can be taken to mean that Paul worked during his travels to preach Christianity.

21-24 pan bei loken on myn [h]abete...clopes The Franciscan Constitutions of 1260 specified that friars' garments should be poor in both cost and color (A. G. Little, *Studies in Franciscan History*, p. 58). Wycliffite criticism of friars seized on this point; cf. F. D. Matthew, ed., *English Works of Wyclif...*, i, p. 50, 'And so of clothing thei don agenst this reule in many maneres; for men seen that the kyng or the emperour my3tte with worschipe were a garnement of a frere for goodnesse of the cloth, and namely of such freris as schulden most keep povert of crist...' Cf. also *Jack Upland* ll. 137-143.

25-29 I seye I beg not for me/...berof oone The Franciscan Constitutions of 1260 state that no friar shall possess more than two habits, but this rule was revised in the Constitutions of 1292, which state that no friar shall have more than two new habits in a single year (A. G. Little, *Studies in Franciscan History*, p. 58).

British Library, MS Cotton Cleop. B ii, fol 62^v. IMEV 2777. Previously printed in Wright, *Poet. Poems*, i, 263-8; Brewer, *Mon. Franciscana* (Rolls ser. 4a (1858), pp. 601-6; Cook, *Reader*, pp. 361-4 (ll. 1-84); Bennett, *Eng. Chaucer-Caxton*, pp. 203-6; Rickert, *Chaucer's World*, pp. 374-8; Kaiser, *Med. Eng.*, p. 322; Robbins, *Hist. Poems*, pp. 157-62.

This poem satirizes friars of all orders, contrasting their precepts with their behavior. The speaker claims he nearly joined an order himself, although he does not specify which one.

18 neres Kidneys or region surrounding them. Robbins claims that *neres* represents unhistorical n- attached to *eres* and not *neres*.

27 fro toune to toune by two and two In their wanderings friars usually went in pairs (Knowles, *The Religious Orders in the Middle Ages*, i, p. 180). Cf. *Mum and the Sothsegger* M 398, 'To euery couple [of friars] I construed my caas for þe nones', and note; also *Jack Upland* ll. 309-311. Cf. ll. 81-82, 91-92.

31-2 ...a man/Of simple ordynaunce St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) founder of the mendicant order that bears his name. The son of a wealthy merchant, he renounced all worldly goods and embraced poverty as a holy way of life. The principal tenets of the Franciscan order as he founded it were evangelical poverty, preaching, and rejection of learning.

37-8 þai dele with purses...wyues Cf. F. D. Matthew, ed., *The English Works of Wyclif*, E.E.T.S. 74 (1880), p. 12, '3if þei [friars] becomen pedderis berynge knyues, pursis, pynnys and girdlis and spices and sylk and precious pellure and fourrouris for wymmen, and þerto smale gentil hondis, to gete love of hem...'; also Chaucer's description of the Friar, *Pro.*, 233-34, 'His typpet was ay farsed ful of knyves/And pynnes, for to yeven

faire wyves.'

48 brewe ful bynne Brew (beer) very thinly; not prosper.

51 reute Robbins reads 'reuerce'.

49-55 Somme frers beren pelure aboute...many a dyuers spyse See ll. 37-8n.

73-80 Iich man pat here...likyngis fulfill Cf. poem 7, ll. 21-4, where friars are similarly portrayed.

81-2 ...be lymitour/And with his felawe babe Limitors were friars who undertook the work of begging for their priory; they begged in specifically delimited areas within which their claims for alms superseded those of pardoners, summoners and others who begged (McKisack, p. 309).

91-2 Er he a childe put hir withinne,/And perchaunce two at ones A probable reference to the friars' habit of travelling in pairs (see l. 22n).

99-102 For had a man slayne...clene and sone Cf. poem 4, ll. 41-2, where similarly grave crimes are mentioned as being absolved by friars at similar cost; see also the note to these lines. The friars' right to hear confession was one of the main points in the dispute between the secular and mendicant clergy (see Intro., pp. 16, 18).

107 Cayme The letters of CAIM were taken to stand for the Carmelite, Augustinian, Jacobin (Dominican), and Minorite (Franciscan) orders respectively. For the CAIM acronym in Wyclif's own work, see *Triologus*, ed. G. Lechler (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1869), bk. iv, cap. 33 (p. 362); see also Penn R. Szittyá, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1986), p. 196. For a reference to Cain in the context of antifeminist verse see poem 24, l. 2 and note.

110 Carmes Friars of the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

111 Austynes Friars of the Hermits of St. Augustine.

112 Iacobyne Friars of the Dominican Order, also called the Order of Friars Preachers. They were called Jacobins after the first convent of the

French Dominicans, St. Jacques.

113 Menours The Order of Friars Minor, founded by St. Francis of Assisi and so also called the Franciscan Order. They were called 'minor' (*fratres minores*) because of the order's emphasis on humility.

127-32 ...Templers...kynq In 1308 Edward II complied with the request of Pope Clement V to disband the Order of Knights Templars, a military and religious order founded c. 1118 to protect the Holy Sepulchre and pilgrims visiting the Holy Land. There seems to have been no popular movement against them in England, and in dissolving the order Clement was bowing to the pressure of Philip IV of France (McKisack, pp. 291-2).

135 O frer for eght or nyen shal syng A reference to the friars' substitution of regular for high masses, for which people had paid more.

143 possessioners Endowed, or non-mendicant, clergy. Cf. *Piers Plowman* B V.144-5, 'And now persons han parceyued þat freres parte wip hem/Thise possessioners preche and depraue freres...'

145 lyue al on purchace Live by begging.

158 bot as þai preche nobing do þai Cf. Whiting, P 397, 'Do as the priest says, not as the priest does'.

170 Apostota ne am I none Although he condemns the friars, the speaker is at pains to show that he has not violated Church law. Cf. *Jack Upland*, ll. 126-36, 'Ffor if a frere leefe his bodily habite to þo whiche he is not bounden by Gods lawe, he is holden apostata and scharply pursued, sumtyme to prisoun, and sumtyme to þo deth'; and Arnold, ed., *Fifty Heresies in Select English Works of John Wyclif*, iii, pp. 373, 369, 'Also freris seyn, if a mon be oones professid to hor religioun, he may nevere leeve hit and be saved. þof he be nevere so unable þerto, for al tyme of his lif.' See ll. 171n. and 175n.

171 Of twelue moneþes me wanted one The speaker claims to have remained with an unspecified order for just under a year. This line and l. 175

might be included to give verisimilitude to the speaker's claim to be rejecting the mendicant orders out of knowledge of them; see Intro., pp. 26-7. For a discussion of this and other poems purporting to be by friars see A. G. Rigg, 'William Dunbar: The "Fenyeit Freir"', *RES* n.s. 14 (1963), 269-73.

174 Or tyme come of professioun He quit the order before taking his final VOWS.

British Library, MS Cotton Cleop. B ii, fol. 64^v. *IMEV* 2663. Previously printed in *Rel. Ant.*, i, p. 322; Wright, *Po1. Poems*, i, 268-70; Heuser, *Anglia* 27, pp. 302-3; Brewster, *Mon. Franciscana* (Rolls Ser. 4a (1858), pp. 606-8; Cook, *Reader*, pp. 364-5; Robbins, *Hist. Poems*, pp. 163-4; Davies, *Med. Eng. Lyr.*, pp. 141-2.

This poem criticizes the Franciscan use of images by interpreting them in a blasphemous way.

5, etc. With an O and an I For a discussion of other poems with this refrain see R. L. Greene, *MÆ* 30 (1961), 170.

8-9 ...þai hangen him on hegh on a grene tre/With leues... This poem was long thought to be an attack on Franciscan involvement with mystery plays (see Wright, *Po1. Poems* i, pp. 268-70; Wright and Halliwell, *Rel. Ant.* i 322), but more recent research suggests that the writer's invective is actually directed at the Franciscans' use of images. As Robbins (*Hist. Poems*, p. 335) pointed out, 'þer comes one out of þe skye...' (l. 19) is probably not a description of a medieval performance. Later Beverly Brian in 'Franciscan Scenes in a Fourteenth-Century Satire', *MÆ* 41 (1972), 27-31, offered plausible explanations for each of the scenes in the poem based on Franciscan legend and wall paintings found in Franciscan churches, although not in any that survive in England.

St. Bonaventure in his treatise *Lignum Vitae* uses a tree schema for the life of Christ, an illustration of which could account for the description of Christ hanging on a blossoming tree (Brian, p. 28).

13-14 þai haue done him on a croys...as he shuld flie Just before he received the stigmata, St. Francis had a vision of a seraph surrounded by light and nailed to a cross. This account was originally influenced by the

six-winged seraphim in the vision of Isaiah (Isaiah 6:2), which gradually became transformed into a flying crucifix in the Franciscan legend (Louis Réau, *L'Iconographie de L'Art Chrétien*, 3 t. (Paris: PUF, 1956), III, p. 527).

18 Armachan Richard Fitzralph, Archbishop of Armagh (d. 1360), one of the most powerful enemies of the mendicant orders (see Intro., pp. 20-1).

19 per comes one oute of be skye in a grey goune Robbins noted that this probably does not refer to a medieval dramatic representation (see ll. 8-9n.) and might refer instead to a Franciscan wall painting. It could be a description of the levitation of St. Francis in ecstasy, which appears in Franciscan art throughout the Middle Ages, notably in a fresco depicting the legend of St. Francis in the Upper Church in Assisi (Brian, p. 29). Franciscan friars wore gray robes; cf. l. 32.

21 Mahoune Mahomet or Mohammed, often regarded by Christians in the Middle Ages as a false god.

24 ...pat pai nere all brent Burning at the stake was the punishment for heresy on the continent, but there is no record of heretics in England receiving this punishment before the statute *De heretico comburendo* was passed in 1401.

26-30 per I sawe a frere blede in myddes of his syde...To se a pope holde a dishe whyl be frer bledes According to legend Pope Gregory IX, when he had doubts about Francis' canonization, was visited by him in a dream and told to receive the blood from his stigmata in a phial as proof of his saintliness. If this scene were drawn or painted it could conceivably be described as in these lines (Brian, p. 29). Lines 26-7 explicitly refer to stigmata.

31-32 A cart was made al of fyre...A grey frer I sawe berinne... Not a reference to the fiery chariot in which Elijah was carried to heaven (*pace* Robbins) but the chariot of fire of Franciscan legend, which appeared to

Francis' followers while he was away preaching (Brian, p. 29). The fiery chariot was frequently included in medieval Franciscan art.

32 grey frer See l. 19n.

42 Sle bi fadre and iape bi modre and pai wyl be assoile One of the central issues in the struggle between the secular and the mendicant clergy was the right of mendicants to hear confession; they were accused of performing this function solely for monetary benefit. The friars were also known for giving easy penances, which they did on the theory that it was better to give a sinner a light penance he was likely to perform than a hard penance which he would probably ignore or fail to complete (H. W. C. Davies, *Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1924), pp. 392-3). Myrc's *Instructions for Parish Priests*, E.E.T.S. e.s. 31 (1868, rev'd 1902), contains the advice, 'Better hyt ys with penaunce lutte/Into purgtory a man to putte/Than wyth penaunce overmyche/Sende hym to helle putte'). Cf. poem 3, ll. 99-102.

5

London, British Library, MS Harley 3362, fol. 24; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 196, fol. 196 (variants). *IMEV* 808. Previously printed in *Rel. Ant.* I, pp. 91-2.

Friars are compared in this poem to other commonplace annoyances.

1 Flen, flyys, and freris The association of the three was proverbial; see Whiting, F 336.

populum Domini male cedunt From which the people of the Lord go wretchedly away.

2 crescentia gramina ledunt Damage the growing grass.

3 Christe, nolens guerras, sed cuncta pace tueris Christ, not wanting strife, but to look on complete peace.

4 per terras Throughout the earth.

6

London, British Library, MS Harley 2252, fol. 1^v. *IMEV* 1148.

Friars are here compared implicitly to a particularly offensive illness.

Cambridge, Trinity College, MS O.2.40 (James 1144), fol. 58^v. *IMEV* 871. Previously printed in *Rel Ant.* II, p. 247; Wright, *Po1. Poems* II, pp. 249-50; Robbins, *Hist. Poems*, pp. 164-5. Written in long lines in the manuscript. The Latin is frequently corrupt.

This macaronic poem makes the usual accusations of deceit and corruption against the friars.

2 Ministri malorum Ministers of evil.

4 Ad penas infernorum Into infernal suffering.

5 Whan seyntes felle fryst from heuen Angels, not saints, were thrown down from heaven (Rev. 12:7-9).

6 Quo prius habitabant Where they had dwelt previously.

8 Et fratres cmmunicabant And will share them (the seven deadly sins) with the friars.

10 Quem fratres pertulerunt Which the friars brought home with them.

11 error Robbins reads 'derei'.

12 Multi perierunt Many perished.

14 Ad falandum gentem To people who are easily deceived.

16 Pecunias habentem Who has money.

18 Fruget petunt isti Those (good-for-nothings) ask for beans.

20 Qui non sunt de grege Cristi Who are not of Christ's flock.

21-4 Lat a freer...violare Cf. poem 3, ll. 73-80, where friars are similarly portrayed.

22 Tecum pernoctare Pass the night in your home.

24 Hic vult violare He will want to violate.

26 Sicut furtam fortis Like robbery by force.

28 In inferni portis Within the infernal gates.

29 pei weyl assaylle boyth Iacke and Gylle...predones Friars were often accused of hearing confession solely for profit; see poem 4 l.42n. and Intro. pp. 16-18.

assaylle A pun on *assoil* (sometimes spelt *assail*), meaning 'to absolve', and *assail*, 'to assault'.

30 Licet sint predones It is permissible to be a thief.

32 Qui sunt latrones Who are highwaymen.

34 Sic edificare To edify such men.

36 Qui vadunt mendicare Who rush about to beg.

38 Reges proditores Betrayers of the king.

40 Falsi deceptores False deceivers.

42 Filius atque Flamen Son and Holy Ghost.

Omnes dicant Amen All say Amen.

Lincoln Cathedral Library, MS 91, fol 148. *IMEV* 2026. Previously printed in *Rel. Ant.*, ii, p. 280-2; Reekes, *NM* 83 (1982), 38-41.

This poem, like poem 35, seems to satirize women's sexuality and male sexual incompetence at the same time. Women's supposed sexual voracity is also a theme in Dunbar's *A Tretise of the Tua Marrit Wemen and the Wedow* (Ed. Kinsley, pp. 48-52).

1 Lyarde Streaked or spotted horse; also an adjective meaning 'grey'.

Jason Reekes (*NM* 83, p. 36) thinks the name, which also serves as the poem's title in the manuscript, might be a pun on 'goliard', but it is at least as possible that the name is simply a pun on 'liar'.

3 Barefote withowttyn schone... The Franciscan rule implied that Minorite friars should go unshod, and bare feet came to be one of the distinguishing marks of the order (see Intro., p. 22; cf. poem 1, ll. 1-2). The parallel between the shoeless horse Lyarde and the unshod Franciscans is developed through repeated references to shoelessness in ll. 9, 12, 31, and 62.

6 prouande Fodder, but also the portion of food allotted to each member of a religious house.

13 pilche Horse blanket, but also a type of hair shirt.

14 wastur Both an idle man and an animal worthless for breeding.

30 He sall be geldid... Cf. poem 3, ll. 85-8, 'If I were a man that hous held/No frer but he were geld/Would come within my wones'.

32 ...tym of Michelmes till it be after Ester Michaelmas or the feast of St. Michael (29 September) is traditionally one of the quarter days of the English business year. The line refers to the autumn and winter, when animals are put out to pasture.

34 a sekke fermere A friar who cared for the sick in the house's

infirmary.

35 ...howse of dyng The early English Minorites, following the instructions of St. Francis who wished his friars to have the poorest buildings possible, built their churches of mud and sticks ('dyng' refers to a mixture of mud, straw, and excrement). One of the first Franciscan churches built of stone was pulled down on orders of the local bishop for violating the instructions of St. Francis (Brewer, ed. *Monumenta Franciscana*, Rolls ser. 4a (1858), vol. 1, p. xix).

37 smale swywynge menne Men who are not very active sexually.

38 chapmans mark The mark of ownership of a livestock dealer, branded onto an animal's hindquarters.

43 non oper serke bot þe harde hayere They shall wear no other shirts but rough hairshirts.

44 Appilby fare A fair held since early medieval times at Appleby in Cumbria, where horses were (and still are) shown and traded.

47 Clense wele...bakke Advice to those about to be bartered to look sharp.

53 many on maa Many a one more.

72 a house of lym and of stone A reference to the Franciscans' departure from building their churches from mud and sticks; cf. l. 35 and note.

80 fosterer Possibly a pun on 'parent' and 'forester', one who lives away from the community.

81 Ful falle hym Foul (chance) befall him.

82 crowne schorne The tonsure, marking those in religious orders.

83 þat sall we proue The later Franciscans were devoted to the study of logic and philosophy despite St. Francis' objection to learning, and by the early fourteenth century were coming to dominate the universities. Many notable medieval philosophers were Franciscans, among them Roger Bacon and St. Bonaventura.

85-6 trede...trede-foulle To tread, regarding male birds, meant to

copulate; a tread fowl was a male bird kept among hens or geese to ensure continuous production of eggs.

87 croune schorne See l. 81n.

90 And for þay go seldom to þay gete grete sayntes Because friars have sexual relations so seldom, when they do they beget great saints.

96 ...clyme alle to God one a schorte tree Are hanged.

97 and that wille I prove See l. 91n.

100 assayllede A pun on 'assail' and 'assoil' (meaning 'absolve' and often spelt 'assail' in Middle English).

105 smalle swywyng men See l. 37n.

106 Sayne Silvester Silvester the First, pope; died 335. Little is known about him, despite his name appearing frequently in ecclesiastical history. Later legends about him abound and were very influential in the Middle Ages. As bishop of Rome he supposedly received primacy over all other bishops and temporal dominion over Italy from the Emperor Constantine, but this 'donation' has long been recognized as a fabrication.

115 brokyn owte of bande Have broken their bonds and freed themselves.

120 laye myn hede to wedde I lay my head as a wager; I bet my head (a pun on 'head' and 'maidenhead' might be intended here).

122 Sayne Silvester See l. 106n.

130 Yf a man thynke mekill...horde Cryptic, but maybe 'If a man is intelligent, he will hold some of his energies in reserve.'

London, British Library, MS Arundel 292, fol. 70^v. *IMEV* 3819. Previously printed in *Rel. Ant.* I, pp. 291-2; Haupt and Hoffman, *Altdeutsche Blätter* II, pp. 145-6; Hollander, *Untuning of Sky*, p. 425; Utley, *Spec.* xxi (1946), 194-202; Sisam, *Ox. Book Med. Eng. Verse*, pp. 184-7.

The satirical lament of a tone-deaf chorister, who wonders why he has given up worldly pleasures for the cloister.

3 ce-sol-fa The musical note C, which may occur as sol or fa in the Guidonian hexachords (developed by Guido d'Arezzo in the tenth century for teaching singing to choirboys by associating each note of the hexachord with a particular syllable) For these and other terms see Henry Holland Carter, *A Dictionary of Medieval Musical Terms* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1961).

8 Al be mirthe of bis mold for God I forsoke! Laments by religious for the secular life, such as this one, are a standard component of *chansons de nonne* (see Intro., p. 41).

9 gowle on my grayel and rore als a roke Howl over my gradual (a book containing choir music for the Mass) and cry out like a rook (a raucous-voiced bird of the crow family).

12 kroken awayward als a fleshoke Bend sideways like a meathook.

17 Wap me Woe is me.

20 bequarre A note, now B-natural, so called because of its square shape.

bemol A note, now B-flat, introduced into the F hexachord in the Guidonian system to avoid the interval of a tritone between B and F.

21 Web be Woe is you.

28 Now wot I qwou iudicare was set in be crede 'Now I know how *iudicare* (to judge [the living and the dead]) came to be put in the Creed' or 'Now I

know what it means to be punished.' Cf. a poem printed by F. L. Utley in *Med. Stud.* 8 (1946), 303-9. Proverbial; see Whiting, J 80.

29 Me is so wo...in be walmes I am as sad as a bee that buzzes inside the walls (presumably because, like William, it both drones and is trapped).

31 I ne rendrede...beren palmes He has not sung for his master since Palm Sunday (the Sunday before Easter commemorating the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, when the crowd carried palm fronds to honor him).

32 Is it also...salmes Is there as much sorrow in singing as there is in the psalms?

34 solfe Sing the notes of the scale in the Guidonian system (see l. 3n.).

35 heue hem al of herre Sing them all a note higher.

37 bemol See l. 20n.

38 Qwan I wente out of bis word When I left the secular world (to become a monk).

liste til mi lare Listen to my tale.

39 Of ef-fa-ut3 and c-la-mi ne cud Y neuere are Of F (fa or ut depending on which hexachord in which it appears) and C (la or mi depending on the hexachord) I never knew anything before.

40 fa The fourth note in the Guidonian hexachords.

41 sol The fifth note in the Guidonian hexachords.

vt The first note in the Guidonian hexachords.

la The sixth note in the Guidonian hexachords.

42 fa See l. 40n.

45 a streinant wit3 to longe tailes A musical note with two stems, similar to the breve.

46 horled mi kayles A colloquial expression equivalent to 'knocked the pegs out from under me'.

50 ge-sol-re-ut3 Ge-sol-re-ut, the note G, called sol, re, or ut depending in which of the three hexachords it appears.

en hawt On high, or above middle C.

52 que wos ren ne vaut That you are worth nothing.

London, British Library, MS Harley 913, fol. 3. *IMEV* 762. Previously printed in Furnivall, *E.E. Poems*, p. 156; Wright, *Altdeutsche Blättern*, I, p. 396; Maetzner, *AE Sprachp.* I, p. 147; Heuser, *Die Kildare-Gedichte*, pp. 145-50; Morley, *Sh. Eng. Poems*, pp. 18-23; Cook, *Reader*, pp. 368-72 (120 ll. only); Haupt and Hoffman, *Altdeutsche Blättern*, I, p. 38; Kuriyagawa, *Eigo Seinen*, nos. 5-9; Robbins, *Hist. Poems*, pp. 121-7; Bennett and Smithers, *EMEV&P*, rev'd 2nd ed., pp. 138-144; Sisam, *Oxford Book MEV*, pp. 159-163 (110 ll. only).

This poem, a satire on monks and nuns, is also a satire on the so-called peasant's paradise of abundance in a life without hard physical labor. Bennett and Smithers argue that the poem is a parody of conceptions of utopia (p. 137); see E. G. Stanley, 'Parody in Early English Literature', *Poetica* 27 (1988), 7-10, for a refutation of this.

1 west The Christian paradise was thought to be in the east; Cockaigne's location in the west is appropriate for an anticlerical paradise (see A. L. Morton, *The English Utopia* (London, 1952), p. 13).

2 Cokaygne A mythical paradise; the name is probably connected with Ger. *kuken*, cake, or Romanic cognates, because the houses in Cockaygne were made of cakes. OF *trouver cocaigne* is 'to find the country where good things drop of themselves into the mouth' (*OED* 2nd ed.).

3-4 heuen riche/Of wel of God nil hit iliche There is nothing like it in the heavenly kingdom of God's goodness.

14 Hely and Enok Elijah, who was taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot (II Kings 2.11), and Enoch, who walked with God and was also taken up to heaven (Gen. 5.24). According to medieval legend, they both were to be slain by the Antichrist and resurrected in three days (see Douglas Hyde, 'Mediaeval

Accounts of Antichrist', in *Medieval Studies in Memory of Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis* (1927), pp. 391-8.

20 To none, russin, and sopper At the noon meal, tea (Ir. *ruisin*, 'afternoon snack'), and supper.

45-6 per beb riuers...wine Many conceptions of paradise contain rivers that flow with wine, milk, honey, and oil (see H. R. Patch, *The Other World*, pp. 13-14; M. R. James, *Apocrypha Anecdota* (1893), par. 23, in J. A. Robinson, ed., *Texts and Studies*, pp. 1-42) ; Bennett and Smithers say that Cokaygne's four rivers derive historically from a utopia based on Lucian's Isle of the Blest (*EMEV&P*, p. 338).

52 white monkes and of grei The Carthusians and Premonstratensian Canons wore white; the Cistercians wore grey.

64 stoute and sterne Robbins points out that this is a common alliterative phrase (*Hist. Poems*, p. 318); cf. Chaucer *KnT* l. 1296, 'hertes sturne and stoute'; *Adv. Arthur* xii, 'sturrun and stowte'.

67-68 pe pilers...Beb iturned of cristale The palace of glass is frequently a feature of earthly paradise (see Morton, p. 14).

77 gilofre of gode smakke Flavorful clove.

83 willis Wells, referring to the four rivers of paradise. The four wells link Cokaygne with the traditional Well of Life; cf. Morton, pp. 16-17; Mandeville, *EETS* 154, p. 113. Cf. ll. 45-6 and note.

86 Euer ernend to ri3t rent Always flowing to good profit.

87-8 of pai stremis...golde From them streams all the precious stones and gold of the earth.

95 fale Numerous. Robbins notes that the list of birds given here might be conventional (*Hist. Poems*, p. 319); cf. *The Owl and the Nightingale*, ed. Stanley, l. 1659; *EgertGrine*, l. 922 etc.

109 Idi3t in stu Prepared in a stew.

112 wipvte swink Without work.

- 124 bi be lifte On the wind.
- 132 in o randun In a rush (see Mustanoja, *NM* 55 (1954), 56-8).
- 135 route Company (probably of the monastery's sister house).
- 138-9 And betip be taburs...lond And beats the drums to call the monks down to land. Drums were sometimes used to call monks in from their work.
- 145 collacione Monastic reading before compline, followed by a drink of light meal.
- 153 dop ham forp Go forth.
- 169 wipoute danger Without refusal.
- 176 uadir abbot Father Abbot, or head of the monastery.
- 190 seint charite Holy charity.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 851, fol. 2. *IMEV* 569. Previously printed in *Rel. Ant.* I, pp. 259-60.

This is a nonsense verse that takes a satirical swipe at unlearned clergy.

1 Saint Hillare St. Hilary (c. 315-368) was a bishop of Poitiers and one of the Church Fathers.

6 Sis Allkar Sister Allkar.

British Library, MS Sloane 2593, fol. 34. *IMEV* 377. Previously printed in Wright, *Carols*, pp. 100-1; *EEL* pp. 220-1; *Ox. Book of Light Verse*, p. 53; Kaiser, *Anthol.*, p. 312, *Med. Eng.*, p. 477; Speirs, *Med. Eng. Poetry*, pp. 82-3; Robbins, *Sec. Lyr.*, pp. 21-2; Davies, *Med. Eng. Lyr.*, pp. 162-3; Greene, *EEC* 2nd ed., p. 457, *Se1.*, p. 166; Sisam, *OBMEV&P*, pp. 445-6; Gray, *OBLMV&P*, p. 162.

This is one of the most widely known anticlerical poems in Middle English, satirizing wanton clergy in the voice of a young woman who has been seduced by one Jankin, who seems to be the local priest. It also parodies the Mass in part.

2 Iankyn A name for lecherous clerics, often found in Middle English literature. Cf. Chaucer, *ShipT* 2288, 2293; *WBT* 303 and *passim*; *ST*; R. Morris, ed., *An Old English Miscellany*, *EETS* 49 (1872), p. 189; Skelton, *Magnificence*, ed. P. Neuss (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1980), Scene 16.

6 Kyrieleyson Both a reference to *kyrie eleison*, 'Lord, have mercy', an element of the Latin mass, and a pun on the name Alison, spelt 'Aleyson' in the carol's burden.

11 payid for his cote Presumably by supporting him either through tithes if he is a parish priest, or alms if he is a friar.

13-14 crakit notis...wortis to be pot Jankin sang short notes as compared to the long notes of plain song. The Wycliffites objected strenuously to Jankin's type of song; see F. D. Matthew, ed., *The English Works of Wyclif Hitherto Unprinted*, *EETS* 74 (1880), p. 92, '...þanne strumpatis 7 þeuys preisen sire iacke or hobbe 7 williem þe proude clerke, how smale þei knacken here notis; 7 seyn þat þei seruen wel god, 7 holy chirche, whanne þei dispisen god in his face...' The comparison with food chopped small

for 'the pot' seems to be idiomatic; see part of a sermon cited in Owst, *Literature and Pulpit*, p. 466, '...more cruel than though they hackede here children as smal as mosselles to here pot...'

16 beryt þe pax brede Not the communion bread, but a disk of precious metal with a handle and decorated with a sacred symbol, used to give the kiss of peace to the congregation (see John S. Bumpus, *A Dictionary of*

Ecclesiastical Terms (London, 1911), sv. 'Pax'). A parallel might be implied between Jankin's holy kiss and his intentions towards the poem's speaker.

17 on myn fot he trede In his notes to the poem R. L. Greene says that this is a 'signal of amorous intention' used by a clerk in *A verie merie Historie of the Milner of Abington*, ll. 178, 264 (in W. C. Hazlitt, ed., *Remains of the Early Popular Poetry of England*, 3 vols. (London, 1886).

19 Benedicamus domino (Let us) bless the Lord.

Cryst fro schame me schylde This phrase also appears in the first lines of the Middle English romance *Sir Gowther* in NLS MS Advocates 19.3.1.

20 Deo gracias Thanks be to God.

London, British Library, MS Cotton Vesp. B xvi, fol. 2^v. *IMEV* 1926.

Previously printed in Turner, *Hist. of Eng.* 1815, iv, pp. 227-9; Wright, *Poet. Poems* ii, pp. 243-7; Ritson, *Anc. Songs* 1829, i. pp. 121-7; Robbins, *Hist. Poems*, pp. 152-7.

This poem refers to the treason of Sir John Oldcastle, a Lollard knight, in a wider context of anti-Lollard sentiment.

20 For fals beleue to ben brent The statute *De Heretico Comburendo*, which provided for the burning of unrepentant heretics, was passed in 1401.

33 An old castel A pun on the name of Sir John Oldcastle, a Lollard knight executed for heresy and insurrection in 1417.

37-38 pat rereth...Agayns þe kyng and his clergie Oldcastle was behind the Lollard rising of 1414, which had as its objective the death of Henry V and his brothers during or immediately following the Christmas celebrations to be spent at Eltham (see E. F. Jacob, *The Fifteenth Century* (Oxford, Clarendon, 1961), pp. 130-131). The rising was easily stopped, and Oldcastle was captured but escaped from the Tower shortly afterwards. Since the poem refers to the rebellion but not to Oldcastle's execution in 1417, it was probably written in the period between 1414 and 1417, during which Oldcastle was at large.

73-5 I trowe þer be no kni3t alyue...gentelmannes game With his *Constitutions* Archbishop Thomas Arundel hoped to suppress heresy not by reasoned vernacular argument against it, which would also serve to publicize the heresy further, but by complete suppression of all vernacular theological discussion (Hudson, *The Premature Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1989), p. 431). Thus the accusation in these lines that Oldcastle is meddling in affairs which, as a knight, should not concern him. Cf.

Hoccleve's *Remonstrance to Oldcastle* (1415):

Let holy chirche medle of the doctryne
Of Crystes lawes and of his byleeue
And lete alle othir folke therto enclyne...

Be war Oldcastle and for Crystes sake
Clymbe no more in holy writ so hie

(*Minor Poems*, ll. 137-40, 193-4)

There also seems to be a certain outrage that as a member of the nobility he is involved in a movement consisting largely of artisans and laborers.

85 saunz faile...saunz doute Without fail; without doubt.

99 thes Lollardes pat lothen ymages most Opposition to images was one of the most consistent features of the Lollard heresy (Margaret Aston, *Lollards and Reformers* (London: Hambledon, 1984), p. 136).

101-102 And pilgrimages to be sou3t/pei seien hit is but mawmentrie

Lollards objected to pilgrimages because people made them in order to venerate relics and images; see *The Lanterne of Li3t*, *EETS* 151 (1917), pp. 84-85.

105-106 He war ful lewde pat wolde byleue...ston Wyclif and his followers feared that the adoration for the Trinity and the saints which images were supposed to arouse would instead be transferred to the images themselves by unlettered people (Aston, p. 139). *The Lanterne of Li3t* says of images, 'þe peyntour makip an ymage forgid wip diuerse colours til it seme in foolis i3en as a lyueli creature'. Moreover, images of Christ and the saints sometimes had supernatural powers associated with them; that they have no inherent powers is a point made in *The Twenty-five Articles* (Arnold, *Select English Works of Wyclif Hitherto Unprinted*, iii, p. 462).

For an examination of the supernatural beliefs that grew up around Christian images, relics and ritual in the Middle Ages, see Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), Chaps. 2 and 3.

113-116 And namly Iames...beheded hym in Kent Although all Lollards seem to have objected to images (see note to l. 97 above), some objected more actively than others by burning, chopping up, or otherwise defacing images. These lines refer to the otherwise unrecorded desecration of a statue of St. James in Kent. Charles Kightly says that this occurrence was well known at the time (Kightly, 'The Early Lollards: A Survey of Popular Lollard Activity in England, 1382-1428' (unpublished D.Phil. thesis, York, 1975), p. 405).

137-139 And under colour...our liege lord kynq See note to ll. 37-38 above.

Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.19 (James 599), fol. 205. *IMEV* 1300.
 Previously printed in Stow, *Chaucer* 1561; Chalmers (fr. Stow), *Engl. Poets*,
 I, pp. 563-4; Person, *Camb. ME Lyr.*, pp. 42-3.

The catalogue of ugliness, as found in this poem, is frequently a component of Middle English verse satirizing women; in the present collection see poems 15, 23 and 25. Such catalogues may also be found in a roundel by Hoccleve (Ed. Furnivall and Gollancz, pp. 311-12) and in Dunbar's *Ane Blak Moir* (ed. Kinsley, no. 33).

11 rauynnysshe yelow ys hyr sonny tresse Her hair is as yellow as the raven (not yellow at all but very dark).

15 as a bolt hyr browes byn ybent Her eyebrows are as straight as an arrow (not arched or 'bent' at all).

16 byttyll-browyd she ys also withall Her brows are furrowed; hence she has a grim, sullen expression.

18 can no good at all Knows no good; is wicked.

28 so goodly speche spyll Ruin such good conversation.

29 slowth noone shall haue in here entresse Sloth shall take no interest in her.

40 Quene Iane Joan, widow of John IV and duchess regent of Brittany, who married Henry IV of England in February 1403.

49 For were she wele of me I dyd no cure If she were well disposed towards me I would need no remedy (for lovesickness).

London, British Library, MS Harley 2255, fol. 153^v. *IMEV* 2237. Previously printed in Halliwell, *Lydgate's M.P.*, ii. 199-205.

The catalogue of ugliness found in this poem, whose authorship recent scholars have once again assigned to Lydgate, is the most obscene and relentless in the shorter verse surviving from the medieval period. For less stunning examples of such catalogues see poems 14, 23 and 25. The meaning of many of the stanzas is obscure, mainly due to the author's peculiar syntax and tendency to jump from metaphor to metaphor.

3 Of colourys like the noble newe Cf. Chaucer, *MT*, ll. 3255-6, 'Full brighter was the shynyng of hir hewe/Than in the Tour the noble yforged newe'.

8 Whan she hath on hire hood of green Why the poem's subject wears a hood of green is not clear; it may be that the hood hides her ugliness and so makes her more pleasing to the eye.

10 Fro the heed to the novyl...down In the rhetoric of courtly description the poet often begins with the subject's head and works down from there.

17-18 The kyrspe skyn of hir forheed...bownde She is wearing a band or ribbon around her head.

33-4 Here greet shulderys...bely so large Cf. poem 23, ll. 37-8, 'With hangyng shuldres wauyng with euery wynde,/Sma1 in the bely as a wyn tonne'.

36 She is no bot, she is a barge Cf. poem 23, ll. 54-6, where the woman is compared to a boat of some kind, possibly a barge.

42-4 hath too pappys...campyng ball Cf. no. 23, l. 21, 'And eyper of

youre pappys like a water bowge'.

53 Hire teeth been whight as ony iete Cf. no. 23, l. 31, 'And yelow tethe, not lyk to the swan'.

65-66 Hire buttokkys...Spaynych stede Cf. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (ed. Tolkien), ll. 966-7, 'Hir body watz schort and pik,/Hir buttokez bal3 and brode'.

73-80 Hire lemys not smal...hood of grene A difficult stanza, possibly 'Her limbs are not small but like spears; she is put together randomly like an elephant, to bear up the great bell (her head) -- a belfry for the body's font (E. G. Stanley emends 'faunt' to 'saunt' and reads 'body saunt' on a parallel with *corsaint*; see *Poetica* 27 (1988)), or else to play at (a game?), or for a hasard (dice game with arbitrary rules) of high stakes, he is just as well off who has her permission to touch her jaggedly edged hood of green'.

85-7 But on them...stonde She will ride (a metaphor for sexual intercourse) the bay horse as well as the brown, and the sorrel too; in other words she is indiscriminate in choosing her lovers.

97-100 Hire watir lyme...his rochys byte Difficult lines, perhaps 'Her water lime (for catching fowl) is well made for both the cormerant and the suyte (a type of fowl?); the bittern that eats the great eel will yet each roach (a small freshwater fish)'. The general idea of the stanza seems to be that no man can escape her wiles.

105-112 The metaphor of hunting for sexual pursuit was common in late medieval poetry; cf. poem 80; also *Blow Thy Horn, Hunter* in Gray, ed., *OBLMV&P*, p. 176.

129-136 Now what she beryth...hood of green Another difficult stanza. Perhaps 'What [arms] she bears I will tell you, although I cannot blaze

(read or design) (coats of) arms; nor can I completely ring her belly (encircle her waist), which is as wrinkled as a mace (wrinkled seed from which the spices mace and nutmeg are derived). A man may stare at her a long time before he decides what her badges (emblems) may be ; her [stained glass] windows (such as those bearing the arms of the families who donated them) are hard to glaze, when she has on her hood of green'.

137 cote armure Coat of arms.

139 terget Target, but also figuratively pudenda.

16

London, British Library, MS Addit. 10336, fol. 4. *IMEV* 3765.5. Previously printed in Halliwell, *Percy Soc.* II, p. 271.

The speaker of poem 16 mocks conventional courtly descriptions of the mistress.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. poet. e 1, fol. 43^V (base text); Oxford, Balliol College MS 354, fol. 250^V, which contains stanzas 1, 3, 5 and 6 only (= O); BL Printed Book IB 55252 (Trevisa, *Bartholomeus Anglicus*), fol. 477^V, which contains stanzas 1, 3 [defective], 5, 6 [defective] and 7 [defective] only (= R). See also 'When wreneys weare wodknyves Cranes for to kyll' in Furnivall, *Ballads*, i, p. 313. *IMEV* 3999. Previously printed in Wright, *Percy Soc.* xxiii, p. 66; Flügel, *Anglia* xxvi, pp. 277-8; Dyboski, *EETS* 101, p. 114; FitzGibbon, *Early Eng. and Scot. Poetry*, p. 200; Wells, *Nonsense Anth.*, p. 186; Masters, *Rymes of Minstr.*, pp. 18-19; Robbins, *Sec. Lyr.*, p. 103; Davies, *Med. Eng. Lyr.*, pp. 223-4; Utley, *PMLA* 60, pp. 346-7; Roberts, *Straw in the Hair*, p. 149 (in part); Silverstein, p. 151; Tydeman, p. 58; Greene, *EEC* 2nd ed., pp. 238-9.

Poem 17 satirizes the constancy of women by comparing its likelihood to that of (other) impossibilities.

1 When nettuls... Proverbial; see Whiting, N 94.

2 thorn trys ber fygys Proverbial; see Whiting, T 223. Cf. Luke 6:44, '...For figs are not gathered from thorns, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush'; Matt. 7:16, 'You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles?'

6 kyskys gyfe of hony superfluens Cf. similar lines in a poem printed in Wright, *Percy Soc.* xxiii, pp. 9-10, 'When brome wyll appeles bere/And hemlocke hony in feere'.

11 bullis of be see Seals.

22 Whan swyn... Proverbial; see Whiting, S 972.

48 Westmynster The Hall of Westminster, location of the major civil law courts.

Oxford, Bodl. MS Eng. Poet. e 1, fol. 13. *IMEV* 3552. Previously printed in Wright, *Poet. Songs*, p. 4; Masters, *Rymes of the Minstrels*, p. 20; Padelford, *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.* ii, p. 385; Silverstein, p. 153; Greene, *EEC* (2nd ed.), p. 329.

Women are here placed in the company of other noxious animals, friars among them.

2 A fox, a fryyer, and a woman Cf. Whiting, F 620, 'Two friars and a fox make three shrews'.

4 A wasp, a wesyll, and a woman Cf. Whiting, W 50 and W 52; also Chaucer's description of Alison in *MT*, l. 3239. Five puzzles (*IMEV* 3256.3) on fol. 1^v of the Brome MS (Yale, Beinecke MS 365) follow the formula of this poem; see Greene, *EEC* (2nd ed.) p. 455.

Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 383 (James 603), p. 68. *IMEV* 1280. Previously printed in Robbins, *Sec. Lyr.*, p. 34; Greene, *EEC* 2nd ed., pp. 288-9, *Se1.*, p. 167; Sisam, p. 454; Oliver, p. 112; Stemmler, p. 84. Poem 20 is similar to poem 19 and may be an expanded version of it, but both poems resemble a third poem (see l. 3n.). Further similar sentiments may be found in poem 26.

The lover in this poem pines so much for his mistress that his sleep and appetite are undisturbed. That he has been rejected by her is made out to be a good thing -- why should he drink ale (have a mistress) when he can drink good wine (have the pleasure of life without a woman)?

Burden

For other carols with similar burdens see Greene, *Early English Carols* (2nd ed.), nos. 406 and 470.1.

Poem

3 Wanne Yc slepe Yc may not wake Robbins in *Secular Lyrics* notes part of song found in Worcester Cathedral Library MS F 64, on fol. 8, 'He may cum to mi lef but by þe watere wanne me lust slepen þanne mot i wakie wnder is þat hi liuie'. Cf. poem 20, where this line is used as the poem's refraid.

7-10 Wanne Yc ryse vp...dyne Cf. poem 20, ll. 25-28.

11 ryche Greene reads 'rythe'.

Oxford, Balliol College, MS 354, fol. 252 (base text); Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, MS Porkington 10, fol. 56^v. *IMEV* 1957. Previously printed in Dyboski, *EETS* 101, p. 119; Flugel, *Anglia* xxvi, pp. 284-5; Halliwell, *Early Eng. Misc.*, ii, pp. 6-8; *Early Eng. Lyrics*, pp. 217-19. Poem 19 is similar in many respects to poem 20 and might have served as its departure point, but the poet could have had another lyric in mind as well (see ll. 53-4n.).

This poem is a more elaborate, even belabored, exposition of the sentiments expressed in poem 19. Poem 20 details the ways in which the lover's sorrow at being abandoned by his mistress affects him: he sleeps well, gains weight, and like the speaker in poem 19 is better off without her in general.

8, etc. That I slepe I cannot wake Cf. poem 19, l. 3.

11-12 That my shoo byndith my litill too/...all my smarte is for you Cf. poem 26, l. 5.

25-8 In the mornynq...any good wyne Cf. poem 19, ll. 7-10.

53-4 My love...thorow many a lake Probably a reference to a song preserved incompletely in Worcester Cathedral Library MS F 64, on fol. 8, 'He may cum to mi lef but by þe watere wanne me lust slepen þanne mot i wakie wnder is þat hi liuie'. This poem and no. 19 might parody it, at least in part.

London, British Library, MS Addit. 5665, fol. 67. *IMEV* 474.5. Previously printed in Ritson, *Anc. Songs* (1792), p. 102; Stevens, *Music and Poetry*, p. 339.

This dialogue between a woman and her would-be lover has been compared to flytings and is in some ways reminiscent of poems 22 and 23. The relationship of the two speakers falls somewhat short of the courtly ideal as expressed in many Middle English lyrics.

4 Lef werke Stop it; knock it off.

a tventy a deuell way! A popular oath; cf. Chaucer, *CYT*, ll. 782-3, 'And al the cost, a twenty devel waye,/Is lost also, which we upon it laye'.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawl. poet. 36, fol. 3^v. *IMEV* 3832.

Previously printed in Robbins, *MLR* 37, p. 416, *Sec. Lyr.*, pp. 219-20; Cords, *Archiv.* 135, p. 296; Davies, *Med. Eng. Lyr.*, pp. 244-5. Poem 22 is a companion piece to poem 23. See poem 21 for a dialogue between a woman and her would-be lover, and poems 1 and 2 for an antifraternial dialogue.

This short poem is rather unusual in that it contains a catalogue of masculine ugliness, and the poem's speaker is a woman.

1 ...bis lettre I write By the mid-fifteenth century the epistle form was a well-established convention of Middle English love poetry. R. H. Robbins lists 39 examples that survive (including this poem and its companion piece) but there are certainly more (see Robbins, 'Two Satiric Middle English Verse Epistles', *MLR* 37 (1942), 420, but also Arthur K. Moore, *The Secular Lyric in Middle English*, p. 147). Cf. Chambers and Sidgwick, *ERL* 15-19, where 'De Amico ad Amicam' and the 'Responsio' provide an example of a non-satirical epistolary exchange in lyric form between a man and a woman; also *Rel. Ant.* II, 173-4 for an instance of brothers exchanging verse epistles.

6ff. Most fresch of contenaunce... The speaker's catalogue of her lover's charms reverses this convention of the Middle English lyric in two ways: by mocking the lover through unfavorable comparisons that are as ludicrously insulting as favorable comparisons in traditional catalogues are complimentary, and by doing so from a woman's point of view. Catalogues of male charms, mocking or otherwise, are rarely found in Middle English verse; the one found here is especially significant because in it the woman's voice speaks from a position of power--instead

of lamenting her abandonment by her lover, as many Middle English lyrics written in the woman's voice do (for examples see Robbins, *SL*, nos. 23, 25, 26, and 27), the speaker of this poem 'writes her lover off'. In this respect poem 22 is also unique. For all its uniqueness, though, the poem follows along the pattern of satirical reversal that can be inferred from its companion piece and other Middle English poems containing satiric catalogues, among them a double roundel by Hoccleve (see *Minor Poems* 311-12), Dunbar's *Ane Blak Moir* (ed. Kinsley, no. 33), and poems 15, 23 and 25 in the present collection.

9-11 Youre...saue only a catte Cf. 'His face was ful brade and flat;/His nose was cutted as a cat' in *Ywain and Gawain* (A. B. Friedman and Norman T. Harrington, eds., E.E.T.S. 254 (1964), 259-60).

15-16 The proporcion of your body...Fro the shuldre... Cf. poem 23, ll.37-38, for a parallel description.

20-1 Your garmentis vpon you.../As it were an olde gose... Cf. poem 23, l. 37, where the woman's shoulders are described as hanging in the same manner.

24 As ych of hem bad odyr Crystis curse Cf. poem 23, ll. 32-3, where teeth are similarly described.

27 So vngoodly youre helys ye lyfte Cf. poem 23, ll. 48-9, where the woman's dancing is also criticized.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawl. poet. 36, fol. 4. *IMEV* 2437.

Previously printed in Cords, *Archiv.* 135, p. 297; Kaiser, *Med. Eng.*, p. 481 (1 st. only); Robbins, *MLR* 37, pp. 417-18, *Sec. Lyr.*, pp. 220-2

Poem 23 is a companion piece to poem 22.

This poem contains a fairly standard catalogue of feminine ugliness, following the pattern of catalogues of beauty in moving from the head to the feet. The catalogue of ugliness is frequently a component of Middle English verse satirizing women; in the present collection cf. poems 15, 23 and 25. Such catalogues may also be found in a roundel by Hoccleve (*Minor Poems*, pp. 311-12) and in Dunbar's *Ane Blak Moir* (ed. Kinsley, no. 33).

Carybdis Charybdis, the whirlpool past which Odysseus had to navigate while also avoiding the sea-monster Scylla.

3-4 Me semyth by youre contenance...to medyl with any retorucion As a woman, you're foolish to meddle with a rhetorician (i.e. with me).

19 Rememberyng your greet hede... Cf. 'Hir golden forhead is ful narw 7 smal' (Hoccleve's *Minor Poems*, ed. MacCracken, p. 311, l. 2.)

21 And eyper of youre pappys like a water bowge Cf. no. 15, ll. 41-4.
water bowge Leather bottle for holding water

22-4 Youre camusyd nose...brennyng afore the roode Cf. 'Hir nose a pentice is pat it ne shal/Reyne in hir mouth thogh shee vp-rightes lay' (Hoccleve's *Minor Poems*, ed. MacCracken, p. 311, ll. 11-12.)

29 Your babyrlyppys of colour ded and wan Cf. 'Hir mowth is nothyng scant with lippes gray' (Hoccleve's *Minor Poems* 312, l. 17; cf. also *Piers Plowman*, B-text, V.190.)

31 And yellow tethe not lyk to the swan Cf. no. 15, l. 53.

37-8 With hangyng shuldres...Smal in the bely... Cf. no. 15, 11. 33-4.

Cambridge, St. John's College, MS S.54 (James 259), fol. 9^v. *IMEV* 3214.
 Previously printed in James and Macaulay, p. 80; Greene, *EEC* 2nd ed., p.
 236.

This poem, whose burden seems to praise women's fidelity, turns the
 comparison with steel against them to satirize women's faults.

ii Wommen be as trew as stele Proverbial; see Whiting, S 709. Cf.

Chaucer Epilogue to *MT*, ll. 2426-7, 'But doutelees, as trewe as any steel/I
 have a wyf'.

2 Kaymys brodyr The phrase 'Cain's kin' was current throughout the Middle
 Ages in England; it was used to refer to evil, often inhuman, beings.

References to Cain are prevalent in antifraternai literature (see poem 3,
 l. 107n.).

Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.19, fol. 205^v. *IMEV* 2524. Previously printed in Stow, *Chaucer* 1561 (st. 2. om.); Speght, *Chaucer* (1598); Urry, *Chaucer* (1721), p. 558; Bell, *Poets of GB XIII*, p. 133; Anderson, *Poets of GB I*, p. 568; Chalmers (fr. Stow), *Eng. Poets*, I, p. 564; Skeat, *Chaucer Canon*, p. 124; Person, *Camb. ME Lyr.*, pp. 40-1.

The catalogue of ugliness is frequently a component of Middle English verse satirizing women; cf poems 14, 15 and 23 in the present collection. Such catalogues may also be found in a roundel by Hoccleve (*Minor Poems*, pp. 311-12) and in Dunbar's *Ane Blak Moir* (ed. Kinsley, no. 33).

8-14 Wyne, women, worshyp, vnweldy age...madde The notion that the four things listed in l. 8 cause a man's demise is frequently found in Middle English literature.

17 enbonyd lyke a melow costard With a bone structure like a ripe costard apple (a type described in the nineteenth century as having five prominent ribs).

19 Gylt opon warantyse...fade Gilt on guarantee that the colour will not fade.

20 Bawsyn-buttockyd With swollen, fat buttocks.

belyed lyke a tonne With a belly like a tun, or large cask.

21 Men cry 'Seynt Barbara!' at lows yng of your gonne Saint Barbara was the patron saint of gunners in the late Middle Ages (Farmer, p. 31); men cry her name when the subject of the poem breaks wind (there is a pun on 'gonne' as a term for 'fart'; see *MED* sv. *gonne*). See J. A. W. Bennett, 'Why men cry St. Barbara', *RES* n.s. 13 (1962), 238.

23 barkfate Tanner's vat or bark-vat (from the use of bark in the tanning process). For another reference to the stench of tanning, see poem 71, ll.

79-82.

24 The swert hath yswent you, the smoke hath you shent Darkness has afflicted you, smoke has disfigured you.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Arch. Selden B 26, fol. 33. *IMEV* 3879.

Previously printed in Stainer, *Early Bod. Music* II, pp. 179-80; *Anglia* XXXVI, pp. 114-5; *EEL*, p. 216; Robbins, *Sec. Lyr.*, pp. 163-4. The poem appears with music in the manuscript.

Similar 'anti-courtly' sentiments are expressed in poems 19 and 20, which also stress the poet's lack of distress at his mistress's displeasure and lack of concern at her absence or loss.

5 at my too Enough to endure pain in my toe. Cf. poem 20, ll. 11-12.

9 ovth fare Away travelling.

London, British Library, MS Harley 2253, fol. 61^v. *IMEV* 1974. Previously printed in Wright, *Po1. Songs*, p. 153; Fairholt, *Percy Soc.* XXVII, pp. 40-2; Boeddeker, *AE Dicht.*, pp. 106-7; Brown, *Eng. Lyr. 13th C.*, pp. 133-4; Dickins and Wilson, *Early ME Texts*, pp. 124-5; Kaiser, *Med. Eng.*, p. 480. In my presentation of this poem I have reproduced the stanzaic form which appears in the manuscript.

Poem 27 satirizes women's fashions. Poem 28 also criticizes women's fashions, although in much less detail and at less length.

2 For te cocke wip knyf To fight with a knife.

21 clogges bat cleueb by here chelle Lumps that stick by their jowls.

24 ioustynde gyn Probably a type of headgear used to bind plaits of hair to the sides of the face.

29 loket by er ouper e3e A lock of hair by ear or eye

32 fance filet A fancy ribbon or band of cloth worn around the head as an ornament or to hold the hair in place.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 59, fol. 73. *IMEV* 3698. Previously printed in Robbins, *Hist. Poems*, p. 139.

This poem is a criticism of women's fashions. Poem 27 criticizes women's attire at greater length and with more bitterness.

London, British Library, MS Sloane 2593, fol. 9^v. *IMEV* 1938. Previously printed in Wright, *Warton Club*, p. 27; Fehr, *Archiv.* cix (1902), p. 49; Robbins, *Sec. Lyr.*, pp. 37-8; Silverstein, p. 130; Greene, *EEC* (2nd ed.), no. 403. See also poems 32, 34 and 36.

Poem 29 contains pithy advice on the pitfalls of marriage for men.

i-ii Cf. *The Towneley Plays* (E.E.T.S. e.s. 71 (1897), p. 119), xiii, ll.

91-3: Bot yong men of wowyng/for god that you boght
 Be well war of wedyng/and thynk in youre thoght
 'had y wyst' is a thyng/it seruys of noght

4 Knet vp be heltre... Cf. poem 30, l. 8 and note. The phrase, borrowed from hawking terminology, is proverbial; see Whiting, H 49.

8 How so euere... Proverbial; see Whiting, G 22.

9-12 Wedowis be wol fals, iwys... 'Go boy, goo!' For the portrayal of widows in Middle English verse see Intro., pp. 38-41.

15 And vnder be tayl... Cf. *Piers Plowman*, A III 126, 'Heo is tikel of hire tayl'. Proverbial; see Whiting, T 8.

16 A twenty deuel name Cf. poem 21, l. 4.

London, British Library, MS Addit. 38666, fol. 174. *IMEV* 344. Previously printed in Brown, *MLN* 33, pp. 415-17; Robbins, *Sec. Lyr.*, pp. 180-1.

Poem 30 is a debate between a cleric and a husbandman over the merits of women.

8 *Quia amore languio* A phrase otherwise found as a refrain in two religious lyrics; one a lament of the Virgin (*IMEV* 1460, ed. Brown, *Rel. Lyr. 14th C.*, no. 132) and the other a complaint of Christ (*IMEV* 1463, ed. Chambers and Sidgwick, *Early Eng. Lyr.*, pp. 151-4. It is also the title of a prose tract (sometimes called *The Form of Living*; *IMEV* 4056, ed. Allen, *Eng. Writ. Rolle*, pp. 82-119. A lament of the Virgin (*IMEV* 1460) has the same rhyme scheme and verse form as the present poem; Brown (p. 415) wrote that the clerk's stanzas in defense of love are 'very obviously' patterned after the *Quia amore languio* lyrics in which the Virgin or Christ beg for the love of man. Poem 30 also parodies the 'quia amore languio' refrain with 'turn up her halter and let her go', but the true relationship between these refrains is unclear, given the frequent intermingling of secular and religious elements in the medieval lyric. 'Quia amore languio' might have been a secular refrain borrowed by religious lyrics; we know that phrases from popular secular songs were sometimes given religious interpretations and were incorporated into sermons by clerics wishing to turn their popularity to religious ends.

16, etc. turne vp hyr haltur... Cf. poem 29, l. 4; also a poem printed in *Reliquiae Antiquae*, i, pp. 75-7.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawl. C 813, fol. 6^v. *IMEV* 2261.8.

Previously printed in *Anglia* XXXI, pp. 320-1.

Friendship between women is an underlying theme in this poem, as it is in poem 35.

5 Gullett Apparently a personal name, perhaps a nickname.

6 knakis in hur buggett Tricks in her bag.

8 Nowe for to here, I thinke itt longe 'To hear it now, I think it tedious.'

12 to farre to the iakis Too far to the toilet (outhouse).

13 Blackamoure A black- or dark-skinned person; cf. Dunbar, *To Ane Blakmoire*, ed. Kinsley, no. 33.

20 dryve awaye the weke Pass the week.

22 Godis bodye Communion bread.

41 Seynt Denyes St. Dennis (d. c. 250) was a bishop of Paris; he was and is the patron saint of France (Farmer, 116-7). His mention in this poem is probably due to rhyme alone.

London, British Library, MS Lansdowne 762, fol. 91^v. *IMEV* 2633.

Previously printed in *Rel. Ant.* i, p. 288; Herrtage, *E.E.T.S.* 33, p. 510.

Poem 32 is a wry commentary on marriage from a man's point of view. Cf.

Wilson, *Oxford Book of Proverbs*, p. 350, 'Hanging and wiving (wedding) go

by destiny'; also *Schoolhouse of Women* (1541), B 1^v, 'Some men... saye it

goeth by destenye To hange or wed...I am well sure Hangynge is better of

the twayne Sooner done and shorter payne'. Poems 29, 34 and 36 also

portray marriage as a pitfall for men.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. poet. e 1, fol. 42^v. *IMEV* 667.

Previously printed in Masters, *Rhymes of Min.*, p. 14; Wright, *Carols*, Percy Soc. XXIII, pp. 84-6; Greene, *EEC*, 2nd ed., p. 241-2.

Poem 33 deals with the proverbial battle over who 'wears the trousers' in the household.

7 be mayster to abuse a brych To abuse a brych, or fail to 'wear the trousers' (not wield authority as head of the household) is a time-honored accusation against men whose wives have dominion over them. Such rôle reversal probably appealed to medieval tastes in much the same way as did the concept of the world upside down, which is so pervasive in medieval art and literature. Several Dutch woodcuts, albeit from the sixteenth century, illustrate the battle for the trousers; it seems to have been a favorite subject of the urban bourgeoisie in Holland in this period (see Lène Dresen-Coenders in *Saints and She-Devils* (London: Rubicon, 1987), pp. 64-65, which also includes a reproduction of a woodcut). 'Wearing the britches' is a proverbial phrase; see Whiting, M 406.

24-25 3et God at be tym...in euery tyd The idea that God gave man mastery over woman at Creation when he fashioned her from Adam's rib often appears in medieval literature. This interpretation of Genesis was not the only one, however. Certain Biblical commentators believed that since woman was created in the perfection of the Garden of Eden and from flesh and not earth, she was in fact purer than man and his equal (see M.-T. d'Alverny, 'Comment les théologiens et les philosophes voient la femme', *CCM* 20 (1977), 105-129). The latter view was apparently not very popular.

36-7 adamant stone...gett It was a medieval belief that some otherwise indestructible substances (such as adamant stones) were soluble

(frangebyll) in certain liquids.

43-9 A scald hed...no bryke The stanza refers to loss of maidenhead and its possible outcome in pregnancy, which eventually cannot be hidden. 'A scald hed...' is proverbial; see Whiting, H 229.

57-9 Adam...Vergyll A catalogue of prominent men whose downfalls were brought about by women's treachery, or in the cases of Aristotle and Vergil, whose lives were simply made miserable by women. The image of Aristotle being ridden by his wife appears in a sixteenth-century Dutch woodcut by Lucas van Leyden and in a sixteenth-century engraving by Georg Pencz (see *Saints and She-Devils*, p. 51).

34

London, British Library, MS Harley 3835, fol. 125^v. *IMEV* 1427. Previously printed in Bishop, *EETS* 109, no. 49.

Poems 29, 32 and 36 take a similarly negative view of marriage for men.

Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, MS Porkington (Brogyntyn) 10, fol. 56^v. *IMEV* 1852. Previously printed in Furnivall, *Jyl of Brentford's Testament* (1871; private edition), pp. 29-33.

Friendship between women, as portrayed here, is also an underlying concern of poem 31. Women are presented as sexually voracious in poem 8 as well; both poems seek to satirize women's sexuality and male sexual incompetence at the same time. In featuring a gathering of women who discuss the performance of their husbands poem 35 is reminiscent of Dunbar's *A Tretise of Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo* (ed. Kinsley, pp. 48-52). The tenth wife in poem 35 happens to be a widow.

11 berre the bell Win the prize.

17 gyue hem evyle hayle Send him bad luck.

81 Seynt Iame of Galys St. James the Greater, an apostle and brother of St. John. According to tradition James travelled to Spain and preached there; he was supposedly buried at Compostella in Galicia. In the late Middle Ages his shrine there was one of the great centers of pilgrimage.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 196, fol. 20. *IMEV* 1829. Previously printed in Robbins, *Sec.Lyr.*, p. 37. A similar poem appears three times in the margins of Durham University MS Cosin V.iii.9, on fols. 16^v, 37^v, 85^v.

Poems 29, 32 and 34 also warn of the pitfalls of marriage for men.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. poet. e 1, fol. 55^v; Oxford, Balliol College MS 354, fol. 250 (=B), and London, British Library, printed book IB 55252 (Trevisa, *Bartholomeus Anglicus*) (=L). *IMEV* 1485. Previously printed in Wright, *Pol. Songs*, p. 88; Kaiser, *Anth.*, p. 311; Dyboski, p. 112; Flugel, *Lieder*, p. 275; Masters, *Rymes of Min.*, p. 28; Kaiser, *Med. Engl.*, p. 478, *Anth.*, p. 311; Robbins, *Sec. Lyr.*, p. 35; Greene, *EEC* 2nd ed., p. 235, *Se1.*, p. 143; Davies, *Med. Eng. Lyr.*, p. 221 (in part).

This poem employs a 'destroying burden', ostensibly concerned with women's good qualities, which reverses the meaning of each stanza preceding it.

ii *Cuius contrarium verum est* 'Of which the contrary is true'. This Latin tag, with some slight variation, appears in an insult on fol. 129^v of BL MS Addit. 31922, 'vynsent Wydderden ys an onest man, so sayeth Nycolas Benden Cuius est contrarium verum est'. Lydgate, among others, also used burdens to reverse the ostensible meanings of poems (cf. poems 55 and 56).
 2 trew as tyrtyll on tre True as a turtledove. The phrase is proverbial; see Whiting, T 542.

A London, British Library, MS Cotton Galba E ix, fol. 50^v. *IMEV* 1480. Previously printed in Ritson, *Anc. Pop. Poetry* pp. 103-8; Wright, *Camden Soc.* 16, p. 359; Hall, *Eng. St.* 21, p. 204; FitzGibbon, *Earl. Eng. Poetry*, pp. 13-14; Robbins, *Sec. Lyr.*, p. 51.

B Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 174 (James 95), p. 484. *IMEV* 1480. Previously printed in *Rel. Ant.*, ii, pp. 108-10; Hazlitt, *Remains*, pp. 161-7.

Notes are to text A.

Poem 38 satirizes the power of money by personifying it as the mighty Sir Penny.

33-34 In erth has he...he may bind Peny has the power of absolution (the loosing and binding of sins), which Christ gave to the apostles and which is passed on to the clergy through the Pope as heir to St. Peter.

40-42 All þe nedes ful sone...Peni gase bitwene Cf. refraid to no. 50, 'For lack of money I could not spede'.

London, British Library, MS Sloane 2593, fol. 26^v. *IMEV* 2747. Previously printed in Ritson, *Anc. Songs* (1877), p. 116; Wright, *Wart. Club*, p. 75; T. Wright, *Latin Poems...Walter Mapes*, p. 361; Ritson, *Anc. Songs*, p. 116; Hazlitt, *Remains* iv, p. 359; Arber, *Dunbar Anth.*, p. 79; Robbins, *Sec. Lyr.*, p. 50; Kaiser, *Anth.*, p. 317, *Med. Engl.*, p. 550; Sisam, *OBMEV&P*, p. 441; Greene, *EEC* 2nd ed., p. 231. For a Latin version see Wright, *Camden Soc.* 16, p. 226.

Poem 39 satirizes the power of the purse.

i Go bet, Peny, go bet, go 'Go bet', go better (said as encouragement).

Cf. a rhyme in Gonville and Caius College, Camb. MS 261, fol. 234, 'Non peni non ware/non catel non care/Go peni go'; also cf. speech in *Parliament of Byrds*, ll. 148-9, 'For here is nought els with friende nor foe/But go bet peny go bet go.'

9-12 And if I haue...be wol idoo Cf. poem 38B, ll. 67-74.

13-20 And if I haue pens...let hym goo! Cf. poem 40, ll. 1-8.

40

London, British Library, MS Sloane 2593, fol. 6. *IMEV* 3539. Previously printed in Wright, *Wart. Club*, p. 14, *Songs and Carols*, no. 4; Hall, *Poems of Minot*, pp. 101-3; Hearne, *Robert of Glouc.*, I, p. lxxxiii; Sisam, p. 428; Greene, *EEC* 2nd ed., p. 230.

Poem 40 illustrates the power of the purse.

5-8 Qan my purs...drynke with vs! Cf. poem 39, ll. 13-20.

16 ...with a bow The speaker has been forced to become a wandering minstrel from lack of money.

41

London, British Library, MS Royal 17 B XLVII, fol. 160^v. *IMEV* 113.

Previously printed in Halliwell, *Nugae Poeticae*, p. 46; Robbins, *Hist. Poems*, p. 134; Greene, *EEC* 2nd ed., p. 231.

Poem 41 personifies money as an all-powerful ruler.

41-48 In Westmynster Hall...a strawe Cf. no. 50, ll. 41-50.

80 That money makythe the man Proverbial; see Whiting, M 628.

London, British Library, MS Sloane 2593, fol. 5^v. *IMEV* 1020. Previously printed in Wright, *Wart. Club*, p. 13; Fehr, *Archiv.* cix, p. 49; Greene, *EEC* 2nd ed., p. 227.

Money and deceit are shown to be closely related in this poem.

i-ii Cf. *Piers Plowman*, B-text, XVIII, ll. 357-8, 'And I [Christ], in liknesse of a leode, that Lord am of hevene,/Graciousliche thi gile have quytt--go gile ayein gile'.

43

Oxford, Balliol College, MS 354, fol. 208^v (base text); Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 237, fol. 1 (first stanza only; = C); Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Lyell 34, flyleaf (no substantive variants); London, British Library, MS Harley 2252, fol. 2 (first stanza only; = H). *IMEV* 1163. Previously printed in Rhodes, *Boke of Nurture* 1577 (first stanza only), repr. Furnivall, *EETS* 32, p. 107, Roxburghe Club 87, p. 49; *Anglia* XXVI, p. 220; Dyboski, *EETS* e.s. 101, p. 140; *Rel. Ant.* I, p. 316; Robbins, *Sec. Lyr.*, p. 81; Patterson, *Shakespeare Stud.*, p. 450; Tilley, p. 483.

Poem 43, which deals with spendthrifts and liars, is heavily proverbial.

1-4 He that owith mych...and say nought Proverbial; see Whiting, S 627.

5-8 He that sweryth...no man know him Proverbial; see Whiting, S 938.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. poet. e 1, fol. 13. *IMEV* 2050.

Previously printed in Wright, *Carols*, Percy Soc. XXIII, no. 4; *EEC* 2nd ed., p. 226.

Secators, or executors (of estates) are not trustworthy and wealth is only temporary -- poem 44 says that it is best to look after your soul while you live and not worry about what becomes of your wealth when you are dead.

45

London, British Library, MS Harley 3038, fol. 1. *IMEV* 685. Previously printed in *Cat.* II, p. 727; *Rel. Ant.* I, p. 314.

Poem 45 has a similar point to poem 44 -- remember your immortal soul while you are living.

46

London, British Library, MS Addit. 16165, fol. 1 (base text); Oxford, Balliol College, MS 354, fol. 147^V (= O); BL MS Harley 3038, fol. 1 (= H). *IMEV* 2060. Previously printed in *Anglia* XXVI, p. 167; Dyboski, *EETS* e.s. 101, p. 138; Hulme, *EETS* 100, no. 41.

5 sekutours Executors.

Poem 46 exhorts the reader to enjoy his wealth while he lives, since the executors will surely enjoy it after he dies.

47

London, British Library, MS Harley 3038, fol. 1. *IMEV* 4179. Previously printed in *Cat.* II, p. 727; *Rel. Ant.* I, p. 314.

secaturs Executors.

A single proverbial line which pithily illustrates the attitude shown towards executors in poems 44, 45 and 46.

London, British Library, MS Harley 5396, fol. 310^v. *IMEV* 1319. Previously printed in *Rel. Ant.* I, pp. 77-9.

Poem 48 illustrates the temporary nature of worldly wealth and position.

8 pat ony kynde man wantys gode That any gentleman lacks goods.

13 bryng hym on bere Bring him to his bier, or end his life.

14 As He bo3t hym with Hys blode Since He (Christ) bought him with His blood (by dying for mankind on the cross).

22 But He me rych pat raght on rode Unless I am enriched by Christ who died on the cross (with a pun on 'rich', to enrich spiritually as well as with worldly goods).

30 knot was on me knyht Outcome was destined for me.

31 kyrk had caght my code The church had caught my disease, and become luxurious and avaricious.

35 wich A practitioner of magic (he vanishes as if by magic).

44 florens ful be fyst A fistful of florins.

London, British Library, MS Harley 2253, fol. 70^v. *IMEV* 2287. Previously printed in Wright, *Po1. Songs*, pp. 155-9; Bøddeker, *AE Dicht.*, p. 107; Sampson, *Camb. Bk. V&P*, p. 393; Robbins, *Hist. Poems*, p. 24.

In poem 49 a man satirically describes his appearance before an ecclesiastical (consistory) court, seemingly on charges of fornication.

4 3ef Ich on molde... If I speak with any maiden in this world.

33-4 3ef Y am wreint...bacbite If I am accused in their writ, I am unjustly accused.

35-6 For moni...Of wymmene wo They make writs for many men because of women's misfortune. It would seem that his partner played a part in his accusation, perhaps because of a previous matrimonial agreement between them (see ll. 62n. and 63-4n.).

37-9 3et per sitteþ somenours...rolle Summoners for ecclesiastical courts were notorious in the Middle Ages for making false charges and for overlooking citations to appear before the courts in return for bribes. Cf. Chaucer, *Pro.* ll. 649-658, *FrT*, ll. 1338-1374; also *PP* B-text, 2.58, 169; 3.133; 4.167.

51-2 For þer heo beodeþ...toke For there they swear on a book (presumably the Bible) that I took filth (fornicated).

55 3eolumon Yellow-man; a court official, possibly a summoner, who wore yellow and acted as beadle.

62 Ant saip by my gabbyng 'Ne shal hit so gon... The punctuation of this line follows Carter Revard's reading of the poem in 'The Lecher, the Legal Eagle and the Papelard Priest...' in Donald E. Hayden, ed., *His Firm Estate* U of Tulsa Monograph Series 2 (1962), 54-71, esp. pp. 61-7.

63-4 Ant þat beo...to wyf The poem's speaker has been called into the

archdeacon's court to answer charges of lechery, and the woman who is either accused with him or is accusing him demands that he marry her (as the court most probably would). That she demands it herself might indicate a previous marital contract between them. For the incidence of clandestine marriage in medieval England and the rules governing it see H. A. Kelly, 'Clandestine Marriage and Chaucer's *Troilus*', *Viator* 4 (1973), 435-57. Kelly points out that in one-third of the cases where fornication was charged between marriageable couples, a matrimonial contract was either admitted by both partners or alleged by one and denied by the other.

73-4 Such chaffare...to be To 'chepe chaffare' was to purchase something; the speaker of the poem says that he could only afford such a small bribe to purchase his freedom that the prosperous judges were neither thankful nor lenient. The 'chapitre', or chapter court, is the same as the archdeacon's court.

76 constory Consistory court. They were the bishops' courts; in this instance the speaker's case seems to have been referred to a consistory court from an archdeacon's court.

79 bisshopes plee The court of the bishop's plea, another name for consistory court.

84 To care of al my kynne To the shame of my kinsmen.

87 proud ase a po Proud as a peacock. Proverbial; see Whiting, P 71, P 73.

London, British Library, MS Harley 542, fol. 102 (base text); British Library, MS Harley 367, fol. 127. *IMEV* 3759. Previously printed in Stow, *Survey* (in part); Strutt, *Horda Angel-cynnan* (1775-6); Hughson (1805), ii, pp. 124-7; Nicolas, *Chron. London* (1827), pp. 260-8; Gilfillan, *Spec. Less. Known Br. Poets* (1860), i, p. 49; Hammond, *Anglia XX*, pp. 410-19, *Eng. Verse Chaucer-Surrey*, pp. 237, 476; FitzGibbon, *EEPoetry*, pp. 68-71; Morley, *Sh. Eng. Poems*, pp. 53-4; Benham, *Eng. Lit. Widsith-Chaucer*, p. 351; Halliwell, *Percy Soc. II*, pp. 103-7; Skeat, *Spec. Eng. Lit. 1394-1579*, pp. 24-7; Bronson, *Old and ME Poems*, pp. 116-19; Bridge, *Old Cryes of London*, pp. 11-12; Holthausen, *Anglia XLIII*, pp. 62-7; Robbins, *Hist. Poems*, pp. 130-4; Sisam, *OBMEP&V*, pp. 446-50; Gray, *OBLMV&P*, pp. 16-19.

Poem 51, often called 'London Lickpenny', is a satire on the attractions of the big city and its indifference to those without money.

3 Westminster Ward The ward of Westminster as distinct from Westminster Hall (cf. Queene Hithe Warde, Faringdon Warde, etc. in Stow's *Survey*). The City of Westminster, in the fifteenth century as now, was the seat of government and location of the high courts.

12 Kynge Benche The Great Hall at Westminster was the location of the three high courts: the Court of Common Pleas ('Common Place' here (l. 25) and in Stow), where civil cases, especially those relating to land and contracts, were heard; the King's Bench, where criminal cases were heard; and the Court of Chancery, where the Lord Chancellor and the Master of the Rolls sat, which heard financial cases and could also be induced to hear appeals from the other courts.

20 Richard, Robert, and one of Kent A cryptic line, but 'one of Kent' might refer to the poem's speaker; in the last stanza he says that he is

returning to Kent (l. 121).

26 Where sat one with a sylken houde Law sergeants wore white silk hoods (W. W. Skeat, *Specimens of English Literature 1394-1579* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1897) 374.) Cf. *Piers Plowman* B-text, Pro. 211-12, 'Yet houed þer an hundred in howues of selk/Sergeant³ it [s]emed þat serueden at þe barre...'

31 He would not geve me a momme of his mouthe He wouldn't say a word to me. Cf. *Piers Plowman* B-text, Pro. 215-16, where the context is similarly one of bribery in a law court, 'Thow my³test bettre meete myst on Maluerne hilles/Than gete a mom of hire mouþ til moneie be shewed.'

33-4 ...vnto the Rollis...Chauncerie The Court of Chancery. See l. 12n.

42 Went in a longe gowne of ray Wore a gown of striped material.

51 were Flemings grete woon The Flemish were famous in the Middle Ages for their cloth manufacture. Many Flemish merchants lived in London; Edward III had welcomed them and then protected them from the hostility of native clothmakers, but popular resentment made them a target during the Peasant's Revolt of 1381, when many of them were killed.

53 copen The Old Flemish word for 'buy' (cf. mod. Dutch 'kopen').

58 When the sone was at highe prime About 9:00 a.m.

65 Into London I gan me hy The speaker enters the precinct within London Wall.

68 Chery in the ryse Cherries still on the twig.

73 Chepe Cheap was a traditional market area; the name in fact comes from the market (called West Cheping; see Stow, i, 258). Stow mentions grocers, spice merchants, and haberdashers particularly in connection with this area (Stow, *Survey*, i, 261, 263, 264). See also Hermione Hobhouse, *The Ward of Cheap in the City of London* (London, 1963).

76 Paris thred...vmple Thread of the kind made in Paris, cotton, and a type of fine linen.

81-2 London stone...Canywike Strete London stone, a stone pillar on

Candlewick Street (modern Cannon Street), was between Cheap and Eastcheap. A fragment of the stone still survives in the street wall of the Church of St. Swithin on Cannon Street.

86 Fisshes faire and grene MS 'Risshes' is acceptable, but since green fish were fresh (as opposed to salted) fish, and the next line, 'Bothe melwell and makarell I gan mete', mentions two specific kinds of fish, the emendation makes better sense.

89 Estchepe Eastcheap, the location of the butchers' market according to Stow, which '...had sometime also Cookes mixed amongst the Butchers, and such other as solde victuals readie dressed of all sorts' (Stow, i, 216). Stow quotes from the poem in connection with Eastcheap; for a discussion of the redaction he knew see E. P. Hammond, 'London Lickpenny', *Anglia* 20 (1897), 404-9.

93 Ye by cokke Nay by cokke Oaths, 'cokke' being a veiled form of 'God'.

94 Some sange of Ienken and Iulian to get themselves mede Cf. *Piers Plowman* B-text, Pro. 33-34, 'And somme murpes to make as Mynstralles konne/And geten gold with hire glee [gilt]lees, I leue'. 'Ienken and Iulian' was probably a ballad popular at the time. Robbins (*Hist. Poems*, p. 321) notes a line from the Coventry Mystery Cycle 'And I wole kepe the feet this type Thow ther come both Iakke and Gylle.'

97 Cornhill Area of London originally a corn market and known in the late Middle Ages for its haberdashers' shops; Stow notes that in the reign of Henry VI it was the home of 'Fripperers or vpholders, that solde olde apparell and housholde stufte' (Stow, i, p. 199).

105 the taverner Stow associates him with the Pope's Head Tavern in Cornhill (Stow, i, p. 199).

108 a peny may do no more then it may Probably proverbial; the sense is similar to Whiting, P 131.

111 London Lykkepenny London is so called because, as Skeat says, it licks

up the pennies that come near it. The epithet has been taken to mean (and even emended to) 'lackpenny', but a quotation from Howell's *Londinopolis* confirms Skeat's explanation: 'Some call London a lick-penny (as Paris is called, by some, a pick-purse) because of feasting, with other occasion of expense and allurements, which cause so many unthrifths among country gentlemen, and others, who flock into her in such excessive multitudes' (Skeat, pp. 373-4). Proverbial; see Whiting, L 429.

112 Byllingesgate Port on the Thames, east of London Bridge. 'On the south side of Thames streete...is first the saide Smarts key...the next is Belinsgate whereof the whole warde taketh name, the which...is at this present a large Watergate, Port or Harbrough for shippes and boats' (Stow, *Survey*, i, p. 206).

124 I dight me to the plowe The poem's speaker might be associated with the 'honest plowman' figure popular in late medieval and early renaissance literature.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 683, fol. 54^V (base text); British Library, MSS Harley 2251, fol. 14 (= H) and Lansdowne 699, fol. 88^V (= L); Leyden, Leyden University MS Voss. 9, fol. 101^V (= V). *IMEV* 36. Previously printed in MacCracken, *E.E.T.S.* 192, pp. 445-7; *Rel. Ant.* I, pp. 13-14; Halliwell, *Perc. Soc.* II, pp. 52-4; Norton-Smith, pp. 12-13.

Poem 51 satirizes the quintessential lazy servant.

5 Hogge of Ware Roger Hogge, Chaucer's Cook (who calls himself Hogge of Ware, Pro. to *CKT*, l. 4336). He tells a tale about a lazy apprentice who drinks, gambles and steals from his master. Despite the allusion to *The Cook's Tale* Lydgate seems to have patterned this poem more after chapter XXVII in the *Disciplina Clericalis* of Petrus Alphonsi.

9 Maymond A traditional name for a bad servant in the Middle Ages, probably originating with Petrus Alphonsi's *Disciplina Clericalis*, chapter XXVII, *exemplum de Maimundo servo*. Cf. the Old French *De Maimon le Pereceus* (*Fabliaux et Contes*, ii, p. 166), and the Anglo-Norman *De Maimound mal esquier* in MS Digby 86, fol. 94.

17 Chekrelȳk A name possibly meaning 'go after the leavings'.

20 Of euery brybe the caryage for to make To 'make the getaway' with the goods.

22 And of newe ale been at the clensyng When new ale is clarified the sediment and impurities are separated out; Maymond waits to drink these dregs which would otherwise be discarded.

25 wil don al his message Will deliver all his messages.

27 vernysshed Cf. Chaucer, *RvT* ll. 4149-4150.

29 Of a candell Cf. no. 68, l. 132; also *Rom. de la Rose*, l. 18242, 'E deus chandelles sembler d'une'.

30 barkyd leder An infusion of bark was used to tan hides; Maymond's face is flushed and 'shines' like newly tanned leather.

47 ale stakes Poles set up before ale houses.

51 onspere the gate Maimundus of the *Disciplina Clericalis* also forgets to shut the door (*Disc. Cler. XXVII*).

52 Riggis bak be wet Probably the name of a dog (V has *nota canis* in the margin); in the *Disciplina Clericalis* Maimundus feels the back of a dog who has been lying before the gate so he can tell his master whether it is raining without having to go outside himself.

53 Togace Probably the name of a cat (H has an interlinear note 'pe cat'); in the *Disciplina Clericalis* Maimundus feels the back of a cat, who has been sleeping on the hearth, to tell his master whether the fire has gone out without having to go and see for himself.

out het Overheated.

60 cast thi cheenys Defecate.

68 Thi organys...ther messe Maymond's breaking wind is compared to the sung mass.

69 treble meene and tenor discordyng Musical terms, here applied to Maymond's flatulence.

London, British Library, MS Harley 2253, fol. 124^v. *IMEV* 2649. Previously printed in Wright, *Poet. Songs*, pp. 237-40; Wulcker, *AE Leseb.*, pp. 73-4; Bøddeker, *AE Dicht.*, pp. 135-8; Sampson, *Camb. Bk. Prose and Verse*, pp. 404-5; Robbins, *Hist. Poems*, pp. 27-9. Written in short lines in the manuscript.

This poem satirizes grooms and their lazy habits.

2 Of Colyn and of Colle Men's names, perhaps used in a general sense like the modern 'Tom, Dick, and Harry'.

3 in pate and by polle One by one.

16 Gobelyn made...mawe A goblin made his storehouse of a groom's stomach.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawl. poet. 36, fol. 2 (base text);
 Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS Advocates 19.3.1, fol. 91
 (variants). *IMEV* 1446. Previously printed in Sandison, *Chans. d'Av.*,
 pp. 119-20.

Poem 53 warns proud, probably liveried, servants that their relatively
 privileged positions in noble households are not guaranteed.

11-12 ...men in seruisse/Lyke lordys gon arayd The imitation of
 courtly fashion by those in service to noble households seems to have
 been one of the prominent 'abuses' of the fifteenth century. Hoccleve
 treats the subject at length in *The Regement of Princes*, where the Old
 Man says, 'Nay sothely, sone, it is al a-mys me pinkyp;/So pore a wight
 his lord to counterfete/In his array; in my conceyit it stynkith'
 (*Regement*, ll. 435-7; see also ll. 407-595). Hoccleve sees the practice
 of 'counterfeiting' noblemen as potentially subversive to the
 established social order; the Old Man in the *Regement* says

Som tyme, afer men myghten lordes knowe
 By there array, from oper folke; bot now
 A man schal stody and musen a long throwe
 Whiche is whiche: o lordes, it sit to yowe
 Amende pis, for it is for youre prowte.
 If twixt yow and youre men no difference
 Be in aray, lesse is youre reuerence.
 (ll. 442-448)

A piece of legislation dated 1463 acknowledges the ineffectiveness of
 'dyvers Ordenauncez and Statutez' enacted earlier, which stated that the
 Commons should 'use nor were noon inordynat Aray'. It continues
 '...which Statutez and Ordenauncez notwithstanding, for lak of
 punysshment and puttyng them in due execution, the Commyns of this youre
 seid Reame, as well men as women, have used, and daily usen, excessive

and inordynat Arayes... ' (Rotuli Parliamentorum V, p. 504, quoted in Scattergood, *Politics and Poetry*, p. 344). The ordinances and statutes to which the act of 1463 refers are a sumptuary law of 1363 (*Stat. of Realm*, I, p. 380), a statute on livery and maintenance of 1390 (*Stat. of Realm*, II, pp. 74-75), and subsequent statutes enacted in 1401, 1406, 1411, and 1429 modifying previous legislation in the hope of making it more effective.

17-18 Somme man wole not hys neyghbour knowe/Whan he is put in hys service Retainers employed by powerful men were often the subject of criticism in sermons and poetry. As lords entrusted more and more of their activities to counsellors and servants, retainers, particularly paid retainers, were becoming increasingly important as a social group. Their power and influence aroused a great deal of resentment (Scattergood, pp. 311, 313); see *Mum and the Sothsegger* Passus II 77-98, and *passim*.

25-6 Trust be not to mych to by service, I rede/Lenger ban bou may weel trauayle By the early fifteenth century, new relationships between lords and vassals, which differed from those based upon the tenurial ties of demesne farming, were becoming increasingly prevalent. The new relationships had their basis in personal contracts negotiated freely, in which a powerful magnate might pledge to promote the interests of smaller landowners in exchange for their support or for service in his personal retinue; alternatively he might pay them wages and grant them his protection, usually indicated by their wearing his badge or livery. Fifteenth-century commentators on such relationships are especially critical of the self-interest the new system fostered (Scattergood, pp. 308, 314). Hoccleve laments the way that lords can no longer be relied upon for customary benevolence towards their retainers, 'welaway! as harde as is a post--/A post? nay; as a stoon--ben hertes now!/Lordes,

for shame! what þing eyleth yow?' (*Regement*, 4695-7). The phrase is proverbial; see Whiting, S 168, S 169, S 170.

A Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawl. poet. 36, fol. 2^v. *IMEV* 1982.

B London, British Library, MS Harley 5396, fol. 290. *IMEV* 1982.

Previously printed in Dexter, *Certaine Worthye MS Poems*, 1597;

Furnivall, *N&Q* 4s, II, p. 125; Brown, *Rel. Lyr. 15th C.*, p. 263-6;

Cords, *Archiv.* CXXXV, pp. 294-6; *Rel. Ant.* i, pp. 73-5.

Notes are to text A.

Poem 54 warns against overspending in order to seem to belong to a higher station in life.

2 rych aray Hoccleve in *The Regement of Princes* describes in some detail the fashion of the fifteenth-century man, and also its expense.

He mentions 'gownes of scarlet/xij 3erdes wyd, wit pendant sleues downe/On þe grounde', with the fur used to trim them alone 'amountyng vnto twenty pound or bet' (ll. 422-425); cf. *Regement*, ll. 421-434.

Hoccleve also alludes to the notion that virtue wears rags while vice is hidden by costly array (see *Regement*, ll. 414-418); the same idea is found in *Mum and the Sothsegger* Passus III 207-213.

12 Good reule Good personal rule; good regulation of one's own life

23 It is no crafte to be to kynde Proverbial; cf. Whiting, C 528.

31 Se what estate þou stonde inne General wisdom, literally as old as Aesop, advocated contentment with one's place in society.

35 Yet beware of had-I-wyste Beware of doing something you may later have cause to regret. Proverbial; see Whiting, H 9.

36 For envy makyth new dystaunce Envy causes new disdain. Proverbial; see Whiting, E 138.

37 In pryde and pouerte is gret penaunce Poverty combined with pride causes great suffering. Proverbial; see Whiting, P 381.

41 But had-I-wyst comyth euer to late Regret always comes too late to be of any help. Proverbial; see l. 35n.

49-50 A bare berde wyl sone be shaue...aboute Although he might have nothing a proud man will act as though he has much. Proverbial; see Whiting, B 110.

54 ley to wedde Pledge as security for a payment; pawn.

55-6 Whan the fere...Where shal we go dyne thanne? When no fire is left (our sustenance is gone), how will we get our dinner? Proverbial; see Whiting, F 213.

59-60 be pot is esy...per be fatte is ouer blowe The pot is easy to keep clean when there is nothing to cook in it. Proverbial; see Whiting, P 324.

63 To mych bonde wyl breke the bowe Bending a bow too far will break it. Proverbial; see Whiting, B 478.

69 Whan gladness growyth into grame When gladness turns into grief. Proverbial; see Whiting, G 102, J 58, W 671.

71 per pryde is before and after shame Pride causes circumstances that later cause shame'. Proverbial; see Whiting, P 385.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 686, fol. 189 (base text); Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.20 (James 600), p. 51 (= T); London, British Library, MSS Harley 2251, fol. 39 (= Ha); Harley 4011, fol. 1 (fragment only; = Hy); Addit. 29729, fol. 154 (= A); Lansdowne 409, fol. 65^V (= L); San Marino, CA, Huntington Library, MS EL 26.A.13, fol. 19 (= E). *IMEV* 3655. Previously printed in Halliwell, Percy Soc. II, pp. 58-60; MacCracken, E.E.T.S. 192, pp. 465-7 (with French version).

In poem 55 Lydgate compares the stability of various aspects of life to the sideways, unsteady motion of a crab.

25 Sergeauntes Sargeants of the law.

27 Consistoryes Consistory, or bishop's, courts. See poem 49 and notes.

56

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MSS Bodley 686, fol. 190^V; Cambridge, Trinity College, MS 1450, fol. 27 (= T); London, British Library, MSS Harley 172, fol. 71^V (= H); Harley 2251, fol. 19^V (= Ha); Harley 4011, fol. 1 (=Hy); Lansdowne 409, fol. 265^V (= L); Addit. 29729, fol. 10 (= A); National Library of Scotland, MS Advocates 1.1.6 (the Bannatyne MS), fol. 79^V (= Ba); San Marino, CA, Huntington Library MS EL 26.A.13, fol. 18 (= E). The poem also appears in Bodleian MS Ashmole 61, fol. 5^V, but in such a variant version that it could not be included here. *IMEV* 199. Previously printed in Halliwell, *Percy Soc.* II, pp. 171-3; *Anc. Scot. Poems*, pp. 207-9; Huntington Club, *Bannatyne MS*, pp. 219-20; Ritchie, *S.T.S.* n.s. XXII, pp. 201-2; MacCracken, *E.E.T.S.* 192, pp. 461-4.

In poem 56 Lydgate compares the stableness of the times to a ram's horn.

54 wedid the cokle from the pure corne Cf. Chaucer, *Epil. to MLT* ll. 1182-3, 'He wolde sowen som difficulte/Or springen cokkel in our clene corn'; also Wyclif. Bible (1) c. 1384, Mat. 13:25, 'His enmye came and sew aboue dernel or cokil in the midil of whete.'

Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 274, fol. 155^v (base text); Armagh, Bishop John Swayne's *Register* (no substantive variants). *IMEV* 811. Previously printed in Coxe, *Cat.*, p. 117; Wright, *Pol. Poems* II, p. 252; Cotton, *Fasti Ecclesiae Hiberniae* III, no. 6; Seymour, *Proc. Royal Irish Acad.* XLI, p. 209.

In this poem love of costly apparel and fashion is said to be the downfall of the country.

3 Costefull crouperers with crestes Expensive cruppers (coverings for the hindquarters of a horse) with heraldic crests (perhaps embroidered) on them.

58

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. poet. b 4, fol. 1^v. *IMEV* 2805.

Previously printed in Lobel, *Bod. Quart. Rec.* III, p. 220 (first stanza only); Robbins, *Anglia* lxxii, pp. 386-7, *Hist. Poems*, pp. 150-2.

In poem 58 the unstableness of the world is again illustrated and linked to the vagaries of fashion.

40 at be counturtaile Contrarily.

London, British Library, MS Harley 372, fol. 113. *IMEV* 4255. Previously printed in Strutt, *Horda Angel-Cynnan* (1775), III, p. 78; Wright, *Poet. Poems* II, p. 251; Fairholt, *Percy Soc.* XXVII, pp. 56-7.

Poem 59 links fashionable attire with corrupt living.

11 your owyn prechynq of contrary condicion Your preaching is contrary to your behavior; you do not practice what you preach

14 Make shorter your taylis and broder your crownyis Make your trains shorter and your tonsure wider (and more apparent).

16 And kepe your owyn howsynq...boundis This line seems more applicable to the friars than to priests in general, who did not live by mendicancy.

60

London, British Library, MS Harley 7322, fol. 140^v. *IMEV* 1217. Previously printed in Furnivall, *EETS* 15 (1866), p. 239.

The subject of this poem seems to be men who abuse power, who deprive people and rob under cover of holiness, and who end shamefully.

61

London, British Library, MS Royal 17 A XVI, fol. 3^v. *IMEV* 1626.

3 kan I no rede I take no advice.

4 too tunges speke in on hede Proverbial; see Whiting, T 381.

Poem 61 deals with deceit.

62

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 102, fol. 104. *IMEV* 1845. Previously printed in Kail, *EETS* 124, pp. 25-7. Written in manuscript as prose.

53 grucche wip be to rage Refuses to lie with you.

Poem 62 ironically advises the reader on how to live 'bodily', ignoring moral and spiritual concerns.

63

London, British Library, MS Sloane 2593, fol. 7^v. *IMEV* 72. Previously printed in *Rel. Ant.* II, p. 165; Wright, *Carols*, Warton Club IV, pp. 19-20; Arber, *Dunbar Anth.*, p. 191; Robbins, *Hist. Poems*, pp. 146-7; *EEL* pp. 187-8; Greene, *EEC* 2nd ed., pp. 227-8.

In poem 63 Truth (personified) is exiled from all the places where one would expect to find him.

64

London, British Library, MS Sloane 2593, fol. 33. *IMEV* 356. Previously printed in Wright, *Carols*, Warton Club IV, pp. 96-8; *Archiv.* CVII, p. 50; Robbins, *Hist. Poems*, pp. 147-8.

Poem 64 laments the wantonness of the times.

13-14 Alle trewe frendis...in hert, in bowth Proverbial; see Whiting, F 634.

16 He was neuere...for nowth Proverbial; see Whiting, F 646.

22 Alle wykkyd tungis...woo Proverbial; see Whiting, T 403.

26 And arest hem...be rowt And arrest the lot of them.

London, British Library, MS Harley 5396, fol. 295. *IMEV* 884. Previously printed in *Rel. Ant.* II, pp. 238-40; Wright, *Pol. Poems* II, pp. 235-7; Robbins, *Hist. Poems*, pp. 127-30.

The present times are so bad, as described in poem 65, that it is as if the blind are led by the purblind.

1 for ay Forever.

2 Merlyn Sorcerer and soothsayer of Arthurian legend; many English prophecies were ascribed to him in the Middle Ages.

5 gyllorys don gode men gye Deceivers delude good men.

8, etc. be bysom ledys be blynde The purblind man leads the blind man. Proverbial; see Whiting, B 349, 350.

10 perus of bis land Bishops.

13 mayntenerys be made iustys Supporters (of powerful noblemen) are made justices.

20 sothe saw Truthful speech.

26 baratur ys made bayly Deception is made bailiff.

33 consistery Court of adjudication under canon law; bishop's court. Cf. poem 49 and notes.

36 Sir Symony A personification of simony, similar to personifications of money found in poems 38, 39, and 40.

44 pat bis lyfe last not longe Cf. no. 48, l. 13, where a similar sentiment is expressed.

46-7 frerys ar confessourys...chefe ladyes of bis londe Friars are confessors, against natural law, to noblewomen. Soon after the fraternal orders were introduced into England their members were serving as confessors in noble households; see Intro., pp. 23, 28.

48 See note to l. 8 above.

52 Now growyth þe gret flour-de-lys Now France flourishes (the flour-de-lys is symbolic of France).

59 absolucions waxyn ware Absolutions are becoming merchandise.

60 Gabberys gloson False religious interpret the gospel to their own ends.

62 Ho shall be leuyd þe se þe wyll spare Who shall be lifted up (above the water), the sea will spare you.

67 þe wade growe euer þe whete The bundle of hay or straw produces the wheat (instead of the opposite, which is natural).

75 buskys 3ou out of boure Hastens you out of your house.

London, British Library, MS Royal 7 A vi, fol. 38^v. *IMEV* 1871. Previously printed in Casley. *Cat. Royal MSS*, p. 119; *Brown, Rel. Lyr. 15th C.* p. 347. Cf. poem 67.

This poem claims that the law, justice and the virtues have been subjugated, so that the vices run rampant in the kingdom.

1 Lex is layde and lethyrly lukys Law is cast down and looks deathly ill.

2 Iusticia Justice.

3 Paciencia is plukytt pat mony men hym lothys Patience is robbed so that many men loathe him.

4 Fides Faith.

5 Caritas Charity.

6 Verus Truthful(ness).

7 Humilitas Humility.

8 Castitas Chastity.

9 Veritas Truth.

10 Verecundia Modesty.

12 rectus iudicium Uprightness of the judiciary.

17 Falsus iudicium False judiciary.

18 Violencia Violence.

19 Inuidia Envy.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 213, fol. 215 (base text); Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 407, fol. 18; Ipswich County Hall Deposit: Hillwood (formerly the Brome Commonplace Book), fol. 81 (no substantive variants). *IMEV* 1870. Previously printed in Smith, *Notes on a Commonplace Book*, p. 40; Brown, *Rel. Lyr. 15th C.*, p. 347. Cf. no. 66.

Law and virtue have been repressed, and faith and charity have fled from the kingdom according to this poem.

1 Lex Law.

2 Veritas Truth.

3 Fides Faith.

4 Caritas Charity.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MSS Laud Misc. 683, fol. 56 (base); Bodley 638, fol. 219 (3 stanzas only; = X); Bodley 648, fol. 19 (15 stanzas only; = Y); London, British Library, MSS Addit. 34360, fol. 24 (= A); Harley 2251, fol. 274 (= H); Harley 364, fol. 22. (5 stanzas only; = H²); Cotton Nero A vi, fol. 194^V (= N). *IMEV* 3444. Previously printed in Halliwell, *Percy Soc.* ii, p. 164; Furnivall, *E.E.T.S.* 8, pp. 79-84; MacCracken, *E.E.T.S.* 192, pp. 449-56; Bowers, *MLN* 67, pp. 534-6.

This poem, by Lydgate, is an extended attack on fools and folly, and may also mock the *sociétés joyeuses* which were popular on the continent in the late Middle Ages.

3 Bachus and Iuno Bacchus, the usual Latin name for Dionysus, in Greek mythology the god of wine and ecstasy; Juno, wife of Jupiter in Roman religion.

5 Markolff Marcolf, a legendary fool who was supposed to have outwitted King Solomon (see Enid Welsford, *The Fool* (London, 1935), pp. 35-41).

21 two facys in on hood Cf. no. 61. Proverbial; see Whiting, F 13.

31 A perlous mouth is wers... Proverbial; see Whiting, M 758.

35 'Tendre broweys skalte...' Bread sopped with broth from a marrow bone is good for weak stomachs. Proverbial; see Whiting, B 530.

49-50 ...Cypryan...gardeyn of his flours St. Cyprian (c. 200-58), bishop of Carthage and martyr. He was a rhetorician who converted to Christianity; the 'garden of flowers' refers to his *florilegium*, or collected works.

89 Senek Seneca the Younger, Roman poet and philosopher of the first century A.D. In the Middle Ages he was believed to have been a Christian and was thought by Jerome to have corresponded with St. Paul. His

Epistulae Morales was probably the most popular of his works.

95-6 hardy mous...cattys eris Proverbial; see Whiting, M 735.

104 Purs penylees in plees A penniless purse in court will never succeed; the same idea is expressed at greater length in nos. 49-50.

132 Of o candel he weneth... Cf. no. 51, l. 29.

148 Isigrimus Isingrimus, the wolf who is an adversary of Reynard the Fox in medieval fable literature. The character first appeared in the *Ysingrimus* of Nivard of Ghent in 1148.

150 oon o two or thre Cf. Appendix A, I, l. 46.

161-4 With ful wombe they preche...glosyng tale References to the friars, taking up many of the stock complaints against them (see Intro., pp. 28-29).

170 Nullatense An obscure reference.

185 Ianus Bifrens Janus Bifrons ('with two faces'), in Roman religion the god of gates and doorways and so of beginnings; his symbol was the double-faced head, looking in opposite directions.

187 camelyon The chameleon, a small lizard which changes the color of its skin to blend in with its surroundings.

189 salamandre The salamander, a lizard-like amphibian somewhat similar in appearance to the chameleon but without the ability to change its color.

195 Iudas Judas, the apostle who betrayed Christ by kissing him (Matt. 26:47-50; Mark 14:43-46, etc.).

London, British Library, MS Harley 2255, fol. 157. *IMEV* 2786. Previously printed in *Chron. of London* (Nicholas) 1827, pp. 273-4; Halliwell, *Perc. Soc.* II, p. 207; Furnivall, *E.E.T.S.* 15, p. 56; MacCracken, *E.E.T.S.* 192, pp. 448-9.

This poem, by Lydgate, is a satirical attack on bakers and millers who cheat their customers by selling underweight loaves and poor flour.

London, British Library, MS Arundel 292, fol. 71^v. *IMEV* 3227. Previously printed in *Rel. Ant.* I, p. 240; *Archiv.* CI, p. 395; Haupt and Hoffman, *Altdeutsche Blättern*, II, pp. 146-7; Lindberg, *Archiv.* 101, p. 395; Coulton, *Life in MA*, III, p. 99; Kaiser, *Med. Eng.*, p. 475; Speirs, *MEW Poet.*, pp. 94-5; Davies, *Med. Eng. Lyr.*, p. 213; Sisam, *14th C. Prose and Verse*, pp. 169-70; Robbins, *Sec. Lyr.*, p. 106; Myers, *EHD* 1327-1485, p. 1055; Salter, *Lit. and Hist.* 5:2, p. 194. Written as prose in manuscript.

This poem is often considered a satire on blacksmiths working at night, but may also satirize the rhythms and alliteration used in literary descriptions of battles in the late Middle Ages (see Salter, as above).

8 spellyn many spelles Tell many tales. Above this line in the manuscript is the phrase 'ech of hem at othyrs' in the same hand as the poem; it is possibly a reference to Chaucer, *PardT*, l. 476, 'And ech of hem at otheres synne lough' (see Salter, *Lit. and Hist.* 5:2 (1979), p. 209, note 3).

15 rowtyn be rowe Roaring by row.

16 dolful a dreme Horrible noise.

18 Twyneth hem tweyn and towchith a treble Possibly twines two (pieces of metal) and hits a treble note.

21 cloye-merys Mare-lamers (see Salter, p. 209, note 4; also Colgrave, *MLR* 48 (1953), p. 51). Robbins et al. read 'clope-merys', or 'mare-clothers'.

British Library, MS Harley 913, fol. 7. *IMEV* 1078. Previously printed in *Rel. Ant.* II, pp. 174-7; Furnivall, *E.E. Poems*, p. 152; Heuser, *Die Kildare-Gedichte*, pp. 154-8; Pinkerton, *Ulster Jnl. Arch.* 1860, VIII, pp. 270-6; Seymour, *Anglo-Irish Lit.*, pp. 110-3; Sisam, *OBMEV*, pp. 156-8 (part only).

This poem, which survives only in part, mocks a wide variety of social groups in late medieval Ireland.

1-3 Seint Michel...to bi fote Saint Michael, the archangel, was often represented in Western iconography as wearing a long red tunic, and sometimes armed with a lance (Louis Réau, *L'Iconographie de L'Art Chrétien*, 3 vol. (Paris: PUF, 1956), 2, p. 47). Throughout the Middle Ages his cult was strong in the British Isles (Farmer, pp. 300-1).

7-8 Seint Cristofre...be brod lake According to legend Christopher (Gk. *Christophos*, 'Christ-bearer') lived a life of Christian service by helping travellers to cross a river; one day a child asked to be carried across. Christopher, a giant, found him so heavy that he was bowed down under the weight. The child later explained that he was Jesus Christ and that Christopher had carried the weight of the world on his shoulders. Christopher is almost always represented in English church art as holding a great staff as he crosses the river with the child on his shoulder (R. L. P. Milburn, *Saints and Their Emblems in English Churches* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1957), p. 56). Fish also sometimes appear in connection with him (Helen Roeder, *Saints and Their Attributes* (London: Longman, 1955), p. 102); a wall painting in the parish church at Horley, Oxfordshire shows Christopher with fish swimming about his legs.

13 Seint Mari bastard, be Maudleinis sone Probably a reference to Joseph

of Arimathea, whom the poet has confused with Joses, the brother of St. James the Less and son of Mary of Bethany (Mark 15:40). In the west, following Gregory the Great, this Mary was sometimes identified as Mary Magdalen (Attwater, p. 230). An old legend, preserved in ballads, makes Mary Magdalen the mother of between two and nine bastard children (see F. J. Child, ed., *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, 5 vols. (New York: Dover, 1965), I, no. 21), and it seems likely that the poet has conflated this legend with the identification of the two Marys and the story of Joses' parentage. (See ll. 14n., 15-16n.)

14 To be wel iclopid wel was bi wone Joseph of Arimathea was sometimes depicted holding a shroud (Roeder, p. 321); he was the wealthy disciple who took Jesus' body to lay it in the tomb.

15-16 a box on bi hand ipeintid al of gold...spicis A spice box was an attribute of Joseph of Arimathea (Roeder, p. 321).

19-21 Seint Domnik, wip bi lang staffe...bok on bi bak St. Dominic was the founder of the Order of Friars Preachers or Black Friars. The book is among his many attributes (Réau, vol. 3, p. 392).

25 Seint Franceis, wip bi mani foulis St. Francis, founder of the Order of Friars Minor or Grey Friars, was often represented in art as preaching to the birds (Réau, vol. 3, p. 521).

28 Mani bold begger siwip bi route A reference to the mendicancy of the Franciscan friars.

31 freris, wip be white copis Dominican friars wore white capes over black under-garments; when they are depicted as *Domini canes* the dogs are always black and white.

32 Drochda Drogheda, a town in Ireland about 30 miles north of Dublin; the Dominican house there was founded in 1224.

34 Of be watir daissers 3e robbip be churchis An accusation that these friars steal from churches the *aspergilla*, instruments (often made of

silver) used to sprinkle holy water.

37-8 Gilmins, wip 3ur blake gunes...tunis Gilmins (from OF *Guillemin*) or Williamite hermits, were a Benedictine order founded by St. William of Vercelli in the eleventh century. Originally they lived in isolation in remote locations. They wore white outer habits but otherwise dressed like the black Benedictines. St. John D. Seymour (in *Anglo-Irish Literature 1200-1582*) takes 'gilmin' as a form of Ir. *giolmanach*, 'tattler', but this does not follow the pattern of the preceding and following stanzas, which name religious orders in a more conventional way and not by epithet. A pun on the two meanings might be intended, however.

39 Menur wiboute and Prechur wipinne The Gilmins have the appearance of Minorite (Franciscan) friars from their dress but behave like Friars Preachers (Dominicans), or perhaps simply wear light-coloured tunics over black ones (see ll. 37-8n.).

40 3ur abite is of gadering You customarily live by gathering, or collecting contributions and alms; 'gathering' can also refer to the amassing of riches and to sexual intercourse, and a pun on these meanings is probably intended.

46 Seint Benetis scourge The Rule of St. Benedict provided for the punishment, by scourging, of disobedient members of the order.

49 nonnes of Seint Mari house Discalced Carmelites, who had a house in Kildare in the Middle Ages.

51 Ofte mistredip 3e 3ur schone...ful tendre Implying that the nuns, whose rule required them to go barefoot, wore shoes and so had tender feet.

56 po3 3ur crune...fair bep 3ur crokes Despite your tonsure, your curly locks are fair.

68 To make wrong hoods...lome gores To make ill-fitting hoods you cut crooked gores.

73 sutters, wip 3our mani lestes Shoemakers, with your many lasts (wooden

models of the foot on which shoes were shaped).

79-80 drenche kiue...Whoso smillip perto... A vat for steeping animal skins in the process of tanning them; woe to anyone who happens to smell it.

81 Whan pat hit bonnerib 3e mote berin schite The tanning vat smells so foul that the tanners must defecate in it during thunderstorms (presumably from fright).

85 bole-ax Not a pole-axe but a 'bull-axe' or butcher's axe with a hammer on the back of the blade for stunning an animal before slaughter.

91 bakers, wip 3ur louis smale Dishonest bakers were the subject of at least two other Middle English satires (see poems 69 and 81), and are also mentioned in *Piers Plowman* B-text, III, ll. 78-85).

93 3e pincheb on be ri3t white You skimp on the right weight (of flour per loaf).

99 3ur powmes berip moch awai 'Your thumbs bear much away', referring to the dishonest ale-seller's practice of putting his or her thumb into the ale-pot to give the appearance of fullness to a short measure.

100 coking-stole Stool used for ducking people who had flouted the moral code of the community. The cucking stool is also mentioned as a punishment for thieving brewsters in *Piers Plowman* (B.III, ll. 78-9).

103 hokesters Hucksters, or petty merchants, peddlars; here they seem to be dealers in offal and unwanted parts of slaughtered animals and are probably tallow-makers (cf. *OED* 2nd ed., Huckster, sb. 1b. 1641 *Best Farm Bks.* (Surtees) 29, 'Wee buy our molten tallowe...of the hucksters and tripewives').

London, British Library, MS Harley 913, fol. 6^v. *IMEV* 1820. Previously printed in Furnivall, *EE Poems*, p. 161. Many similar versions of this poem, which Robbins calls the 'abuses of the age', exist; see his listing in the *Index of Middle English Verse* and suppl. for manuscripts and editions.

London, British Library, MS Cotton Cleop. C vi, fol. 22^v (base text);
Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.1.45 (James 43), fol. 24. *IMEV* 1917.
Previously printed in *Archiv. CIV*, p. 304; James, *Cat. I*, p. 57; Brown,
MHRA II, p. 104; Peter, *Complaint and Satire*, p. 101.

This poem lists the signs of wantonness in a woman.

3 opin brest Exposed breast.

4 midoutin lesing Without mistake.

74

Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 274, fol. 155^v. *IMEV* 2010. Previously printed in Coxe, *Cat.*, p. 117; Wright, *Poet. Poems* II, p. 252.

In poem 74 fashion is implicated in the lack of compassion in present-day society.

1 Luffe Love.

75

British Library, MS Harley 247, fol. 129. *IMEV* 1941.8. Previously printed in Cooper, *Annals of Cambridge* (1842), i, p. 161; Coulton, *Social Life*, p. 66; Wilson, *Lost Lit.*, pp. 194-5.

A satirical poem against the mayor of Cambridge, which was publicly posted.

76

London, British Library, MS Royal 12.C.xiv, fol. 1^v. *IMEV* 2172. Previously printed in Bowers, *JEGP* 56, pp. 440-3.

A macaronic satire against the unpopular Sir Roger Belers (see Bowers, as above, for details of his life).

1 Miles Rogerus Sir Roger.

wons Dwells.

2 He was strict with all (people), as the clergy know well.

3-4 As a rose beautiful yesterday droops from fear of harshness, thus the simple soldier.

5 Although modestly born, nevertheless the unkind man was highly elevated (in social rank).

6 Thus exalted, he used to say 'Who dares question us?'

7 Fawning, greedy, shining like some patriotic star;

8 As if a wolf on the attack he said

9 Then with the power of the king, then with the protection of the law

10 That man from a poor clan in ill time flees his seat.

Verses composed on Roger Belers.

77

London, British Library, MS Lansdowne 418, fol. 93 (a transcript from the missing section of MS Harley 913). *IMEV* 4280. Previously printed in Heuser, *Die Kildare-Gedichte*, p. 11; Seymour, *Anglo-Irish Lit. 1200-1582*, p. 88; Wilson, *Leeds St. in Eng.* 5, p. 46, *Lost. Lit.*, p. 205.

A satire against those opposing the Powers family. The poem survives only in part.

78

Callow End, Worcester, Stanbrook Abbey, MS 3, fol. iii. *IMEV* 1793.6. Previously printed in Ker, *Med.Aev.* 34 (1965), p. 231; Greene, *EEC* 2nd ed., pp. 232-3.

1 Toryton Torrington, in North Devon.

13 scour be gonge Clean the privy.

A satire against John Clerke of Torrington, about whom no records or other references survive.

BL MS Royal App. 58, fol. 24^v. IMEV 870.5. Previously printed in Flügel, *Anglia* XII, p. 268; Rimbault, *Songs and Ballads*, p. 35.

A satire against one Friar Gastkyn, which survives with accompanying music in the manuscript and was probably performed.

2 Qui manes hic in patria Who remains here in his native land (*manes* for *manet*).

5 Tartara Tartarus, the lowest part of the infernal regions in Greek and Roman mythology, sometimes equated (as here) with the Christian hell.

6 Pro te et consimilibus For you and those just like you.

8 Absentyd a claustralibus Made absent by a lock or bolt, or locked out.

9 A fysche to lyve allways yn lond Proverbial; see Whiting, F 233.

10 Quid vero mirabilius Which is truly most extraordinary.

14 To present þe demonibus et fac cum consilio To present you to the demons and hold council.

16 in pelago On the open sea.

18 Vt ibi cum doloribus So that they would have distress there; so that they would be in trouble.

20 sub fluminibus Below the running water (waves).

22 Prior vel episcopo Prior or bishop.

24 Non vagans hic in seculo Not wandering (as) now in the secular world.

80

British Library, MS Harley 7578, fol. 16. *IMEV* 551. Previously printed in Robbins, *PQ* 35, pp. 93-5; Bowers, *MLN* 70, pp. 397-8; Davies, *Med. Eng. Lyr.*, p. 260 (st. 1-3 only).

Poem 80 is a satire against a philanderer who has caught a venereal disease and is now suffering the consequences of his past behavior.

3 And haste so...ystoole And have so many does shot and stolen. 'Shot' is a double-entendre equating shooting with sexual intercourse. The metaphor of shooting and hunting as sexual intercourse and pursuit is continued throughout the poem (see ll. 12, 29, 35, 39, 51, 54). Cf. poem 15, ll. 89-96, 105-12, where shooting and hunting are used in a similar way.

29 venerye Pursuit of sexual pleasure, with a pun on its other meaning of hunting.

33 madest forwarde Probably 'made a bargain'.

54 venire See l. 29n.

81

Oxford, Balliol College, MS 228, fol. 310^v. *IMEV* 459. Previously printed in Coxe, *Cat.*, p. 74; Mynors, *Cat.*, p. 235.

Poem 81 is a short satire against a false baker; cf. Lydgate's poem on the same subject (no. 69).

London, British Library, Printed Book IB 55040 (Caxton's *Mirroure of the World*, 1481), fol. ult.^v. IMEV 1409.1. Previously printed in *Rel. Ant.* I, pp. 250-1.

Poem 82 is a mock recipe to restore virginity.

4 wertows frely fyne Sumptuous and select vegetables.

15 gnattys smere Ointment made from gnats.

31 hoylyd on a herdyll Oiled on a hurdle.

33 mary of a whe3stone Marrow (soft inner part) of a whetstone.

34 gerdylle Belt; here rope with which Judas hanged himself after betraying Christ.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. poet. e 1, fol. 24^v. *IMEV* 813.

Previously printed in *Rhymes of the Minstrels*; Wright, *Carols* (Percy Soc. 23), p. 23; Jones, *Inst. Hist. Med. Bull.* 5, p. 575; Kaiser, *Anth.*, p. 312, *Med. Eng.*, p. 523; Davies, *Med. Eng. Lyr.*, p. 235; Robbins, *Sec. Lyr.*, p. 102.

A mock medical recipe which would undoubtedly worsen rather than alleviate the condition for which it was prescribed.

8 brynston Brimstone (usually known as sulphur today), a caustic substance often found in medieval medicinal recipes, especially those for skin diseases (see F. J. Furnivall, ed., *Andrew Boorde's Introduction and Dyetary*, E.E.T.S. e.s. 10 (1870), pp. 101-2, chapter 170; also Chaucer, *Gen. Pro.* I, ll. 629-32, of the Summoner: 'Ther nas quyk-silver, lytarge, ne brymston,/Boras, ceruce, ne oille or tartre noon...That hym myghte helpen of his whelkes white...' Boorde in his dietary advises particular caution in treating the eyes, at one point saying that it is best to leave the eyes alone and wait for any problem to resolve itself (ed. Furnivall, p. 101).

Appendix A

A Middle English Parody of Lydgate's *Valentine*

MS Rawlinson Poetry 36 in the Bodleian Library has been noted previously for the unique items it contains: three rather conventional love lyrics (items 6 - 8) and two satirical love epistles, one answering the other (items 4 and 5). But the manuscript contains another unique poem, which is of perhaps even greater interest; this is a parody of Lydgate's *A Valentine to Our Lady*, which until now has been taken for a straightforward copy of the poem. In the *Index of Middle English Verse* (under no. 3065) Brown and Robbins list Rawl. Poet. 36 as one of the manuscripts containing the *Valentine*, but make no mention of the important alterations incorporated into this version of it. Lydgate probably would not have appreciated the modern attribution of the Rawlinson version of the poem to him, so neatly does it mock his praise of the Virgin in its praise of an earthly woman.

The *Valentine* is preserved in four manuscripts apart from Rawl. Poet. 36: British Library MSS Harley 2251 and Additional 29729, Trinity College, Cambridge, MS R.3.20, and Bodleian Library MS Ashmole 59. Two of these, Ashmole 59 and TCC R.3.20, are familiar as manuscripts copied by the fifteenth-century antiquarian John Shirley, while Harley 2251 is copied partially from a Shirley manuscript now lost and partially from TCC R.3.20.¹ Additional 29729 is known to have been copied chiefly by John Stow, a sixteenth-century antiquarian who owned several Shirley manuscripts, from TCC R.3.20.² The texts from Rawlinson Poet. 36 (fol. 1) and Harley 2251 (fol. 242^v), neither of them printed previously, are given here in parallel. The Harley 2251 text is printed with variants from the three other manuscripts (A = British Library MS Addit. 29729, fol. 155; T =

Trinity College, Cambridge MS R.3.20; B = Bodleian Library MS Ashmole 59, fol. 52).

The Harley 2251 *Valentine* is of importance because it presents the 'best' text of the poem of the four manuscript versions, its copyist apparently having either corrected his exemplum at several points, or used a text of the poem unknown to us. Judging from the nature and frequency of disagreements between the Harley 2251 and Trinity R.3.20 texts, the Harley 2251 *Valentine* does not seem to have been copied from the text of the poem in Trinity R.3.20 but from the lost Shirley manuscript. Harley 2251 gives better readings at l. 13, 'theyr sorte doth falle', against 'fortune wyl shewe' of Trinity R.3.20, the latter causing a faulty rhyme; at l. 33, 'Of Kyng David she stoode so in his grace', against the vaguer 'Of King David she stood so in þe grace' of Additional, Ashmole and Trinity; at l. 46, 'Gaf hym presentes', against 'Gaf him presence' of the other three manuscripts; at l. 130, in reference to St. Louis as an ancestor of Catherine of Valois, 'Saynt Lowys bloode', against the reference in Additional, Ashmole and Trinity to the more obscure St. Clothilde, also claimed as an ancestor by the Valois, 'Saynt Clottis bloode'; and at l. 137, 'To shede theyr grace and to theyr noble bloode', since the stanza can be read as addressing Henry VI as well as his mother, against 'To shede hir grace and to theyr noble bloode' of the three other manuscripts.

While a copyist might be expected to make minor grammatical corrections, it is less probable that he would substitute the half-line 'theyr sorte doth falle' for 'fortune wyl shewe' to correct a deficiency of rhyme that could be corrected more simply by substituting the single word 'falle' for 'shewe'. It is less probable still that he would substitute 'Saynt Lowys' for 'Saynt Clottis'. Since St. Louis was

canonized in 1297, comparatively recently for people living in Lydgate's age, and was so strongly connected to the contemporary French monarchy, 'Saynt Lowys' is much the better reading and perhaps the original one. It is possible therefore that the Harley 2251 text of the Lydgate *Valentine* was copied from a better text of the poem than any we now have.

The Rawlinson version of the Lydgate *Valentine* omits so much of Lydgate's material and so greatly rearranges what it does include that its relationship to the other manuscripts is obscured. However, in one important reading it does agree with the Trinity R.3.20 version of the poem: the rhyme of the line 'But I have chosen oon that excellyth in wordys fewe' in the Rawlinson text, which is integral to the poem's parodic criticism of the Lydgate *Valentine*'s verbosity, depends upon the line preceding it, 'Takyng ther choys as Fortune wole shew'. This reading appears a single time only in the text of the Trinity manuscript (at l. 13), and is incorrect, as we have seen. Whoever rewrote the Lydgate *Valentine* in the version that appears in the Rawlinson manuscript must have been familiar with the redaction of the poem represented at least in part by the Trinity R.3.20 text.

The copyist of the Lydgate *Valentine* follows the poem closely in form, singling out for ridicule both its religious nature and Lydgate's tendency to long-windedness. By the time the Rawlinson copyist has finished, the religious nature of the Lydgate *Valentine* has been completely transformed. The Rawlinson copyist makes oblique references to the cult of Venus in place of Lydgate's oblique references to the cult of the Virgin, and the goddess of love becomes the object of the poet's supplications instead of the Blessed Mother.³ Where the parodist of the Rawlinson manuscript addresses the Blessed Virgin as Lydgate addresses her, he reveals that his

earthly mistress's name is the same as hers, 'Humbely besechyng to that pure Virgyne/That ye ar named after to graunte me grace' (1.71-72; analogous lines in Lydgate 1a.134-135). In these substitutions the Rawlinson poem recalls *The Lover's Mass*⁴, a parody of the mass in which a lover begs the grace of Venus and Cupid in the courtship of his lady. The remainder of the Rawlinson parodist's address asks the Virgin to help him court and win his mistress, with the incongruity of his prayer underscored by the irony of his mistress and the Virgin sharing the same name.

The naming of the beloved in the original *Valentine*, 'And if I shal hir name specifye/That folk may wite whiche she shuld be/This goodely fresshe callid is Mary' (1a.71-72), is also treated parodically in the Rawlinson version. Poem I prolongs the revelation by substituting a further appellation, 'Pys goodly fressh callyd is in spicerie/A notable confeccion, i, ii, and thre' (1.43-44). The Lydgate *Valentine* describes the Virgin as 'a braunche of kynges that sprang out of Jesse' (1a.74); poem I mocks this as 'The deth of conyes whan they may not fle' (1.47) and 'The vessell assised grettest of wynes alle' (1.48), although these appear at a different stage in the poem. The parodist's description of his mistress as a 'notable confeccion', 'the deth of conyes', and 'the vessell assised grettest of wynes alle' might be deliberate nonsense, or equally might be a code of some kind, perhaps giving her name. One might speculate thus: in Middle English the word *marie*, 'marrow', was used figuratively to describe the choicest parts of foods, and so could be the referent of 'in spicerie/A notable confeccion'; we know from lines 71-2 that Mary ('marie') must be the first name of the poem's addressee. 'The deth of conyes whan they may not fle' could refer to 'hunting', a word which was often found as a component of surnames in medieval England, as it is today (see *OED*,

'hunting'). 'The vessell assised grettest of wines alle' could refer to a 'tunne'; together these two lines might make the name 'Huntington'. Unfortunately there is no way of knowing if 'Mary Huntington' really was the addressee of the poem, but the opening and closing lines of the stanza, 'And yf I shuld hyr name specyfie' and 'Whom I haue chosen pus peples hyr calle', strongly suggest that a name is revealed in it. Whether or not these substituted lines have any encoded significance these substituted lines in Poem I might have, they parody the religious theme of Lydgate's *Valentine*.

The poet mocks Lydgate's long-windedness by substituting 'But my choys excellyth in wordys fewe' (or variations) for the conclusion of most of Lydgate's stanzas, 'I love oon whiche excellith alle' (or variations). Where Lydgate rhetorically asks 'What shal I sayn of qwene Penelope/Or in Grece of the qwene Alceste?' (1a.51-52) the parodist substitutes 'What nedyth of hyr [his mistress] long processe to make,/Sythyn euery vertu that an herte may thynke/Embelysshed is in her, þerfor, for hyr sake?' (1.50-53), asserting that it is unnecessary to make such lengthy comparisons if one's beloved possesses virtue to an outstanding degree. The Rawlinson poet also removes most of Lydgate's references to women of antiquity and eliminates all of his references to Biblical heroines and saints. As Lydgate's catalogue of good women has little direct relation to the rest of his poem and the women are listed by rote, the majority of the catalogue can be removed without any damage to the sense of the poem.

Since much of the parody in the Rawlinson lyric is achieved through secularization of the Lydgate *Valentine*, it is worth considering both poems in light of the relationship of secular and religious lyrics in Middle English. These two poems present an especially interesting problem because

in his *Valentine to Our Lady* Lydgate uses secular conventions to create a religious lyric (making it a parody of sorts to begin with) and the Rawlinson poet in effect 'resecularizes' the poem in parodying it. The question of whether Lydgate used a poem represented by the Rawlinson text as a model for his *Valentine* could even be raised.

Lydgate's adaptation of the secular conventions of the verse love epistle and the occasion of St. Valentine's Day to a religious lyric is quite clever. His *Valentine* works on the basis of the surprise the reader feels when the addressee of the poem is revealed as the Virgin Mary. The revelation of her identity marks the lyric as a religious one; until that point, the poem appears to be a simple secular love epistle. After the mention of Mary's name Lydgate begins a long series of religious allusions in connection with her, but still ends each stanza with variations on 'Whom I love best for she excelleth alle', the refrain he uses to close the stanzas in the poem's secular first half. The refrain takes on new dimensions after Mary's identity is revealed, since she undeniably does excel all others, and places her in the longstanding tradition of the Blessed Virgin as the queen of courtesy and ideal courtly lady.

The secular first half of the poem similarly takes on new, religious implications once Mary's identity is revealed; the reader realizes that the poet's praise of his lady is not just courtly hyperbole, but a religious truth. The revelation of Mary's identity thus causes the reader to interpret the secular conventions of the poem religiously. Something of a parallel can be found in the lyric beginning 'I haue non English convenient and digne',⁵ which can be read as a Valentine to the Blessed Virgin but also as a secular love lyric, for the poem itself contains no specific religious references--only the reader's interpretation makes it a religious

lyric. Certainly lyrics like the latter, which can be read as having either secular or religious meanings, are common in Middle English verse--Carleton Brown in his *Religious Lyrics of the XVth Century* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1934) printed several which contain no religious references whatsoever and could be included equally well in an anthology of secular verse.⁶ The very fact that such lyrics are open to either interpretation shows a flexibility of formal convention in the lyric of which both Lydgate and the Rawlinson parodist were well aware.

The two poems finally serve to highlight a problem of interpretation concerning the nature of literary parody. Can we recognize parody when its subject is either unknown to us, or is a literary convention instead of a specific poem or piece of prose? The Rawlinson poem parodies the Lydgate *Valentine* specifically and not the verse love epistle generally; the Rawlinson lyric is a perfectly ordinary verse love epistle if it is not read against the Lydgate poem, and we would have no way of knowing that it is a parody without comparing it to the Lydgate *Valentine*. While it does not really help to answer the question, the Rawlinson poem does at least provide an instance of literary parody from an age when examples of it are few and far between.

Notes

- ¹ E. P. Hammond, *Chaucer: A Bibliographical Manual* (New York: Macmillan, 1908), 515, 517.
- ² Hammond, 517.
- ³ Chaucer includes an elaborate description of Venus's temple in the *Parliament of Foules*, ll. 113 ff.; see also *The Knight's Tale*, ll. 1103-111, where Palamon prays to Venus, for whom he has mistaken Emily (references are to L. D. Benson, ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987). See also R. H. Robbins, *Secular Lyrics of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1955), no. 178.
- ⁴ *IMEV* 4186; ed. E. P. Hammond, *English Verse from Chaucer to Surrey* (1927; New York: Octagon, 1965), 207.
- ⁵ *IMEV* 1309; ed. W. W. Skeat, *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (London: Clarendon, 1897), Suppl.: 281-4.
- ⁶ See Brown, nos. 40, 46, and 47.

I (Rawl. Poet. 36)

[S]ent Valentyn, of custom yere be yere,
 Men haue in vsans in thys regyon
 To loke and serche Cupides calendere
 On thy day here loues by grete effeccion,
 Suche as ben prykkyd by Venus mocion, 5
 Takyng ther choys as Fortune wole shew,
 But I haue chosen oon that excellyth in wordys few.

For summe chese for fayrenesse and beaute,
Summe for estate, summe for rychesse;
 Somme for fredom, somme for bounte, 10
 Somme for ther port, summe for gentylnesse;
Summe for plesaunce, s~~um~~e for goodnesse--
 Lyke as the chaunce of Fortune wyl shewe--
 But my choyse excellyth alle in wordys fewe.

II (Harley 2251)

Seynt Valentyne, of custom yeere by yeere,
 Men haue an vsaunce in this regioun
 To loke and serche Cupides kalendere,
 And chese theyr choyse by grete affeccioun
 Suche as bien priked with Cupides mocioun, 5
 Takyng theyre choyse as theyr sort doth falle;
 But I love oon whiche excellith alle.

Som chese for fayrenesse and for high beaute,
 Som for estate and som eeke for richesse;
 Som for fredam and som for bounte, 10
 Som for theyr port and theyr gentillesse;
 Som for theyr plesaunce and som for theyr goodenesse;
 Liche as the chaunce of theyr sorte doth falle,
 But I love on whiche excellith alle.

I chase that floure sithen gon ful yoore, 15
 And euery yeere my choyse I shal renuwe
 Vpon this day; conferme it euermore!
 She is in love so stidefast and so trewe,
 Who lovith hir best it shal hym neuer rewe
 Yif suche a grace vnto his sort may falle; 20
 Whom I have chose, for she excellith alle.

Men speke of Lucressa of Rome town 15
For wyfly trouth founde in clennesses,
And somme trette of Marcia Caton
Wyth laude and price of hyr stedfastnesse,
And summe of Dydo for hyr kyndnesse;
But fortune suche happe let on me falle 20
That I haue chosen oon that excelllyth alle.

Men speke of Lucesse that was of Rome towne
 For wyfly trowth founded on clenness;
 Som write als of Marcia Catoun
 With lawde and prise for hir stidefastenesse, 25
 And som of Dydo for hir kyndenesse;
 Fortune suche happe lete vpon hem falle,
 But I love oon that excellith alle.

Rachel was fayre, Lya was eke fecunde,
 And riche also was the qwene Candace; 30
 So in hir tyme right fayre was Roosamonde,
 And Bersabe hadde a goodely face;
 Of Kyng Daud she stoode so in his grace
 First whan his looke he lete vpon hir falle;
 But I love oon whiche excellith alle. 35

The noble kyng, the myghti Assuere,
 Cherished Hester for hir grete mekenesse,
 For wommanhod, and for hir humble chiere;
 Made hir a qwene and a grete princesse;
 To the Jewes lawe she was defenseresse 40
 In sodayn myschief that dide vpon hem falle;
 But I love oon whiche excellith alle.

24 als of Marcia Catoun] of Marcia Catoun als AT **28 excellith]**
 excellepe hem B **qwene]** faire qwene B **32 hadde]** hade eke B **33 his]** þe
 ATB **41 sodayn]** þe sodeine B

Thesbe the mayde born in Babylon
 That loued so weel {yong} Priamus,
 And Cleopater of w[i]lful motion
 Lyst for to dye wyth here Antonyus;
 Set a1 oon syde! On hys so vertuus,
 Whych I do my souerayn lady calle,
 Whom I loue best for she excellyth alle.

Saba cam fer for Kyng Salamon
 To seen his riches and his sapience,
 His stately houshold and his hye renoun; 45
 Gaf hym presentes of grete excellence,
 Herd his prouerbis and his hye prudence
 Wher as he sat in his royal stalle;
 But I love oon whiche excellith alle.

What shal I sayn of Qwene Penelope, 50
 Or in Grece of the Qwene Alceste?
 Of Polixene other of Medee,
 Or of qwene Eleyne holden the fairest?
 Lete hem farewell and lete theyr names rest!
 My ladyes name theyr renoun doth apalle, 55
 Whom I shal chese, for she excellith alle.

Thesbe, the mayden born in Babylon
 That loved wele the yonge Priamus,
 And Cleopatre of wilful mocioun
 List for to dye with hir Antonius; 60
 Sette al on side! Oone is so vertuous
 Whiche that I do my souerayne lady calle,
 Whom I love best, for she excellith alle.

43 Saba] Saba als B fer] om. B for] frome B 46 presentes] presence
 ABT 47 hye] gret AT 48 as] þat B 51 Qwene] feire qwene B 52 Medee]
 gode Medee B 56 shal chese] haue chose A have chosen B 58 wele] so
 wele ABT 63 Whom I love] And love hir B

What shuld I rehearse of Grysyllys paciens,
 Or speke in Grece of the quene Alceste?
 Or of Pallas Minerua that hat the eloquence, 30
 Or of quene Eleyne holden the fayrest?
 Late them fareweell! Lete ther names reste!
 Suche happe Fortune dyd me shewe:
 Whom I haue chosen excelllyth in termes fewe.

For yf I shuld the trouth expresse, 35
 The vertues comprehendyd in thys ladyes ichon
 May wel be veryfied bothe more and lesse
 In my lady that I loue in yere agon;
 And nowe good happe, as gest, cam me oon,
 Suche favour eke Fortune dyd me shew, 40
 That my choys excelllyth alle in wordys fewe.

Gresyeld whilom had grete pacience,
 As it was preved ferre vp in Itaile; 65
 Pallas Mynerua hadde eloquence,
 And Pantasilia faught in plate and maile,
 And Senobia lyouns wolde assaile
 To make hem taame as oxe in a stalle;
 But I love oon that excellith alle. 70

And yf I shuld hyr name specyfie
 That folkys may wote what she shuld be,
 Pys goodly fresh callyd is in spicerie 45
 A notable confeccion, oon, ij, and thre;
 The deth of conyes whan they may not fle;
 The vessell assised grettest of wyne alle;
 Whom I haue chosen þus peples hyr calle.

What nedyth of hyr long processe to make, 50
 Sythyn euery vertu that a[n] herte may thynke
 Embelysshed is in her, þerfor, for hyr sake?
 Thus in myn hert, enclose by penne and ynke
 Vnto lady fortune, that I may rote and synke
 In her herte, and in hyr grace falle, 55
 Whom I haue chosen þat excelllyth alle.

Also vnto Venus hertely I me compleyn,
 That knowyth the ferventnesse of my desyre
 Not to suffyr my mastresse to haue dysden
 On me that brenne euer in louys fyre. 60
 But that she wol quite me myn hyre
 After my desert, þus for grace I calle,
 Of my lady whych excelllyth alle.

And if I shal hir name specifye
 That folk may wite whiche she shuld be,
 This goodely fresshe callid is Marye:
 A braunche of kynges that sprang out of Jesse,
 That made the Lord thurgh hir humylite, 75
 To lete his gold dewe into hir brest downe falle
 To bere the fruyte which shuld save vs alle.

I meane thus--whan the Holy Gost alight
 Into hir brest to save vs euerychon,
 Right as the dewe with siluer dropes bright 80
 Fel vpon the flees of Gedeon,
 And as the yerde also of Aaron
 Bouriowned and bare fruyte to sugre oure galle;
 Whom I love best for she excellith alle.

She of oure evil adawed hath the eclips, 85
 Oure victory of the serpent wonne;
 This is she that whilom in the Apocalips
 Seynt John the Apostel sawe clothed in a sonne;
 Mankyndes ioye at hir was first begonne,
 Refut to synners that for help do calle 90
 To hir of goodenesse whiche excellith alle.

71 specifye] yow specifye B 72 may wote whiche] shoulde wit what B 73]
 Called is oure ladye þe blesse Marie B 76 downe] om. B 87 This] þis
 same B 88 a] om. TB 90 help] helth A hir help B do] om. B 91 To hir
 of] For mans helpe hir B whiche] om. B

428

This is the mayde whiche on the awtere
 With cheld in armes appered plainly thanne,
 And shone for brightnesse as any sonne cliere
 To fore th'emp[er]our cleped Octouyan; 95
 And he fil downe and worship hir began,
 Left his pride and gan hir socour calle,
 To hir of goodenesse that excellith alle.

She was chief roote of oure saluacioun
 That first for man the helth gan purchase, 100
 Whan Gabryel with salutacioun
 Gan from the Lord hir salwe in the place.
 She brought first Theophilus to grace,
 Out of the myschief that he was in falle,
 Whom I love best, for she excellith alle. 105

Men at theyr lust may both chese and lete
 Liche as love doth theyr hertis distreyne;
Kateryne was goode and Seynt Margarete,
 Agnes, Agas and Marie Mawdeleyne,
 Fides Lucia and also Seynt Eleyne, 110
 But of my sort the sort is so befalle
 I love oon best, for she excellith alle.

95 th'emperour] MS *thempour*
 92 on] on to B 93 plainly] in pe temple B 94 and 95 *interchanged* B 97
 his] al his B gan hir socour] of socour <g>ane hir B 98 that] for sheo
 B 102 Gan from the] Came frome oure B 104 that he was in] into whiche
 he was falle B 109 Agnes Agas] Aunieys and agas B and] *om.* B 110 also
 seynt] eke faire B 111 But of my sort] Of my fortune B so befalle]
 nowe me falle B 112 I love oon best for she] pat I love one whiche
 {p^t}B

430

After theyr hertis to any man is free,
 Whoeuer say nay in love for to chese;
 In choyse of love there is grete liberte 115
 Euery seasoun, whether it th[awe] or freese;
 And for my part, because me list nat cheese,
 Ne in my choyse ther may no myschieff falle,
 I have chosen oon whiche excellith alle.

From yeere to yeere for necligence or rape, 120
 Voyde of al chaunge and of newfangelnesse,
 Saynt Valantyne hi[t] shal me nat escape
 Vpon thy day in tokene of stidefastnesse;
 But that I shal conferme in sikernesse
 My choys of newe, so as it is befalle, 125
 To love hir best whiche that excelleth alle.

116 thawe] MS *thrawe* 122 hit] MS *hir*
 113 any] every AT 114 in love for to] p^t eche wight may B 117 me] I A
 cheese] leese ABT 119 whiche excellith alle] whome I love best of alle
 B

Souereyn mastresse of welfare pris
 Whos goodnesse thorew the worde doth shyne, 65
 So wel avysed, so prudent and so wys,
 And whos trouth no wyt may determyne--
 Of youre specyall grace your eres inclyne,
 And y[i]f me leue lyke as it is falle
 To loue you best that excellyth alle. 70

Humbely besechyng to that pure Virgyne
 That ye ar named after to graunte me grace
 You so to loue and send somme syne,
 Wythoute interrupcion in any place,
 And therto that may haue I leysure and space 75
 To do you that we plesaunce calle,
 That I may reioyse; a, that excellyth alle!

Go pou messenger and for fere pou quake
 For to apere in so hye presence,
 Tyl she of grace the to mercy take, 80
 That hath of custome by ryghtful prouidence
Mercy annexyd to hyr magnificence;
 Of womanly pyte perto haue reuthe,
 Where ygnorance causeth such offence,
 Wythoute malyce, menyng nat but treuthe. 85

Explicit

Noble princesse, braunche of floure de lys,
 Whos goodenesse thurgh the world doth shyne,
 So wele avised, so prudent, and so wise,
 Saynt Lowys bloode and of that noble lyne, 130
 Lowly beseche I conferme and termyne
 To yeve me l[e]ve liche as it is befalle
 To love hir best that excellith alle.

With humble hert besechyng that Virgyne
 Whiche is most fayre, most bountevous, and most goode; 135
 To sixte Henry his moder Kateryne
 To shede theyr grace and to theyr noble bloode,
 And Crist Jhesu that starf vpon the roode,
 Have on vs mercy whan we for help calle
 For love of hir that excellith alle. 140

132 leve] MS love

127 princesse] prynce A 130 Lowys] Clottis ABT 132 befalle] me befalle
 B 135 most goode] goode ABT 137 theyr] hir ABT

Appendix B

An Index of Middle English Satiric and Parodic Verse

This index represents an attempt to list surviving pieces of verse in this tradition, excepting longer narrative poems. While the index follows the principles for defining satirical poems outlined in the Introduction, given the difficulties of defining medieval satire it cannot claim to be complete. Early printed editions of the poems in the index are not listed; please refer to the entries specified in the *Short Title Catalogue*. A dagger following the index number indicates that the poem appears in the present collection, with the corresponding number given in brackets after the first line.

- 1 A baylife there was, in the weste contrey
On corrupt bayliffs
STC 6088, 88.3
- 2 A faythfull frende wolde I fayne fynde
On friendship and money
STC 3309.5, 10.3, 10.5, 11, 12, 12.3
- 3 A froward knave pleyedly to descryve (51)
Oxford, Bodleian MS Laud Misc. 683, fol. 54^v; BL MSS Harley 2251,
fol. 14; Lansdowne 699, fol. 88^v; Leyden, MS Voss. 9, p. 201
Lydgate, on froward Maymond
IMEV 36
- 4 A lytell ragge of Rethorike
Skelton, *A replycacion against certayne yong scolers...*
STC 22609
- 5 A man þat xuld of trowþe telle (63)
BL MS Sloane 2593, fol. 7^v.
On the lack of honesty
IMEV 72

- 6 A sterne stryfe is stered newe
The Plowman's Tale
 STC 5099.5, 5100, 5069, 5074
- 7 Aboue all thynge thow arte a kyng (41)
 BL MS Royal 17 B xlvii, fol. 160^v
 On the power of money
 IMEV 113
- 8 After playes sportes and daunces of solace
 Copland, an attack on women and marriage
 STC 5728, 28.5
- 9 Agaynst the prowde Scottys claterynge
 Skelton, against the Scots
 STC 22598-9
- 10 All that I may swink or swete
 Oxford, Bodleian MS Eng. pot. e 1, fol. 52.
 Lament of a hen-pecked husband
 IMEV 210
- 11 All women have vertues noble and excellent
 BL Addit. 17942, fol. 18^v; Longleat 258, fol. 32.
 Punctuation poem vs. women
 IMEV232
- 12 Allas what schul we freris do (2)
 Cambridge, St. John's Col., MS G 28 (James 195), fol. i^v
 A friar replies to criticism (see no. 182)
 IMEV 161 (answering IMEV 3697)
- 13 Als I me sat myself allon
 BL MS Egerton 1624, fol. 1
 Vs. false friends
 IMEV 362

- 14 Although I lack intelligence
Anti-Catholic skeltonics
STC 7071
- 15 An housbande I haue
Against women and marriage
STC 20765.5
- 16 An obstinate Papiste that was sometyme a Frier
Crowley, 'Of obstinate Papistes'
STC 6088-8.3
- 17 And as I passid in my preiere þer prestis were at messe
A. CUL MS Ll.4.14, fol. 107^v ('Richard the Redeles', 857 ll.
beginning and ending imperfectly); B. BL MS Addit. 41666, fol. 1
(1751 ll. only)
Mum and the Sothsegger
*IMEV *6*
- 18 Apon the midsummer evin mirriest of nichts
Cambridge, MS Pepys 2553, pp. 81-96
Dunbar, *The Tretis of Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedow*
IMEV 3845.5; STC 7350
- 19 As I chaunced for to walke, for my recreacyon
Against Andrew Borde's 'Book of Beards'
STC 4241.5
- 20 As I cowth walke because of recreacion (30)
BL MS Addit. 38666, fol. 174
A dialogue between a clerk and a husbandman
IMEV 344

- 21 As I me lend to a lond (64)
 BL MS Sloane 2593, fol. 33
 'A Lord how gos þis word abowte'
IMEV 356
- 22 As I went on 30l day in owre prosessyon (12)
 BL MS Sloane 2593, fol. 34
 'Jolly Jankin'
IMEV 377
- 23 As long as any berdes be worne
 Answer to Andrew Borde's 'Book of Beards'
STC 1465
- 24 As 3ung Aurora with cristall haile
 NLS MS Advocates 1.1.6, fol. 117; MS Asloan, fol. 211^v (part only)
Dunbar, Ane Ballet of the Fen3eit Freir of Tun gland
IMEV 417.5
- 25 Ay beshere we you be my fay
 BL MS Addit. 5465, fol. 96^v
 Skelton, *Manerly Margery Mylk and Ale*
IMEV 456.5
- 26 Be god and saint hillare (11)
 Oxford, Bodleian MS Bodley 851, fol. 2
 On an ill-learned clerk
IMEV 569
- 27 Barnes I say yf thou be shent
 In defence of beards
STC 1465

- 28 Be it knowen and understand
 Coventry Corp. Leet Book, fol. 275^v
 Rude verses on injustices in Coventry c. 1495
IMEV 466
- 29 Be pes 3e make me spille my ale (21)
 BL MS Addit. 5665, fol. 67
 A lovers' dialogue
IMEV 474.5
- 30 Bewayle maye Inghland, the synne of Sodomytes
 'Iohan Bale tr. of 6 Lat. verses by Sir Iohan Oldecastell'
STC 1276-8
- 31 Bissop lorles/Kyng redeles (72)
 BL MS Harley 913, fol. 6^v (for MSS containing many similar
 versions see *IMEV 1820*)
 On the evil times
IMEV 1820
- 32 Bo pepe what haue I spyed, a bug I trow, deuysing of proud knacks
 Attack on women
STC 1374
- 33 Burgeys thou haste so blowen atte the cole (80)
 BL MS Harley 7578, fol. 16
 To a once-amorous burgess
IMEV 551
- 34 But we hoope we shalle do the a pryve thyng
 BL MS Cotton Cleop. F iii, fol. 71^v
 Mocking imprecation at conclusion of a prose letter
IMEV 557

- 35 Bytwene a þousend men may on ycouþe
 Cambridge UL MS Gg 3. 8, fol. 68^v
 On women's lack of discretion
IMEV 514
- 36 Calays men now mai 3e care
 BL MS Cotton Galba E ix, fol. 55^v, col. i
 Minot on the Siege of Calais
IMEV 585
- 37 Crose and curteys Christ thys begynnyng spede
 TCC MS 595, fol. 305; BL MS Royal 18 B xvii, fol. 1; Harley 78,
 fol. 3 (ll. 172-207 only)
Pierce the Plowman's Crede
IMEV 663; STC 19904
- 38 Dayly in Englond meruels be fownd (33)
 Oxford, Bodleian MS Eng. poet. e 1, fol. 42^v
 On the battle for the breeches
IMEV 667
- 39 Deuise prowes and eke humylitee
 Bodleian MS Eng. poet. e 1, fol. 42^v
 Virtuous maidens, wicked wives
IMEV 679; STC 7348
- 40 Deuorit with dreme devysing in my slummer
 Pepys 2553, p. 187; Advoc. 1.1.6, p. 47 and fol. 60
 A 'general satyre' ascribed to Dunbar and Inglis
IMEV 679.8
- 41 Do mon for þiselffe wyl þou art olyue (45)
 BL MS Harley 3038, fol. 1
 On executors
IMEV 685

- 42 Euen with the same commendacion that to you doth pertayne
 Defense of Cromwell
STC 12206a
- 43 Faine wald I with all diligence
 Pepys 2553, p. 210
 On the danger of writing (attrib. to Dunbar)
IMEV 753.5
- 44 Flescly lustys and festys (57)
 Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 274, fol. 155; Armagh, Bp.
 Swayne's Reg. (fol. no. unknown)
 On pride
IMEV 811
- 45 Flen flyys and freris populum domini male cedunt (5)
 BL MS Harley 3362, fol. 24; Oxford, Bodleian MS Digby 196,
 fol. 196
 Macaronic lines on friars
IMEV 808
- 46 For a man þat is almost blynd (83)
 Oxford, Bodleian MS Eng. poet. e 1, fol. 24^v
 A burlesque cure for blindness
IMEV 813
- 47 For age is a page
 Skelton, against Wolsey
STC 22615, 15.5, 17
- 48 For as moche as many folke there be
 Copland, against marriage
STC 5729

- 49 Ffor feer or for favour of ony fals mane
 BL Cotton Rolls ii. 23
 Against the Duke of Suffolk
IMEV 818
- 50 For thar wer thai bal brend
 Cambridge UL Gg 1.1, fol. 345^v
 English abuse of the Scots
IMEV 848
- 51 Freers, freers, wo 3e be (7)
 TCC MS 0.2.40 (James 1144), fol. 58^v
 Macaronic verses against the friars
IMEV 871
- 52 Frenschipe faileþ and fullich fadeþ
 Bodleian Vernon MS, fol. 408^v; BL MS Addit. 22283, fol. 130^v
 Against false friends
IMEV 872
- 53 Frere Gastkyn wo þou be (79)
 BL MS Royal App. 58, fol. 24^v
 A macaronic poem against a friar
IMEV 870.5
- 54 Fulfyllyd ys þe profesy for ay (65)
 BL MS Harley 5396, fol. 295
 'þe bysom ledys þe blynde'
IMEV 884
- 55 Fur in see bi west Spaygne (10)
 BL MS Harley 913, fol. 3
The Land of Cockayne
IMEV 762

- 56 Gentle Paule laie doune thy swearde:
 Skelton on Wolsey
STC 12721-23
- 57 Glorye vnto god, laud and benyson
 'The payne and sorowe of euyll maryage'
STC 19119
 Go bet peny go bet go
 See no. 139
- 58 Guk guk gud day schir gaip quhill 3e get it
 NLS MS Advocates 1.1.6, fol. 141^v
 Henryson, *Sum Practysis of Medecyne*
IMEV 1021
- 59 Gyle and gold togedere arn met (42)
 BL MS Sloane 2593, fol. 5^v
 On deceitfulness and money
IMEV 1020
- 60 Hail Seint Michel wip þe lange sper (71)
 BL MS Harley 913, fol. 7
 An Irish satire on the estates
IMEV 1078
- 61 Haue mercie on me frere
 Kilkenny, Red Book of Ossory, fol. 72
 Against the friars
IMEV 1123
- 62 He is wys þat kan be war or him be wo
 BL MS Harley 116, fol. 170^v; Harley 2316, fol. 26; NLS MS

Advocates 18.7.21, fol. 151^V; Hereford Cath. MS O.IV.14, pt. ii,
flyleaf

On the wise man

IMEV 1139

63 He þat hath a good neyghboure hath a good morowe

BL MS Harley 116, fol. 170^V

Proverbial rhyme

IMEV 1140

64 He þat lovyth welle to fare

Naples, Royal Lib. XIII,B.29, p. 113

Against extravagance

IMEV 1156

65 He þat owith mych and hath nought (43)

Oxford, Balliol MS 354, fol. 208^V; Oxford, Corpus Christi MS 237,
fol. 1; BL MS Harley 2252, fol. 2

Proverbial rhymes on money

IMEV 1163

Herfor and therfor and therfor I came

See no. 173

66 Herkyn to my tale that I schall to yow schew

NLS MS Advocates 19.3.1, fol. 60; NLW MS Brogyntyn (Porkington)
10, fol. 152

Nonsense verses

IMEV 1116

67 Hey priuet3 gritliche (60)

BL MS Harley 7322, fol. 140^V

Four lines on the evils of the times

IMEV 1217

- 68 How praty and proper now that we be
 Against women
STC 22924
- 69 I am olde whan age doth apele
 Bodleian SC 10234, fol. 38^v
 On old men in love
IMEV 1278
- 70 I can fynd no man now that wille enquere
 Bodl. MS Laud Misc. 416, fol. 60
 Against marriage
IMEV 1287
- 71 I haue a lady where so she be (14)
 TCC R.3.19, fol. 205
 Satirical description of a mistress
IMEV 1280
- 72 I herd a playnt of grete pyte (48)
 BL MS Harley 5396, fol. 310^v
 'Alas þat ony kynde man wantys gode'
IMEV 1319
- 73 I not what I shall syng nor say
 BL MS Harley 5396, fol. 292
 'Turne up hur halter and let her go'
IMEV 1338
- 74 I se ther is but litill truste
 Cambridge UL MS Kk 6. 30, fol. 70^v; BL MS Sloane 554, fol. 53^v
 On women's faithlessness
IMEV 1356

- 75 I wold ffayn be a clarke
Oxford, Balliol MS 354, fol. 252; Bodleian MS Laud Misc. 601,
fol. 115^v
A schoolboy's lament
IMEV 1399
- 76 If thou art young then marry not ekit (34)
BL MS Harley 3835, fol. 125^v
On marriage
IMEV 1427
- 77 In a chambre as I stode (53)
Oxford, Bodleian MS Rawl. poet. 36, fol. 2; NLS MS Advocates
19.3.1., fol. 91
'Service is non eritage'
IMEV 1446
- 78 In a somere sesoun whan softe was þe sonne
(for MSS. and eds. see *IMEV* and *STC* entries listed below)
William Langland, *Piers Plowman*
IMEV 1459; *STC* 19906-7a
- 79 In autumpne when the sonne in virgine
Skelton, *The Bowge of Court*
IMEV 1470.5; *STC* 22597.5
- 80 In erth it es a litill thing (38)
BL MS Cotton Galba E ix, fol. 50; Cambridge, Gonville and Caius
Col. MS 174 (James 95), p. 484
On Sir Penny
IMEV 1480
- 81 In euery place ye may well se (37)
Oxford, Bodleian MS Eng. poet. e 1, fol. 55^v; Oxford, Balliol Col.
MS 354, fol. 250; BL printed book IB 55242, flyleaf

Against women

IMEV 1485

82 In London there I was lent (50)

BL MSS Harley 542, fol. 102; Harley 367, fol. 127

London Lickpenny

IMEV 3759

83 In may hit murgeþ when hit dawes

BL MS Harley 2253, fol. 71^v

Defence of and warning against women

IMEV 1504

84 In secreit place this hindir nycht

CUL MS L1.5.10, fol. 34^v; Pepys MS 2553, pp. 308, 311;

NLS MS Advocates 1.1.6, fol. 103^v

Dunbar

IMEV 1527

85 In the moneth of May when gresse groweþ grene

BL MS Cotton Vesp. B xvi, fol. 1^v; Lambeth Pal. MS 306, fol. 51;

Dublin, Trinity Col. MS 516, art. 15

On the death of the Duke of Suffolk

IMEV 1555

86 Iohan þe mullere hap ygrounde smal smal smal

BL MS Royal 13 E ix, fol. 287, col. i

Protest verses

IMEV 1796

87 Ion Clerke of Toryton I dar awow (78)

Callow End, Worcester, Stanbrook Abbey MS 3, fol. iii

Against John Clerke

IMEV 1793.6

88 It is a wonder be þe rode (61)

BL MS Royal 17.A.xvi, fol. 3^v

On false tongues

IMEV 1626

89 Jack dawē þou habest blasfemed 7 reson hast

Oxford, Bodleian MS Digby 41, fol. 2 (in margins)

Jack Upland's Rejoinder

IMEV 1653.5

90 Jhesu lord our heavenly kyng

NLW MS Peniarth 51, fol. 103

Founding a mythical fraternity of drinkers

IMEV 1726

91 Know or thow knytte (36)

Oxford, Bodleian MS Digby 196, fol. 20 (similar lines appear in the margin of Durham Univ. MS Cosin V.iii.9, fols. 16^v, 37^v, 85^v)

On marriage

IMEV 1829

92 Kyngē Iamy, Iomy, your Ioye is all go

Skelton, against James IV of Scotland

STC 22593

Kyrie so kyrie Iankyn syngyt merie with Aleyson

See no. 22

93 Lang heff I maed of ladyes quhytt

CUL MS L1.5.10, fol. 45^v; Pepys MS 2553, pp. 341-2

Dunbar, *Ane Blak Moir*

IMEV 1934.5

94 Len puet fere et defere

Edinburgh, NLS MS Advocates 19.2.1, fol. 105, col. i

The sayings of the four philosophers

IMEV 1857

- 95 Lerne bodyly to lyue (62)
Oxford, Bodleian MS Digby 102, fol. 104
Mock advice on conduct
IMEV 1845
- 96 Lex is layde and lethyrly lukys (66)
BL MS Royal 7 A vi, fol. 38^v
On the evil times
IMEV 1871
- 97 Lex is layde downe (67)
Oxford, Bodleian MSS Laud Misc. 213, fol. 215^v; Tanner 407, fol. 18; Norfolk, Mrs. D. Hamilton, MS Hamilton, fol. 81
Four lines on the evil times
IMEV 1870
- 98 Liper lok and tuinkling (73)
BL MS Cotton Cleop. C vi, fol. 22^v; TCC MS B.1.45 (James 43), fol. 24
On improper behavior
IMEV 1917
- 99 Loke er þin herte be set (29)
BL MS Sloane 2593, fol. 9^v
On women and marriage
IMEV 1938
- 100 Loke how fflaundes dop fare wip his folyhede
Oxford, Bodleian MS Digby 102, fol. 115
On the follies of the Duke of Burgundy
IMEV 1939
- 101 Loke out here Maier with thy pillid pate (75)
BL MS Harley 247, fol. 129

Abuse of the Mayor of Cambridge

IMEV 1941.8

- 102 Looke well about ye that louers be
Bodleian MS Tanner 407, fol. 38; Cambridge, Trinity Col. MS 1450,
fol. 28, MS 599, fol. 207; BL MS Harley 2251, fol. 149^v

Beware of deceitful women

IMEV 1944

- 103 Lord how shall I me complayn (20)
Oxford, Balliol Col. MS 354, fol. 252; Aberystwyth, NLW
MS Brogyntyn (Porkington) 10, fol. 59^v

Mock suffering for the love of his mistress

IMEV 1957

- 104 Lord þat lenest vs lyf ant lokest vch an lede (27)
BL MS Harley 2253, fol. 61^v

Against women and their fashions

IMEV 1974

- 105 Lord what is thys world wele (54)
Oxford, Bodleian MS Rawl. poet. 36, fol. 2^v; BL MS Harley 5396,
fol. 290

'Gode rule ys out of remembrauns'

IMEV 1982

- 106 Loue is out of lond iwent
BL MS Harley 7322, fol. 145

On the evils of the times

IMEV 2008

- 107 Lucina schynnyng in silence of the night
CUL MS Ll.5.10, fol. 42^v; Pepys MS 2253, p. 334; NLS MS Advocates
1.1.6, fol. 133

Dunbar, *Buk of Antichrist*

IMEV 2018.5

- 108 Luffe luffe where is þi reste? (74)
Oxford, Corpus Christi Col., MS 274, fol. 155
On extravagance
IMEV 2010
- 109 Lustneþ lordinges boþe 3onge ant olde
BL MS Harley 2253, fol. 73^v
On the Flemings against the French
IMEV 1894
- 110 Lyarde es ane olde horse and may no3ht wele drawe (8)
Lincoln Cathedral Lib. MS 91, fol. 148
Criticism of the friars
IMEV 2026
- 111 Lystneþ lordynges a newe song ichulle bigynne
BL MS Harley 2253, fol. 59^v
On the execution of Sir Simon Fraser
IMEV 1889
- 112 Madame ye ben of al beaute shryne
(for MSS see *IMEV* entry listed below)
Chaucer, *To Rosemounde*
IMEV 2031
Man be war of þin wowyng
See no. 99
- 113 Man be war þe way ys sledur (44)
Oxford, Bodleian MS Eng. poet. e 1, fol. 13
On executors
IMEV 2050

- 114 Man if þow wys arte (46)
 BL MS Addit. 16165, fol. 1; Oxford, Balliol Col. MS 354, fol. 147^v
 On executors
IMEV 2060
- 115 Mastres your maners are hard to know
 BL MS Royal 17 D XVIII, fol. 1^v
 Against women's inconstancy
IMEV 2195.3
- 116 Men hem compleynes of vntrewth
 Bodleian MS Hatton 107, fol. 1^v
 On the degeneracy of the times
IMEV 2146
 Money money now hay goode day
 See no. 7
- 117 Miles Rogerus by ten mile wons he to neer us
 BL MS Royal 12 C XIV, fol. 1^v
 Macaronic satire on Sir Roger Belers
IMEV 2172
- 118 My darlyng dere my daysy floure
Dyuers Balettys
 Skelton, a seduction
IMEV 2231.5; STC 22604
- 119 My fayr lady so fressh of hewe (15)
 BL MS Harley 2255, fol. 153^v
 A satirical description of a mistress, probably by Lydgate
IMEV 2237
- 120 My loving frende amorous Bune (31)
 Oxford, Bodleian MS Rawl. C 813, fol. 6^v

A mocking letter from one woman to another

IMEV 2261.8

121 My name is Parrott, a byrd of paradyse

Skelton, Speke, Parrott

STC 22598-9

122 Ne be þi wimpil never so jely ne so stroutende

MS Cotton Cleop. C VI, fol. 22

On women's fashions

IMEV 2285

123 Ne mai no lewed lued libben in londe (49)

BL MS Harley 2253, fol. 70^v.

On the consistory courts

IMEV 2287

Noua noua saw yow euer such

See no. 37

124 Now goot falshed in eueri flok

BL MS Harley 2316, fol. 26^v; MS Royal 17 B xvii, fol. 99

Truth is prisoner

IMEV 2319

Now go gyle gyle gyle

See no. 59

125 Now lythis off ane gentill knyght

CUL MS Ll.5.10, fol. 8; Pepys MS 2553, pp. 3-5

Dunbar, Sir Thomas Norny

IMEV 2349.3

126 Now raygneth pride in price

Stowe, Annales (ed. Howe, 1615), p. 294

John Ball's letters

IMEV 1791

- 127 Now she that I . Louyd trewly
 Against women
STC 20700.3
- 128 Now ys Yngland alle in fyght
 Oxford, Corpus Christi Col., MS 237, fol. 236^V; Cambridge,
 University Lib. MS Hh 2. 6, fol. 58
 On the evil times
IMEV 2335
- 129 O man more than madde
 Bodleian MS Rawl. C 813, fol. 69^V
 Against women
IMEV 2500.5
- 130 O fresch floure most plesant of pryse (23)
 Oxford, Bodleian MS Rawl. poet. 36, fol. 4
 A mocking letter to his mistress
IMEV 2437 (companion piece to no. 193, *IMEV* 3832)
- 131 O mosy quince hangyng by youre stalke (25)
 TCC R.3.19, fol. 205^V
 Satirical description of a mistress
IMEV 2524
- 132 Of all nacyons under the heuyn
 Skelton, *Agaynst a Comely Coystrowne*
IMEV 2609.5; *STC* 22611
- 133 Of alle þese kene conqueroures to carpe is oure kynde
 CUL Ff.5.48, fol. 62; BL MS 5396, fol. 339 *The Turnament of*
Tottenham
IMEV 2615

- 134 Of life and deth nowe chuse the (32)
 BL MS Lansdowne 762, fol. 91^v
 Against marriage
IMEV 2633
- 135 Of my lady wel me reioise I may
 Huntington Library MS HM 744, fol. 54
 Hoccleve, satirical praise of his mistress
IMEV2640
- 136 Of rybaud³ Y ryme and rede o my rolle (52)
 BL MS Harley 2253, fol. 124^v
 On household retainers
IMEV 2649
- 137 Of the prowde Cardinall this is the shelde
 Against Wolsey
STC 1462.7-.9
- 138 Of þes frer mynours me thenkes moch wonder (4)
 BL MS Cotton Cleop. B ii, fol. 65^v
 Against the friars
IMEV 2663
- 139 Peny is an hardy kny³t (39)
 BL MS Sloane 2593, fol. 26
 'Sir Penny'
IMEV 2747
- 140 Pla-ce-bo/Who is there who
 Skelton, *Phyllip Sparowe*
IMEV 2756.5; STC 22594-96a
- 141 Preste ne monke ne 3it chanoune (3)
 BL MS Cotton Cleop. B ii, fol. 62^v

Against the friars

IMEV 2777

142 Put out his hed lyst nat for to dare (69)

BL MS Harley 2255, fol. 157

Lydgate, against dishonest bakers

IMEV 2786

143 Qan I haue in myn purs inow (40)

BL MS Sloane 2593, fol. 6

On the power of the purse

IMEV 3539

144 Qwhen Rome is removyde in-to Englande

CUL MS Kk.1.5 (IV), fol. 33

Political prophecies

IMEV 4008

145 R shall rech and the p shall prech

BL MS Lansdowne 762, fol. 97^v, 96

Doggerel prognostics and prophecies

IMEV 2793.5

146 Religious pepille leuyn in holynesse (58)

Oxford, Bodleian MS Eng. poet. b 4, fol. 1^v

On the lack of stableness in society

IMEV 2805

147 Right wel beloved prentise

Bodleian MS Rawl. C 813, fol. 8

A humorous letter

IMEV 2827.5

148 Rolling in my remembraunce

Cambridge UL MS Ll 5. 10, fol. 35; Pepys MS 2553, p. 311; NLS MS

Advocates 1.1.6, fol. 94

On the evil times

IMEV2831.2

149 Rutterkyn is com vnto our towne

BL MS Addit. 5465, fol. 101^V

Satire on gallants, possibly by Skelton

IMEV 2832.2

150 Rycht fane wald I my queritance mak

Cambridge UL MS L1 5. 10, fol. 40; MS Pepys 2553, p. 330; NLS MS

Advocates 1.1.6, fol. 144

Sir Penny

IMEV2821.5

151 Schir Johine the the Ros ane thing thair is compiled

CUL MS L1.5.10, fol. 58; Pepys MS 2553, p. 53-4, 59-63, 69-72;

77-80; NLS MS Advocates 1.1.6, fol. 147

Dunbar, *The Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie*

IMEV 3117.8; STC 7348

152 She commyth and tykyll hym be the throote

An old fool and a young wife

STC 14520.5

153 Sir David þe bruse was at distance

BL MS Cotton Galba E ix, fol. 56, col. i

Minot on the Battle of Nevilles Cross

IMEV 3117

154 Skottes out of berwick and of abirdene

BL MS Cotton Galba E ix, fol. 52^V, col. i

Minot on the Battle of Halidon Hill

IMEV 3080

155 So propre cappes

BL MS Sloane 747, fol. 88^V

'The manner of the world nowadays', possibly by Skelton

IMEV 3168.2

156 Somer passed, and wynter well begone

The Fifteen Joys of Marriage (tr. from French)

STC 15257.5-8

157 Somtyme the world was so stedfast and stable

(for MSS see *IMEV* entry listed below)

Chaucer, *Lak of Stedfastness*

IMEV 3190

158 Swarte smekyd smepes smateryd wyth smoke (70)

BL MS Arundel 292, fol. 71^v

On blacksmiths

IMEV 3227

159 Swete harte be trewe

V&A Mus. MS Dyce 45, fol. 22

Parody of a religious poem (*IMEV* 2086)

IMEV 3228.3

Syng we alle and sey we þus

See no. 143

Synge and blow blow wel blow

See no. 87

160 Sythene that Bretayne was biggede and Bruyttus itaught

BL MS Addit. 31042, fol. 176^v (ends imperfectly)

Wynnere and Wastoure

IMEV 3137

161 Take hede and lerne thou lytell chylde and se

'The payne and sorowe of euyll maryage'

STC 19119

- 162 Tell you I chill
 Skelton, *The Tunnyng of Eleanor Rummyng*
IMEV 3265.5; STC 22598-9
- 163 The ax was sharpe the stokke was hard
 Oxford, St. John's MS 209, fol. 38^v; CUL MS Dd.14.2, fol. 312
 On the Evils in England 1381
IMEV 3306
- 164 The cyte is bond that shuld be fre
 Coventry Corp. Leet Book, fol. 278
 Rude verses on injustices in Coventry
IMEV 3322
- 165 The fryses of Walis to Brystowe are brought
 Against the Welsh
STC 6088-8.3
- 166 The grace of the graye distaffe, with the spyndelles all at a raffe
 Women at an alehouse
STC 14546.5
- 167 The hart lovyt þe wood the hare lovyt þe hyll
 Ipswich County Hall Dep.: Hillwood, fol. 1
 Satirical proverbs on women
IMEV 3372.6
- 168 The laughynge tymes, with theyr Crymes spent
 R. Fabyan, tr. of 'Sunt tui criminibus'
STC 10659-62
- 169 The nunne walked on her prayer
 Bawdy carol on nuns
STC 5204.3

- 170 The prouerb olde whoso denieth
 E. Gosynhill, 'The Scolehouse of women'
STC 12104.5
- 171 The taxe hath tened vs alle
 Oxford, Bodleian MS Digby 196, fol. 20^v; Cambridge, Corpus Christi
 MS 369, fol. 46^v (48 ll. only of variant version)
IMEV 3620
- 172 per is a busch þat is forgrowe
Olim Deritend House (pres. owner unknown); pr. Wright, *Pol. Poems*
 I, pp. 363-6
 Sarcastic verses vs. Richard II's ministers
IMEV 3529
- 173 Ther wer iij wyllly 3 wyly þer wer (18)
 Oxford, Bodleian MS Eng. poet. e 1, fol. 13
 Against women
IMEV 3552
- 174 There ben women there ben wordes
 Bodleian MS Douce 52, fol. 23; Manchester, Rylands MS Lat. 394,
 fol. 12
 Against women
IMEV 3522.5
- 175 These women all
 BL MS Harley 7578, fo. 100^v; Washington, Folger Lib. MS 1186.2
 On women's inconstancy
IMEV 3559.8
- 176 This lyeng wydow full fals and crafty
 On a female rogue
STC 22869.7

- 177 This nicht in my sleip I wes agast
 CUL MS L1.5.10, fol. 18^v (13 sts. only); Pepys MS 2553, pp. 55-7
 (13 sts. only); NLS MS Advocates 1.1.6, fol. 132^v (17 sts. only)
 Dunbar, *Renunce thy God and cum to me*
 IMEV 1634.6
- 178 This nycht befoir the dawing cleir
 CUL MS L1.5.10, fol. 42; Pepys MS 2553, p. 333; NLS MS Advocates
 1.1.6, fol. 115
 Dunbar, *How Dumbar was desyrd to be ane Freir*
 IMEV 3634.3
- 179 This work deuysed is For such as do amys
 Skelton, *Ware the Hauke*
 STC 22598-9
- 180 This worlde is full of stabulnesse (55)
 Bodleian MS Bodley 779, fol. 189; Cambridge, Trinity Col. MS 600,
 p. 50; BL MSS Harley 2251, fol. 40; Harley 2382 (1 st. only);
 Harley 4011, fol. 1 (1 st. only); Addit. 29729, fol. 154;
 Huntington MS EL 26 A. 13, fol. 19
 Lydgate, 'Ri3t as the crabbe goth forward'
 IMEV 3655
- 181 pou þat sellest þe worde of god (1)
 Cambridge, St. John's Col. MS G 28 (James 195), fol. i^v
 Against the friars (see companion piece no. 12)
 IMEV 3697
- 182 pou þat werred þe crowne of thornes (28)
 Oxford, Bodleian MS Ashmole 59, fol. 73
 On women's attire
 IMEV 3698

- 183 Thow Pheillippe foundour of new falsehede
 BL MS Sloane 252, fol. 169 (44 ll. only); Rome, Eng. Col. MS 1306,
 fol. 83^v
 Scorn of the Duke of Burgundy
IMEV 3682
- 184 Thyse scaterande Scottes holde I for sottes
 Against the Scots at the siege of Dunbar in 1296
STC 9997-10002
- 185 To London once there I was lent (50)
 BL MS Harley 367, fol. 127, 126^v; Harley 542, fol. 102
 London Lickpenny
IMEV 3759
 To my trew loue and able
 See no. 193
- 186 To saie you are not fayre I shal belye you (16)
 BL MS Addit. 10336, fol. 4
 Four lines on his mistress
IMEV 3765.5
- 187 To veri god 7 to alle trewe in Crist
 CUL MS Ff.6.2, fol. 71; BL MS Harley 6641, fol. 1
Jack Upland
IMEV 3782.5
 To you dere herte variant and mutable
 See no.
- 188 To yow my purse and to noon other wight
 (for MSS see *IMEV* entry listed below)
 Chaucer, *The Complaint to his Purse*
IMEV 3738

- 189 Too secaturis and an ouerseere make thre theues
 BL MS Harley 3038, fol. 1
 On executors
IMEV 4179
- 190 Tyll home sull wylekyn this joly gentyll schepe
 BL MS Addit. 19046, fol. 74
 A political carol
IMEV3742
- 191 Vertues and good lyuinge is cleped ypocrisie
 Bodleian MS Bodley 415, fol. 108^v
 On the evils of the times
IMEV 3851
- 192 Vncomly in cloystre I coure ful of care (9)
 BL MS Arundel 292, fol. 70^v
 On the difficulties of religious song
IMEV 3819
- 193 Vnto you most froward þis lettre I write (22)
 Oxford, Bodleian MS Rawl. poet. 36, fol. 3^v
 A mocking letter to her lover
IMEV 3832 (companion piece to no. 130, *IMEV 2437*)
- 194 Vycys be wyld and vertues lame
 Oxford, Balliol Col. MS 354, fol. 227; Bodleian MS Eng. poet. e 1,
 fol. 60^v
 On the evils of the times
IMEV 3852
- 195 War þis winter oway, wele wald I wene
 BL MS Cotton Galba E ix, fol. 57, col. i
 Political verses
IMEV 3899

- 196 We be maydins fay and fre
 Song by courtesans
STC 22924
- 197 We that ar heir in hevins glory
 CUL MS L1.5.10, fol. 55^V; Cambridge, Pepys MS 2553, p. 290; NLS MS
 Advocates 1.1.6, fol. 102
 Dunbar, *Dregy to King James IV being in Strivilling*
IMEV 3870
- 198 Welcome be 3e when 3e goo (26)
 Oxford, Bodleian MS Arch. Selden B 26, fol. 33
 Disdain of a mistress
IMEV 3879
- 199 What can it auayle
 Oxford, Bodleian MS Rawl. C 813, fol. 72^V (part only); BL MSS
 Harley 2252, fol. 147; Lansdowne 762, fol. 71
 Skelton, *Colyn Cloute*
IMEV 3903.5; *STC* 22600.5-3
- 200 What wenys kyng Edwarde, with hys longe shankys
 Scots verses against the English
STC 10659-62, 20724, 9997-10002
- 201 Whenne feithe fayles in prestys sawes
 Oxford, Bodleian MSS Ashmole 781, p. 162; Tanner 88, p. 253; Rawl.
 poet. F 32, fol. 2^V; CUL MSS Gg.4.27 (Ib), fol. 4^V; Ii.6.11,
 ult.; Pepys MS 1236, fol. 91; TCC 595, fol. 3; Magdalene Cl. MS
 1236, fol. 91; BL MSS Royal 17 A xvi, fol. 27^V; Addit. 24663,
 fol. 1; Manchester, Rylands MS 39882, fol. 130; Capesthorne,
 fol. 104
 A prophecy ascribed to Merlin
IMEV 3943 (see no. 202, *IMEV* 3943, for var. vers.)

- 202 When lordes will is londes law
 Oxford, Bodleian MS Ashmole 59, fol. 78 (8 ll. only); Dublin,
 Trinity Col. MS 516, fol. 115; Manchester, Rylands MS Lat. 201,
 fol. 103; Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Mus. MS 355
 A prophecy ascribed to Merlin
IMEV 3986 (var. vers. of no. 201, *IMEV 3943*)
- 203 When man as mad a kyng of a capped man
 BL MS Harley 2253, fol. 127, col. ii
 Thomas of Erceldoune's prophecy
IMEV 3989
- 204 When nettuls in wynter bryng forth rosys red (17)
 Oxford, Bodleian MS Eng. poet. e 1, fol. 43^v; Oxford, Balliol Col.
 MS 354, fol. 250^v (part only); BL printed book IB 55242,
 flyleaves (part only)
 On the impossibility of trusting women
IMEV 3999
- 205 When pride is most in prise
 BL MSS Royal 17 B xvii, fol. 2^v; Addit. 8151, fol. 200^v
 On the evils of the times
IMEV4006
- 206 When þe fflemmyng wer fressh florissed in your flouris
 London, Lambeth Palace MS 6, fol. 256, col. ii
 Mockery of the Flemings
IMEV 4034
- 207 When the son the laumpe of heuen ful lyght
 Bodleian MS Fairfax 16, fol. 306
 'How a lover prayseth hys lady' (in doggerel couplets)
IMEV 4043

- 208 Who shal graunten to myn eye a strong streme of teres
Oxford, Bodleian MS Digby 41, fol. 2
The Reply of Friar Daw Topias
IMEV 4098.3
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- 210 Womanhood wanton ye want
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- 211 Wyse mon if þou art (46)
BL MS Harley 3038, fol. 1
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IMEV 4179
- 212 Wyth all myn hool herte entere
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- 213 Ye proud galonttis hertlesse (59)
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Young men of Waterford learne now to play	77

Abbreviations of Works Frequently Cited

Attwater	David Attwater, <i>The Penguin Dictionary of Saints</i>
C.C.M.	<i>Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale</i>
Chaucer	
<i>CkT</i>	The Cook's Tale
<i>FrT</i>	The Friar's Tale
<i>KnT</i>	The Knight's Tale
<i>MT</i>	The Miller's Tale
<i>NPT</i>	The Nun's Priest's Tale
<i>RvT</i>	The Reeve's Tale
<i>ST</i>	The Summoner's Tale
<i>ShipT</i>	The Shipman's Tale
<i>WBT</i>	The Wife of Bath's Tale
<i>EEC</i>	R. L. Greene, ed., <i>Early English Carols</i>
<i>EETS/E.E.T.S.</i>	<i>Early English Text Society</i>
<i>EHD</i>	<i>English Historical Documents</i>
<i>EMEV&P</i>	J. A. W. Bennett and E. V. Smithers, eds., <i>Early Middle English Verse and Prose</i>
<i>Eng. Lyr. 13th C.</i>	Carlton Brown, ed., <i>English Lyrics of the 13th Century</i>
Farmer	David Hugh Farmer, <i>The Oxford Dictionary of Saints</i> (2nd ed.)
<i>Harv. Theol. Rev.</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>Hist. Poems/HP</i>	R. H. Robbins, ed., <i>Historical Poems of the 14th and 15th Centuries</i>
<i>IMEV</i>	Carlton Brown and R. H. Robbins, <i>An Index of Middle English Verse</i>

<i>JEGP</i>	<i>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>
<i>Lit. and Hist.</i>	<i>Literature and History</i>
<i>MÆ</i>	<i>Medium Ævum</i>
<i>MED</i>	<i>The Middle English Dictionary</i>
<i>Med. Stud.</i>	<i>Medieval Studies</i>
<i>MLN</i>	<i>Modern Language Notes</i>
<i>MLQ</i>	<i>Modern Language Quarterly</i>
<i>MLR</i>	<i>Modern Language Review</i>
<i>N&Q</i>	<i>Notes and Queries</i>
<i>NM</i>	<i>Neuphilologische Mitteilungen</i>
<i>OBLMV&P</i>	D. Gray, ed., <i>The Oxford Book of Late Medieval Verse and Prose</i>
<i>OBMEV</i>	C. and K. Sisam, eds., <i>The Oxford Book of Middle English Verse</i>
<i>OED</i>	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary</i>
<i>PMLA</i>	<i>Publications of the Modern Languages Association</i>
<i>Pol. Poems</i>	T. Wright, ed., <i>Political Poems</i>
<i>PP</i>	<i>Piers Plowman</i>
<i>PR</i>	Anne Hudson, <i>The Premature Reformation</i>
<i>Rel. Ant</i>	T. Wright and J. O. Halliwell, eds., <i>Reliquiae Antiquae</i>
<i>Rel. Lyr. 14th C.</i>	Carlton Brown, ed., <i>Religious Lyrics of the 14th Century</i>
<i>Rel. Lyr. 15th C.</i>	Carlton Brown, ed., <i>Religious Lyrics of the 15th Century</i>
<i>RES</i>	<i>The Review of English Studies</i>
<i>S.A.T.F.</i>	<i>Société des Ancien Textes Français</i>

- Se1.* R. L. Greene, ed., *A Selection of Early English Carols*
- SL* R. H. Robbins, ed., *Secular Lyrics of the 14th and 15th Centuries*
- S.T.S.* *Scottish Text Society*
- Supp.* R. H. Robbins and J. L. Cutler, *A Supplement to the Index of Middle English Verse*
- YES* *Yearbook of English Studies*

Glossary

The Glossary is selective, and records only words that might be difficult for readers without a broad knowledge of Middle English. As most of these words occur only once in the texts, poem and line references are not given. Basic parts of speech are indicated as follows: n. *noun*; n.pl. *noun plural*; n.poss. *noun possessive*; v. *verb infinitive*; v.1.sing. *verb first person singular* etc.; v.pt. *verb past tense*; v.pp. *verb past participle*; ger. *gerund*; adj. *adjective*; adv. *adverb*; pron. *pronoun*; conj. *conjunction*; interj. *interjection*; prep. *preposition*.

abate v. put an end to (an engagement)

abedde adv. in bed

abite n. customary practice

abow adv. above

acommaryd adj. encumbered

advertence n. concern, interest

adyll adj. rotten, putrid

afforn adj. forward, in front

afretpe, afretie v. devour

ak conj. but

alles n.pl. awls

amawns v. give alms

ambes n.pl. alms

amble v. ride or walk at an easy pace; **ambelyng** ger.

amorteyse v. pass into inalienable ecclesiastical or other corporate ownership

angers n.pl. afflictions

annuels n.pl. payments for masses said regularly, whether daily or annually; also the masses themselves

aposen v. confront with a question, examine

- appallid** adj. made flat or stale
apropred v.pp. made the property of the Church
arat v. rebuke, reprove
archerie n. art of shooting with a bow, (fig.) sexual activity
arewas n.pl. arrows
arewen v. be sorry for, regret
arrerage n. wage or wages
asay n. ceremonial tasting
asay v. sample or taste in order to judge
aschelle v. shell
aspye v. watch, spy on
assayllede v.pt. assailed; absolved
asselyd v.pp. fixed with a seal
assoiled v.pt. absolved; assailed
astiune n. astrion, sapphire
asyse n. measurement, dimensions
ateynte v.pp. attained
avavnte n. confident declaration
avoir-de-peise n. goods sold by weight
avysement n. advice
- babbyrlyppys** n.pl. thick, protruding lips
baggefonde n. scrotum
baggys n.pl. badges, distinctive emblems worn by nobles and their
retinues
bales n.pl. woes
balle n. head
baratur n. deception
barbet n. piece of cloth worn over or under the chin to cover the neck

- and bosom
- baret** n. fighting
- barkfate** n. tanner's vat
- barmfellys** n.pl. leather aprons
- barmhatres** n.pl. leather aprons
- baston, bastoun** n. verse or stanza
- bastyle** n. usually an outcropping of a fortress or the fortress itself;
perhaps referring to a pillory in a high place
- bayard** n. bay-colored horse
- bayly¹** n. bailiff
- bayly²** n. security for a prisoner's appearance for trial; also temporary
release from imprisonment
- bede** v.pt. commanded
- belleweder** n. leader of the flock, (fig.) leader
- belye** v. falsely represent
- benyme** v. take away from
- besette** v.3.sing. arranges
- beshetyn** pp. adj. covered in dung
- beshrewd** v.pt. cursed
- bewreyed** v.pp. governed
- biledes** v.3.pl. mislead
- ble** n. color
- blin** v. put a stop to
- blote** adj. soft, pliable
- blynne** v. cease, refrain from
- bochevampe** n. botched vamps (fronts of shoes)
- bolace** n. wild plum
- bole-ax** n. bull-axe or butcher's axe, with a hammer on the back of the
blade for stunning animals before slaughter

bolwerkys n.pl. pads, padding

bone n. thing commanded

bordas n.pl. good-for-nothings

borgh n. thing deposited as security, pledge

bozes n.pl. 'buns' of hair worn at either cheek

boskep v.3.sing. attires, dresses oneself

bote; boote n. use or advantage

botailles n.pl. boundaries or boundary markers

boune adj. bound, obliged

bouse v. drink

bout n. part of a head-dress, passing around the back of the head

braideth v.3.sing. breeds, grows

brayde n. space of time

brede n. breed

brende n. brown horse

bren-wateris n.pl. blacksmiths (water-burners, from the cooling of molten metal in water)

breuen v. write down, put on record; **breued** v.pt.

brimme n. water

brocage n. business dealings, esp. of an illegitimate nature

bront n. blow, attack

browys n.pl. brews, broths

brude n. bride, young wife

bruskelys n.pl. bristles

brynston n. brimstone

bugee n. sheepskin

bugge v. beg

bugyl n. blue-flowered herb of the mint family

burde n. board

- burgeys** n. freeman of the town, usually referring to a city merchant or master craftsman in the guilds
- bury dookes** n.pl. burdocks
- bymodered** adj. muddied, covered in mud
- byse** n. dark fur used to trim and line garments
- bysom** n. purblind man
- byswykep** v.3.pl. deceive or cheat
-
- cach** v. snatch away from
- calcedun** n. chalcedony
- caldmawe** n. waterbird; (fig.) loose woman
- calle** n. netted cap, head-dress
- cammede** adj. pug-nosed
- campyng ball** n. football
- canel** n. cinnamon
- capel-clawers** n.pl. grooms (hack-clawers), attendants of horses
- capil** n. hack
- carpe** v. complain
- carpyng** n. complaining
- carrake-sayles** n.pl. sails of large ships
- catchpolles** n.pl. petty bailiffs or other minor officers of the law
- cauylacion** n. quibbling, fault-finding
- cawdrun** n. cauldron
- cayteuys** n.pl. wretched men, knaves
- chaffare** n. merchandise
- chalandre** n. lark
- chalance** v.3.pl. accuse (of)
- chattar** n. loose talk, ranting
- chaule** v. chatter, talk idly

chaumbys n.pl. legs
cheping n. marketplace
chevesaunce n. loan, esp. one made on security
chot v.1.sing. think, know
chyn n. chain; (fig.) dung
clastrep v.3.pl. talk rapidly and noisily
clatter v.3.pl. prattle, chatter noisily
clondre v. drone, hum
clours n.pl. dells, ravines
cloye-merys n.pl. mare-lamers
clynge v. waste away
coking-stole n. stool used for ducking those who have transgressed the social code
colle n. conjuring trick
collacione n. group reading, followed by a drink or light meal before compline, in monastic life
combres, commorus adj. troublesome, burdensome
companage n. any food except bread or meat, relish, side dish
connyng n. ability, skill
consistery, constery, constory n. court of adjudication under canon law, bishop's court
copen v. buy
cord adj. stuck, impaled
cormeraunt n. cormorant
cormyse n. cornemuse, hornpipe (an early bagpipe)
corrin n. drinking pot
costard n. apple of a type having prominent ridges
couaunde n. bodily duty married people owe to one another
counte-betyne adj. impotent

- countene** adj. county; (fig.) relating to the female genitals
countenance n. bearing, demeanor
counturtaile, countretayle n. contrary
coupable adj. responsible, guilty
couren ger. cowering
coussid v.pt. bartered
coustage n. cost
cownte n. female genitalia
cowres v.3.pl. covers, overlays, spreads
crabbyd adj. ill-tempered, spiteful
crommeþ v.3.sing. stuffs
crop n. (disparaging) belly, stomach
crouperers n.pl. cruppers
crowpe n. hindquarters, buttocks
cryator n. creature
cucubes n.pl. cubeb (pepper-like berries)
- dadde** v. strike, beat
dalyaunce n. polite conversation, small talk
dare¹ v. be dispirited
dare² v. harm, vex
dapeit interj. a curse on
dayles v.2.pl. separates, goes away from
debres n. ruins, remains
dedute n. delight
delysyn n. deception
den n. dean, technically a church official with jurisdiction over a
 subdivision of an archdeaconry
dere adj. hard, severe

dese, dees n. dais

deynous adj. arrogant

deynte n. liking, fondness

dispenden v. disburse, spend

domesman n. judge

donke v.pt. hammered, thumped

dorne v. dare

dos n.pl. does

drahtes n.pl. blows

drawep¹ v.3.sing. torture

drawep² v.3.sing. bring to, come around

dritte, dryt n. droppings, dung

dronklew adj. addicted to drink, habitually drunk

drere adj. hard, difficult

dryghtyn n. lord

dunnir n. thunder

dute n. delight

dwer n. dread, doubt

dyng n. dung

dyth v. repair, build

eey n. egg

e3e-brewe n.pl. eyebrows

elinglich adv. desolately

encombyr v.2.pl. cause suffering or inconvenience to

endet3 n.pl. obligations

endooryd v.pp. covered, coated (usually with a glaze made from egg yolks)

enfomyned v.pt. starved

enquentaunce n. acquaintance

entayles n. cut, fashion, or style of clothes or armor

entraylle n. bowels, intestines

entresse n. interest

epetite n. hepatitis

exegent emergency

fale adj. numerous

falnes n. shrewdness

falowep v.3.sing. withers

fase n. face

favell n. flattery

fayly n. failure liable to a penalty

fax n. hair

fedyrfoy n. feverfew

fe3e v. match, go together

feldfare n. fieldfare

fell n. stretch of waste or pasture land

fell v.pp. caused to fall

fenestrall¹ n. window; **fenestres** n.pl.

fenestrallys² n.pl. openings in a pillory for the arms and head

fer¹ n. companion; **ferys** n.pl.

fer² n. fire

fer²-flunderys n.pl. sparks (fire-fragments)

ferly adj. strange, marvellous

fermere n. superintendent of a (monastic) infirmary

fesyke n. medical knowledge; cathartic, purge

fi interj. exclamation of disgust

file n. worthless person, rascal

files v.3.sing. fouls, defiles
fleede v.pp. cowed, in retreat
fleh n.pl. fleas
fleis n. flesh, meat
fleye v. frighten, terrify
floute v. mock, scoff at
flyt¹ v. argue abusively
flytte² v. toss
folde n. dock, prison
folht n. filth
foltyssh adj. foolish
fonne v. act foolishly, dote
forlaped v.pp. filled with drink, drunk
fors n. consequence
forswat adj. covered with sweat
forsworne adj. abjured, renounced on oath
fosterer¹ n. foster-parent
fosterer² n. forester
fopire n.pl. loads
foysoun n. abundance
frary n. friary
fray n. attack, assault
frith n. wooded area, woodland
frountel n. ornament for the forehead
froward adj. contrary
furpe adj. fourth
fy interj. expression of disgust or contempt
fytt n. luck, chance

- gabben** v. lie
gabbyng n. lying, false speech
galle n. bitterness, rancor
gandedir n. gander
gadering n. assembling or gathering people together, accumulation of wealth; (fig.) sexual intercourse
gaffe n. iron hook
galingale n. cyperus, a spice
gallid adj. injured by rubbing, rubbed sore
galuns n.pl. gallons
gamin n. game
gandedir n. gander
gedelynges n.pl. low-born men, knaves
geke, 3eke, goke n. cuckoo
gentery n. manners, polite behavior
ger v. cause to, makes; **gers** v.3.sing.
gerdylle, girdyll n. belt
gett n. goat
gigelot n. loose woman, harlot
gilofre n. clove
gingeuir n. ginger
gladieþ v.2.pl. make glad
glosen v. flatter
gloserys n.pl. sycophants, flatterers
gnacchen v. gnash
gnauen v. gnaw
gnoste n. churl (gnoffe)
golokes n.pl. tubs
gome n. man

gonge n. privy

gonne n. gun; (fig.) fart

gores n.pl. wedge-shaped pieces of cloth producing the difference in width required at different points in a garment

goshorne n. fool

gowle v.1.sing. howl

gowlend ger. howling

granys n.pl. traps, nooses

gre n. goodwill, favor

gredip, gredes v.3.sing. cries; accuses of a crime

grene adj. fresh

grethenynesse adj. bad condition

grisely adj. grisly, horrible

gritliche adj. greatly

gromes n.pl. grooms, man-servants

grucchyng n. grumbling, complaining

grype v. dig

gryse n. grey fur (probably of squirrel)

gurnardis n.pl. seafish

gyle n. deception

gyllorys n.pl. deceivers, tricksters

halse v. neck

halwei n. healing lotion

halymotes n.pl. courts held by the devil

hammys n.pl. parts of legs behind the knees

hanfelis n.pl. anvils

handeth (on) v. copulate with (of a bitch)

happes, happis n.pl. unforeseen events

harace n. stable for breeding
harlotes n.pl. rogues
hasard n. dice game with arbitrary rules
hathell n. nobleman
hawe n. fruit of the hawthorne (i.e. thing of little value)
hawle n. hail
hay v. have
hayfre n. heifer
hechil n. heckle, an instrument set with many small sharp pins used to
card wool
heme n. churl
hent v. grasp
herberweles n. homeless (people)
herberwen v. dwell
herygoud n. cloak, outer garment
hewre see hure
hideward adv. in this direction, this way
hobying n. hawking with a hobby (small horse)
hodles adj. not wearing a hood
hokesters n.pl. hucksters
holliche, holly adj. holy
holy n. holly bush
hore adj. grey with age
horeling n. fornicator
hori adj. filthy
horle v.1.sing. howl, roar
horne n. horn (as cuckolds were said to wear on the brow)
horsknaues n.pl. stableboys or grooms
horw3 n. filth

- hosteller** n. innkeeper
houue, how n. care, anxiety
hude n. hide, skin
hure, hewre n. covering for the head, cap
hyne n. servant
hyrdmen n.pl. herdsmen
hyre n. wages
hyrt n. household
- iambleue** n. leg-lifting
iape n. trick, fraud; frivolous pastime or amusement
iape v. mock, laugh at
iaspe n. jasper
idi3t v.pt. prepared
iett v. walk pompously, strut
ilk adj. same
ilka, ylke adj. each
ilorn v.pp. lost
impotence n. sexual impotence
incypyens n. foolishness
iousy adj. juicy; full of drink
iowys n.pl. jaws
ita3te adj. taught
iumbelyd v.pt. made up in a confused or random manner
- kaitefs** see **cayteuys**
- karke** n. load, burden
karylle ax n. Carlel (fr. *Carlisle*) axe, a kind of battle axe
kenneb v.3.pl. make known

kerke n. cackle

kest n. chest, money-box

knytte, knet v. tie together, marry; v.p.p. **knyt**

kongons n.pl. fools

kovent n. convent

kunger n. conger, large sea-eel

kutte v. steal

kyd v. proclaim

kynde n. nature, natural or customary action or state

kyrspe adj. wrinkled

kyskys n.pl. hollow-stemmed plants of the family including common
hemlock

lake n. stream, river

lath adj. loathly

lather n. ladder

lauor n. water-pitcher, ewer

lawne n. a kind of fine linen

lay v.1.sing. sing a lay

lay n. song

lede v. conduct

lend v.pt. went towards

lent adj. bound for

lent v.pp. let out at interest

lene v. lend

lenkithes v.3.sing. lengthens

lerede n. learned men

lesys v.3.sing. decreases, lessens in length

leuerokes, laueroke n.pl. larks

- leve** n.pl. friends
lewde adj. unlearned
lifte n. air, wind
likam n. body
likful adj. delightful, pleasant
liþer adj. evil
lolle v. preach, carry on as a Lollard
lome adj. crooked, ill-cut
lome n. penis; (contempt.) fellow
longith v.3.sing. belongs
lorles adj. without learning or knowledge
lose n. good-for-nothing
losynger n. false flatterer, deceiver
louseþ v.3.sing. remove lice from
lowcray n. probably a kind of striped velvet fabric
lued n. man, person
lugre n. ligure
lurdeyn n. good-for-nothing
lupernesse n. laziness, sloth
lypet n. small portion, mouthful
lycke v.1.sing. stroke
lyst v. listen
- maces** n. mace, the outer covering of the nutmeg used as a spice
make maystries v. have success
malapert adj. impudent, shameless
male n. belly
marcerye n. merchandise
marreþ v.3.sing. spoils, ruins

mary n. marrow
mase n. mace, the dried outer covering of the nutmeg
mated v.pp. confounded, amazed
mawmentrie n. worship of idols or images, idolatry
mayeny n. household retainers or servants
maystri n. mastery
mekell, mekill adj. much
melow adj. ripe
melwell n. codfish
mene n. body of retainers, retinue
menske n. (judicial) favor
mese, messe n. prepared dish, serving of food
measure n. what is commensurate or adequate
mett n. length; (fig.) penis
mett v. have sexual intercourse with
mett adj. measured
mocchep v.3.sing. jeers, scoffs
mode n. mood
mold n. earth
momelep v.3.sing. babbles
mosy adj. hairy
mote v. argue, discuss
mowtyng n. judgement
moyson n. musical measure
myleway adj. mile-away
mysmotinde adj. wrongly arguing or judging

neffes n.pl. hands
nelle v.1.sing. refuse, will not

nemel (of mouth) adj. quick to bite

neres n.pl. kidneys

newels n.pl. knots

nobulys n.pl. nobles (coins)

noke n. angular symbol used in musical notation

nolle n. head

nything n. nothing

obergacyon n. scolding, rebuking

ok see **ak**

oreisun n. orison, a sung prayer forming part of the mass

ouerseere n. executor (of a will)

palfreours n.pl. servants in charge of horses; grooms

panteer n. trap, snare

pasteus n.pl. pastries

Paternoster n. the Lord's Prayer

pectorellys n.pl. ornaments for the breast

peesed v.pp. subdued, pacified

peked adj. pointed

pelure n. fur, especially of valuable kind

pencyll, pyncell n. (fig.) penis

person n. parson

pese-straa n. straw made from dried stalks of pea plants

peye n. magpie

piement n. spiced wine

pilche, pylche n. horse blanket; hair shirt; skin (usu. of an animal)

pilers n.pl. legs

pillid adj. bald

pinnes n.pl. nails, pegs

pisal n. epistle

plete v. plead; **plep** v.3.sing.

po n. peacock

polkep v.3.sing. excites, stirs up

poppe n. fop, manikin

pose n. head cold, catarrh

potels n.pl. vessels holding a half-gallon

pouerayle n. poor people

praer n. meadow

prassiune n. prasiune

precious adj. worthless

presepe n. writ requiring something to be done or demanding a reason for its non-performance

preueaunce n. provision

priuet3 v.3.pl. deprive

prouande, provendre n. provender, fodder; amount of food allotted to each member of a religious house

prouede v.pt. prospered

pruest n. priest

pulteer n. poulterer

purposeth v. intend, determine

pusonde v.pp. poisoned

pykep (of) v.3.sing. take (from)

pyp n. tube used to inject medicinal preparations into the body and draw out infected matter

pystyl n. epistle

- quarte** n. physical well-being
quarters n.pl. vessels holding a quarter-gallon
quaylled v.pp. cowed, daunted
quaynte adj. gracious, courteous
quitollis n.pl. discharges, payments of debts

rad; radde v.pp. advised
radicacyon n. rootedness
rape adj. early
raþer adv. before
ratoure n. ratcatcher; (fig.) libertine
ray n. arrangement
rechles adj. careless
reddis v.2.sing. advise
redeles without advice
redes n.pl. pieces of advice
refrayne v. restrain, hold back from
reke v.3.pl. go, make one's way
rendre n. lesson
rendrede v.pt. sang, rendered (a lesson)
renne n. song, poem
reute v. trim, decorate
rewe adj. striped
rewe v.3.sing. ends, declines
rewly, ruly adj. pitiful, wretched
rind n. bark
ris n. vegetation
robbet3 n.pl. robbers
rochys n.pl. rocks

- rode¹** n. redness, ruddiness
rode² n. rood, cross
rohte v.3.sing. made, did
roilend ger. roaming, wandering
rope v. water
rounyng ger. whispering, murmuring
route, rowtte n. company, group
route v. behave riotously
roupes n.pl. sorrows, griefs
russin n. afternoon snack
rybaud³ n.pl. retainers who performed the lowest offices in royal or noble households
ryd n. room, space
rykenep v.3.sing. reckons
rynde v. strip
rynke n. man

sadde adj. constant, faithful
sa³te v.pp. at peace, free from strife
salmes n.pl. psalms
sarpelere n. large canvas sack
satournad adj. weighty, sagging
saw n. word; saying, proverb
sawt v.3.pl. leap, dance
sawtry n. psaltry, a musical instrument like a mountain dulcimer
scald adj. scabby
scape n. harm, injury
schamil n. butcher's block
schankes, shankys n.pl. legs

schare n. scarecrow
schentyd, schent v.pp. ruined
schindes n. skin
schrewe n. rascal
score n. list, record
scorying n. recording, writing down
scredes n.pl. lengths of gold or silver thread or lace
scrowe n. bill, scroll
secatur n. executor (of an estate or will); **secators** n.pl.
sedwale n. valerian
seergecloth n. piece of woolen fabric
seken v. sicken
sekyrly adv. surely, certainly
sel n. good luck
selcuth adj. strange
semavs, semewe n.pl. seagull
sembli adj. pleasing
sene n. spicy sauce containing chives and onion
serkelys n.pl. undergarments
seyntwarie n. sanctuary
shabbes n.pl. low fellows, knaves
shadde v.pt. shaped
shameliche adj. shameful
shende adj. ruined
shethen v. sheathe; (fig.) copulate with
shome v. adorn or dress horses
shon n.pl. shoes
shotte, shote v.pt. shot; ejaculated; n. fornication; venereal disease
shoyep v.3.sing. appears to be

shrapeþ v.3.sing. scratch, scrape
shuppare n. Creator
shupte v.pt. made
sioune n. shoots
skere v.1.sing. clear of a charge
skere adj. pure, free from guilt or sin
skill n. knowledge or understanding
skill v. know how to
skyfte v. exchange, switch
sla n. death
slat adj. slatternly
sledur adj. slippery, uncertain
sleilich adv. skillfully
slo v. slay
sloggy adj. sluggish
smaragde n. emerald
smarte n. suffering, pain
smatter v. prate, chatter ignorantly
smere n. grease, ointment
smoke n. smock
snellich adv. quickly
sogettys n.pl. subjects
sojournant n. visitor
solas n. enjoyment
sorell n. sorrel
sotell adj. subtle
sothfastnesse n. truthfulness
spanne n. distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little
 finger when the hand is fully extended (about 9 in.)

spelle, spele v.3.sing. tells, relates
spence n. room where victuals and liquor are kept, buttery
spered v.pp. speared
spewen v. vomit
spreynt v.pp. sprinkled
spylle v. ruin
stalun n. stallion
steuyn n. voice
stode n. stud
stokefysche n. hard dried fish, usually cod, which was beaten to soften it before cooking
stotiand ger. stuttering, stammering
stoure, stowre n. battle, conflict
streinant n. musical note with two long tails, similar to a breve
strett v. do violence to
stronde n. land near water, quay, port; foreign country
sturne v.pp. cast down
suggen v. say
suth adj. south
sutters, sotters n.pl. shoemakers
suyte n. train of followers
swart adj. dark
swert n. darkness
swilk adj. such
sydecoke v.3.sing. pulls sideways
sydefalle n. drooping to one side
sykyd v.pt. sighed
sykyrnesse n. security, certainty
syre n. sire

tabourerys n.pl. drummers

taburs n.pl. drums

tale n. number

talmes v.3.sing. tires

tarage n. shield

tarse n. penis

tayles n.pl. trains

tekyl adj. promiscuous

templers n.pl. ornaments worn on the sides of the forehead

tene n. vexation

pakketh v.3.sing. whacks

the v. thrive

thike adv. huskily, hoarsely

thong n. thing

poste n. pile of excrement

thro adj. angry, violent

prostil n. thrush

thruschylcok n. thrush

pryue-mon n. prosperous man

punne adj. thin

tihing n. laughing, giggling

till v. plough; (fig.) have sexual intercourse with

todrawe adj. uprooted

tokes n.pl. buttons; (fig.) testes

tolle n. temptation

tolyure v. lure on

tones v.2.sing. intone

torynde adj. torn apart

tohrude v.pp. covered

- toswolle** v.pp. swollen, puffed up
totorn v.pp. torn up
toute n. backside
trantes n.pl. trentals, sets of thirty requiem masses
tre n. wood
trede v. copulate (of birds)
treisuses n.pl. pieces of worn leather
trie adj. select
trobles n.pl. pieces of waste leather
troke v. tail; be wanting or lacking
tromcheri n. trumpery, trickery
truaunt n. idle rogue
trusse v. be put to flight, be sent packing
tuinkling n. winking
turnebroche n. spit-turner
tyke v. strike
tynde n. each of the pointed branches of a deer's horns
tyres n.pl. attires
tyrtyll n. turtledove

vaire n. fur from a type of squirrel having a grey back and white belly
vaste n. waste
venerye, venire n. hunting; pursuit of sexual pleasure
vernysshed adj. shiny and having a reddish hue (as varnished wood)
viage n. journey
visage n. face
vmbythoght v.pp. thought about, considered
vnclere adj. not easy to understand
vmpeire n. arbitor

vndresse v. undo
vniune n. large pearl
vnkyndly adj. unnatural
vnþenful adj. not thriving or prosperous
vnthryfft n. malpractice, fault in conduct
vp-mewed v.pp. shut up in a coop for fattening
vsely adv. usually, habitually

wagge v. move, drift (in water)
war adj. worse
warantyse n. warantee
ware n. genitals
wastur n. idle man; animal worthless for breeding
wap, wep interj. woe to me; woe to you
waussing n. washing
wayne wagon
wed n. pledge
wede v. go mad
wedwale n. oriole
wend v.1.sing. alter the direction of
wene v. know
weole adj. wealth, possessions
wepmon n. weapon
wertows n.pl. vegetables
wheton adj. made of wheat grain or flour
whobeit pron. whoever
willerdome n. wilfulness, self-will
willis wells
wisa1 n. (contempt.) mouth

withall adv. likewise, in addition

wlonke adj. splendid, fine

wons v. dwells

wonunges n.pl. houses, dwellings

wood, wode adj. crazed

woon n. habitation, dwelling

word n. world

wor3t n. vegetable; **wortis** n.pl.

worune v. harass

wreint v.pt. accused

wrye v. turn

wrymplyd v.pt. creased, wrinkled

(on) **wrynch** adj. crosswise

wunne n. strife, agitation

wydowed v.pp. made a widow

wye n. man

wynnerys n.pl. those who earn their livings through effort or merit

wytis n.poss. man's

yate n. gate

3e3ep v.3.sing. called out

3ernid v.pt. yearned

yhaht v.pp. hatched

ylke see **ilka**

yswent v.pp. afflicted, troubled