

**The Canterbury
Tales and Other
Poems
VOL.VII**

**By
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Freeditorial 

THE CANTERBURY TALES AND OTHER POEMS

THE THIRD BOOK

To the Third Book is prefixed a beautiful invocation of Venus, under the character of light:

O Blissful light, of which the beames clear
Adornen all the thirde heaven fair!
O Sunne's love, O Jove's daughter dear!
Pleasance of love, O goodly debonair, lovely and gracious
In gentle heart ay ready to repair! always enter and abide
O very cause of heal and of gladness, true welfare
Y-heried be thy might and thy goodness! praised
In heav'n and hell, in earth and salte sea.
Is felt thy might, if that I well discern;
As man, bird, beast, fish, herb, and greene tree,
They feel in times, with vapour etern,
God loveth, and to love he will not wern forbid
And in this world no living creature
Withoute love is worth, or may endure.
Ye Jove first to those effectes glad,
Through which that thinges alle live and be,
Commended; and him amorous y-made
Of mortal thing; and as ye list, ay ye pleased
Gave him, in love, ease or adversity, pleasure
And in a thousand formes down him sent
For love in earth; and whom ye list he hent. he seized whom you
wished
Ye fierce Mars appeasen of his ire,
And as you list ye make heartes dign worthy
Algates them that ye will set afire, at all events
They dreade shame, and vices they resign
Ye do him courteous to be, and benign; make, cause
And high or low, after a wight intendeth, according as
The joyes that he hath your might him sendeth.
Ye holde realm and house in unity;
Ye soothfast cause of friendship be also; true
Ye know all thilke cover'd quality secret power
Of thinges which that folk on wonder so,
When they may not construe how it may go

She loveth him, or why he loveth her,
As why this fish, not that, comes to the weir. fish-trap
Knowing that Venus has set a law in the universe, that whoso strives with her shall have
the worse, the poet prays to be taught to describe some of the joy that is felt in her
service; and the Third Book opens with an account of the scene between Troilus and
Cressida:

Lay all this meane while Troilus
Recording his lesson in this mannere; memorizing
"My fay!" thought he, "thus will I say, and thus; by my faith!
Thus will I plain unto my lady dear; make my plaint
That word is good; and this shall be my cheer
This will I not forgotten in no wise;"
God let him worken as he can devise.
And, Lord! so as his heart began to quap, quake, pant
Hearing her coming, and short for to sike; make short sighs
And Pandarus, that led her by the lap, skirt
Came near, and gan in at the curtain pick, peep
And saide: "God do boot alle sick! afford a remedy to
See who is here you coming to visite;
Lo! here is she that is your death to wite!" to blame for your death
Therewith it seemed as he wept almost.
"Ah! ah! God help!" quoth Troilus ruefully;
"Whe'er me be woe, O mighty God, thou know'st! whether
Who is there? for I see not truely."
"Sir," quoth Cresside, "it is Pandare and I;
"Yea, sweete heart? alas, I may not rise
To kneel and do you honour in some wise."
And dressed him upward, and she right tho then
Gan both her handes soft upon him lay.
"O! for the love of God, do ye not so
To me," quoth she; "ey! what is this to say?
For come I am to you for causes tway; two
First you to thank, and of your lordship eke
Continuance I woulde you beseek." protection beseech
This Troilus, that heard his lady pray
Him of lordship, wax'd neither quick nor dead;
Nor might one word for shame to it say,
Although men shoulde smiten off his head.
But, Lord! how he wax'd suddenly all red!
And, Sir, his lesson, that he ween'd have con, thought he knew

To praye her, was through his wit y-run. by heart
 Cresside all this espied well enow, —
 For she was wise, — and lov'd him ne'er the less,
 All n'ere he malapert, nor made avow,
 Nor was so bold to sing a foole's mass;
 But, when his shame began somewhat to pass,
 His wordes, as I may my rhymes hold,
 I will you tell, as teache bookes old.
 In changed voice, right for his very dread,
 Which voice eke quak'd, and also his mannere
 Goodly abash'd, and now his hue is red, becomingly
 Now pale, unto Cresside, his lady dear,
 With look downcast, and humble yielde cheer, submissive face
 Lo! altherfirste word that him astert, the first word he said
 Was twice: "Mercy, mercy, my dear heart!"
 And stent a while; and when he might out bring, stopped speak
 The nexte was: "God wote, for I have,
 As farforthly as I have conning, as far as I am able
 Been youres all, God so my soule save,
 And shall, till that I, woeful wight, be grave; die
 And though I dare not, cannot, to you plain,
 Y-wis, I suffer not the lesse pain.
 "This much as now, O womanlike wife!
 I may out bring, and if it you displease, speak out
 That shall I wreak upon mine owne life, avenge
 Right soon, I trow, and do your heart an ease,
 If with my death your heart I may appease:
 But, since that ye have heard somewhat say,
 Now reck I never how soon that I dey." die
 Therewith his manly sorrow to behold
 It might have made a heart of stone to rue;
 And Pandare wept as he to water wo'ld,
 And saide, "Woe-begone be heartes true," in woeful plight
 And procur'd his niece ever new and new, urged
 "For love of Godde, make of him an end, put him out of pain
 Or slay us both at ones, ere we wend." go
 "Ey! what?" quoth she; "by God and by my truth,
 I know not what ye woulde that I say;"
 "Ey! what?" quoth he; "that ye have on him ruth, pity
 For Godde's love, and do him not to dey." die
 "Now thenne thus," quoth she, "I would him pray

To telle me the fine of his intent; end of his desire
Yet wist I never well what that he meant." knew
"What that I meane, sweete hearte dear?"
Quoth Troilus, "O goodly, fresh, and free!
That, with the streames of your eyne so clear, beams, glances
Ye woulde sometimes on me rue and see, take pity and look on me
And then agreeen that I may be he, take in good part
Withoute branch of vice, in any wise,
In truth alway to do you my service,
"As to my lady chief, and right resort,
With all my wit and all my diligence;
And for to have, right as you list, comfort;
Under your yerd, equal to mine offence, rod, chastisement
As death, if that I breake your defence; do what you
And that ye deigne me so much honour, forbid
Me to commanden aught in any hour.
"And I to be your very humble, true,
Secret, and in my paines patient,
And evermore desire, freshly new,
To serven, and be alike diligent,
And, with good heart, all wholly your talent
Receive in gree, how sore that me smart; gladness
Lo, this mean I, mine owen sweete heart."

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With that she gan her eyen on him cast, Pandarus
Full easily and full debonairly, graciously
Advising her, and hied not too fast, considering went
With ne'er a word, but said him softely,
"Mine honour safe, I will well truely,
And in such form as ye can now devise,
Receive him fully to my service; Troilus
"Beseeching him, for Godde's love, that he
Would, in honour of truth and gentleness,
As I well mean, eke meane well to me;
And mine honour, with wit and business, wisdom and zeal
Aye keep; and if I may do him gladness,
From henceforth, y-wis I will not feign:
Now be all whole, no longer do ye plain.
"But, natheless, this warn I you," quoth she,
"A kinge's son although ye be, y-wis,

Ye shall no more have sovereignty
 Of me in love, than right in this case is;
 Nor will I forbear, if ye do amiss,
 To wrathe you, and, while that ye me serve, be angry with, chide
 To cherish you, right after ye deserve. as you deserve
 "And shortly, deare heart, and all my knight,
 Be glad, and drawe you to lustiness, pleasure
 And I shall truely, with all my might,
 Your bitter turnen all to sweeteness;
 If I be she that may do you gladness,
 For ev'ry woe ye shall recover a bliss:"
 And him in armes took, and gan him kiss.

Pandarus, almost beside himself for joy, falls on his knees to thank Venus and Cupid, declaring that for this miracle he hears all the bells ring; then, with a warning to be ready at his call to meet at his house, he parts the lovers, and attends Cressida while she takes leave of the household — Troilus all the time groaning at the deceit practised on his brother and Helen. When he has got rid of them by feigning weariness, Pandarus returns to the chamber, and spends the night with him in converse. The zealous friend begins to speak "in a sober wise" to Troilus, reminding him of his love-pains now all at an end.

"So that through me thou standest now in way
 To fare well; I say it for no boast;
 And know'st thou why? For, shame it is to say,
 For thee have I begun a game to play,
 Which that I never shall do eft for other, again another
 Although he were a thousand fold my brother.
 "That is to say, for thee I am become,
 Betwixte game and earnest, such a mean means, instrument
 As make women unto men to come;
 Thou know'st thyselfe what that woulde mean;
 For thee have I my niece, of vices clean, pure, devoid
 So fully made thy gentleness to trust, nobility of nature
 That all shall be right as thyselfe lust. as you please
 "But God, that all wot, take I to witness, knows everything
 That never this for covetise I wrought, greed of gain
 But only to abridge thy distress, abate
 For which well nigh thou diedst, as me thought;
 But, goode brother, do now as thee ought,
 For Godde's love, and keep her out of blame;
 Since thou art wise, so save thou her name.

"For, well thou know'st, the name yet of her,
 Among the people, as who saith hallow'd is;
 For that man is unborn, I dare well swear,
 That ever yet wist that she did amiss; knew
 But woe is me, that I, that cause all this,
 May thinke that she is my niece dear,
 And I her eme, and traitor eke y-fere. uncle as well
 "And were it wist that I, through mine engine, arts, contrivance
 Had in my niece put this fantasy fancy
 To do thy lust, and wholly to be thine, pleasure
 Why, all the people would upon it cry,
 And say, that I the worste treachery
 Did in this case, that ever was begun,
 And she fordone, and thou right naught y-won." ruined
 Therefore, ere going a step further, Pandarus prays Troilus to give him pledges of
 secrecy, and impresses on his mind the mischiefs that flow from vaunting in affairs of
 love. "Of kind," by his very nature he says, no vaunter is to be believed:

"For a vaunter and a liar all is one;
 As thus: I pose a woman granteth me suppose, assume
 Her love, and saith that other will she none,
 And I am sworn to holden it secre,
 And, after, I go tell it two or three;
 Y-wis, I am a vaunter, at the least,
 And eke a liar, for I break my hest. promise
 "Now looke then, if they be not to blame,
 Such manner folk; what shall I call them, what?
 That them avaunt of women, and by name,
 That never yet behight them this nor that, promised (much
 Nor knowe them no more than mine old hat? less granted)
 No wonder is, so God me sende heal, prosperity
 Though women dreade with us men to deal!
 "I say not this for no mistrust of you,
 Nor for no wise men, but for fooles nice; silly
 And for the harm that in the world is now,
 As well for folly oft as for malice;
 For well wot I, that in wise folk that vice
 No woman dreads, if she be well advised;
 For wise men be by fooles' harm chastised." corrected, instructed

So Pandarus begs Troilus to keep silent, promises to be true all his days, and assures him that he shall have all that he will in the love of Cressida: "thou knowest what thy lady granted thee; and day is set the charters up to make."

Who mighte telle half the joy and feast
Which that the soul of Troilus then felt,
Hearing th'effect of Pandarus' behest?
His olde woe, that made his hearte swelt, faint, die
Gan then for joy to wasten and to melt,
And all the reheating of his sighes sore
At ones fled, he felt of them no more.
But right so as these holtes and these hayes, woods and hedges
That have in winter deade been and dry,
Reveste them in greene, when that May is,
When ev'ry lusty listeth best to play; pleasant (one) wishes
Right in that selfe wise, sooth to say,
Wax'd suddenly his hearte full of joy,
That gladder was there never man in Troy.

Troilus solemnly swears that never, "for all the good that God made under sun," will he reveal what Pandarus asks him to keep secret; offering to die a thousand times, if need were, and to follow his friend as a slave all his life, in proof of his gratitude.

"But here, with all my heart, I thee beseech,
That never in me thou deeme such folly judge
As I shall say; me thoughte, by thy speech,
That this which thou me dost for company, friendship
I shoulde ween it were a bawdery; a bawd's action
I am not wood, all if I lewed be; I am not mad, though
It is not one, that wot I well, pardie! I be unlearned
"But he that goes for gold, or for richness,
On such messages, call him as thee lust; what you please
And this that thou dost, call it gentleness,
Compassion, and fellowship, and trust;
Depart it so, for widewhere is wist
How that there is diversity requer'd
Betwixte thinges like, as I have lear'd.
"And that thou know I think it not nor ween, suppose
That this service a shame be or a jape, subject for jeering
I have my faire sister Polyxene,
Cassandr', Helene, or any of the frape; set
Be she never so fair, or well y-shape,

Telle me which thou wilt of ev'ry one,
To have for thine, and let me then alone."

Then, beseeching Pandarus soon to perform out the great enterprise of crowning his love for Cressida, Troilus bade his friend good night. On the morrow Troilus burned as the fire, for hope and pleasure; yet "he not forgot his wise governance self- control;"

But in himself with manhood gan restrain
Each rakel deed, and each unbridled cheer, rash demeanour
That alle those that live, sooth to sayn,
Should not have wist, by word or by mannere, suspicion
What that he meant, as touching this mattere;
From ev'ry wight as far as is the cloud
He was, so well dissimulate he could.
And all the while that I now devise describe, narrate
This was his life: with all his fulle might,
By day he was in Marte's high service,
That is to say, in armes as a knight;
And, for the moste part, the longe night
He lay, and thought how that he mighte serve
His lady best, her thank for to deserve. gratitude
I will not swear, although he laye soft,
That in his thought he n'as somewhat diseas'd; troubled
Nor that he turned on his pillows oft,
And would of that him missed have been seis'd; possessed
But in such case men be not alway pleas'd,
For aught I wot, no more than was he;
That can I deem of possibility. judge
But certain is, to purpose for to go,
That in this while, as written is in gest, the history of
He saw his lady sometimes, and also these events
She with him spake, when that she durst and lest; dared and pleased
And, by their both advice, as was the best, consultation
Appointed full warily in this need, made careful preparations
So as they durst, how far they would proceed.
But it was spoken in so short a wise, so briefly, and always in such
In such await alway, and in such fear, vigilance and fear of being
Lest any wight divinen or devise found out by anyone
Would of their speech, or to it lay an ear,
That all this world them not so lefe were, they wanted more than
As that Cupido would them grace send anything in the world
To maken of their speches right an end.

But thilke little that they spake or wrought,
His wise ghost took ay of all such heed, spirit
It seemed her he wiste what she thought
Withoute word, so that it was no need
To bid him aught to do, nor aught forbid;
For which she thought that love, all came it late, although
Of alle joy had open'd her the gate.

Troilus, by his discretion, his secrecy, and his devotion, made ever a deeper lodgment in Cressida's heart; so that she thanked God twenty thousand times that she had met with a man who, as she felt, "was to her a wall of steel, and shield from ev'ry displeasance;" while Pandarus ever actively fanned the fire. So passed a "time sweet" of tranquil and harmonious love the only drawback being, that the lovers might not often meet, "nor leisure have, their speches to fulfil." At last Pandarus found an occasion for bringing them together at his house unknown to anybody, and put his plan in execution.

For he, with great deliberation,
Had ev'ry thing that hereto might avail be of service
Forecast, and put in execution,
And neither left for cost nor for travail; effort
Come if them list, them shoulde nothing fail,
Nor for to be in aught espied there,
That wiste he an impossible were. he knew it was impossible
that they could be discovered there
And dreadeless it clear was in the wind without doubt
Of ev'ry pie, and every let-game;
Now all is well, for all this world is blind,
In this matter, bothe fremd and tame; wild
This timber is all ready for to frame;
Us lacketh naught, but that we weete wo'ld know
A certain hour in which we come sho'ld.

Troilus had informed his household, that if at any time he was missing, he had gone to worship at a certain temple of Apollo, "and first to see the holy laurel quake, or that the godde spake out of the tree." So, at the changing of the moon, when "the welkin shope him for to rain," when the sky was preparing to rain Pandarus went to invite his niece to supper; solemnly assuring her that Troilus was out of the town — though all the time he was safely shut up, till midnight, in "a little stew," whence through a hole he joyously watched the arrival of his mistress and her fair niece Antigone, with half a score of her women. After supper Pandarus did everything to amuse his niece; "he sung, he play'd, he told a tale of Wade;" at last she would take her leave; but

The bente Moone with her hornes pale,

Saturn, and Jove, in Cancer joined were,
That made such a rain from heav'n avail, descend
That ev'ry manner woman that was there
Had of this smoky rain a very fear;
At which Pandarus laugh'd, and saide then
"Now were it time a lady to go hen!" hence

He therefore presses Cressida to remain all night; she complies with a good grace; and after the sleeping cup has gone round, all retire to their chambers — Cressida, that she may not be disturbed by the rain and thunder, being lodged in the "inner closet" of Pandarus, who, to lull suspicion, occupies the outer chamber, his niece's women sleeping in the intermediate apartment. When all is quiet, Pandarus liberates Troilus, and by a secret passage brings him to the chamber of Cressida; then, going forward alone to his niece, after calming her fears of discovery, he tells her that her lover has "through a gutter, by a privy went," a secret passage come to his house in all this rain, mad with grief because a friend has told him that she loves Horastes. Suddenly cold about her heart, Cressida promises that on the morrow she will reassure her lover; but Pandarus scouts the notion of delay, laughs to scorn her proposal to send her ring in pledge of her truth, and finally, by pitiable accounts of Troilus' grief, induces her to receive him and reassure him at once with her own lips.

This Troilus full soon on knees him set,
Full soberly, right by her bedde's head,
And in his beste wise his lady gret greeted
But Lord! how she wax'd suddenly all red,
And thought anon how that she would be dead;
She coulde not one word aright out bring,
So suddenly for his sudden coming.

Cressida, though thinking that her servant and her knight should not have doubted her truth, yet sought to remove his jealousy, and offered to submit to any ordeal or oath he might impose; then, weeping, she covered her face, and lay silent. "But now," exclaims the poet —

But now help, God, to quenchen all this sorrow!
So hope I that he shall, for he best may;
For I have seen, of a full misty morrow, morn
Followen oft a merry summer's day,
And after winter cometh greene May;
Folk see all day, and eke men read in stories,
That after sharpe stoures be victories. conflicts, struggles
Believing his mistress to be angry, Troilus felt the cramp of death seize on his heart,
"and down he fell all suddenly in swoon." Pandarus "into bed him cast," and called on

his niece to pull out the thorn that stuck in his heart, by promising that she would "all forgive." She whispered in his ear the assurance that she was not wroth; and at last, under her caresses, he recovered consciousness, to find her arm laid over him, to hear the assurance of her forgiveness, and receive her frequent kisses. Fresh vows and explanations passed; and Cressida implored forgiveness of "her own sweet heart," for the pain she had caused him. Surprised with sudden bliss, Troilus put all in God's hand, and strained his lady fast in his arms. "What might or may the seely innocent larke say, when that the sperhawk sparrowhawk hath him in his foot?"

Cressida, which that felt her thus y-take,
As write clerkes in their bookes old,
Right as an aspen leaf began to quake,
When she him felt her in his armes fold;
But Troilus, all whole of cares cold, cured of painful sorrows
Gan thanke then the blissful goddes seven.
Thus sundry paines bringe folk to heaven.
This Troilus her gan in armes strain,
And said, "O sweet, as ever may I go'n, prosper
Now be ye caught, now here is but we twain,
Now yielde you, for other boot is none." remedy
To that Cresside answered thus anon,
"N' had I ere now, my sweete hearte dear,
Been yolden, y-wis, I were now not here!" yielded myself
O sooth is said, that healed for to be
Of a fever, or other great sickness,
Men muste drink, as we may often see,
Full bitter drink; and for to have gladness
Men drinke often pain and great distress!
I mean it here, as for this adventure,
That thorough pain hath founden all his cure.
And now sweetnesse seemeth far more sweet,
That bitterness assayed was befor; tasted
For out of woe in blisse now they fleet, float, swim
None such they felte since that they were born;
Now is it better than both two were lorn!
For love of God, take ev'ry woman heed
To worke thus, if it come to the need!
Cresside, all quit from ev'ry dread and teen, pain
As she that juste cause had him to trust,
Made him such feast, it joy was for to see'n,
When she his truth and intent cleane wist; knew the purity

And as about a tree, with many a twist, of his purpose
Bitrent and writhen is the sweet woodbind, plaited and wreathed
Gan each of them in armes other wind. embrace, encircle
And as the new abashed nightingale, newly-arrived and timid
That stinteth, first when she beginneth sing, stops
When that she heareth any herde's tale, the talking of a shepherd
Or in the hedges any wight stirring;
And, after, sicker out her voice doth ring; confidently
Right so Cressida, when her dreade stent, her doubt ceased
Open'd her heart, and told him her intent. mind
And might as he that sees his death y-shapen, prepared
And dien must, in aught that he may guess, for all he can tell
And suddenly rescouse doth him escapen, he is rescued and escapes
And from his death is brought in sickness; to safety
For all the world, in such present gladness
Was Troilus, and had his lady sweet;
With worse hap God let us never meet!
Her armes small, her straighte back and soft,
Her sides longe, fleshly, smooth, and white,
He gan to stroke; and good thrift bade full oft blessing
On her snow-white throat, her breastes round and lite; small
Thus in this heaven he gan him delight,
And therewithal a thousand times her kist,
That what to do for joy unneth he wist. he hardly knew
The lovers exchanged vows, and kisses, and embraces, and speches of exalted love, and
rings; Cressida gave to Troilus a brooch of gold and azure, "in which a ruby set was like a
heart;" and the too short night passed.

"When that the cock, commune astrologer,
Gan on his breast to beat, and after crow,
And Lucifer, the daye's messenger,
Gan for to rise, and out his beames throw;
And eastward rose, to him that could it know,
Fortuna Major, then anon Cresseide,
With hearte sore, to Troilus thus said:
"My hearte's life, my trust, and my pleasance!
That I was born, alas! that me is woe,
That day of us must make disseverance!
For time it is to rise, and hence to go,
Or else I am but lost for evermo'.
O Night! alas! why n'ilt thou o'er us hove, hover

As long as when Alcmena lay by Jove?
 "O blacke Night! as folk in bookes read
 That shapen art by God, this world to hide, appointed
 At certain times, with thy darke weed, robe
 That under it men might in rest abide,
 Well oughte beastes plain, and folke chide,
 That where as Day with labour would us brest, burst, overcome
 There thou right flee'st, and deignest not us rest. grantest
 "Thou dost, alas! so shortly thine office, duty
 Thou rakel Night! that God, maker of kind, rash, hasty
 Thee for thy haste and thine unkinde vice,
 So fast ay to our hemisphere bind,
 That never more under the ground thou wind; turn, revolve
 For through thy rakel hieing out of Troy hasting
 Have I forgone thus hastily my joy!" lost
 This Troilus, that with these wordes felt,
 As thought him then, for piteous distress,
 The bloody teares from his hearte melt,
 As he that never yet such heaviness
 Assayed had out of so great gladness,
 Gan therewithal Cresside, his lady dear,
 In armes strain, and said in this mannere:
 "O cruel Day! accuser of the joy
 That Night and Love have stol'n, and fast y-wrien! closely
 Accursed be thy coming into Troy! concealed
 For ev'ry bow'r hath one of thy bright eyen: chamber
 Envious Day! Why list thee to espyen?
 What hast thou lost? Why seekest thou this place?
 There God thy light so quenche, for his grace!
 "Alas! what have these lovers thee aguilt? offended, sinned against
 Dispiteous Day, thine be the pains of hell! cruel, spiteful
 For many a lover hast thou slain, and wilt;
 Thy peering in will nowhere let them dwell:
 What! proff'rest thou thy light here for to sell?
 Go sell it them that smalle seales grave! cut devices on
 We will thee not, us needs no day to have."
 And eke the Sunne, Titan, gan he chide,
 And said, "O fool! well may men thee despise!
 That hast the Dawning all night thee beside,
 And suff'rest her so soon up from thee rise,
 For to disease us lovers in this wise! annoy

What! hold thy bed, both thou, and eke thy Morrow! keep
I bidde God so give you bothe sorrow!" pray
The lovers part with many sighs and protestations of unswerving and undying love;
Cressida responding to the vows of Troilus with the assurance —

"That first shall Phoebus falle from his sphere, the sun
And heaven's eagle be the dove's fere,
And ev'ry rock out of his place start,
Ere Troilus out of Cressida's heart."

When Pandarus visits Troilus in his palace later in the day, he warns him not to mar his
bliss by any fault of his own:

"For, of Fortune's sharp adversity,
The worste kind of infortune is this,
A man to have been in prosperity,
And it remember when it passed is.

Thou art wise enough; forthy," do not amiss; therefore
Be not too rakel, though thou sitte warm; rash, over-hasty
For if thou be, certain it will thee harm.

"Thou art at ease, and hold thee well therein;
For, all so sure as red is ev'ry fire,
As great a craft is to keep weal as win;
Bridle alway thy speech and thy desire,
For worldly joy holds not but by a wire;
That proveth well, it breaks all day so oft,
Forthy need is to worke with it soft."

Troilus sedulously observes the counsel; and the lovers have many renewals of their
pleasure, and of their bitter chidings of the Day. The effects of love on Troilus are
altogether refining and ennobling; as may be inferred from the song which he sung often
to Pandarus:

The Second Song of Troilus.

"Love, that of Earth and Sea hath governance!
Love, that his hestes hath in Heaven high! commandments
Love, that with a right wholesome alliance
Holds people joined, as him list them guy! guide
Love, that knitteth law and company,
And couples doth in virtue for to dwell,
Bind this accord, that I have told, and tell!
"That the worlde, with faith which that is stable,

Diverseth so, his stoundes according; according to its seasons
That elementes, that be discordable, discordant
 Holden a bond perpetually during;
 That Phoebus may his rosy day forth bring;
And that the Moon hath lordship o'er the night; —
All this doth Love, ay heried be his might! praised
 "That the sea, which that greedy is to flowen,
 Constraineth to a certain ende so limit
 His floodes, that so fiercely they not growen
 To drenchen earth and all for evermo'; drown
 And if that Love aught let his bridle go,
 All that now loves asunder shoulde leap,
And lost were all that Love holds now to heap. together
 "So woulde God, that author is of kind,
 That with his bond Love of his virtue list
 To cherish heartes, and all fast to bind,
 That from his bond no wight the way out wist!
And heartes cold, them would I that he twist, turned
To make them love; and that him list ay rue have pity
 On heartes sore, and keep them that be true."
But Troilus' love had higher fruits than singing:

 In alle needes for the towne's werre war
He was, and ay the first in armes dight, equipped, prepared
 And certainly, but if that bookes err,
 Save Hector, most y-dread of any wight; dreaded
And this increase of hardiness and might courage
 Came him of love, his lady's grace to win,
 That altered his spirit so within.
In time of truce, a-hawking would he ride,
 Or elles hunt the boare, bear, lioun;
 The smalle beastes let he go beside;
And when he came riding into the town,
 Full oft his lady, from her window down,
As fresh as falcon coming out of mew, cage
 Full ready was him goodly to salue. salute
And most of love and virtue was his speech,
And in despite he had all wretchedness he held in scorn all
And doubtless no need was him to besech despicable actions
 To honour them that hadde worthiness,
 And ease them that weren in distress;

And glad was he, if any wight well far'd,
That lover was, when he it wist or heard.

For he held every man lost unless he were in Love's service; and, so did the power of Love work within him, that he was ay always humble and benign, and "pride, envy, ire, and avarice, he gan to flee, and ev'ry other vice."

THE FOURTH BOOK

A BRIEF Proem to the Fourth Book prepares us for the treachery of Fortune to Troilus; from whom she turned away her bright face, and took of him no heed, "and cast him clean out of his lady's grace, and on her wheel she set up Diomedes." Then the narrative describes a skirmish in which the Trojans were worsted, and Antenor, with many of less note, remained in the hands of the Greeks. A truce was proclaimed for the exchange of prisoners; and as soon as Calchas heard the news, he came to the assembly of the Greeks, to "bid a boon." Having gained audience, he reminded the besiegers how he had come from Troy to aid and encourage them in their enterprise; willing to lose all that he had in the city, except his daughter Cressida, whom he bitterly reproached himself for leaving behind. And now, with streaming tears and pitiful prayer, he besought them to exchange Antenor for Cressida; assuring them that the day was at hand when they should have both town and people. The soothsayer's petition was granted; and the ambassadors charged to negotiate the exchange, entering the city, told their errand to King Priam and his parliament.

This Troilus was present in the place
When asked was for Antenor Cressida;
For which to change soon began his face,
As he that with the wordes well nigh died;
But natheless he no word to it seid; said
Lest men should his affection espy,
With manne's heart he gan his sorrows drie; endure
And, full of anguish and of grisly dread,
Abode what other lords would to it say,
And if they woulde grant, — as God forbid! —
Th'exchange of her, then thought he thinges tway: two
First, for to save her honour; and what way
He mighte best th'exchange of her withstand;
This cast he then how all this mighte stand.
Love made him alle prest to do her bide, eager to make her stay
And rather die than that she shoulde go;
But Reason said him, on the other side,
"Without th'assent of her, do thou not so,
Lest for thy worke she would be thy foe;
And say, that through thy meddling is y-blow divulged, blown abroad
Your bothe love, where it was erst unknow." previously unknown
For which he gan deliberate for the best,
That though the lordes woulde that she went,
He woulde suffer them grant what them lest, they pleased

And tell his lady first what that they meant;
 And, when that she had told him her intent,
 Thereafter would he worken all so blive, speedily
 Though all the world against it woulde strive.
 Hector, which that full well the Greekes heard,
 For Antenor how they would have Cresseide,
 Gan it withstand, and soberly answer'd;
 "Sirs, she is no prisoner," he said;
 "I know not on you who this charge laid;
 But, for my part, ye may well soon him tell,
 We use here no women for to sell." are accustomed
 The noise of the people then upstart at once,
 As breame as blaze of straw y-set on fire violent, furious
 For Infortune woulde for the nonce Misfortune
 They shoulde their confusion desire
 "Hector," quoth they, "what ghost may you inspire spirit
 This woman thus to shield, and do us lose cause us to
 Dan Antenor? — a wrong way now ye choose, —
 "That is so wise, and eke so bold baroun;
 And we have need of folk, as men may see
 He eke is one the greatest of this town;
 O Hector! lette such fantasies be!
 O King Priam!" quoth they, "lo! thus say we,
 That all our will is to forego Cresseide;"
 And to deliver Antenor they pray'd.

Though Hector often prayed them "nay," it was resolved that Cressida should be given
 up for Antenor; then the parliament dispersed. Troilus hastened home to his chamber,
 shut himself up alone, and threw himself on his bed.

And as in winter leaves be bereft,
 Each after other, till the tree be bare,
 So that there is but bark and branch y-left,
 Lay Troilus, bereft of each welfare,
 Y-bounden in the blacke bark of care,
 Disposed wood out of his wit to braid, to go out of his senses
 So sore him sat the changing of Cresseide. so ill did he bear
 He rose him up, and ev'ry door he shet, shut
 And window eke; and then this sorrowful man
 Upon his bedde's side adown him set,
 Full like a dead image, pale and wan,
 And in his breast the heaped woe began

Out burst, and he to worken in this wise,
 In his woodness, as I shall you devise. madness relate
 Right as the wilde bull begins to spring,
 Now here, now there, y-darted to the heart, pierced with a dart
 And of his death roareth in complaining;
 Right so gan he about the chamber start,
 Smiting his breast aye with his fistes smart; painfully, cruelly
 His head to the wall, his body to the ground,
 Full oft he swapt, himselfe to confound. struck, dashed
 His eyen then, for pity of his heart,
 Out streameden as swifte welles tway; fountains
 The highe sobbes of his sorrow's smart
 His speech him reft; unnethes might he say, scarcely
 "O Death, alas! why n'ilt thou do me dey? why will you not
 Accursed be that day which that Nature make me die?
 Shope me to be a living creature!" shaped
 Bitterly reviling Fortune, and calling on Love to explain why his happiness with
 Cressicla should be thus repealed, Troilus declares that, while he lives, he will bewail his
 misfortune in solitude, and will never see it shine or rain, but will end his sorrowful life
 in darkness, and die in distress.

"O weary ghost, that errest to and fro!
 Why n'ilt thou fly out of the woefulest wilt not
 Body that ever might on grounde go?
 O soule, lurking in this woeful nest!
 Flee forth out of my heart, and let it brest, burst
 And follow alway Cresside, thy lady dear!
 Thy righte place is now no longer here.
 "O woeful eyen two! since your disport delight
 Was all to see Cressida's eyen bright,
 What shall ye do, but, for my discomfort,
 Stande for naught, and weepen out your sight,
 Since she is quench'd, that wont was you to light?
 In vain, from this forth, have I eyen tway
 Y-formed, since your virtue is away!
 "O my Cresside! O lady sovereign
 Of thilke woeful soule that now cryeth! this
 Who shall now give comfort to thy pain?
 Alas! no wight; but, when my hearte dieth,
 My spirit, which that so unto you hieth, hasteneth
 Receive in gree, for that shall ay you serve; with favour

Forthy no force is though the body sterve. therefore no matter
die

"O ye lovers, that high upon the wheel
Be set of Fortune, in good adventure,
God lene that ye find ay love of steel, grant always
And longe may your life in joy endure!
But when ye come by my sepulture, sepulchre
Remember that your fellow resteth there;
For I lov'd eke, though I unworthy were.
"O old, unwholesome, and mislived man,
Calchas I mean, alas! what ailed thee
To be a Greek, since thou wert born Trojan?
O Calchas! which that will my bane be, destruction
In cursed time wert thou born for me!
As woulde blissful Jove, for his joy,
That I thee hadde where I would in Troy!"

Soon Troilus, through excess of grief, fell into a trance; in which he was found by Pandarus, who had gone almost distracted at the news that Cressida was to be exchanged for Antenor. At his friend's arrival, Troilus "gan as the snow against the sun to melt;" the two mingled their tears a while; then Pandarus strove to comfort the woeful lover. He admitted that never had a stranger ruin than this been wrought by Fortune:

"But tell me this, why thou art now so mad
To sorrow thus? Why li'st thou in this wise,
Since thy desire all wholly hast thou had,
So that by right it ought enough suffice?
But I, that never felt in my service
A friendly cheer or looking of an eye,
Let me thus weep and wail until I die.
"And over all this, as thou well wost thy selve, knowest
This town is full of ladies all about,
And, to my doom, fairer than suche twelve in my judgment
As ever she was, shall I find in some rout, company
Yea! one or two, withouten any doubt:
Forthy be glad, mine owen deare brother! therefore
If she be lost, we shall recover another.
"What! God forbid alway that each pleasance
In one thing were, and in none other wight;
If one can sing, another can well dance;
If this be goodly, she is glad and light;
And this is fair, and that can good aright;

Each for his virtue holden is full dear,
 Both heroner, and falcon for rivere.
 "And eke as writ Zausis, that was full wise,
 The newe love out chaseth oft the old,
 And upon new case lieth new advice;
 Think eke thy life to save thou art hold; bound
 Such fire by process shall of kinde cold; shall grow cold by
 For, since it is but casual pleasance, process of nature
 Some case shall put it out of remembrance. chance
 "For, all so sure as day comes after night,
 The newe love, labour, or other woe,
 Or elles seldom seeing of a wight,
 Do old affections all over go; overcome
 And for thy part, thou shalt have one of tho those
 T'abridge with thy bitter paine's smart;
 Absence of her shall drive her out of heart."
 These wordes said he for the nones all, only for the nonce
 To help his friend, lest he for sorrow died;
 For, doubtless, to do his woe to fall, make his woe subside
 He raughte not what unthrift that he said; cared folly
 But Troilus, that nigh for sorrow died,
 Took little heed of all that ever he meant;
 One ear it heard, at th'other out it went.
 But, at the last, he answer'd and said,
 "Friend, This leachcraft, or y-healed thus to be,
 Were well sitting if that I were a fiend, recked
 To traisen her that true is unto me: betray
 I pray God, let this counsel never the, thrive
 But do me rather sterve anon right here, die
 Ere I thus do, as thou me wouldest lear!" teach

Troilus protests that his lady shall have him wholly hers till death; and, debating the counsels of his friend, declares that even if he would, he could not love another. Then he points out the folly of not lamenting the loss of Cressida because she had been his in ease and felicity — while Pandarus himself, though he thought it so light to change to and fro in love, had not done busily his might to change her that wrought him all the woe of his unprosperous suit.

"If thou hast had in love ay yet mischance,
 And canst it not out of thine hearte drive,
 I that lived in lust and in pleasance delight
 With her, as much as creature alive,

How should I that forget, and that so blive? quickly
O where hast thou been so long hid in mew, cage
That canst so well and formally argue!"

The lover condemns the whole discourse of his friend as unworthy, and calls on Death, the ender of all sorrows, to come to him and quench his heart with his cold stroke. Then he distils anew in tears, "as liquor out of alembic;" and Pandarus is silent for a while, till he bethinks him to recommend to Troilus the carrying off of Cressida. "Art thou in Troy, and hast no hardiment daring, boldness to take a woman which that loveth thee?" But Troilus reminds his counsellor that all the war had come from the ravishing of a woman by might (the abduction of Helen by Paris); and that it would not beseem him to withstand his father's grant, since the lady was to be changed for the town's good. He has dismissed the thought of asking Cressida from his father, because that would be to injure her fair fame, to no purpose, for Priam could not overthrow the decision of "so high a place as parliament;" while most of all he fears to perturb her heart with violence, to the slander of her name — for he must hold her honour dearer than himself in every case, as lovers ought of right:

"Thus am I in desire and reason twight: twisted
Desire, for to disturbe her, me redeth; counseleth
And Reason will not, so my hearte dreadeth." is in doubt
Thus weeping, that he coulde never cease
He said, "Alas! how shall I, wretche, fare?
For well feel I alway my love increase,
And hope is less and less alway, Pandare!
Increasen eke the causes of my care;
So well-away! why n' ill my hearte brest? why will not
For us in love there is but little rest." my heart break?
Pandare answered, "Friend, thou may'st for me
Do as thee list; but had I it so hot, please
And thine estate, she shoulde go with me! rank
Though all this town cried on this thing by note,
I would not set all that noise a groat; value
For when men have well cried, then will they rowne, whisper
Eke wonder lasts but nine nights ne'er in town.
"Divine not in reason ay so deep,
Nor courteously, but help thyself anon;
Bet is that others than thyselfe weep; better
And namely, since ye two be all one,
Rise up, for, by my head, she shall not go'n!
And rather be in blame a little found,
Than sterve here as a gnat withoute wound! die

"It is no shame unto you, nor no vice,
 Her to withhold, that ye loveth most;
 Parauntre she might holde thee for nice, peradventure foolish
 To let her go thus unto the Greeks' host;
 Think eke, Fortune, as well thyselfe wost,
 Helpeth the hardy man to his emprise,
 And weiveth wretches for their cowardice. forsaketh
 "And though thy lady would a lite her grieve, little
 Thou shalt thyself thy peace thereafter make;
 But, as to me, certain I cannot 'lieve
 That she would it as now for evil take:
 Why shoulde then for fear thine hearte quake?
 Think eke how Paris hath, that is thy brother,
 A love; and why shalt thou not have another?
 "And, Troilus, one thing I dare thee swear,
 That if Cressida, which that is thy lief, love
 Now loveth thee as well as thou dost her,
 God help me so, she will not take agrief amiss
 Though thou anon do boot in this mischief; provide a remedy
 And if she willeth from thee for to pass, immediately
 Then is she false, so love her well the lass. less
 "Forthy, take heart, and think, right as a knight, therefore
 Through love is broken all day ev'ry law;
 Kithe now somewhat thy courage and thy might; show
 Have mercy on thyself, for any awe; in spite of any fear
 Let not this wretched woe thine hearte gnaw;
 But, manly, set the world on six and seven,
 And, if thou die a martyr, go to heaven."

Pandarus promises his friend all aid in the enterprise; it is agreed that Cressida shall be carried off, but only with her own consent; and Pandarus sets out for his niece's house, to arrange an interview. Meantime Cressida has heard the news; and, caring nothing for her father, but everything for Troilus, she burns in love and fear, unable to tell what she shall do.

But, as men see in town, and all about,
 That women use friendes to visite, are accustomed
 So to Cresside of women came a rout, troop
 For piteous joy, and weened her delight, thought to please her
 And with their tales, dear enough a mite, not worth a mite
 These women, which that in the city dwell,
 They set them down, and said as I shall tell.

Quoth first that one, "I am glad, truly,
Because of you, that shall your father see;"
Another said, "Y-wis, so am not I,
For all too little hath she with us be." been
Quoth then the third, "I hope, y-wis, that she
Shall bringen us the peace on ev'ry side;
Then, when she goes, Almighty God her guide!"
Those wordes, and those womanishe thinges,
She heard them right as though she thennes were, thence; in some
For, God it wot, her heart on other thing is; other place
Although the body sat among them there,
Her advertence is always elleswhere; attention
For Troilus full fast her soule sought;
Withoute word, on him always she thought.
These women that thus weened her to please,
Aboute naught gan all their tales spend;
Such vanity ne can do her no ease,
As she that all this meane while brenn'd
Of other passion than that they wend; weened, supposed
So that she felt almost her hearte die
For woe, and weary of that company. weariness
For whiche she no longer might restrain
Her teares, they began so up to well,
That gave signes of her bitter pain,
In which her spirit was, and muste dwell,
Rememb'ring her from heav'n into which hell
She fallen was, since she forwent the sight lost
Of Troilus; and sorrowfully she sight. sighed
And thilke fooles, sitting her about,
Weened that she had wept and siked sore, sighed
Because that she should out of that rout company
Depart, and never playe with them more;
And they that hadde knowen her of yore
Saw her so weep, and thought it kindeness,
And each of them wept eke for her distress.
And busily they gonnen her comfort began
Of thing, God wot, on which she little thought;
And with their tales weened her disport,
And to be glad they her besought;
But such an ease therewith they in her wrought,
Right as a man is eased for to feel,

For ache of head, to claw him on his heel.
But, after all this nice vanity, silly
They took their leave, and home they wenten all;
Cressida, full of sorrowful pity,
Into her chamber up went out of the hall,
And on her bed she gan for dead to fall,
In purpose never thennes for to rise;
And thus she wrought, as I shall you devise. narrate

She rent her sunny hair, wrung her hands, wept, and bewailed her fate; vowing that, since, "for the cruelty," she could handle neither sword nor dart, she would abstain from meat and drink until she died. As she lamented, Pandarus entered, making her complain a thousand times more at the thought of all the joy which he had given her with her lover; but he somewhat soothed her by the prospect of Troilus's visit, and by the counsel to contain her grief when he should come. Then Pandarus went in search of Troilus, whom he found solitary in a temple, as one that had ceased to care for life:

For right thus was his argument alway:
He said he was but lorne, well-away! lost, ruined
"For all that comes, comes by necessity;
Thus, to be lorn, it is my destiny. lost, ruined
"For certainly this wot I well," he said,
"That foresight of the divine purveyance providence
Hath seen alway me to forgo Cresseide, lose
Since God sees ev'ry thing, out of doubtance, without doubt
And them disposeth, through his ordinance,
In their merites soothly for to be,
As they should come by predestiny.
"But natheless, alas! whom shall I 'lieve?
For there be greate clerkes many one scholars
That destiny through argumentes preve, prove
And some say that needly there is none, necessarily
But that free choice is giv'n us ev'ry one;
O well-away! so sly are clerkes old,
That I n'ot whose opinion I may hold. know not
"For some men say, if God sees all befor,
Godde may not deceived be, pardie!
Then must it fallen, though men had it sworn, befall, happen
That purveyance hath seen before to be;
Wherefore I say, that from etern if he eternity
Hath wist before our thought eke as our deed, known
We have no free choice, as these clerkes read. maintain

"For other thought, nor other deed also,
Might never be, but such as purveyance,
Which may not be deceived never mo',
Hath feeled before, without ignorance; perceived
For if there mighte be a variance,
To writen out from Godde's purveying,
There were no prescience of thing coming,
"But it were rather an opinion
Uncertain, and no steadfast foreseeing;
And, certes, that were an abusion, illusion
That God should have no perfect clear weeting, knowledge
More than we men, that have doubtous weening; dubious opinion
But such an error upon God to guess, to impute to God
Were false, and foul, and wicked cursedness. impiety
"Eke this is an opinion of some
That have their top full high and smooth y-shore,
They say right thus, that thing is not to come,
For that the prescience hath seen before because
That it shall come; but they say, that therefore
That it shall come, therefore the purveyance
Wot it before, withouten ignorance.
"And, in this manner, this necessity
Returneth in his part contrary again; reacts in the opposite
For needfully behoves it not to be, direction
That thilke thinges fallen in certain, certainly happen
That be purvey'd; but needly, as they sayn,
Behoveth it that thinges, which that fall,
That they in certain be purveyed all.
"I mean as though I labour'd me in this
To inquire which thing cause of which thing be;
As, whether that the prescience of God is
The certain cause of the necessity
Of thinges that to come be, pardie!
Or if necessity of thing coming
Be cause certain of the purveying.
"But now enforce I me not in shewing I do not lay stress
How th'order of causes stands; but well wot I,
That it behoveth, that the befalling
Of thinges wiste before certainly, known
Be necessary, all seem it not thereby, though it does not appear
That prescience put falling necessair

To thing to come, all fall it foul or fair.
 "For, if there sit a man yond on a see, seat
 Then by necessity behoveth it
 That certes thine opinion sooth be,
 That weenest, or conjectest, that he sit; conjecturest
 And, furtherover, now againward yet,
 Lo! right so is it on the part contrary;
 As thus, — now hearken, for I will not tarry; —
 "I say that if th'opinion of thee
 Be sooth, for that he sits, then say I this,
 That he must sitte by necessity;
 And thus necessity in either is,
 For in him need of sitting is, y-wis,
 And, in thee, need of sooth; and thus forsooth
 There must necessity be in you both.
 "But thou may'st say he sits not therefore
 That thine opinion of his sitting sooth
 But rather, for the man sat there before,
 Therefore is thine opinion sooth, y-wis;
 And I say, though the cause of sooth of this
 Comes of his sitting, yet necessity
 Is interchanged both in him and thee.
 "Thus in the same wise, out of doubtance,
 I may well maken, as it seemeth me,
 My reasoning of Godde's purveyance,
 And of the thinges that to come be;
 By whiche reason men may well y-see
 That thilke thinges that in earthe fall, those happen
 That by necessity they comen all.
 "For although that a thing should come, y-wis,
 Therefore it is purveyed certainly,
 Not that it comes for it purveyed is;
 Yet, natheless, behoveth needfully
 That thing to come be purvey'd truely;
 Or elles thinges that purveyed be,
 That they betide by necessity. happen
 "And this sufficeth right enough, certain,
 For to destroy our free choice ev'ry deal;
 But now is this abusion, to sayn illusion, self-deception
 That falling of the thinges temporel
 Is cause of Godde's prescience eternal;

Now truly that is a false sentence, opinion, judgment
 That thing to come should cause his prescience.
 "What might I ween, an' I had such a thought, if
 But that God purveys thing that is to come,
 For that it is to come, and elles nought?
 So might I ween that thinges, all and some,
 That whilom be befall and overcome, have happened
 Be cause of thilke sov'reign purveyance, in times past
 That foreknows all, withouten ignorance.
 "And over all this, yet say I more thereto, —
 That right as when I wot there is a thing,
 Y-wis, that thing must needfully be so;
 Eke right so, when I wot a thing coming,
 So must it come; and thus the befalling
 Of thinges that be wist before the tide, time
 They may not be eschew'd on any side." avoided

While Troilus was in all this heaviness, disputing with himself in this matter, Pandarus
 joined him, and told him the result of the interview with Cressida; and at night the
 lovers met, with what sighs and tears may be imagined. Cressida swooned away, so that
 Troilus took her for dead; and, having tenderly laid out her limbs, as one preparing a
 corpse for the bier, he drew his sword to slay himself upon her body. But, as God would,
 just at that moment she awoke out of her swoon; and by and by the pair began to talk of
 their prospects. Cressida declared the opinion, supporting it at great length and with
 many reasons, that there was no cause for half so much woe on either part. Her
 surrender, decreed by the parliament, could not be resisted; it was quite easy for them
 soon to meet again; she would bring things about that she should be back in Troy within
 a week or two; she would take advantage of the constant coming and going while the
 truce lasted; and the issue would be, that the Trojans would have both her and Antenor;
 while, to facilitate her return, she had devised a stratagem by which, working on her
 father's avarice, she might tempt him to desert from the Greek camp back to the city.

"And truly," says the poet, having fully reported her plausible speech,

And truly, as written well I find,
 That all this thing was said of good intent, sincerely
 And that her hearte true was and kind
 Towardses him, and spake right as she meant,
 And that she starf for woe nigh when she went, died
 And was in purpose ever to be true;
 Thus write they that of her workes knew.
 This Troilus, with heart and ears y-sprad, all open
 Heard all this thing devised to and fro,

And verily it seemed that he had
The selfe wit; but yet to let her go the same opinion
His hearte misforgave him evermo'; misgave
But, finally, he gan his hearte wrest compel
To truste her, and took it for the best.
For which the great fury of his penance suffering
Was quench'd with hope, and therewith them between
Began for joy the amoureuse dance;
And as the birdes, when the sun is sheen, bright
Delighten in their song, in leaves green,
Right so the wordes that they spake y-fere together
Delighten them, and make their heartes cheer. glad

Yet Troilus was not so well at ease, that he did not earnestly entreat Cressida to observe her promise; for, if she came not into Troy at the set day, he should never have health, honour, or joy; and he feared that the stratagem by which she would try to lure her father back would fail, so that she might be compelled to remain among the Greeks. He would rather have them steal away together, with sufficient treasure to maintain them all their lives; and even if they went in their bare shirt, he had kin and friends elsewhere, who would welcome and honour them.

Cressida, with a sigh, right in this wise
Answer'd; "Y-wis, my deare hearte true,
We may well steal away, as ye devise,
And finde such unthrifty wayes new;
But afterward full sore it will us rue; we will regret it
And help me God so at my moste need
As causeless ye suffer all this dread!
"For thilke day that I for cherishing that same
Or dread of father, or of other wight,
Or for estate, delight, or for wedding,
Be false to you, my Troilus, my knight,
Saturne's daughter Juno, through her might,
As wood as Athamante do me dwell mad
Eternally in Styx the pit of hell!
"And this, on ev'ry god celestial
I swear it you, and eke on each goddess,
On ev'ry nymph, and deity infernal,
On Satyrs and on Faunes more or less,
That halfe goddess be of wilderness; demigods
And Atropos my thread of life to-brest, break utterly
If I be false! now trow me if you lest. believe please

"And thou Simois, that as an arrow clear
Through Troy ay runnest downward to the sea,
Bear witness of this word that said is here!
That thilke day that I untrue be
To Troilus, mine owen hearte free,
That thou returne backward to thy well,
And I with body and soul sink in hell!"

Even yet Troilus was not wholly content, and urged anew his plan of secret flight; but Cressida turned upon him with the charge that he mistrusted her causelessly, and demanded of him that he should be faithful in her absence, else she must die at her return. Troilus promised faithfulness in far simpler and briefer words than Cressida had used.

"Grand mercy, good heart mine, y-wis," quoth she;
"And blissful Venus let me never sterve, die
Ere I may stand of pleasance in degree in a position to reward
To quite him that so well can deserve; him well with pleasure
And while that God my wit will me conserve,
I shall so do; so true I have you found,
That ay honour to me-ward shall rebound.
"For truste well that your estate royal, rank
Nor vain delight, nor only worthiness
Of you in war or tourney martial,
Nor pomp, array, nobley, nor eke richness,
Ne made me to rue on your distress; take pity
But moral virtue, grounded upon truth,
That was the cause I first had on you ruth. pity
"Eke gentle heart, and manhood that ye had,
And that ye had, — as me thought, — in despite
Every thing that sounded unto bad, tended unto, accorded with
As rudeness, and peoplish appetite, vulgar
And that your reason bridled your delight;
This made, aboven ev'ry creature,
That I was yours, and shall while I may dure.
"And this may length of yeares not fordo, destroy, do away
Nor remuable Fortune deface; unstable
But Jupiter, that of his might may do
The sorrowful to be glad, so give us grace,
Ere nightes ten to meeten in this place,
So that it may your heart and mine suffice!
And fare now well, for time is that ye rise."

The lovers took a heart-rending adieu; and Troilus, suffering unimaginable anguish,
"withoute more, out of the chamber went."

THE FIFTH BOOK.

APPROACHE gan the fatal destiny
That Jovis hath in disposition,
And to you angry Parcae, Sisters three, The Fates
Committeth to do execution;
For which Cressida must out of the town,
And Troilus shall dwelle forth in pine, pain
Till Lachesis his thread no longer twine. twist
The golden-tressed Phoebus, high aloft,
Thries had alle, with his beames clear, thrice
The snowes molt, and Zephyrus as oft melted
Y-brought again the tender leaves green,
Since that the son of Hecuba the queen Troilus
Began to love her first, for whom his sorrow
Was all, that she depart should on the morrow

In the morning, Diomedes was ready to escort Cressida to the Greek host; and Troilus, seeing him mount his horse, could with difficulty resist an impulse to slay him — but restrained himself, lest his lady should be also slain in the tumult. When Cressida was ready to go,

This Troilus, in guise of courtesy,
With hawk on hand, and with a huge rout retinue, crowd
Of knightes, rode, and did her company,
Passing alle the valley far without;
And farther would have ridden, out of doubt,
Full fain, and woe was him to go so soon, gladly
But turn he must, and it was eke to do'n.
And right with that was Antenor y-come
Out of the Greekes' host, and ev'ry wight
Was of it glad, and said he was welcome;
And Troilus, all n'ere his hearte light, although his heart
He pained him, with all his fulle might, was not light
Him to withhold from weeping at the least;
And Antenor he kiss'd and made feast.
And therewithal he must his leave take,
And cast his eye upon her piteously,
And near he rode, his cause for to make excuse, occasion
To take her by the hand all soberly;
And, Lord! so she gan weepe tenderly!
And he full soft and slily gan her say,

"Now hold your day, and do me not to dey." do not make me die

With that his courser turned he about,
With face pale, and unto Diomed
No word he spake, nor none of all his rout;
Of which the son of Tydeus tooke heed,
As he that couthe more than the creed knew
In such a craft, and by the rein her hent; took
And Troilus to Troye homeward went.
This Diomed, that led her by the bridle,
When that he saw the folk of Troy away,
Thought, "All my labour shall not be on idle, in vain
If that I may, for somewhat shall I say;
For, at the worst, it may yet short our way;
I have heard say eke, times twice twelve,
He is a fool that will forget himselfe."
But natheless, this thought he well enough,
That "Certainly I am aboute naught,
If that I speak of love, or make it tough; make any violent
For, doubtless, if she have in her thought immediate effort
Him that I guess, he may not be y-brought
So soon away; but I shall find a mean,
That she not wit as yet shall what I mean." shall not yet know

So he began a general conversation, assured her of not less friendship and honour among the Greeks than she had enjoyed in Troy, and requested of her earnestly to treat him as a brother and accept his service — for, at last he said, "I am and shall be ay, while that my life may dure, your own, aboven ev'ry creature.

"Thus said I never e'er now to woman born;
For, God mine heart as wisly gladden so! surely
I loved never woman herebeforn,
As paramours, nor ever shall no mo';
And for the love of God be not my foe,
All can I not to you, my lady dear, although
Complain aright, for I am yet to lear. teach
"And wonder not, mine owen lady bright,
Though that I speak of love to you thus blive; soon
For I have heard ere this of many a wight
That loved thing he ne'er saw in his live;
Eke I am not of power for to strive
Against the god of Love, but him obey
I will alway, and mercy I you pray."

Cressida answered his discourses as though she scarcely heard them; yet she thanked him for his trouble and courtesy, and accepted his offered friendship — promising to trust him, as well she might. Then she alighted from her steed, and, with her heart nigh breaking, was welcomed to the embrace of her father. Meanwhile Troilus, back in Troy, was lamenting with tears the loss of his love, despairing of his or her ability to survive the ten days, and spending the night in wailing, sleepless tossing, and troublous dreams. In the morning he was visited by Pandarus, to whom he gave directions for his funeral; desiring that the powder into which his heart was burned should be kept in a golden urn, and given to Cressida. Pandarus renewed his old counsels and consolations, reminded his friend that ten days were a short time to wait, argued against his faith in evil dreams, and urged him to take advantage of the truce, and beguile the time by a visit to King Sarpedon (a Lycian Prince who had come to aid the Trojans). Sarpedon entertained them splendidly; but no feasting, no pomp, no music of instruments, no singing of fair ladies, could make up for the absence of Cressida to the desolate Troilus, who was for ever poring upon her old letters, and recalling her loved form. Thus he "drove to an end" the fourth day, and would have then returned to Troy, but for the remonstrances of Pandarus, who asked if they had visited Sarpedon only to fetch fire? At last, at the end of a week, they returned to Troy; Troilus hoping to find Cressida again in the city, Pandarus entertaining a scepticism which he concealed from his friend. The morning after their return, Troilus was impatient till he had gone to the palace of Cressida; but when he found her doors all closed, "well nigh for sorrow adown he gan to fall."

Therewith, when he was ware, and gan behold
How shut was ev'ry window of the place,
As frost him thought his hearte gan to cold; began to grow cold
For which, with changed deadly pale face,
Withoute word, he forth began to pace;
And, as God would, he gan so faste ride,
That no wight of his countenance espied.
Then said he thus: "O palace desolate!
O house of houses, whilom beste hight! formerly called best
O palace empty and disconsolate!
O thou lantern, of which quench'd is the light!
O palace, whilom day, that now art night!
Well oughtest thou to fall, and I to die,
Since she is gone that wont was us to guy! guide, rule
"O palace, whilom crown of houses all,
Illumined with sun of alle bliss!
O ring, from which the ruby is out fall!
O cause of woe, that cause hast been of bliss!

Yet, since I may no bet, fain would I kiss
Thy colde doores, durst I for this rout;
And farewell shrine, of which the saint is out!"

.....

From thence forth he rideth up and down,
And ev'ry thing came him to remembrance,
As he rode by the places of the town,
In which he whilom had all his pleasance;
"Lo! yonder saw I mine own lady dance;
And in that temple, with her eyen clear,
Me caughte first my righte lady dear.
"And yonder have I heard full lustily
My deare hearte laugh; and yonder play:
Saw I her ones eke full blissfully;
And yonder ones to me gan she say,
'Now, goode sweete! love me well, I pray;'
And yond so gladly gan she me behold,
That to the death my heart is to her hold. holden, bound
"And at that corner, in the yonder house,
Heard I mine allerlevest lady dear, dearest of all
So womanly, with voice melodious,
Singe so well, so goodly and so clear,
That in my soule yet me thinks I hear
The blissful sound; and in that yonder place
My lady first me took unto her grace."

Then he went to the gates, and gazed along the way by which he had attended Cressida at her departure; then he fancied that all the passers-by pitied him; and thus he drove forth a day or two more, singing a song, of few words, which he had made to lighten his heart:

"O star, of which I lost have all the light,
With hearte sore well ought I to bewail,
That ever dark in torment, night by night,
Toward my death, with wind I steer and sail;
For which, the tenthe night, if that I fail miss; be left without
The guiding of thy beames bright an hour,
My ship and me Charybdis will devour."

By night he prayed the moon to run fast about her sphere; by day he reproached the tardy sun — dreading that Phaethon had come to life again, and was driving the chariot of Apollo out of its straight course. Meanwhile Cressida, among the Greeks, was

bewailing the refusal of her father to let her return, the certainty that her lover would think her false, and the hopelessness of any attempt to steal away by night. Her bright face waxed pale, her limbs lean, as she stood all day looking toward Troy; thinking on her love and all her past delights, regretting that she had not followed the counsel of Troilus to steal away with him, and finally vowing that she would at all hazards return to the city. But she was fated, ere two months, to be full far from any such intention; for Diomedes now brought all his skill into play, to entice Cressida into his net. On the tenth day, Diomedes, "as fresh as branch in May," came to the tent of Cressida, feigning business with Calchas.

Cressida, at short words for to tell,
Welcomed him, and down by her him set,
And he was eath enough to make dwell; easily persuaded to stay
And after this, without long let, delay
The spices and the wine men forth him fet, fetched
And forth they speak of this and that y-fere, together
As friendes do, of which some shall ye hear.
He gan first fallen of the war in speech
Between them and the folk of Troye town,
And of the siege he gan eke her beseech
To tell him what was her opinioun;
From that demand he so descended down
To aske her, if that her strange thought
The Greekes' guise, and workes that they wrought. fashion
And why her father tarried so long delayed
To wedde her unto some worthy wight.
Cressida, that was in her paines strong
For love of Troilus, her owen knight,
So farforth as she cunning had or might, ability
Answer'd him then; but, as for his intent, purpose
It seemed not she wiste what he meant. knew
But natheless this ilke Diomedes same
Gan in himself assure, and thus he said; grow confident
"If I aright have taken on you heed, observed you
Me thinketh thus, O lady mine Cressida,
That since I first hand on your bridle laid,
When ye out came of Troye by the morrow,
Ne might I never see you but in sorrow.
"I cannot say what may the cause be,
But if for love of some Trojan it were;
The which right sore would a-thinke me which it would much

That ye for any wight that dwelleth there pain me to think
Should ever spill a quarter of a tear, shed
Or piteously yourselfe so beguile; deceive
For dreadeless it is not worth the while. undoubtedly
"The folk of Troy, as who saith, all and some
In prison be, as ye yourselfe see;
From thence shall not one alive come
For all the gold betwixte sun and sea;
Truste this well, and understande me;
There shall not one to mercy go alive,
All were he lord of worldes twice five. although

.....

"What will ye more, lovesome lady dear?
Let Troy and Trojan from your hearte pace;
Drive out that bitter hope, and make good cheer,
And call again the beauty of your face,
That ye with salte teares so deface;
For Troy is brought into such jeopardy,
That it to save is now no remedy.
"And thinke well, ye shall in Greekes find
A love more perfect, ere that it be night,
Than any Trojan is, and more kind,
And better you to serve will do his might;
And, if ye vouchesafe, my lady bright,
I will be he, to serve you, myselve, —
Yea, lever than be a lord of Greekes twelve!" rather
And with that word he gan to waxe red,
And in his speech a little while he quoke, quaked; trembled
And cast aside a little with his head,
And stint a while; and afterward he woke,
And soberly on her he threw his look,
And said, "I am, albeit to you no joy,
As gentle man as any wight in Troy. high-born
"But, hearte mine! since that I am your man, leigeman, subject
And you be the first of whom I seeke grace, (in love)
To serve you as heartily as I can,
And ever shall, while I to live have space,
So, ere that I depart out of this place,
Ye will me grante that I may, to-morrow,
At better leisure, telle you my sorrow."

Why should I tell his wordes that he said?
He spake enough for one day at the mest; most
It proveth well he spake so, that Cresseide
Granted upon the morrow, at his request,
Farther to speake with him, at the least,
So that he would not speak of such mattere;
And thus she said to him, as ye may hear:
As she that had her heart on Troilus
So faste set, that none might it arace; uproot
And strangely she spake, and saide thus; distantly, unfriendlily
"O Diomedes! I love that ilke place
Where I was born; and Jovis, for his grace,
Deliver it soon of all that doth it care! afflict
God, for thy might, so leave it well to fare!" grant it

She knows that the Greeks would fain wreak their wrath on Troy, if they might; but that shall never befall: she knows that there are Greeks of high condition — though as worthy men would be found in Troy: and she knows that Diomedes could serve his lady well.

"But, as to speak of love, y-wis," she said,
"I had a lord, to whom I wedded was,
He whose mine heart was all, until he died;
And other love, as help me now Pallas,
There in my heart nor is, nor ever was;
And that ye be of noble and high kindred,
I have well heard it tellen, out of dread. doubt
"And that doth me to have so great a wonder causeth
That ye will scorn any woman so;
Eke, God wot, love and I be far asunder;
I am disposed bet, so may I go, fare or prosper
Unto my death to plain and make woe;
What I shall after do I cannot say,
But truly as yet me list not play. I am not disposed
for sport
"Mine heart is now in tribulation;
And ye in armes busy be by day;
Hereafter, when ye wonnen have the town,
Paraunter then, so as it happen may, peradventure
That when I see that I never ere sey, saw before
Then will I work that I never ere wrought;
This word to you enough sufficen ought.
"To-morrow eke will I speak with you fain, willingly

So that ye touche naught of this mattere;
And when you list, ye may come here again,
And ere ye go, thus much I say you here:
As help me Pallas, with her haire clear,
If that I should of any Greek have ruth,
It shoulde be yourselfe, by my truth!
"I say not therefore that I will you love;
Nor say not nay; but, in conclusioun, nor say I that
I meane well, by God that sits above!" I will not
And therewithal she cast her eyen down,
And gan to sigh, and said; "O Troye town!
Yet bid I God, in quiet and in rest pray
I may you see, or do my hearte brest!" cause my heart to break
But in effect, and shortly for to say,
This Diomedes all freshly new again
Gan pressen on, and fast her mercy pray;
And after this, the soothe for to sayn,
Her glove he took, of which he was full fain,
And finally, when it was waxen eve,
And all was well, he rose and took his leave.
Cressida retired to rest:

Returning in her soul ay up and down
The wordes of this sudden Diomedes,
His great estate, the peril of the town, rank
And that she was alone, and hadde need
Of friendes' help; and thus began to dread
The causes why, the soothe for to tell,
That she took fully the purpose for to dwell. remain (with the
Greeks)

The morrow came, and, ghostly for to speak, plainly
This Diomedes is come unto Cresseide;
And shortly, lest that ye my tale break,
So well he for himselfe spake and said,
That all her sighes sore adown he laid;
And finally, the soothe for to sayn,
He refte her the great of all her pain. took away the greater
part of
And after this, the story telleth us
That she him gave the faire baye steed
The which she ones won of Troilus;

And eke a brooch (and that was little need)
That Troilus' was, she gave this Diomede;
And eke, the bet from sorrow him to relieve,
She made him wear a pensel of her sleeve. pendant
I find eke in the story elleswhere,
When through the body hurt was Diomede
By Troilus, she wept many a tear,
When that she saw his wide woundes bleed,
And that she took to keepe him good heed, tend, care for
And, for to heal him of his sorrow's smart,
Men say, I n'ot, that she gave him her heart. know not

And yet, when pity had thus completed the triumph of inconstancy, she made bitter moan over her falseness to one of the noblest and worthiest men that ever was; but it was now too late to repent, and at all events she resolved that she would be true to Diomede — all the while weeping for pity of the absent Troilus, to whom she wished every happiness. The tenth day, meantime, had barely dawned, when Troilus, accompanied by Pandarus, took his stand on the walls, to watch for the return of Cressida. Till noon they stood, thinking that every corner from afar was she; then Troilus said that doubtless her old father bore the parting ill, and had detained her till after dinner; so they went to dine, and returned to their vain observation on the walls. Troilus invented all kinds of explanations for his mistress's delay; now, her father would not let her go till eve; now, she would ride quietly into the town after nightfall, not to be observed; now, he must have mistaken the day. For five or six days he watched, still in vain, and with decreasing hope. Gradually his strength decayed, until he could walk only with a staff; answering the wondering inquiries of his friends, by saying that he had a grievous malady about his heart. One day he dreamed that in a forest he saw Cressida in the embrace of a boar; and he had no longer doubt of her falsehood. Pandarus, however, explained away the dream to mean merely that Cressida was detained by her father, who might be at the point of death; and he counselled the disconsolate lover to write a letter, by which he might perhaps get at the truth. Troilus complied, entreating from his mistress, at the least, a "letter of hope;" and the lady answered, that she could not come now, but would so soon as she might; at the same time "making him great feast," and swearing that she loved him best — "of which he found but bottomless behest which he found but groundless promises." Day by day increased the woe of Troilus; he laid himself in bed, neither eating, nor drinking, nor sleeping, nor speaking, almost distracted by the thought of Cressida's unkindness. He related his dream to his sister Cassandra, who told him that the boar betokened Diomede, and that, wheresoever his lady was, Diornede certainly had her heart, and she was his: "weep if thou wilt, or leave, for, out of doubt, this Diomede is in, and thou art out." Troilus, enraged, refused to believe Cassandra's interpretation; as well, he cried, might such a story be credited of Alcestis, who devoted her life for her husband; and in his wrath he started from bed, "as

though all whole had him y-made a leach physician," resolving to find out the truth at all hazards. The death of Hector meanwhile enhanced the sorrow which he endured; but he found time to write often to Cressida, beseeching her to come again and hold her truth; till one day his false mistress, out of pity, wrote him again, in these terms:

"Cupide's son, ensample of goodlihead, beauty, excellence
O sword of knighthood, source of gentleness!
How might a wight in torment and in dread,
And healeless, you send as yet gladness? devoid of health
I hearteless, I sick, I in distress?
Since ye with me, nor I with you, may deal,
You neither send I may nor heart nor heal.

"Your letters full, the paper all y-plainted, covered with
Commoved have mine heart's pitt; complainings
I have eke seen with teares all depainted
Your letter, and how ye require me
To come again; the which yet may not be;
But why, lest that this letter founden were,
No mention I make now for fear.

"Grievous to me, God wot, is your unrest,
Your haste, and that the goddes' ordinance impatience
It seemeth not ye take as for the best;
Nor other thing is in your remembrance,
As thinketh me, but only your pleasance;
But be not wroth, and that I you beseech,
For that I tarry is all for wicked speech. to avoid malicious
gossip

"For I have heard well more than I wend weened, thought
Touching us two, how thinges have stood,
Which I shall with dissimuling amend;
And, be not wroth, I have eke understood
How ye ne do but holde me on hand;
But now no force, I cannot in you guess no matter
But alle truth and alle gentleness.

"Comen I will, but yet in such disjoint jeopardy, critical
I stande now, that what year or what day position
That this shall be, that can I not appoint;
But in effect I pray you, as I may,
For your good word and for your friendship ay;
For truely, while that my life may dure,
As for a friend, ye may in me assure. depend on me

"Yet pray I you, on evil ye not take do not take it ill
That it is short, which that I to you write;
I dare not, where I am, well letters make;
Nor never yet ne could I well endite;
Eke great effect men write in place lite; men write great matter
Th' intent is all, and not the letter's space; in little space
And fare now well, God have you in his grace!
"La Vostre C."

Though he found this letter "all strange," and thought it like "a kalendes of change," Troilus could not believe his lady so cruel as to forsake him; but he was put out of all doubt, one day that, as he stood in suspicion and melancholy, he saw a "coat- armour" borne along the street, in token of victory, before Deiphobus his brother. Deiphobus had won it from Diomedes in battle that day; and Troilus, examining it out of curiosity, found within the collar a brooch which he had given to Cressida on the morning she left Troy, and which she had pledged her faith to keep for ever in remembrance of his sorrow and of him. At this fatal discovery of his lady's untruth,

Great was the sorrow and plaint of Troilus;
But forth her course Fortune ay gan to hold;
Cressida lov'd the son of Tydeus,
And Troilus must weep in cares cold.
Such is the world, whoso it can behold!
In each estate is little heart's rest;
God lend us each to take it for the best! grant

In many a cruel battle Troilus wrought havoc among the Greeks, and often he exchanged blows and bitter words with Diomedes, whom he always specially sought; but it was not their lot that either should fall by the other's hand. The poet's purpose, however, he tells us, is to relate, not the warlike deeds of Troilus, which Dares has fully told, but his love-fortunes:

Beseeching ev'ry lady bright of hue,
And ev'ry gentle woman, what she be, whatsoever she be
Albeit that Cressida was untrue,
That for that guilt ye be not wroth with me;
Ye may her guilt in other bookes see;
And gladder I would writen, if you lest,
Of Penelope's truth, and good Alceste.
Nor say I not this only all for men,
But most for women that betrayed be
Through false folk (God give them sorrow, Amen!)
That with their greates wit and subtilty

Betraye you; and this commoveth me
To speak; and in effect you all I pray,
Beware of men, and hearken what I say.
Go, little book, go, little tragedy!
There God my maker, yet ere that I die,
So send me might to make some comedy!
But, little book, no making thou envy, be envious of no poetry
But subject be unto all poesy;
And kiss the steps, where as thou seest space,
Of Virgil, Ovid, Homer, Lucan, Stace.
And, for there is so great diversity
In English, and in writing of our tongue,
So pray I God, that none miswrite thee,
Nor thee mismetre for default of tongue!
And read whereso thou be, or elles sung,
That thou be understanden, God I 'seech! beseech
But yet to purpose of my rather speech. earlier subject
The wrath, as I began you for to say,
Of Troilus the Greekes boughte dear;
For thousandes his handes made dey, made to die
As he that was withouten any peer,
Save in his time Hector, as I can hear;
But, well-away! save only Godde's will,
Dispiteously him slew the fierce Achill'.
And when that he was slain in this mannere,
His lighte ghost full blissfully is went spirit
Up to the hollowness of the seventh sphere
In converse leaving ev'ry element;
And there he saw, with full advisement, observation, understanding
Th' erratic starres heark'ning harmony,
With soundes full of heav'nly melody.
And down from thennes fast he gan advise consider, look on
This little spot of earth, that with the sea
Embraced is; and fully gan despise
This wretched world, and held all vanity,
To respect of the plein felicity in comparison with
That is in heav'n above; and, at the last, the full felicity
Where he was slain his looking down he cast.
And in himself he laugh'd right at the woe
Of them that wepte for his death so fast;
And damned all our works, that follow so condemned

The blinde lust, the which that may not last,
 And shoulde all our heart on heaven cast; while we should
 And forth he wente, shortly for to tell,
 Where as Mercury sorted him to dwell. allotted
 Such fine hath, lo! this Troilus for love! end
 Such fine hath all his greate worthiness! exalted royal rank
 Such fine hath his estate royal above!
 Such fine his lust, such fine hath his nobless! pleasure
 Such fine hath false worlde's brittleness! fickleness, instability
 And thus began his loving of Cresside,
 As I have told; and in this wise he died.
 O young and freshe folke, he or she, of either sex
 In which that love upgroweth with your age,
 Repaire home from worldly vanity,
 And of your heart upcaste the visage "lift up the countenance
 To thilke God, that after his image of your heart."
 You made, and think that all is but a fair,
 This world that passeth soon, as flowers fair!
 And love Him, the which that, right for love,
 Upon a cross, our soules for to bey, buy, redeem
 First starf, and rose, and sits in heav'n above; died
 For he will false no wight, dare I say, deceive, fail
 That will his heart all wholly on him lay;
 And since he best to love is, and most meek,
 What needeth feigned loves for to seek?
 Lo! here of paynims cursed olde rites! pagans
 Lo! here what all their goddes may avail!
 Lo! here this wretched worlde's appetites! end and reward
 Lo! here the fine and guerdon for travail, of labour
 Of Jove, Apollo, Mars, and such rascaille rabble
 Lo! here the form of olde clerkes' speech,
 In poetry, if ye their bookes seech! seek, search
 L'Envoy of Chaucer.

O moral Gower! this book I direct.
 To thee, and to the philosophical Strode,
 To vouchesafe, where need is, to correct,
 Of your benignities and zeales good.
 And to that soothfast Christ that starf on rood died on the cross
 With all my heart, of mercy ever I pray,
 And to the Lord right thus I speak and say:

"Thou One, and Two, and Three, etern on live, eternally living
That reignest ay in Three, and Two, and One,
Uncircumscrib'd, and all may'st circumscribe, comprehend
From visible and invisible fone foes
Defend us in thy mercy ev'ry one;
So make us, Jesus, for thy mercy dign, worthy of thy mercy
For love of Maid and Mother thine benign!"
Explicit Liber Troili et Cresseidis.

CHAUCER'S DREAM.

This pretty allegory, or rather conceit, containing one or two passages that for vividness and for delicacy yield to nothing in the whole range of Chaucer's poetry, had never been printed before the year , when it was included in the edition of Speght. Before that date, indeed, a Dream of Chaucer had been printed; but the poem so described was in reality "The Book of the Duchess; or the Death of Blanche, Duchess of Lancaster" — which is not included in the present edition. Speght says that "This Dream, devised by Chaucer, seemeth to be a covert report of the marriage of John of Gaunt, the King's son, with Blanche, the daughter of Henry, Duke of Lancaster; who after long love (during the time whereof the poet feigneth them to be dead) were in the end, by consent of friends, happily married; figured by a bird bringing in his bill an herb, which restored them to life again. Here also is showed Chaucer's match with a certain gentlewoman, who, although she was a stranger, was, notwithstanding, so well liked and loved of the Lady Blanche and her Lord, as Chaucer himself also was, that gladly they concluded a marriage between them." John of Gaunt, at the age of nineteen, and while yet Earl of Richmond, was married to the Lady Blanche at Reading in May ; Chaucer, then a prisoner in France, probably did not return to England till peace was concluded in the following year; so that his marriage to Philippa Roet, the sister of the Duchess Blanche's favourite attendant Katharine Roet, could not have taken place till some time after that of the Duke. In the poem, it is represented to have immediately followed; but no consequence need be attached to that statement. Enough that it followed at no great interval of time; and that the intimate relations which Chaucer had already begun to form with John of Gaunt, might well warrant him in writing this poem on the occasion of the Duke's marriage, and in weaving his own love-fortunes with those of the principal figures. In the necessary abridgement of the poem for the present edition, the subsidiary branch of the allegory, relating to the poet's own love affair, has been so far as possible separated from the main branch, which shadows forth the fortunes of John and Blanche. The poem, in full, contains, with an "Envoy" arbitrarily appended, lines; of which are given here. (Transcriber's note: modern scholars believe that Chaucer was not the author of this poem)

WHEN Flora, the queen of pleasance,
Had wholly achiev'd the obeisance won the obedience
Of the fresh and the new season,
Thorough ev'ry region;
And with her mantle whole covert wholly covered
What winter had made discover, — stripped
On a May night, the poet lay alone, thinking of his lady, and all her beauty; and, falling
asleep, he dreamed that he was in an island

Where wall, and gate, was all of glass,
And so was closed round about,
That leaveless none came in nor out; without permission
Uncouth and strange to behold;
For ev'ry gate, of fine gold,
A thousand fanes, ay turning, vanes, weathercocks
Entuned had, and birds singing contrived so as to emit
Diversely, on each fane a pair, a musical sound
With open mouth, against the air;
And of a suit were all the tow'rs, of the same plan
Subtilly carven aft flow'rs carved to represent
Of uncouth colours, during ay, lasting forever
That never be none seen in May,
With many a small turret high;
But man alive I could not sigh, see
Nor creatures, save ladies play, disporting themselves
Which were such of their array,
That, as me thought, of goodlihead for comeliness
They passed all, and womanhead.
For to behold them dance and sing,
It seemed like none earthly thing;

And all were of the same age, save one; who was advanced in years, though no less gay in demeanour than the rest. While he stood admiring the richness and beauty of the place, and the fairness of the ladies, which had the notable gift of enduring unimpaired till death, the poet was accosted by the old lady, to whom he had to yield himself prisoner; because the ordinance of the isle was, that no man should dwell there; and the ladies' fear of breaking the law was enhanced by the temporary absence of their queen from the realm. Just at this moment the cry was raised that the queen came; all the ladies hastened to meet her; and soon the poet saw her approach — but in her company his mistress, wearing the same garb, and a seemly knight. All the ladies wondered greatly at this; and the queen explained:

"My sisters, how it hath befall, befallen
I trow ye know it one and all,
That of long time here have I been
Within this isle bidding as queen,
Living at ease, that never wight
More perfect joye have not might;
And to you been of governance
Such as you found in whole pleasance,
In every thing as ye know,

After our custom and our law;
Which how they firste founded were,
I trow ye wot all the mannere.
And who the queen is of this isle, —
As I have been this longe while, —
Each seven years must, of usage,
Visit the heav'nly hermitage,
Which on a rock so highe stands,
In a strange sea, out from all lands,
That for to make the pilgrimage
Is call'd a perilous voyage;
For if the wind be not good friend,
The journey dureth to the end
Of him which that it undertakes;
Of twenty thousand not one scapes.
Upon which rock groweth a tree,
That certain years bears apples three;
Which three apples whoso may have,
Is from all displeasance y-save safe from all pain
That in the seven years may fall;
This wot you well, both one and all.
For the first apple and the hext, highest
Which groweth unto you the next,
Hath three virtues notable,
And keepeth youth ay durable,
Beauty, and looks, ever-in-one, continually
And is the best of ev'ry one.
The second apple, red and green,
Only with lookes of your eyne,
You nourishes in great pleasance,
Better than partridge or fesaunce, pheasant
And feedeth ev'ry living wight
Pleasantly, only with the sight.
And the third apple of the three,
Which groweth lowest on the tree,
Whoso it beareth may not fail miss, fail to obtain
That to his pleasance may avail. that which
So your pleasure and beauty rich,
Your during youth ever y-lich, alike
Your truth, your cunning, and your weal, knowledge
Hath flower'd ay, and your good heal,

Without sickness or displeasance,
Or thing that to you was noyance. offence, injury
So that you have as goddesses
Lived above all princesses.
Now is befall'n, as ye may see;
To gather these said apples three,
I have not fail'd, against the day,
Thitherward to take the way,
Weening to speed as I had oft. expecting to succeed
But when I came, I found aloft
My sister, which that hero stands,
Having those apples in her hands,
Advising them, and nothing said, regarding, gazing on
But look'd as she were well apaid: satisfied
And as I stood her to behold,
Thinking how my joys were cold,
Since I these apples have not might, might not have
Even with that so came this knight,
And in his arms, of me unware,
Me took, and to his ship me bare,
And said, though him I ne'er had seen,
Yet had I long his lady been;
Wherefore I shoulde with him wend,
And he would, to his life's end,
My servant be; and gan to sing,
As one that had won a rich thing.
Then were my spirits from me gone,
So suddenly every one,
That in me appear'd but death,
For I felt neither life nor breath,
Nor good nor harme none I knew,
The sudden pain me was so new,
That had not the hasty grace be had it not been for the
Of this lady, that from the tree prompt kindness
Of her gentleness so bled, hastened
Me to comforten, I had died;
And of her three apples she one
Into mine hand there put anon,
Which brought again my mind and breath,
And me recover'd from the death.
Wherefore to her so am I hold, beholden, obliged

That for her all things do I wo'ld,
For she was leach of all my smart, physician
And from great pain so quit my heart. delivered
And as God wot, right as ye hear,
Me to comfort with friendly cheer,
She did her prowess and her might.
And truly eke so did this knight,
In that he could; and often said,
That of my woe he was ill paid, distressed, ill-pleased
And curs'd the ship that him there brought,
The mast, the master that it wrought.
And, as each thing must have an end,
My sister here, our bother friend,
Gan with her words so womanly
This knight entreat, and cunningly,
For mine honour and hers also,
And said that with her we should go
Both in her ship, where she was brought,
Which was so wonderfully wrought,
So clean, so rich, and so array'd,
That we were both content and paid; satisfied
And me to comfort and to please,
And my heart for to put at ease,
She took great pain in little while,
And thus hath brought us to this isle
As ye may see; wherefore each one
I pray you thank her one and one,
As heartily as ye can devise,
Or imagine in any wise."
At once there then men mighte see'n,
A world of ladies fall on kneen
Before my lady, —

Thanking her, and placing themselves at her commandment. Then the queen sent the aged lady to the knight, to learn of him why he had done her all this woe; and when the messenger had discharged her mission, telling the knight that in the general opinion he had done amiss, he fell down suddenly as if dead for sorrow and repentance. Only with great difficulty, by the queen herself, was he restored to consciousness and comfort; but though she spoke kind and hope-inspiring words, her heart was not in her speech,

For her intent was, to his barge
Him for to bring against the eve,

With certain ladies, and take leave,
 And pray him, of his gentleness,
 To suffer her thenceforth in peace, let her dwell
 As other princes had before;
 And from thenceforth, for evermore,
 She would him worship in all wise
 That gentleness might devise;
 And pain her wholly to fulfil, make her utmost efforts
 In honour, his pleasure and will.
 And during thus this knight's woe, —
 Present the queen and other mo', (there being) present
 My lady and many another wight, —
 Ten thousand shippes at a sight
 I saw come o'er the wavy flood,
 With sail and oar; that, as I stood
 Them to behold, I gan marvail
 From whom might come so many a sail;
 For, since the time that I was born,
 Such a navy therebeforn
 Had I not seen, nor so array'd,
 That for the sight my hearte play'd
 Ay to and fro within my breast;
 For joy long was ere it would rest.
 For there were sailes full of flow'rs; embroidered with flowers
 After, castles with huge tow'rs,
 Seeming full of armes bright,
 That wond'rous lusty was the sight; pleasant
 With large tops, and mastes long,
 Richly depaint' and rear'd among, raised among them
 At certain times gan repair
 Smalle birdes down from the air,
 And on the shippes' bounds about bulwarks
 Sat and sang, with voice full out,
 Ballads and lays right joyously,
 As they could in their harmony.

The ladies were alarmed and sorrow-stricken at sight of the ships, thinking that the knight's companions were on board; and they went towards the walls of the isle, to shut the gates. But it was Cupid who came; and he had already landed, and marched straight to the place where the knight lay. Then he chid the queen for her unkindness to his servant; shot an arrow into her heart; and passed through the crowd, until he found the poet's lady, whom he saluted and complimented, urging her to have pity on him that

loved her. While the poet, standing apart, was revolving all this in his mind, and resolving truly to serve his lady, he saw the queen advance to Cupid, with a petition in which she besought forgiveness of past offences, and promised continual and zealous service till her death. Cupid smiled, and said that he would be king within that island, his new conquest; then, after long conference with the queen, he called a council for the morrow, of all who chose to wear his colours. In the morning, such was the press of ladies, that scarcely could standing-room be found in all the plain. Cupid presided; and one of his counsellors addressed the mighty crowd, promising that ere his departure his lord should bring to an agreement all the parties there present. Then Cupid gave to the knight and the dreamer each his lady; promised his favour to all the others in that place who would truly and busily serve in love; and at evening took his departure. Next morning, having declined the proffered sovereignty of the island, the poet's mistress also embarked, leaving him behind; but he dashed through the waves, was drawn on board her ship from peril of death, and graciously received into his lady's lasting favour. Here the poet awakes, finding his cheeks and body all wet with tears; and, removing into another chamber, to rest more in peace, he falls asleep anew, and continues the dream. Again he is within the island, where the knight and all the ladies are assembled on a green, and it is resolved by the assembly, not only that the knight shall be their king, but that every lady there shall be wedded also. It is determined that the knight shall depart that very day, and return, within ten days, with such a host of Benedicts, that none in the isle need lack husbands. The knight

Anon into a little barge
Brought was, late against an eve,
Where of all he took his leave.
Which barge was, as a man thought,
Aft his pleasure to him brought; according to
The queen herself accustom'd ay
In the same barge to play. take her sport
It needed neither mast nor rother rudder
(I have not heard of such another),
Nor master for the governance; steering
It sailed by thought and pleasance,
Withoute labour, east and west;
All was one, calm or tempest.
And I went with, at his request,
And was the first pray'd to the feast. the bridal feast
When he came unto his country,
And passed had the wavy sea,
In a haven deep and large
He left his rich and noble barge,

And to the court, shortly to tell,
He went, where he was wont to dwell, —
And was gladly received as king by the estates of the land; for during his absence his
father, "old, and wise, and hoar," had died, commending to their fidelity his absent son.
The prince related to the estates his journey, and his success in finding the princess in
quest of whom he had gone seven years before; and said that he must have sixty
thousand guests at his marriage feast. The lords gladly guaranteed the number within
the set time; but afterwards they found that fifteen days must be spent in the necessary
preparations. Between shame and sorrow, the prince, thus compelled to break his faith,
took to his bed, and, in wailing and self-reproach,

— Endur'd the days fifteen,
Till that the lords, on an evne, evening
Him came and told they ready were,
And showed in few wordes there,
How and what wise they had purvey'd provided suitably
For his estate, and to him said, to his rank
That twenty thousand knights of name,
And forty thousand without blame,
Alle come of noble ligne line, lineage
Together in a company
Were lodged on a river's side,
Him and his pleasure there t'abide.
The prince then for joy uprose,
And, where they lodged were, he goes,
Withoute more, that same night,
And there his supper made to dight; had prepared
And with them bode till it was day. abode, waited
And forthwith to take his journey,
Leaving the strait, holding the large,
Till he came to his noble barge:
And when the prince, this lusty knight,
With his people in armes bright,
Was come where he thought to pass, cross to the isle
And knew well none abiding was
Behind, but all were there present,
Forthwith anon all his intent
He told them there, and made his cries proclamation
Thorough his hoste that day twice,
Commanding ev'ry living wight
There being present in his sight,

To be the morrow on the rivage, shore
There he begin would his voyage.
The morrow come, the cry was kept proclamation was obeyed
But few were there that night that slept,
But truss'd and purvey'd for the morrow; packed up and provided
For fault of ships was all their sorrow; lack, shortage
For, save the barge, and other two,
Of shippes there I saw no mo'.
Thus in their doubttes as they stood,
Waxing the sea, coming the flood,
Was cried "To ship go ev'ry wight!"
Then was but hie that hie him might, whoever could hasten, did
And to the barge, me thought, each one
They went, without was left not one,
Horse, nor male, truss, nor baggage, trunk, wallet
Salad, spear, gardebrace, nor page, helmet arm-shield
But was lodged and room enough;
At which shipping me thought I lough, laughed
And gan to marvel in my thought,
How ever such a ship was wrought. constructed
For what people that can increase, however the numbers increased
Nor ne'er so thick might be the prease, press, crowd
But alle hadde room at will;
There was not one was lodged ill.
For, as I trow, myself the last
Was one, and lodged by the mast;
And where I look'd I saw such room
As all were lodged in a town.
Forth went the ship, said was the creed;
And on their knees, for their good speed, to pray for success
Down kneeled ev'ry wight a while,
And prayed fast that to the isle
They mighte come in safety,
The prince and all the company.
With worship and withoute blame,
Or disclander of his name, reproach, slander
Of the promise he should return
Within the time he did sojourn
In his lande biding his host; waiting for
This was their prayer least and most:
To keep the day it might not be'n,

That he appointed with the queen.

Wherefore the prince slept neither day nor night, till he and his people landed on the glass-walled isle, "weening to be in heav'n that night." But ere they had gone a little way, they met a lady all in black, with piteous countenance, who reproached the prince for his untruth, and informed him that, unable to bear the reproach to their name, caused by the lightness of their trust in strangers, the queen and all the ladies of the isle had vowed neither to eat, nor drink, nor sleep, nor speak, nor cease weeping till all were dead. The queen had died the first; and half of the other ladies had already "under the earth ta'en lodging new." The woeful recorder of all these woes invites the prince to behold the queen's hearse:

"Come within, come see her hearse
Where ye shall see the piteous sight
That ever yet was shown to knight;
For ye shall see ladies stand,
Each with a greate rod in hand,
Clad in black, with visage white,
Ready each other for to smite,
If any be that will not weep;
Or who makes countenance to sleep.
They be so beat, that all so blue
They be as cloth that dy'd is new."

Scarcely has the lady ceased to speak, when the prince plucks forth a dagger, plunges it into his heart, and, drawing but one breath, expires.

For whiche cause the lusty host,
Which stood in battle on the coast,
At once for sorrow such a cry
Gan rear, thorough the company, throughout
That to the heav'n heard was the soun',
And under th'earth as far adown,
And wilde beastes for the fear
So suddenly affrayed were, afraid
That for the doubt, while they might dure, have a chance of safety
They ran as of their lives unsure,
From the woodes into the plain,
And from valleys the high mountain
They sought, and ran as beastes blind,
That clean forgotten had their kind. nature

The lords of the laggard host ask the woebegone lady what should be done; she answers that nothing can now avail, but that for remembrance they should build in their land,

open to public view, "in some notable old city," a chapel engraved with some memorial of the queen. And straightway, with a sigh, she also "pass'd her breath."

Then said the lordes of the host,
And so concluded least and most,
That they would ay in houses of thack thatch
Their lives lead, and wear but black,
And forsake all their pleasances,
And turn all joy to penances;
And bare the dead prince to the barge,
And named them should have the charge; those who should
And to the hearse where lay the queen
The remnant went, and down on kneen,
Holding their hands on high, gan cry,
"Mercy! mercy!" evereach thry; each one thrice
And curs'd the time that ever sloth
Should have such masterdom of troth.
And to the barge, a longe mile,
They bare her forth; and, in a while,
All the ladies, one and one,
By companies were brought each one.
And pass'd the sea, and took the land,
And in new hearses, on a sand,
Put and brought were all anon,
Unto a city clos'd with stone,
Where it had been used ay
The kinges of the land to lay,
After they reigned in honours;
And writ was which were conquerours;
In an abbey of nunnes black,
Which accustom'd were to wake,
And of usage rise each a-night,
To pray for ev'ry living wight.
And so befell, as is the guise,
Ordain'd and said was the service
Of the prince and eke of the queen,
So devoutly as mighte be'n;
And, after that, about the hearses,
Many orisons and verses,
Withoute note full softly music
Said were, and that full heartily;

That all the night, till it was day,
The people in the church gan pray
Unto the Holy Trinity,
Of those soules to have pity.
And when the nighte past and run
Was, and the newe day begun, —
The young morrow with rayes red,
Which from the sun all o'er gan spread,
Attemper'd cleare was and fair, clement, calm
And made a time of wholesome air, —
Befell a wondrous case and strange chance, event
Among the people, and gan change
Soon the word, and ev'ry woe
Unto a joy, and some to two.
A bird, all feather'd blue and green,
With brighte rays like gold between,
As small thread over ev'ry joint,
All full of colour strange and coint, quaint
Uncouth and wonderful to sight, unfamiliar
Upon the queene's hearse gan light,
And sung full low and softly
Three songes in their harmony,
Unletted of every wight; unhindered by
Till at the last an aged knight,
Which seem'd a man in greate thought,
Like as he set all thing at nought,
With visage and eyes all forwept, steeped in tears
And pale, as a man long unslept,
By the hearses as he stood,
With hasty handling of his hood
Unto a prince that by him past,
Made the bird somewhat aghast. frightened
Wherefore he rose and left his song,
And departed from us among,
And spread his winges for to pass
By the place where he enter'd was.
And in his haste, shortly to tell,
Him hurt, that backward down he fell,
From a window richly paint,
With lives of many a divers saint,
And beat his winges and bled fast,

And of the hurt thus died and past;
And lay there well an hour and more
Till, at the last, of birds a score
Came and assembled at the place
Where the window broken was,
And made such waimentatioun, lamentation
That pity was to hear the soun',
And the warbles of their throats,
And the complaint of their notes,
Which from joy clean was reversed.
And of them one the glass soon pierced,
And in his beak, of colours nine,
An herb he brought, flow'rless, all green,
Full of smalle leaves, and plain, smooth
Swart, and long, with many a vein. black
And where his fellow lay thus dead,
This herb he down laid by his head,
And dressed it full softly, arranged
And hung his head, and stood thereby.
Which herb, in less than half an hour,
Gan over all knit, and after flow'r bud
Full out; and waxed ripe the seed;
And, right as one another feed
Would, in his beak he took the grain,
And in his fellow's beak certain
It put, and thus within the third i.e. third hour after it
Upstood and pruned him the bird, had died
Which dead had been in all our sight;
And both together forth their flight
Took, singing, from us, and their leave;
Was none disturb them would nor grieve.
And, when they parted were and gone,
Th' abbess the seedes soon each one
Gathered had, and in her hand
The herb she took, well avisand considering
The leaf, the seed, the stalk, the flow'r,
And said it had a good savour,
And was no common herb to find,
And well approv'd of uncouth kind, strange nature
And more than other virtuous;
Whoso might it have for to use

In his need, flower, leaf, or grain,
Of his heal might be certain.
She laid it down upon the hearse
Where lay the queen; and gan rehearse
Each one to other what they had seen.
And, taling thus, the seed wax'd green, as they gossiped
And on the dry hearse gan to spring, —
Which me thought was a wondrous thing, —
And, after that, flow'r and new seed;
Of which the people all took heed,
And said it was some great miracle,
Or medicine fine more than treacle;
And were well done there to assay
If it might ease, in any way,
The corpses, which with torchelight
They waked had there all that night.
Soon did the lordes there consent,
And all the people thereto content,
With easy words and little fare; ado, trouble
And made the queene's visage bare,
Which showed was to all about,
Wherefore in swoon fell all the rout, company, crowd
And were so sorry, most and least,
That long of weeping they not ceas'd;
For of their lord the remembrance
Unto them was such displeasance. cause of grief
That for to live they called pain,
So were they very true and plain.
And after this the good abbess
Of the grains gan choose and dress prepare
Three, with her fingers clean and smale, small
And in the queenes mouth, by tale,
One after other, full easily
She put, and eke full cunningly. skilfully
Which showed some such virtue.
That proved was the medicine true.
For with a smiling countenance
The queen uprose, and of usance custom
As she was wont, to ev'ry wight
She made good cheer; for whiche sight showed a gracious
The people, kneeling on the stones, countenance

Thought they in heav'n were, soul and bones;
 And to the prince, where that he lay,
 They went to make the same assay. trial, experiment
 And when the queen it understood,
 And how the medicine was good,
 She pray'd that she might have the grains,
 To relieve him from the pains
 Which she and he had both endur'd.
 And to him went, and so him cur'd,
 That, within a little space,
 Lusty and fresh alive he was,
 And in good heal, and whole of speech,
 And laugh'd, and said, "Gramercy, leach!" "Great thanks,
 For which the joy throughout the town my physician!"
 So great was, that the belles' soun'
 Affray'd the people a journey to the distance of
 About the city ev'ry way; a day's journey
 And came and ask'd the cause, and why
 They rungen were so stately. proudly, solemnly
 And after that the queen, th'abbess,
 Made diligence, ere they would cease,
 Such, that of ladies soon a rout company, crowd
 Suing the queen was all about; following
 And, call'd by name each one and told, numbered
 Was none forgotten, young nor old.
 There mighte men see joyes new,
 When the medicine, fine and true,
 Thus restor'd had ev'ry wight,
 So well the queen as the knight,
 Unto perfect joy and heal,
 That floating they were in such weal swimming in such
 As folk that woulde in no wise happiness
 Desire more perfect paradise.

On the morrow a general assembly was convoked, and it was resolved that the wedding feast should be celebrated within the island. Messengers were sent to strange realms, to invite kings, queens, duchesses, and princesses; and a special embassy was despatched, in the magic barge, to seek the poet's mistress — who was brought back after fourteen days, to the great joy of the queen. Next day took place the wedding of the prince and all the knights to the queen and all the ladies; and a three months' feast followed, on a large plain "under a wood, in a champaign, betwixt a river and a well, where never had abbey nor cell been, nor church, house, nor village, in time of any manne's age." On the day

after the general wedding, all entreated the poet's lady to consent to crown his love with marriage; she yielded; the bridal was splendidly celebrated; and to the sound of marvellous music the poet awoke, to find neither lady nor creature — but only old portraitures on the tapestry, of horsemen, hawks, and hounds, and hurt deer full of wounds. Great was his grief that he had lost all the bliss of his dream; and he concludes by praying his lady so to accept his love-service, that the dream may turn to reality.

Or elles, without more I pray,
That this night, ere it be day,
I may unto my dream return,
And sleeping so forth ay sojourn
Aboute the Isle of Pleasance,
Under my lady's obeisance, subject to my lady
In her service, and in such wise,
As it may please her to devise;
And grace once to be accept',
Like as I dreamed when I slept,
And dure a thousand year and ten
In her good will: Amen, amen!

THE PROLOGUE TO THE LEGEND OF GOOD WOMEN.

SOME difference of opinion exists as to the date at which Chaucer wrote "The Legend of Good Women." Those who would fix that date at a period not long before the poet's death — who would place the poem, indeed, among his closing labours — support their opinion by the fact that the Prologue recites most of Chaucer's principal works, and glances, besides, at a long array of other productions, too many to be fully catalogued. But, on the other hand, it is objected that the "Legend" makes no mention of "The Canterbury Tales" as such; while two of those Tales — the Knight's and the Second Nun's — are enumerated by the titles which they bore as separate compositions, before they were incorporated in the great collection: "The Love of Palamon and Arcite," and "The Life of Saint Cecile" (see note to the Second Nun's tale). Tyrwhitt seems perfectly justified in placing the composition of the poem immediately before that of Chaucer's magnum opus, and after the marriage of Richard II to his first queen, Anne of Bohemia. That event took place in 1381; and since it is to Anne that the poet refers when he makes Alceste bid him give his poem to the queen "at Eltham or at Sheen," the "Legend" could not have been written earlier. The old editions tell us that "several ladies in the Court took offence at Chaucer's large speeches against the untruth of women; therefore the queen enjoined him to compile this book in the commendation of sundry maidens and wives, who show'd themselves faithful to faithless men. This seems to have been written after *The Flower and the Leaf*." Evidently it was, for distinct references to that poem are to be found in the Prologue; but more interesting is the indication which it furnishes, that "*Troilus and Cressida*" was the work, not of the poet's youth, but of his maturer age. We could hardly expect the queen — whether of Love or of England — to demand seriously from Chaucer a retractation of sentiments which he had expressed a full generation before, and for which he had made atonement by the splendid praises of true love sung in "*The Court of Love*," "*The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*," and other poems of youth and middle life. But "*Troilus and Cressida*" is coupled with "*The Romance of the Rose*," as one of the poems which had given offence to the servants and the God of Love; therefore we may suppose it to have more prominently engaged courtly notice at a later period of the poet's life, than even its undoubted popularity could explain. At whatever date, or in whatever circumstances, undertaken, "The Legend of Good Women" is a fragment. There are several signs that it was designed to contain the stories of twenty-five ladies, although the number of the good women is in the poem itself set down at nineteen; but nine legends only were actually composed, or have come down to us. They are, those of Cleopatra Queen of Egypt (10 lines), Thisbe of Babylon (10), Dido Queen of Carthage (10), Hypsipyle and Medea (10), Lucrece of Rome (10), Ariadne of Athens (10), Phiomela (10), Phyllis (10), and Hypermnestra (10). Prefixed to these stories, which are translated or imitated from Ovid, is a Prologue containing 10 lines — the only part of the "Legend" given in the present edition. It is by far the most original, the strongest, and most pleasing part of the poem; the description of spring, and of his enjoyment of that

season, are in Chaucer's best manner; and the political philosophy by which Alcestis mitigates the wrath of Cupid, adds another to the abounding proofs that, for his knowledge of the world, Chaucer fairly merits the epithet of "many-sided" which Shakespeare has won by his knowledge of man.

A THOUSAND times I have hearde tell,
That there is joy in heav'n, and pain in hell;
And I accord it well that it is so; grant, agree
But, natheless, yet wot I well also, know
That there is none dwelling in this country
That either hath in heav'n or hell y-be; been
Nor may of it no other wayes witten know
But as he hath heard said, or found it written;
For by assay there may no man it preve. practical trial
prove, test
But God forbid but that men should believe
Well more thing than men have seen with eye!
Men shall not weenen ev'ry thing a lie
But if himself it seeth, or else do'th; unless
For, God wot, thing is never the less sooth, true
Though ev'ry wighte may it not y-see.
Bernard, the Monke, saw not all, pardie!
Then muste we to bookes that we find
(Through which that olde thinges be in mind),
And to the doctrine of these olde wise,
Give credence, in ev'ry skilful wise, reasonable
That tellen of these old approved stories,
Of holiness, of regnes, of victories, reigns, kingdoms
Of love, of hate, and other sundry things
Of which I may not make rehearsings;
And if that olde bookes were away,
Y-lorn were of all remembrance the key.
Well ought we, then, to honour and believe
These bookes, where we have none other preve. proof
And as for me, though that I know but lite, little
On bookes for to read I me delight,
And to them give I faith and good credence,
And in my heart have them in reverence,
So heartily, that there is game none no amusement
That from my bookes maketh me to go'n,
But it be seldom on the holyday;

Save, certainly, when that the month of May
Is comen, and I hear the fowles sing,
And that the flowers ginnen for to spring,
Farewell my book and my devotion!
Now have I then such a condition,
That, above all the flowers in the mead,
Then love I most these flowers white and red,
Such that men calle Day's-eyes in our town;
To them have I so great affectioun,
As I said erst, when comen is the May,
That in my bed there dawneth me no day
That I n'am up, and walking in the mead, am not
To see this flow'r against the sunne spread,
When it upriseth early by the morrow;
That blissful sight softeneth all my sorrow,
So glad am I, when that I have presence
Of it, to do it alle reverence,
As she that is of alle flowers flow'r,
Fulfilled of all virtue and honour,
And ever alike fair, and fresh of hue;
As well in winter, as in summer new,
This love I ever, and shall until I die;
All swear I not, of this I will not lie, although
There loved no wight hotter in his life.
And when that it is eve, I runne blife, quickly, eagerly
As soon as ever the sun begins to west, decline westward
To see this flow'r, how it will go to rest,
For fear of night, so hateth she darkness!
Her cheer is plainly spread in the brightness countenance
Of the sunne, for there it will uncloze.
Alas! that I had English, rhyme or prose,
Sufficient this flow'r to praise aright!
But help me, ye that have cunning or might; skill or power
Ye lovers, that can make of sentiment,
In this case ought ye to be diligent
To further me somewhat in my labour,
Whether ye be with the Leaf or the Flow'r;
For well I wot, that ye have herebefore
Of making ropen, and led away the corn; reaped
And I come after, gleaning here and there,
And am full glad if I may find an ear

Of any goodly word that you have left.
And though it hap me to rehearsen eft again
What ye have in your freshe songes said,
Forbeare me, and be not evil apaid, displeased
Since that ye see I do it in th'honour
Of love, and eke in service of the flow'r
Whom that I serve as I have wit or might.
She is the clearness, and the very light, true
That in this darke world me winds and leads; turns, guides
The heart within my sorrowful breast you dreads,
And loves so sore, that ye be, verily,
The mistress of my wit, and nothing I.
My word, my works, are knit so in your bond,
That, as a harp obeyeth to the hand,
That makes it sound after his fingering,
Right so may ye out of my hearte bring
Such voice, right as you list, to laugh or plain; complain, mourn
Be ye my guide, and lady sovereign.
As to mine earthly god, to you I call,
Both in this work, and in my sorrows all.
But wherefore that I spake to give credence
To old stories, and do them reverence,
And that men muste more things believe
Than they may see at eye, or elles preve, prove
That shall I say, when that I see my time;
I may not all at ones speak in rhyme.
My busy ghost, that thirsteth always new spirit
To see this flow'r so young, so fresh of hue,
Constrained me with so greedy desire,
That in my heart I feele yet the fire,
That made me to rise ere it were day, —
And this was now the first morrow of May, —
With dreadful heart, and glad devotion,
For to be at the resurrection
Of this flower, when that it should unclose
Against the sun, that rose as red as rose,
That in the breast was of the beast that day the sign of the Bull
That Agenore's daughter led away.
And down on knees anon right I me set,
And as I could this freshe flow'r I gret, greeted
Kneeling alway, till it unclosed was,

Upon the smalle, softe, sweete grass,
That was with flowers sweet embroider'd all,
Of such sweetness and such odour o'er all, everywhere
That, for to speak of gum, or herb, or tree,
Comparison may none y-maked be;
For it surmounteth plainly all odours,
And for rich beauty the most gay of flow'rs.
Forgotten had the earth his poor estate
Of winter, that him naked made and mate, dejected, lifeless
And with his sword of cold so sore grieved;
Now hath th'attemper sun all that releaved temperate furnished
That naked was, and clad it new again. anew with leaves
The smalle fowles, of the season fain, glad
That of the panter and the net be scap'd, draw-net
Upon the fowler, that them made awhap'd terrified, confounded
In winter, and destroyed had their brood,
In his despite them thought it did them good
To sing of him, and in their song despise
The foule churl, that, for his covetise, greed
Had them betrayed with his sophistry deceptions
This was their song: "The fowler we defy,
And all his craft:" and some sunge clear
Layes of love, that joy it was to hear,
In worshipping and praising of their make; honouring mate
And for the blissful newe summer's sake,
Upon the branches full of blossoms soft,
In their delight they turned them full oft,
And sunge, "Blessed be Saint Valentine!
For on his day I chose you to be mine,
Withoute repenting, my hearte sweet."
And therewithal their heals began to meet,
Yielding honour, and humble obeisances,
To love, and did their other observances
That longen unto Love and to Nature;
Construe that as you list, I do no cure. care nothing
And those that hadde done unkindeness, committed offence
As doth the tidife, for newfangledness, against natural laws
Besoughte mercy for their trespassing
And humbly sange their repenting,
And swore upon the blossoms to be true;
So that their mates would upon them rue, take pity

And at the laste made their accord. reconciliation
 All found they Danger for a time a lord, although disdain
 Yet Pity, through her stronge gentle might,
 Forgave, and made mercy pass aright
 Through Innocence, and ruled Courtesy.
 But I ne call not innocence folly
 Nor false pity, for virtue is the mean,
 As Ethic saith, in such manner I mean.
 And thus these fowles, void of all malice,
 Accorded unto Love, and lefte vice
 Of hate, and sangen all of one accord,
 "Welcome, Summer, our governor and lord!"
 And Zephyrus and Flora gentilly
 Gave to the flowers, soft and tenderly,
 Their sweete breath, and made them for to spread,
 As god and goddess of the flow'ry mead;
 In which me thought I mighte, day by day,
 Dwellen alway, the jolly month of May,
 Withoute sleep, withoute meat or drink.
 Adown full softly I began to sink,
 And, leaning on mine elbow and my side
 The longe day I shope to abide, resolved, prepared
 For nothing elles, and I shall not lie
 But for to look upon the daisy;
 That men by reason well it calle may
 The Daye's-eye, or else the Eye of Day,
 The empresse and the flow'r of flowers all
 I pray to God that faire may she fall!
 And all that love flowers, for her sake:
 But, nathesle, ween not that I make do not fancy that I
 In praising of the Flow'r against the Leaf, write this poem
 No more than of the corn against the sheaf;
 For as to me is lever none nor lother,
 I n'am withholden yet with neither n'other.
 Nor I n'ot who serves Leaf, nor who the Flow'r; nor do I know
 Well brooke they their service or labour! may they profit by
 For this thing is all of another tun,
 Of old story, ere such thing was begun.
 When that the sun out of the south gan west,
 And that this flow'r gan close, and go to rest,
 For darkness of the night, the which she dread; dreaded

Home to my house full swiftly I me sped,
To go to rest, and early for to rise,
To see this flower spread, as I devise. describe
And in a little arbour that I have,
That benched was of turfes fresh y-grave, cut out
I bade men shoulde me my couche make;
For dainty of the newe summer's sake, pleasure
I bade them strowe flowers on my bed.
When I was laid, and had mine eyen hid,
I fell asleep; within an hour or two,
Me mette how I lay in the meadow tho, dreamed then
To see this flow'r that I love so and dread.
And from afar came walking in the mead
The God of Love, and in his hand a queen;
And she was clad in royal habit green;
A fret of gold she hadde next her hair, band
And upon that a white corown she bare,
With flowrons small, and, as I shall not lie, florets
For all the world right as a daisy
Y-crowned is, with white leaves lite, small
So were the flowrons of her crowne white.
For of one pearle, fine, oriental,
Her white crowne was y-maked all,
For which the white crown above the green
Made her like a daisy for to see'n, look upon
Consider'd eke her fret of gold above.
Y-clothed was this mighty God of Love
In silk embroider'd, full of greene greves, boughs
In which there was a fret of red rose leaves,
The freshest since the world was first begun.
His gilt hair was y-crowned with a sun,
Instead of gold, for heaviness and weight; to avoid
Therewith me thought his face shone so bright,
That well unnethes might I him behold;
And in his hand me thought I saw him hold
Two fiery dartes, as the gledes red; glowing coals
And angel-like his winges saw I spread.
And all be that men say that blind is he, although
Algate me thoughte that he might well see; at all events
For sternly upon me he gan behold,
So that his looking did my hearte cold. made my heart

And by the hand he held this noble queen, grow cold
Crowned with white, and clothed all in green,
So womanly, so benign, and so meek,
That in this worlde, though that men would seek.
Half of her beauty shoulde they not find
In creature that formed is by Kind; Nature
And therefore may I say, as thinketh me,
This song in praising of this lady free:
"Hide, Absolon, thy gilte tresses clear; golden
Esther, lay thou thy meekness all adown;
Hide, Jonathan, all thy friendly mannere,
Penelope, and Marcia Catoun,
Make of your wifhood no comparisoun;
Hide ye your beauties, Isoude and Helene;
My lady comes, that all this may distain. outdo, obscure
"Thy faire body let it not appear,
Lavine; and thou, Lucrece of Rome town;
And Polyxene, that boughte love so dear,
And Cleopatra, with all thy passioun,
Hide ye your truth of love, and your renown;
And thou, Thisbe, that hadst of love such pain
My lady comes, that all this may distain.
"Hero, Dido, Laodamia, y-fere, together
And Phyllis, hanging for Demophoon,
And Canace, espied by thy cheer,
Hypsipyle, betrayed by Jasoun,
Make of your truthe neither boast nor soun';
Nor Hypermnestr' nor Ariadne, ye twain;
My lady comes, that all this may distain."
This ballad may full well y-sungen be,
As I have said erst, by my lady free;
For, certainly, all these may not suffice
T'appaire with my lady in no wise; surpass in beauty
For, as the sunne will the fire distain, or honour
So passeth all my lady sovereign,
That is so good, so fair, so debonair,
I pray to God that ever fall her fair!
For n'hadde comfort been of her presence, had I not the
I had been dead, without any defence, comfort of
For dread of Love's wordes, and his cheer;
As, when time is, hereafter ye shall hear.

Behind this God of Love, upon the green,
 I saw coming of Ladies nineteen,
 In royal habit, a full easy pace;
 And after them of women such a trace, train
 That, since that God Adam had made of earth,
 The thirde part of mankind, or the ferth, fourth
 Ne ween'd I not by possibility, I never fancied
 Had ever in this wide world y-be; been
 And true of love these women were each one.
 Now whether was that a wonder thing, or non, not
 That, right anon as that they gan espy
 This flow'r, which that I call the daisy,
 Full suddenly they stenten all at once, stopped
 And kneeled down, as it were for the nonce,
 And sange with one voice, "Heal and honour
 To truth of womanhead, and to this flow'r,
 That bears our aller prize in figuring; that in its figure bears
 Her white crowne bears the witnessing!" the prize from us all
 And with that word, a-compass enviroun all around in a ring
 They sette them full softely adown.
 First sat the God of Love, and since his queen, afterwards
 With the white corowne, clad in green;
 And sithen all the remnant by and by, then
 As they were of estate, full courteously;
 And not a word was spoken in the place,
 The mountance of a furlong way of space. extent
 I, kneeling by this flow'r, in good intent
 Abode, to knowe what this people meant,
 As still as any stone, till, at the last,
 The God of Love on me his eyen cast,
 And said, "Who kneeleth there?" and I answer'd
 Unto his asking, when that I it heard,
 And said, "It am I," and came to him near,
 And salued him. Quoth he, "What dost thou here, saluted
 So nigh mine owen flow'r, so boldely?
 It were better worthy, truely,
 A worm to nigh near my flow'r than thou." approach, draw nigh
 "And why, Sir," quoth I, "an' it liketh you?"
 "For thou," quoth he, "art thereto nothing able,
 It is my relic, dign and delectable, emblem worthy
 And thou my foe, and all my folk warrayest, molestest, censurest

And of mine olde servants thou missayest,
And hind'rest them, with thy translation,
And lettest folk from their devotion preventest
To serve me, and holdest it folly
To serve Love; thou may'st it not deny;
For in plain text, withoute need of glose, comment, gloss
Thu hast translated the Romance of the Rose,
That is a heresy against my law,
And maketh wise folk from me withdraw;
And of Cresside thou hast said as thee list,
That maketh men to women less to trust,
That be as true as e'er was any steel.
Of thine answer advise thee right weel; consider right well
For though that thou renied hast my lay, abjured my law
As other wretches have done many a day, or religion
By Sainte Venus, that my mother is,
If that thou live, thou shalt repente this,
So cruelly, that it shall well be seen."
Then spake this Lady, clothed all in green,
And saide, "God, right of your courtesy,
Ye mighte hearken if he can reply
Against all this, that ye have to him meved; advanced against him
A godde shoulde not be thus aggrieved,
But of his deity he shall be stable,
And thereto gracious and merciable. merciful
And if ye n'ere a god, that knoweth all, were not
Then might it be, as I you telle shall,
This man to you may falsely be accused,
Whereas by right him ought to be excused;
For in your court is many a losengeour, deceiver
And many a quaint toteler accusour, strange prating accuser
That tabour in your eares many a soun', drum
Right after their imaginatioun,
To have your dalliance, and for envy; pleasant conversation,
These be the causes, and I shall not lie, company
Envy is lavender of the Court alway, laundress
For she departeth neither night nor day
Out of the house of Caesar, thus saith Dant';
Whoso that go'th, algate she shall not want. at all events
And eke, parauntre, for this man is nice, peradventure foolish
He mighte do it guessing no malice; thinking

For he useth thinges for to make; compose poetry
Him recketh naught of what mattere he take; cares nothing for
Or he was bidden make thilke tway compose those two
Of some person, and durst it not withsay; by refuse, deny
Or him repenteth utterly of this.

He hath not done so grievously amiss,
To translate what olde clerkes write,
As though that he of malice would endite, write down
Despite of Love, and had himself it wrought. contempt for
This should a righteous lord have in his thought,
And not be like tyrants of Lombardy,
That have no regard but at tyranny.
For he that king or lord is naturel,
Him oughte not be tyrant or cruel,
As is a farmer, to do the harm he can;
He muste think, it is his liegeman,
And is his treasure, and his gold in coffer;
This is the sentence of the philosopher: opinion, sentiment
A king to keep his lieges in justice,
Withoute doubtte that is his office.

All will he keep his lords in their degree, — although
As it is right and skilful that they be, reasonable
Enhanced and honoured, and most dear,
For they be halfe in this world here, — demigods
Yet must he do both right to poor and rich,
All be that their estate be not y-lich; alike
And have of poore folk compassion.

For lo! the gentle kind of the lion;
For when a fly offendeth him, or biteth,
He with his tail away the flye smiteth,
All easily; for of his gentry nobleness
Him deigneth not to wreak him on a fly,
As doth a cur, or else another beast.

In noble corage ought to be arrest, in a noble nature ought
And weighen ev'rything by equity, to be self-restraint
And ever have regard to his degree.

For, Sir, it is no mastery for a lord
To damn a man, without answer of word; condemn
And for a lord, that is full foul to use. most infamous practice
And it be so he may him not excuse, the offender
But asketh mercy with a dreadful heart, fearing, timid

And proffereth him, right in his bare shirt,
To be right at your owen judgement,
Then ought a god, by short advisement, deliberation
Consider his own honour, and his trespass;
For since no pow'r of death lies in this case,
You ought to be the lighter merciabile;
Lette your ire, and be somewhat tractable! restrain
This man hath served you of his cunning, ability, skill
And further'd well your law in his making. composing poetry
Albeit that he cannot well endite,
Yet hath he made lewed folk delight ignorant
To serve you, in praising of your name.
He made the book that hight the House of Fame,
And eke the Death of Blanche the Duchess,
And the Parliament of Fowles, as I guess,
And all the Love of Palamon and Arcite,
Of Thebes, though the story is known lite; little
And many a hymne for your holydays,
That highte ballads, roundels, virelays.
And, for to speak of other holiness,
He hath in prose translated Boece,
And made the Life also of Saint Cecile;
He made also, gone is a greate while,
Origenes upon the Magdalene.
Him oughte now to have the lesse pain; penalty
He hath made many a lay, and many a thing.
Now as ye be a god, and eke a king,
I your Alcestis, whilom queen of Thrace,
I aske you this man, right of your grace,
That ye him never hurt in all his life;
And he shall sweare to you, and that blife, quickly
He shall no more aguilten in this wise, offend
But shall maken, as ye will him devise,
Of women true in loving all their life,
Whereso ye will, of maiden or of wife,
And further you as much as he missaid
Or in the Rose, or elles in Cresseide." either
The God of Love answered her anon:
"Madame," quoth he, "it is so long agone
That I you knew, so charitable and true,
That never yet, since that the world was new,

To me ne found I better none than ye;
If that I woulde save my degree,
I may nor will not warne your request; refuse
All lies in you, do with him as you lest.
I all forgive withoute longer space; delay
For he who gives a gift, or doth a grace,
Do it betimes, his thank is well the more;
And deeme ye what he shall do therefor. adjudge
Go thanke now my Lady here," quoth he.
I rose, and down I set me on my knee,
And saide thus; "Madame, the God above
Foryielde you that ye the God of Love reward
Have made me his wrathe to forgive;
And grace so longe for to live, give me grace
That I may knowe soothly what ye be,
That have me help'd, and put in this degree!
But truely I ween'd, as in this case,
Naught t' have aguilt, nor done to Love trespass; offended
For why? a true man, withoute dread, offence
Hath not to parte with a thieve's deed. any share in
Nor a true lover oughte me to blame,
Though that I spoke a false lover some shame.
They oughte rather with me for to hold,
For that I of Cressida wrote or told,
Or of the Rose, what so mine author meant; made a true translation
Algate, God wot, it was mine intent by all ways
To further truth in love, and it cherice, cherish
And to beware from falseness and from vice,
By such example; this was my meaning."
And she answer'd; "Let be thine arguing,
For Love will not counterpleaded be
In right nor wrong, and learne that of me;
Thou hast thy grace, and hold thee right thereto.
Now will I say what penance thou shalt do
For thy trespass; and understand it here: offence
Thou shalt, while that thou livest, year by year,
The moste partie of thy time spend
In making of a glorious Legend
Of Goode Women, maidenes and wives,
That were true in loving all their lives;
And tell of false men that them betray,

That all their life do naught but assay
How many women they may do a shame;
For in your world that is now held a game. considered a sport
And though thou like not a lover be,
Speak well of love; this penance give I thee.
And to the God of Love I shall so pray,
That he shall charge his servants, by any way,
To further thee, and well thy labour quite: requite
Go now thy way, thy penance is but lite.
And, when this book ye make, give it the queen
On my behalf, at Eltham, or at Sheen."
The God of Love gan smile, and then he said:
"Know'st thou," quoth he, "whether this be wife or maid,
Or queen, or countess, or of what degree,
That hath so little penance given thee,
That hath deserved sorely for to smart?
But pity runneth soon in gentle heart; nobly born
That may'st thou see, she kitheth what she is. showeth
And I answer'd: "Nay, Sir, so have I bliss,
No more but that I see well she is good."
"That is a true tale, by my hood,"
Quoth Love; "and that thou knowest well, pardie!
If it be so that thou advise thee. bethink
Hast thou not in a book, li'th in thy chest, (that) lies
The greate goodness of the queen Alceste,
That turned was into a daisy
She that for her husbände chose to die,
And eke to go to hell rather than he;
And Hercules rescued her, pardie!
And brought her out of hell again to bliss?"
And I answer'd again, and saide; "Yes,
Now know I her; and is this good Alceste,
The daisy, and mine own hearte's rest?
Now feel I well the goodness of this wife,
That both after her death, and in her life,
Her greate bounty doubleth her renown. virtue
Well hath she quit me mine affectioun recompensed
That I have to her flow'r the daisy;
No wonder is though Jove her stellify,
As telleth Agathon, for her goodness;
Her white crowne bears of it witness;

For all so many virtues hadde she
As smalle flowrons in her crowne be.
In remembrance of her, and in honour,
Cybele made the daisy, and the flow'r,
Y-crowned all with white, as men may see,
And Mars gave her a crowne red, pardie!
Instead of rubies set among the white."
Therewith this queen wax'd red for shame a lite
When she was praised so in her presence.
Then saide Love: "A full great negligence
Was it to thee, that ilke time thou made that same
'Hide Absolon thy tresses,' in ballade,
That thou forgot her in thy song to set,
Since that thou art so greatly in her debt,
And knowest well that calendar is she guide, example
To any woman that will lover be:
For she taught all the craft of true loving,
And namely of wifhood the living, especially
And all the boundes that she ought to keep:
Thy little wit was thilke time asleep. that
But now I charge thee, upon thy life,
That in thy Legend thou make of this wife, poetise, compose
When thou hast other small y-made before;
And fare now well, I charge thee no more.
But ere I go, thus much I will thee tell, —
Never shall no true lover come in hell.
These other ladies, sitting here a-row,
Be in my ballad, if thou canst them know,
And in thy bookes all thou shalt them find;
Have them in thy Legend now all in mind;
I mean of them that be in thy knowing.
For here be twenty thousand more sitting
Than that thou knowest, goode women all,
And true of love, for aught that may befall;
Make the metres of them as thee lest;
I must go home, — the sunne draweth west, —
To Paradise, with all this company:
And serve alway the freshe daisy.
At Cleopatra I will that thou begin,
And so forth, and my love so shalt thou win;
For let see now what man, that lover be,

Will do so strong a pain for love as she.
I wot well that thou may'st not all it rhyme,
That suche lovers didden in their time;
It were too long to readen and to hear;
Suffice me thou make in this mannere,
That thou rehearse of all their life the great, substance
After these old authors list for to treat; according as
For whoso shall so many a story tell,
Say shortly, or he shall too longe dwell."
And with that word my bookes gan I take,
And right thus on my Legend gan I make.
Thus endeth the Prologue.

CHAUCER'S A. B. C.
CALLED
LA PRIERE DE NOSTRE DAME

A.

ALMIGHTY and all-merciable Queen, all-merciful
To whom all this world fleeth for succour,
To have release of sin, of sorrow, of teen! affliction
Glorious Virgin! of all flowers flow'r,
To thee I flee, confounded in errour!
Help and relieve, almighty debonair, gracious, gentle
Have mercy of my perilous languour!
Vanquish'd me hath my cruel adversair.

B.

Bounty so fix'd hath in thy heart his tent, goodness, charity
That well I wot thou wilt my succour be;
Thou canst not warne that with good intent refuse he who
Asketh thy help, thy heart is ay so free!
Thou art largess of plein felicity, liberal bestower full
Haven and refuge of quiet and rest!
Lo! how that thieves seven chase me!
Help, Lady bright, ere that my ship to-brest! be broken to pieces

C.

Comfort is none, but in you, Lady dear!
For lo! my sin and my confusion,
Which ought not in thy presence to appear,
Have ta'en on me a grievous action, control
Of very right and desperation!
And, as by right, they mighte well sustene
That I were worthy my damnation,
Ne were it mercy of you, blissful Queen!

D.

Doubt is there none, Queen of misericorde, compassion
That thou art cause of grace and mercy here;
God vouchesaf'd, through thee, with us t'accord; to be reconciled
For, certes, Christe's blissful mother dear!
Were now the bow y-bent, in such mannere
As it was first, of justice and of ire,

The rightful God would of no mercy hear;
But through thee have we grace as we desire.

E.

Ever hath my hope of refuge in thee be';
For herebefore full oft in many a wise
Unto mercy hast thou received me.
But mercy, Lady! at the great assize,
When we shall come before the high Justice!
So little fruit shall then in me be found,
That, thou ere that day correcte me, unless
Of very right my work will me confound.

F.

Flying, I flee for succour to thy tent,
Me for to hide from tempest full of dread;
Beseeching you, that ye you not absent,
Though I be wick'. O help yet at this need!
All have I been a beast in wit and deed, although
Yet, Lady! thou me close in with thy grace;
Thine enemy and mine, — Lady, take heed! — the devil
Unto my death in point is me to chase.

G.

Gracious Maid and Mother! which that never
Wert bitter nor in earthe nor in sea,
But full of sweetness and of mercy ever,
Help, that my Father be not wroth with me!
Speak thou, for I ne dare Him not see;
So have I done in earth, alas the while!
That, certes, but if thou my succour be,
To sink etern He will my ghost exile.

H.

He vouchesaf'd, tell Him, as was His will,
Become a man, as for our alliance, to ally us with god
And with His blood He wrote that blissful bill
Upon the cross, as general acquittance
To ev'ry penitent in full creance; belief
And therefore, Lady bright! thou for us pray;
Then shalt thou stenten alle His grievance, put an end to

And make our foe to failen of his prey.

I.

I wote well thou wilt be our succour,
Thou art so full of bounty in certain;
For, when a soule falleth in errorr,
Thy pity go'th, and haleth him again; draweth
Then makest thou his peace with his Sov'reign,
And bringest him out of the crooked street:
Whoso thee loveth shall not love in vain,
That shall he find as he the life shall lete. when he leaves
life

K.

Kalendares illumined be they brilliant exemplars
That in this world be lighted with thy name;
And whoso goeth with thee the right way,
Him shall not dread in soule to be lame;
Now, Queen of comfort! since thou art the same
To whom I seeke for my medicine,
Let not my foe no more my wound entame; injure, molest
My heal into thy hand all I resign.

L.

Lady, thy sorrow can I not portray
Under that cross, nor his grievous penance;
But, for your bothe's pain, I you do pray,
Let not our aller foe make his boastance, the foe of us all —
That he hath in his listes, with mischance, Satan
Convicte that ye both have bought so dear; ensnared that which
As I said erst, thou ground of all substance!
Continue on us thy piteous eyen clear.

M.

Moses, that saw the bush of flames red
Burning, of which then never a stick brenn'd, burned
Was sign of thine unwemmed maidenhead. unblemished
Thou art the bush, on which there gan descend
The Holy Ghost, the which that Moses wend weened, supposed
Had been on fire; and this was in figure.
Now, Lady! from the fire us do defend,
Which that in hell eternally shall dure.

N.

Noble Princess! that never haddest peer;
Certes if any comfort in us be,
That cometh of thee, Christe's mother dear!
We have none other melody nor glee, pleasure
Us to rejoyce in our adversity;
Nor advocate, that will and dare so pray
For us, and for as little hire as ye,
That helpe for an Ave-Mary or tway.

O.

O very light of eyen that be blind!
O very lust of labour and distress! relief, pleasure
O treasurer of bounty to mankind!
The whom God chose to mother for humbless!
From his ancill he made thee mistress handmaid
Of heav'n and earth, our billes up to bede; offer up our petitions
This world awaiteth ever on thy goodness;
For thou ne failedst never wight at need.

P.

Purpose I have sometime for to enquire
Wherefore and why the Holy Ghost thee sought,
When Gabrielis voice came to thine ear;
He not to war us such a wonder wrought, afflict
But for to save us, that sithens us bought:
Then needeth us no weapon us to save,
But only, where we did not as we ought,
Do penitence, and mercy ask and have.

Q.

Queen of comfort, right when I me bethink
That I aguilt have bothe Him and thee, offended
And that my soul is worthy for to sink,
Alas! I, caitiff, whither shall I flee?
Who shall unto thy Son my meane be? medium of approach
Who, but thyself, that art of pity well? fountain
Thou hast more ruth on our adversity
Than in this world might any tongue tell!

R.

Redress me, Mother, and eke me chastise!
For certainly my Father's chastising
I dare not abiden in no wise,
So hideous is his full reckoning.
Mother! of whom our joy began to spring,
Be ye my judge, and eke my soule's leach; physician
For ay in you is pity abounding
To each that will of pity you beseech.

S.

Sooth is it that He granteth no pity
Withoute thee; for God of his goodness
Forgiveth none, but it like unto thee; unless it please
He hath thee made vicar and mistress thee
Of all this world, and eke governess
Of heaven; and represseth his justice
After thy will; and therefore in witness according to
He hath thee crowned in so royal wise.

T.

Temple devout! where God chose his wonning, abode
From which, these misbeliev'd deprived be,
To you my soule penitent I bring;
Receive me, for I can no farther flee.
With thornes venomous, O Heaven's Queen!
For which the earth accursed was full yore,
I am so wounded, as ye may well see,
That I am lost almost, it smart so sore!

V.

Virgin! that art so noble of apparail, aspect
That ledest us into the highe tow'r
Of Paradise, thou me wiss and counsail direct and counsel
How I may have thy grace and thy succour;
All have I been in filth and in errour,
Lady! on that country thou me adjourn, take me to that place
That called is thy bench of freshe flow'r,
There as that mercy ever shall sojourn.

X.

Xpe thy Son, that in this world alight,
Upon a cross to suffer his passioun,
And suffer'd eke that Longeus his heart pight, pierced
And made his hearte-blood to run adown;
And all this was for my salvatioun:
And I to him am false and eke unkind,
And yet he wills not my damnation;
This thank I you, succour of all mankind! for this I am
indebted to you

Y.

Ysaac was figure of His death certain,
That so farforth his father would obey,
That him ne raughte nothing to be slain; he cared not
Right so thy Son list as a lamb to dey: die
Now, Lady full of mercy! I you pray,
Since he his mercy 'sured me so large,
Be ye not scant, for all we sing and say,
That ye be from vengeance alway our targe. shield, defence

Z.

Zachary you calleth the open well
That washed sinful soul out of his guilt;
Therefore this lesson out I will to tell,
That, n'ere thy tender hearte, we were spilt. were it not for
Now, Lady brighte! since thou canst and wilt, destroyed, undone
Be to the seed of Adam merciabile; merciful
Bring us unto that palace that is built
To penitents that be to mercy able! fit to receive mercy
Explicit. The end

A GOODLY BALLAD OF CHAUCER.

MOTHER of nurture, best below'd of all,
And freshe flow'r, to whom good thrift God send
Your child, if it lust you me so to call, please
All be I unable myself so to pretend, although I be
 To your discretion I recommend
My heart and all, with ev'ry circumstance,
 All wholly to be under your governance.
 Most desire I, and have and ever shall,
Thing which might your hearte's ease amend
 Have me excus'd, my power is but small;
 Nathless, of right, ye oughte to commend
My goode will, which fame would entend attend, strive
 To do you service; for my suffisance contentment
 Is wholly to be under your governance.
Mieux un in heart which never shall apall,
Ay fresh and new, and right glad to dispend
 My time in your service, what so befall,
 Beseeching your excellence to defend
 My simpleness, if ignorance offend
 In any wise; since that mine affiance
 Is wholly to be under your governance.
Daisy of light, very ground of comfort,
The sunne's daughter ye light, as I read;
For when he west'reth, farewell your disport!
By your nature alone, right for pure dread
Of the rude night, that with his boistous weed rude garment
 Of darkness shadoweth our hemisphere,
 Then close ye, my life's lady dear!
 Dawneth the day unto his kind resort,
And Phoebus your father, with his streames red,
Adorns the morrow, consuming the sort crowd
 Of misty cloudes, that would overlade
True humble heartes with their mistihead. dimness, mistiness
New comfort adaws, when your eyen clear dawns, awakens
 Disclose and spread, my life's lady dear.
Je voudrais — but the greate God disposeth, I would wish
 And maketh casual, by his Providence,
Such thing as manne's fraile wit purposeth,
 All for the best, if that your conscience

Not grudge it, but in humble patience
It receive; for God saith, withoute fable,
A faithful heart ever is acceptable.
Cauteles whoso useth gladly, gloseth; cautious speeches
To eschew such it is right high prudence; deceiveth
What ye said ones mine heart opposeth,
That my writing japes in your absence jests, coarse stories
Pleased you much better than my presence:
Yet can I more; ye be not excusable;
A faithful heart is ever acceptable.
Quaketh my pen; my spirit supposeth
That in my writing ye will find offence;
Mine hearte welketh thus; anon it riseth; withers, faints
Now hot, now cold, and after in fervence;
That is amiss, is caus'd of negligence,
And not of malice; therefore be merciable;
A faithful heart is ever acceptable.
L'Envoy.

Forth, complaint! forth, lacking eloquence;
Forth little letter, of ending lame!
I have besought my lady's sapience
On thy behalfe, to accept in game
Thine inability; do thou the same.
Abide! have more yet! Je serve Joyesse! I serve Joy
Now forth, I close thee in holy Venus' name!
Thee shall unclothe my hearte's governess.

A BALLAD SENT TO KING RICHARD.

SOMETIME this world was so steadfast and stable,
That man's word was held obligation;
And now it is so false and deceivable, deceitful
That word and work, as in conclusion,
Be nothing one; for turned up so down
Is all this world, through meed and wilfulness, bribery
That all is lost for lack of steadfastness.
What makes this world to be so variable,
But lust that folk have in dissension? pleasure
For now-a-days a man is held unable fit for nothing
But if he can, by some collusion, unless fraud, trick
Do his neighbour wrong or oppression.
What causeth this but wilful wretchedness,
That all is lost for lack of steadfastness?
Truth is put down, reason is holden fable;
Virtue hath now no domination;
Pity exil'd, no wight is merciabile;
Through covetise is blent discretion; blinded
The worlde hath made permutation
From right to wrong, from truth to fickleness,
That all is lost for lack of steadfastness.
L'Envoy.

O Prince! desire to be honourable;
Cherish thy folk, and hate extortion;
Suffer nothing that may be reprovab a subject of reproach
To thine estate, done in thy region; kingdom
Show forth the sword of castigation;
Dread God, do law, love thorough worthiness,
And wed thy folk again to steadfastness!
L'ENVOY OF CHAUCER TO BUKTON.

My Master Bukton, when of Christ our King
Was asked, What is truth or soothfastness?
He not a word answer'd to that asking,
As who saith, no man is all true, I guess;
And therefore, though I highte to express promised
The sorrow and woe that is in marriage,
I dare not write of it no wickedness,

Lest I myself fall eft in such dotage. again folly
I will not say how that it is the chain
Of Satanas, on which he gnaweth ever;
But I dare say, were he out of his pain,
As by his will he would be bounden never.
But thilke doated fool that eft had lever that
Y-chained be, than out of prison creep,
God let him never from his woe dissever,
Nor no man him bewaile though he weep!
But yet, lest thou do worse, take a wife;
Bet is to wed than burn in worse wise;
But thou shalt have sorrow on thy flesh thy life, all thy life
And be thy wife's thrall, as say these wise.
And if that Holy Writ may not suffice,
Experience shall thee teache, so may hap,
That thee were lever to be taken in Frise,
Than eft to fall of wedding in the trap. again
This little writ, proverbes, or figure,
I sende you; take keep of it, I read! heed
"Unwise is he that can no weal endure;
If thou be sicker, put thee not in dread." in security danger
The Wife of Bath I pray you that you read,
Of this mattere which that we have on hand.
God grante you your life freely to lead
In freedom, for full hard is to be bond.

A BALLAD OF GENTLENESS.

THE firste stock-father of gentleness,
What man desireth gentle for to be,
Must follow his trace, and all his wittes dress, apply
Virtue to love, and vices for to flee;
For unto virtue longeth dignity,
And not the reverse, safely dare I deem,
All wear he mitre, crown, or diademe. whether he wear
This firste stock was full of righteousness,
True of his word, sober, pious, and free,
Clean of his ghost, and loved business, pure of spirit
Against the vice of sloth, in honesty;
And, but his heir love virtue as did he,
He is not gentle, though he riche seem,
All wear he mitre, crown, or diademe.
Vice may well be heir to old richness,
But there may no man, as men may well see,
Bequeath his heir his virtuous nobless;
That is appropriated to no degree, specially reserved
But to the first Father in majesty,
Which makes his heire him that doth him queme, please
All wear he mitre, crown, or diademe.

THE COMPLAINT OF CHAUCER TO HIS PURSE.

To you, my purse, and to none other wight,
Complain I, for ye be my lady dear!
I am sorry now that ye be so light,
For certes ye now make me heavy cheer;
Me were as lief be laid upon my bier.
For which unto your mercy thus I cry,
Be heavy again, or elles must I die!
Now vouchesafe this day, ere it be night,
That I of you the blissful sound may hear,
Or see your colour like the sunne bright,
That of yellowness hadde peer.
Ye be my life! Ye be my hearte's steer! rudder
Queen of comfort and of good company!
Be heavy again, or elles must I die!
Now, purse! that art to me my life's light
And savour, as down in this worlde here,
Out of this towne help me through your might,
Since that you will not be my treasurere;
For I am shave as nigh as any frere.
But now I pray unto your courtesy,
Be heavy again, or elles must I die!
Chaucer's Envoy to the King.

O conqueror of Brute's Albion,
Which by lineage and free election
Be very king, this song to you I send;
And ye which may all mine harm amend,
Have mind upon my supplication!

GOOD COUNSEL OF CHAUCER.

FLEE from the press, and dwell with soothfastness;
Suffice thee thy good, though it be small;
For hoard hath hate, and climbing tickleness, instability
Press hath envy, and weal is blent o'er all, prosperity is blinded
Savour no more than thee behove shall; have a taste for
Read well thyself, that other folk canst read; counsel
And truth thee shall deliver, it is no dread. doubt
Paine thee not each crooked to redress,
In trust of her that turneth as a ball;
Great rest standeth in little business:
Beware also to spurn against a nail;
Strive not as doth a crocke with a wall; earthen pot
Deeme thyself that deemest others' deed, judge
And truth thee shall deliver, it is no dread.
What thee is sent, receive in buxomness; submission
The wrestling of this world asketh a fall;
Here is no home, here is but wilderness.
Forth, pilgrim! Forthe beast, out of thy stall!
Look up on high, and thank thy God of all!
Weive thy lust, and let thy ghost thee lead, forsake thy
And truth thee shall deliver, it is no dread. inclinations
spirit

PROVERBS OF CHAUCER.

WHAT should these clothes thus manifold,
Lo! this hot summer's day?
After great heate cometh cold;
No man cast his pilche away. pelisse, furred cloak
Of all this world the large compass
Will not in mine arms twain;
Who so much will embrace,
Little thereof he shall distraign. grasp
The world so wide, the air so remuable, unstable
The silly man so little of stature;
The green of ground and clothing so mutable,
The fire so hot and subtile of nature;
The water never in one — what creature never the same
That made is of these foure thus flitting,
May steadfast be, as here, in his living?
The more I go, the farther I am behind;
The farther behind, the nearer my war's end;
The more I seek, the worse can I find;
The lighter leave, the lother for to wend;
The better I live, the more out of mind;
Is this fortune, n'ot I, or infortune; I know not misfortune
Though I go loose, tied am I with a loigne. line, tether

VIRELAY.

ALONE walking
In thought plaining,
And sore sighing;
All desolate,
Me rememb'ring
Of my living;
My death wishing
Both early and late.
Infortunate
Is so my fate,
That, wot ye what?
Out of measure
My life I hate;
Thus desperate,
In such poor estate,
Do I endure.
Of other cure
Am I not sure;
Thus to endure
Is hard, certain;
Such is my ure, destiny
I you ensure;
What creature
May have more pain?
My truth so plain
Is taken in vain,
And great disdain
In remembrance;
Yet I full fain
Would me complain,
Me to abstain
From this penance.
But, in substance,
None alleggeance alleviation
Of my grievance
Can I not find;
Right so my chance,
With displeasance,

Doth me advance;
And thus an end.

"SINCE I FROM LOVE."

SINCE I from Love escaped am so fat,
I ne'er think to be in his prison ta'en;
Since I am free, I count him not a bean.
He may answer, and saye this and that;
I do no force, I speak right as I mean; care not
Since I from Love escaped am so fat.
Love hath my name struck out of his slat, slate, list
And he is struck out of my bookes clean,
For ever more; there is none other mean;
Since I from Love escaped am so fat.

CHAUCER'S WORDS TO HIS SCRIVENER.

ADAM Scrivener, if ever it thee befall
Boece or Troilus for to write anew,
Under thy long locks thou may'st have the scall scab
But after my making thou write more true! according to my
So oft a day I must thy work renew, composing
It to correct, and eke to rub and scrape;
And all is through thy negligence and rape. haste
CHAUCER'S PROPHECY.

WHEN priestes failen in their saws, come short of their
And lordes turne Godde's laws profession
Against the right;
And lechery is holden as privy solace, secret delight
And robbery as free purchase,
Beware then of ill!
Then shall the Land of Albion
Turne to confusion,
As sometime it befell.
Ora pro Anglia Sancta Maria, quod Thomas Cantuaria.

Sweet Jesus, heaven's King,
Fair and best of all thing,
You bring us out of this mourning,
To come to thee at our ending!
Notes to Chaucer's Prophecy.