

ENGLISH PROSE

EARLY MIDDLE ENGLISH

THE ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE (C. 1154)

A MONK OF PETERBOROUGH

(FROM THE RECORD FOR 1137)

This gære¹ for² the king Stephne ofer sæ³ to Normandi, and ther wes⁴ underfangen,⁵ forthithat⁶ hi⁷ uuenden⁸ that he sculde⁹ ben¹⁰ alsuic¹¹ also¹² the eom¹³ wes, and for⁶ he hadde get his tresor;¹⁴ ac¹⁵ he to-deld¹⁶ it and scatered sotlice.¹⁷ Micel¹⁸ hadde Henri king gadered gold and sylver, and na¹⁹ god²⁰ ne dide me²¹ for his saule²² tharof.²³

Tha²⁴ the king Stephne to Englalande com,²⁵ tha²⁶ macod²⁷ he his gadering²⁸ æt Oxeneford; and thar he nam²⁹ the biscop Roger of Sereberi³⁰ and Alexander biscop of Lincol and te³¹ Canceler Roger his neves,³² and dide³³ ælle in prisun til hi⁷ iafen³⁴ up here³⁵ castles. Tha²⁴ the suikes³⁶ undergæton³⁷ that he milde man was and softe and god²⁰ and na¹⁹ justise³⁸ ne dide, tha²⁶ diden hi⁷ alle wunder.³⁹ Hi⁷ hadden him⁴⁰ manred⁴¹ maked²⁷ and athes⁴² suoren,⁴³ ac¹⁵ hi nan¹⁹ treuthe ne heolden.⁴⁴ Alle he⁷ wæron⁴⁵ forsworen and here³⁵ treothes forloren;⁴⁶ for ævric⁴⁷ rice⁴⁸ man his castles makede,⁴⁹ and agænes⁵⁰ him heolden,⁵¹ and fylde⁵² the land ful of castles. Hi suencten⁵³ suythe⁵⁴ the uurece⁵⁵ men of the land mid⁵⁶ castel weorces.⁵⁷ Tha²⁴ the castles uaren⁴⁵

¹ year ² went ³ sea ⁴ was ⁵ received ⁶ because
⁷ they ⁸ weened, thought ⁹ should ¹⁰ be ¹¹ just
such ¹² as ¹³ uncle ¹⁴ treasure ¹⁵ but ¹⁶ dispersed
¹⁷ foolishly ¹⁸ much ¹⁹ no ²⁰ good ²¹ anyone ²² soul
²³ on account of it ²⁴ when ²⁵ came ²⁶ then ²⁷ made
²⁸ assembly ²⁹ seized ³⁰ Salisbury ³¹ the ³² nephews
(i.e. the son and nephew of Roger of Salisbury)
³³ put ³⁴ gave ³⁵ their ³⁶ traitors ³⁷ perceived
³⁸ justice, punishment ³⁹ strange things, evils ⁴⁰ to
him ⁴¹ homage ⁴² oaths ⁴³ sworn ⁴⁴ kept ⁴⁵ were
⁴⁶ entirely abandoned ⁴⁷ every ⁴⁸ powerful ⁴⁹ fortified
⁵⁰ against ⁵¹ held ⁵² filled ⁵³ oppressed ⁵⁴ greatly
⁵⁵ wretched ⁵⁶ with ⁵⁷ works

maked, tha¹ fylde² hi mid deovles and yvele³ men. Tha¹ namen³ hi tha⁴ men the⁵ hi wenden⁶ that ani god⁷ hefden,⁸ bathe⁹ be¹⁰ nihtes and be dæies, carlmen¹¹ and wimmen, and diden¹² heom¹³ in prisun efter¹⁴ gold and sylver, and pined¹⁵ heom untellendlice¹⁶ pining,¹⁷ for ne uuæren¹⁸ nævre¹⁹ nan martyrs swa²⁰ pined also²¹ hi wæron. Me²² hinged²³ up bi the fet²⁴ and smoked heom mid ful²⁵ smoke. Me hinged bi the thumbes, other²⁶ bi the hefed,²⁷ and hengen²⁸ brynges²⁹ on her³⁰ fet. Me dide¹² cnotted strenges³¹ abuton³² here³⁰ hæved²⁷ and uurythen³³ to³⁴ that it gæde³⁵ to the hærnas.³⁶ Hi dyden heom in quarterne³⁷ thar³⁸ nadres³⁹ and snakes and pades⁴⁰ wæron inne, and drapen⁴¹ heom swa.²⁰

I ne can ne I ne mai⁴² tellen alle the wunder⁴³ ne alle the pines⁴⁴ that hi diden wrecce⁴⁵ men on⁴⁶ this land; and that lastede tha .xix. wintre⁴⁷ wile⁴⁸ Stephne was king, and ævre⁴⁹ it was uerse⁵⁰ and uerse.

FROM AN OLD ENGLISH HOMILY (BEFORE 1200)

(Unknown Author)

Missus est Jeremias in puteum et stetit ibi usque ad os, etc.

(See Jeremiah 38 : 6-13)

Leofemen,⁵¹ we vindeth⁵² in Halie Boc⁵³ that Jeremie the prophete stod in ane⁵⁴ pütte⁵⁵ and thet⁵⁶ in the venne⁵⁷ up to his muthe;⁵⁸ and

¹ then ² evil ³ seized ⁴ those ⁵ who ⁶ weened, thought ⁷ property ⁸ had ⁹ both ¹⁰ by ¹¹ men ¹² put ¹³ them ¹⁴ after (i.e. to obtain) ¹⁵ tortured ¹⁶ unspeakable ¹⁷ torture ¹⁸ were ¹⁹ never ²⁰ so ²¹ as ²² one (i.e., they *indefinite*) ²³ hanged ²⁴ feet ²⁵ foul ²⁶ or ²⁷ head ²⁸ hung ²⁹ corselets (as weights) ³⁰ their ³¹ cords ³² about ³³ twisted ³⁴ till ³⁵ went, penetrated ³⁶ brains ³⁷ prison ³⁸ where ³⁹ adders ⁴⁰ toads ⁴¹ killed ⁴² may ⁴³ evils ⁴⁴ tortures ⁴⁵ wretched ⁴⁶ in ⁴⁷ years ⁴⁸ while ⁴⁹ ever ⁵⁰ worse ⁵¹ beloved ⁵² find ⁵³ holy book = the Bible ⁵⁴ a ⁵⁵ pit ⁵⁶ that (emphatic) ⁵⁷ fen, mire ⁵⁸ mouth

tha¹ he hefede² ther ane³ hwile istonde,⁴ tha⁵ bicom⁶ his licome⁷ swithe⁸ feble, and me⁹ nom¹⁰ rapes¹¹ and caste in to him for to draghen¹² hine¹³ ut of thisse pütte. Ah¹⁴ his licome⁷ was se¹⁵ swithe⁸ feble thet he ne mihte noht¹⁶ itholie¹⁷ the herdnesse¹⁸ of the rapes. Tha⁵ sende me⁹ clothes¹⁹ ut of thes²⁰ kinges huse for to bi-winden²¹ the rapes, thet his licome,⁷ the²² feble wes, ne sceolde²³ noht¹⁶ wursien.²⁴ Leofemen,²⁵ theos²⁶ ilke²⁷ weord²⁸ the²² ic²⁹ hadde³⁰ her i-seid³¹ habbeth mucele³² bi-tacnunge,³³ and god³⁴ ha³⁵ beoth³⁶ to heren and mucele betere to et-halden.³⁷

Bi Jeremie the prophete we aghen³⁸ to understonden ülcnē³⁹ mon sünfulle⁴⁰ thet lith in hevie sünne and thurh sothe⁴¹ scrift⁴² his sünbendes⁴³ nüle⁴⁴ slakien.⁴⁵ *Funiculi amaritudines penelencie significant.* The rapes the²² weren i-cast to him bi-tacneth⁴⁶ the herdnesse of scrifte⁴²; for nis⁴⁷ nan⁴⁸ of us se¹⁵ strong the⁴⁹ hefde idon⁵⁰ thre hefed⁵¹ sünnen thet his licome nere⁵² swithe feble er⁵³ he hefde i-dreghen⁵⁴ thet⁵⁵ scrift the²² ther-to bilimpeth.⁵⁶ Thas kinges hus bi-tacneth Hali Chirche. Tha clothes thet weren i-sende ut of thes kinges huse for to binden the rapes mid⁵⁷ bi-tacnet⁵⁸ the halie⁵⁹ ureisuns⁶⁰ the⁶¹ me⁶² singeth in halie chirche and the halie sacramens the⁶¹ me⁶³ sacreth⁶³ in⁶⁴ a-lesnesse⁶⁵ of alla sünfulle. Leofemen, nu ye⁶⁶ habbeth i-herd of this pütte the bi-tacninge the ic hadde embe⁶⁷ i-speken⁶⁸ and the bi-tacninge of the prophete and thet⁶⁹ the rapes bi-tacneth, and hwat⁶⁹ tha clathes bi-tacneth the⁴⁹ the rapes weren mide⁶⁷ bi-wunden. I-hereth⁷⁰ nuthe⁷¹ whülche⁷² things wunieth⁷³ in thisse pütte. Ther wunieth fower⁷⁴ cünnes⁷⁵ würmes⁷⁶ inne,⁷⁷ thet for-doth⁷⁸ nuthe⁷¹ al theos midelard.⁷⁹ Ther

¹ when ² had ³ a ⁴ stood ⁵ then ⁶ became ⁷ body
⁸ very ⁹ one, they (*indefinite*) ¹⁰ took ¹¹ ropes ¹² draw
¹³ him ¹⁴ but ¹⁵ so ¹⁶ not ¹⁷ endure ¹⁸ hardness
¹⁹ cloths ²⁰ the (*gen. s.*) ²¹ wind about ²² which
²³ should ²⁴ grow worse, suffer ²⁵ beloved ²⁶ these
²⁷ same ²⁸ words ²⁹ I ³⁰ have ³¹ said, spoken
³² much ³³ meaning, significance ³⁴ good ³⁵ they ³⁶ are
³⁷ keep ³⁸ ought ³⁹ each ⁴⁰ sinful ⁴¹ true ⁴² confession,
penance ⁴³ sin-bonds ⁴⁴ will not ⁴⁵ loosen
⁴⁶ signify ⁴⁷ there is not ⁴⁸ none ⁴⁹ that ⁵⁰ done
⁵¹ head, chief ⁵² were not, would not become ⁵³ ere,
before ⁵⁴ endured, performed ⁵⁵ the ⁵⁶ belongs
⁵⁷ with ⁵⁸ signifies ⁵⁹ holy ⁶⁰ orisons, prayers ⁶¹ that
⁶² one, they (*indefinite*) ⁶³ celebrate(s) ⁶⁴ for ⁶⁵ hear
⁶⁶ ye ⁶⁷ about ⁶⁸ spoken ⁶⁹ what ⁷⁰ hear
⁷¹ now ⁷² what sort of ⁷³ dwell ⁷⁴ four ⁷⁵ kinds
⁷⁶ reptiles ⁷⁷ in (*to be taken with Ther*) ⁷⁸ destroy
⁷⁹ world

wunieth inne¹ faghe² nedden,³ and beoreth⁴ atter⁵ under heore⁶ tunge; blake tadden,⁷ and habbeth atter uppon heore heorte; yelwe⁸ froggen, and crabben.

Crabbe is an manere⁹ of fisce¹⁰ in there¹¹ sea. This fis¹⁰ is of swilc¹² cünde¹³ thet ever se¹⁴ he mare¹⁵ stren¹⁶ thet him to swimminde mid¹⁶ the watere, se¹⁷ he mare swimmeth abac.¹⁸ And the alde crabbe seide to the yunge,¹⁹ "Hwi ne swimmet thu forthward in there¹¹ sea also¹⁴ other fisses doth?" And heo²⁰ seide, "Leofe²¹ moder, swim thu foren²² me and tech me hu²³ ic scal²⁴ swimmen forthward." And heo²⁰ bigon to swimmen forthward mid the streme, and swam hire²⁵ ther-ayen.²⁶ Thas²⁷ faghe neddre³ bi-tacneth this faghe² folc²⁸ the²⁹ wuneth in thisse weorlde, [etc.]

RICHARD POORE? (D. 1237)

FROM THE ANCEN RIWLE⁸⁰

SPEECH

On alre-erest,³¹ hwon³² ye schulen³³ to oure³⁴ parlures³⁵ thürle,³⁶ iwiteth³⁷ et³⁸ ower³⁴ meiden³⁹ hwo hit⁴⁰ beo⁴¹ thet is icumen,⁴² vor⁴³ swüch⁴⁴ hit mei⁴⁵ beon⁴⁶ thet ye schulen⁴⁷ aschunien⁴⁸ ou;⁴⁹ and hwon ye alles⁵⁰ moten⁵¹ vorth,⁵² creiseth⁵³ ful yeorne⁵⁴ our⁵⁴ muth,⁵⁵ earen, and eien,⁵⁶ and te⁵⁷ breoste eke; and goth⁵⁸ forth mid Godes drede to preoste.⁵⁹ On erest⁶⁰ siggeth⁶¹ confiteor,⁶² and ther-efter *benedicite*.⁶³ Thet⁶⁴ he ouh⁶⁵ to siggen,⁶⁶ hercneth his wordes, and sitteth al stille, thet,⁶⁷ hwon³² he parteth vrom ou,⁶⁸ thet he ne cunne⁶⁹ ower god⁷⁰ ne ower üel⁷¹ nouthur; ne he ne cunne ou nouthur⁷² blamen ne preisen. Sum⁷³ is so

¹ in (*to be taken with Ther*) ² spotted ³ adds
⁴ bear ⁵ poison ⁶ their ⁷ toads ⁸ yellow ⁹ kind
¹⁰ fish ¹¹ the ¹² such ¹³ nature ¹⁴ as ¹⁵ more
¹⁶ with ¹⁷ so ¹⁸ aback ¹⁹ young ²⁰ she ²¹ dear
²² before ²³ how ²⁴ shall ²⁵ her (*reflexive*) ²⁶ against
it ²⁷ these ²⁸ folk ²⁹ that ³⁰ The Nuns' Rule
³¹ first of all ³² when ³³ shall [go] ³⁴ your
³⁵ parlor's ³⁶ window ³⁷ know, learn ³⁸ from
³⁹ maid ⁴⁰ it ⁴¹ is ⁴² come ⁴³ for ⁴⁴ such ⁴⁵ may
⁴⁶ be ⁴⁷ shall, ought to ⁴⁸ shun, avoid ⁴⁹ you (*reflexive, not to be translated*) ⁵⁰ by all means or
necessarily ⁵¹ must [go] ⁵² forth, i.e. out of your
dwelling ⁵³ cross, i.e. bless with the sign of the cross
⁵⁴ zealously ⁵⁵ mouth ⁵⁶ eyes ⁵⁷ the, i.e. your ⁵⁸ go
(*Imper.*) ⁵⁹ the priest ⁶⁰ first ⁶¹ say (*Imperative, as are some of the other verbs in -eth*) ⁶² the formula
of confession ⁶³ a canticle or hymn: "Bless ye the
Lord!" ⁶⁴ what ⁶⁵ ought ⁶⁶ say ⁶⁷ that, in order
that ⁶⁸ you ⁶⁹ know ⁷⁰ good ⁷¹ evil ⁷² neither ⁷³ one

wel ilerē¹ other² se³ wis-iworded, thet heo⁴ wolde⁵ thet he⁶ wüste⁷ hit;⁸ the⁹ sit¹⁰ and speketh toward him, and yelt¹¹ him word ayein¹² word, and bicumeth meister,¹³ the schulde beon ancre; and leareth¹⁴ him thet is icumen¹⁵ to leren¹⁶ hire:¹⁷ wolde¹⁸ bi hire tale sone¹⁹ beon mit²⁰ te wise icüd²¹ and icnowen.²² Icnowen heo⁴ is wel, vor²³ thurh thet ilke²⁴ thet heo⁴ weneth²⁵ to beon²⁶ wis iholden,²⁷ he understont²⁸ thet heo is sot.²⁹ Vor heo hunteth effer pris,³⁰ and kecceth lastunge.³¹ Vor et³² te³³ laste, hwon³⁴ he is iwend³⁵ a-wei, "Theos³⁶ ancre," he wüle³⁷ siggen,³⁸ "is of mucele³⁹ speche." Eve heold ine paraís⁴⁰ longe tale⁴¹ mid²⁰ te neddre,⁴² and tolde hire¹⁷ al thet lescun⁴³ thet God hire hefde⁴⁴ ilerē⁴⁵ and Adam of then³³ epple; and so the veond⁴⁶ thurh hire word understod an-on-riht⁴⁷ hire wocnesse,⁴⁸ and ivond⁴⁹ wei toward hire of hire vorlorenesse.⁵⁰ Ure⁵¹ Lefdi,⁵² Seinte Marie, düde⁵³ al⁵⁴ an other wise: ne tolde heo then³³ engle⁵⁵ none tale, auh⁵⁶ askede him thing scheortliche⁵⁷ thet heo⁴ ne kuthe.⁵⁸ Ye, mine leove⁵⁹ süstren, voleweth⁶⁰ Ure⁵¹ Lefdi, and nout⁶¹ the kakele⁶² Eve. Vor-thi⁶³ ancre, hwat-se⁶⁴ heo beo,⁶⁵ also⁶⁶ muchel⁶⁷ ase heo ever con⁶⁷ and mei, holde hire⁶⁸ stille: nabbe⁶⁹ heo nout henne⁷⁰ künde.⁷¹ The hen, hwon heo haveth⁷² ileid, ne con⁶⁷ buten⁶⁶ kakelen.⁷³ And hwat biyit⁷⁴ he ther-of? Kumeth⁷⁵ the coue⁷⁶ anon-riht⁴⁷ and reveth⁷⁷ hire hire eiren,⁷⁸ and fret⁷⁹ al thet of hwat⁸⁰ heo schulde vorth-bringen hire cwike⁸¹ briddes;⁸² and riht also⁸³ the lüthere⁸⁴ coue, deovel,⁸⁵ berth⁸⁶ a-wei vrom the kakeleinde⁸⁷ ancren and vorswoluweth⁸⁸ al thet⁸⁹ god⁸⁹ thet heo istreoned⁹⁰ habbeth,⁹¹ thet schulden ase⁹² briddes beren⁹³ ham⁹⁴ up tou-

¹ taught ² or ³ so ⁴ she ⁵ would ⁶ i.e. the
priest ⁷ should know ⁸ it ⁹ who ¹⁰ sits ¹¹ yields
¹² against, for ¹³ master ¹⁴ teacheth ¹⁵ come ¹⁶ teach
¹⁷ her ¹⁸ she would ¹⁹ soon ²⁰ with ²¹ recognized
²² known ²³ for ²⁴ very thing ²⁵ thinks, expects ²⁶ be
²⁷ held ²⁸ understands ²⁹ foolish ³⁰ praise ³¹ blame
³² at ³³ the ³⁴ when ³⁵ turned ³⁶ this ³⁷ will
³⁸ say ³⁹ much ⁴⁰ paradise ⁴¹ talk ⁴² adder, serpent
⁴³ lesson ⁴⁴ had ⁴⁵ taught ⁴⁶ fiend ⁴⁷ at
⁴⁸ once ⁴⁹ weakness ⁵⁰ found ⁵¹ perdition ⁵² Our
⁵³ Lady ⁵⁴ did ⁵⁵ all, entirely ⁵⁶ angel ⁵⁷ but ⁵⁸ briefly
⁵⁹ knew ⁶⁰ dear ⁶¹ follow ⁶² not ⁶³ chattering
⁶⁴ therefore ⁶⁵ what-so, i.e. whosoever ⁶⁶ be, may
be ⁶⁷ as ⁶⁸ can ⁶⁹ herself ⁷⁰ have not (*hortative Subj.*)
⁷¹ hen's ⁷² nature ⁷³ hath ⁷⁴ cackle ⁷⁵ obtains
⁷⁶ cometh ⁷⁷ chough ⁷⁸ takes from ⁷⁹ eggs
⁸⁰ eats ⁸¹ which ⁸² live, living ⁸³ young birds ⁸⁴ so
⁸⁵ wicked ⁸⁶ the devil ⁸⁷ bears ⁸⁸ cackling ⁸⁹ swallows
up ⁹⁰ good ⁹¹ produced ⁹² has ⁹³ as ⁹⁴ bear
⁹⁵ them

ward heovene, yif hit nere¹ icakeled. The wrecche peoddare² more noise he maketh to yeien³ his sope⁴ then⁵ a riche mercer al his deorewurthe⁶ ware. To summe⁷ gostliche⁸ monne⁹ thet ye beoth trusti uppen, ase¹⁰ ye muwen¹¹ beon of lüt,¹² god¹³ is thet ye asken red¹⁴ and salve,¹⁵ thet he teche ou toyaines¹⁶ fondunges,¹⁷ and ine schrifte¹⁸ scheaweth¹⁹ him, yif he wüle iheren,²⁰ ower²¹ greste²² and ower lodlükeste²³ sünnen,²⁴ vor-thi-thet him areowe ou;²⁵ and thurh the bireounesse²⁶ crie Crist inwardliche²⁷ merci vor ou, and hadde²⁸ ou ine münde²⁹ and in his bonen.³⁰ *Sed multi veniunt ad vos in vestimentis ovium; intrinsecus autem sunt lupi rapaces.* "Auh³¹ witeth³² ou, and beoth³³ iwarre,"³⁴ he seith, ure³⁵ Loverd, "vor monie³⁶ cumeth to ou ischrud³⁷ mid lombes fleose,³⁸ and beoth³⁹ wode⁴⁰ wulves." Worldliche men ileveth⁴¹ lüt;⁴² religiuse yet lesse. Ne wilnie⁴³ ye nout to muchel hore⁴⁴ kuthlechange.⁴⁵ Eve withute drede spec⁴⁶ mit te neddre. Ure³⁵ Lefdi⁴⁷ was ofdred⁴⁸ of Gabriele speche.

* * * * *

Ure deorewurthe⁶ Lefdi, Seinte Marie, thet ouh⁴⁹ to alle wümmen beon vorbisne,⁵⁰ was of so lüte⁴² speche thet nouhware⁵¹ ine Holi Write ne ivinde⁵² we thet heo spec⁴⁶ bute vor⁵³ sithen;⁵⁴ auh³¹ for⁵⁵ the seldspeche⁵⁶ hire wordes weren hevie,⁵⁷ and hefden⁵⁸ mucele mihte. Hire vorme⁵⁹ wordes thet we redeth of weren the⁶⁰ heo onswerde then⁶¹ engle Gabriel, and the⁶² weren so mihtie thet mid tet⁶³ thet⁶⁴ heo seide, *Ecce ancilla Domini; fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum,* — et tisse⁶⁵ worde Godes sune and soth⁶⁶ God bicom⁶⁷ mon; and the Loverd, thet al the world ne mühte⁶⁸ nout bivon,⁶⁹ bi-tünde⁷⁰ him⁷¹ withinnen the meidenes⁷² wombe Marie. Hire othre⁷³ wordes weren thoa⁸⁰ heo com and grette⁷⁴ Elizabeth hire mowe;⁷⁵ and hwat mihte, wenest-tu,⁷⁶ was icüd⁷⁷ ine theos⁸²

¹ were not ² peddler ³ cry ⁴ soap ⁵ than ⁶ precious
⁷ some ⁸ spiritual ⁹ man ¹⁰ as ¹¹ may ¹² few ¹³ good
¹⁴ counsel ¹⁵ remedy ¹⁶ against ¹⁷ temptations ¹⁸ confession
¹⁹ show ²⁰ hear ²¹ your ²² greatest ²³ most hateful
²⁴ sins ²⁵ in order that he may pity you (*areowe is impersonal*) ²⁶ pity ²⁷ sincerely ²⁸ have ²⁹ mind,
memory ³⁰ prayers ³¹ but ³² guard ³³ be ³⁴ cautious
³⁵ our ³⁶ many ³⁷ clothed ³⁸ fleece ³⁹ are ⁴⁰ wild
⁴¹ believe (*Imperative*) ⁴² little ⁴³ desire ⁴⁴ their
⁴⁵ acquaintance ⁴⁶ spoke ⁴⁷ Lady ⁴⁸ afraid ⁴⁹ ought
⁵⁰ example ⁵¹ nowhere ⁵² find ⁵³ four ⁵⁴ times
⁵⁵ because of ⁵⁶ seldom-speaking ⁵⁷ weighty ⁵⁸ had
⁵⁹ first ⁶⁰ when ⁶¹ the ⁶² these ⁶³ that ⁶⁴ which
⁶⁵ at this ⁶⁶ true ⁶⁷ became ⁶⁸ might ⁶⁹ encompass
⁷⁰ enclosed ⁷¹ himself ⁷² maiden's ⁷³ second ⁷⁴ greeted
⁷⁵ kinswoman ⁷⁶ thinkest thou ⁷⁷ manifested

wordes? Hwat,¹ thet a child bigon vor to pleien² toyeynes³ ham⁴ — thet was Sein Johan — in his moder wombe! The thridde time thet heo spec,⁵ thet was et te neoces,⁶ and ther, thurh hire bone,⁷ was water iwend⁸ to wine. The veorthe time was thoa⁹ heo hefde¹⁰ imist¹¹ hire sune,¹² and eft¹³ hine¹⁴ ivond.¹⁵ And hu muchel wunder voluwede¹⁶ theos wordes! Thet God almihti beih¹⁷ him¹⁸ to one¹⁹ monne,²⁰ to one¹⁹ smithe, and to ane¹⁹ wümmone,²¹ and foluwude¹⁶ ham,⁴ ase²² hore,²³ hwüder-so²⁴ heo²⁵ ever wolden.²⁶ Nimeth²⁷ nu²⁸ her²⁹ yeme,³⁰ and leorneth yeorne³¹ her-bi hu³² seldcene³³ speche haveth muche strencthe.

NUNS MAY KEEP NO BEAST BUT A CAT

Ye, mine leove³⁴ süstren,³⁵ ne schulen³⁶ habben³⁷ no best,³⁸ bute kat one.³⁹ Ancre⁴⁰ thet haveth eihte⁴¹ thüpçeth⁴² bet⁴³ husewif,⁴⁴ ase Marthe was, then ancre;⁴⁰ ne none-weis⁴⁶ ne mei heo⁴⁶ beon⁴⁷ Marie mid grithfulness⁴⁸ of heorte. Vor theonne⁴⁹ mot⁵⁰ heo thenchen⁵¹ of the kues⁵² foddre, and of heordemonne⁵³ huire,⁵⁴ oluhnen⁵⁵ there⁵⁶ heiward,⁵⁷ warien⁵⁸ hwon⁵⁹ me⁶⁰ pünt⁶¹ hire, and yelden,⁶² thauh,⁶³ the hermes.⁶⁴ Wat⁶⁵ Crist, this is lodlich⁶⁶ thing hwon⁵⁹ me⁶⁰ maketh mone⁶⁷ in tune⁶⁸ of ancre⁶⁹ eihte.⁴¹ Thauh,⁶³ yif⁷⁰ eni mot⁵⁰ nede habben⁷¹ ku, loke⁷² thet heo⁴⁶ none monne ne eilie,⁷³ ne ne hermie;⁷⁴ ne thet hire thouht ne beo⁷⁵ nout ther-on iversted.⁷⁶ Ancre ne ouh⁷⁷ nout to habben⁷¹ no thing thet drawe⁷⁸ utward hire heorte. None cheffare⁷⁹ ne drive ye. Ancre thet is cheapild,⁸⁰ heo cheapeth⁸¹ hire soule thet chepmon⁸² of helle. Ne wite⁸³ ye nout in oure⁸⁴ huse⁸⁵ of other monnes thinges, ne eihte,⁴¹ ne clothes; ne nout ne undervo⁸⁶ ye thet chirche vestimenz, ne there⁸⁷

¹ behold ² play ³ against, at the sound of
⁴ them ⁵ spoke ⁶ marriage ⁷ prayer, request ⁸ turned
⁹ when ¹⁰ had ¹¹ missed ¹² son ¹³ again ¹⁴ him ¹⁵ found
¹⁶ followed ¹⁷ bowed, humbled ¹⁸ himself ¹⁹ a
²⁰ man ²¹ woman ²² as ²³ theirs ²⁴ whitherso
²⁵ they ²⁶ would ²⁷ take (*Imperative*) ²⁸ now ²⁹ here
³⁰ heed ³¹ well ³² how ³³ rare ³⁴ dear ³⁵ sisters
³⁶ shall ³⁷ have ³⁸ beast ³⁹ only ⁴⁰ a nun ⁴¹ property
⁴² seems ⁴³ rather ⁴⁴ housewife ⁴⁵ no-ways ⁴⁶ she
⁴⁷ be ⁴⁸ peacefulness ⁴⁹ then ⁵⁰ must ⁵¹ think
⁵² cow's ⁵³ herdsmen's ⁵⁴ hire ⁵⁵ flatter ⁵⁶ the
⁵⁷ heyward, bailiff ⁵⁸ curse ⁵⁹ when ⁶⁰ one
⁶¹ impounds ⁶² pay ⁶³ nevertheless ⁶⁴ damages
⁶⁵ knows ⁶⁶ hateful ⁶⁷ complaint ⁶⁸ town, farm
⁶⁹ a nun's ⁷⁰ if ⁷¹ have ⁷² look ⁷³ disturb
⁷⁴ harm ⁷⁵ be ⁷⁶ fastened ⁷⁷ ought ⁷⁸ may draw
⁷⁹ bargain ⁸⁰ bargainer ⁸¹ sells ⁸² tradesman
⁸³ keep, take care of ⁸⁴ your ⁸⁵ house ⁸⁶ receive ⁸⁷ the

caliz,¹ bute-yif² strencthe³ hit makie,⁴ other⁵ muchel eie;⁶ vor of swüche⁷ witunge⁸ is iku-men⁹ muchel üvel¹⁰ ofte-sithen.¹¹

ENGLISH PROCLAMATION OF HENRY III (1258)

Henr', þurȝ¹² godes fultume¹³ king on¹⁴ Engleneloande, Lhoauerd on Yrloand', Duk on Norm', on Aquitain', and eorl on Anioiw, Send¹⁵ igretinge¹⁶ to alle hise holde,¹⁷ ilærde¹⁸ and ileawede¹⁹ on Huntendon'schir'. þæt²⁰ witen²¹ ȝe²² wel alle, þæt we willen and vnne²³ þæt þæt²⁴ vre²⁵ rædesmen²⁶ alle, oþer²⁷ þe²⁸ moare²⁹ dæl²⁹ of heom³⁰ þæt beoþ³¹ ichosen þurȝ¹² vs and þurȝ¹² þæt²⁷ loandes³² folk on vre kuneriche,³³ habbeþ³⁴ idon³⁵ and schullen³⁶ don³⁷ in þe worþnesse³⁸ of gode³⁹ and on vre treowþe⁴⁰ for þe fremre⁴¹ of þe loande þurȝ¹² þe besizte⁴² of þan²⁷ to-foreniseide⁴³ rædesmen,²⁰ beo stedefæst and ilestinde⁴⁴ in alle þinge a⁴⁵ buten⁴⁶ ænde.⁴⁷ And we hoaten⁴⁸ alle vre treowe,⁴⁹ in¹² þe treowþe⁴⁰ þæt heo⁵⁰ us oȝen,⁵¹ þæt heo stedefæstliche healden⁵² and sweren to healden and to werien⁵³ þo²⁷ isetnesses⁵⁴ þæt beon⁵¹ imakede and beon to makien⁵⁵ þurȝ¹² þan²⁷ to-foren-iseide⁴³ rædesmen oþer⁵ þurȝ¹² þe moare²⁹ dæl²⁹ of heom,³⁰ alswo⁵⁶ also⁵⁷ hit⁵⁸ is biforen iseid.⁵⁹ And þæt æhc⁶⁰ oþer⁶¹ helpe þæt for to done⁶² bi þan²⁷ ilche oþe⁶³ aȝenes⁶⁴ alle men Riȝt for to done⁶⁵ and to foangen.⁶⁵ And noan⁶⁶ ne nime⁶⁷ of loande ne⁶⁸ of eȝte⁶⁹ wherþurȝ¹² þis besizte⁴² muȝe⁷⁰ beon ilet⁷¹ oþer iwersed⁷² on onie⁷³ wise. And ȝif⁷⁴ oni⁷⁵ oþer⁵ onie⁷⁶ cumen her-onȝenes,⁷⁷ we willen and hoaten⁴⁸ þæt alle vre treowe⁴⁹ heom healden deadliche ifoan.⁷⁸ And for þæt we willen þæt þis beo stedefæst and lestinde,⁴⁴ we sende⁷⁹ ȝew⁸⁰ þis writ

¹ chalice ² unless ³ strength, necessity
⁴ make, cause ⁵ or ⁶ fear ⁷ such ⁸ guarding
⁹ come ¹⁰ evil ¹¹ oft-times ¹² by ¹³ aid ¹⁴ in
¹⁵ sends ¹⁶ greeting ¹⁷ faithful ¹⁸ learned
¹⁹ unlearned ²⁰ that ²¹ know ²² ye ²³ grant
²⁴ what ²⁵ our ²⁶ counselors ²⁷ the ²⁸ greater
²⁹ part ³⁰ them ³¹ are ³² land's ³³ kingdom ³⁴ have
³⁵ done ³⁶ shall ³⁷ do ³⁸ honor ³⁹ God ⁴⁰ loyalty
⁴¹ benefit ⁴² provision ⁴³ aforesaid ⁴⁴ lasting ⁴⁵ ever
⁴⁶ without ⁴⁷ end ⁴⁸ command ⁴⁹ loyal ⁵⁰ they ⁵¹ owe
⁵² hold ⁵³ defend ⁵⁴ laws ⁵⁵ to make, to be made
⁵⁶ just ⁵⁷ as ⁵⁸ it ⁵⁹ said ⁶⁰ each ⁶¹ the other ⁶² same
⁶³ oath ⁶⁴ towards ⁶⁵ receive ⁶⁶ none ⁶⁷ take (*subj. of command*) ⁶⁸ nor ⁶⁹ property ⁷⁰ may ⁷¹ hindered
⁷² injured ⁷³ any ⁷⁴ if ⁷⁵ any one ⁷⁶ any (*pl.*) ⁷⁷ here
against, *i.e.* against this proclamation ⁷⁸ foes ⁷⁹ send
⁸⁰ you

open, ieseined¹ wiþ vre seel to halden² amanges ȝew ine hord.³ Witesse vs-seluen⁴ æt Lunden' þane⁵ Eȝtetene⁶ day on þe Monþe of Octobr' In þe Two and fowertizþe⁷ ȝeare of vre cruninge.⁸

RICHARD ROLLE (1290?-1349)

FROM EPISTLE III

THE COMMANDMENT OF LOVE TO GOD

The lufe of Jhesu Criste es⁹ ful dere¹⁰ tresure, ful delytabyl¹¹ joy, and ful syker¹² to trayst¹³ man on. For-thi,¹⁴ he wil not gyf it to folys,¹⁵ that kan nocht hald¹⁶ it and kepe it tenderly; bot¹⁷ til¹⁸ thaim he gese¹⁹ it the whilk²⁰ nowther²¹ for wele ne for wa²² wil lat²³ it passe fra tham, bot are²⁴ thai wil dye or²⁵ thai wolde wrath Jhesu Criste. And na²⁶ wyse man dose²⁷ precyous lycor in a stynkand vessel, bot in a clene. Als²⁸ Criste dose²⁷ nocht his lufe in a foule hert in syn and bownden in vile lust of flesche, bot in a hert that es fayre and clene in vertues. Noght-for-thi,²⁹ a fowle vessel may be made sa clene that a ful dere thyng savely³⁰ may be done³¹ tharin.³² And Jhesu Criste oft-sythes³³ purges many synfull mans sawle³⁴ and makes it abyly³⁵ thurgh his grace to receyve the delitable¹¹ swetnes of hys luf, and to be his wonnyng-stede³⁶ in halynes;³⁷ and ay³⁸ the clennar it waxes, the mare³⁹ joy and solace of heven Criste settes thar-in. For-thi,¹⁴ at the fyrst tyme when a man es⁹ turned to God, he may not fele⁴⁰ that swete lycor til he have bene wele used in Goddes servys⁴¹ and his hert be purged thorow⁴² prayers and penance and gode thoughtes in God. For he that es slaw⁴³ in Goddes serveyce may nocht be byrnand⁴⁴ in lufe, bot-if⁴⁵ he do al his myght and travell⁴⁶ nyght and day to fulfill Goddes will. And when that blyssed lufe es in a mans hert, it wil not suffer hym be ydel,⁴⁷ bot ay it stirres hym to do som gode that myght be lykand⁴⁸ til God, as in praying, or in wirkyng

¹ signed ² hold ³ safe-keeping ⁴ ourselves ⁵ the
⁶ eighteenth ⁷ fortieth ⁸ crowning ⁹ is ¹⁰ precious
¹¹ delightful ¹² secure ¹³ trust ¹⁴ therefore ¹⁵ fools
¹⁶ hold ¹⁷ but ¹⁸ to ¹⁹ gives ²⁰ which ²¹ neither
²² woe ²³ let ²⁴ sooner ²⁵ ere ²⁶ no ²⁷ puts ²⁸ so
²⁹ nevertheless ³⁰ safely ³¹ put ³² therein ³³ oft-times
³⁴ soul ³⁵ able ³⁶ dwelling-place ³⁷ holiness ³⁸ ever
³⁹ more ⁴⁰ feel ⁴¹ service ⁴² through ⁴³ slow
⁴⁴ burning ⁴⁵ unless ⁴⁶ labor ⁴⁷ idle ⁴⁸ pleasing

profitabel thynges, or in spekyng of Cristes passyon;¹ and principally in thoght, that the mynde² of Jhesu Criste passe nocht fra his thoght. For if thou lufe hym trewly, thou wil³ glad the⁶ in hym and nocht in other thyng; and thou wil thynk on hym, kastand⁴ away al other thoghtes. Bot if thou be fals, and take other than hym, and delyte the in erthly thyng agaynes his wille, wit⁵ thou wele he will forsake the⁶ as thou hase⁷ done hyme, and dampne the for thi synne.

Wharfore, that thou may lufe hym trewly, understand that his lufe es proved in thre thynges; in thynkyng, in spekyng, in wirkyng. Change thi thoght fra the worlde, and kast it haly⁸ on hym, and he sall norysche the.⁹ Change thi mowth fra unnayte⁹ and warldes¹⁰ speche, and speke of hym, and he sall¹¹ comforth¹² the. Change thi hend¹³ fra the warkes¹⁴ of vanitese, and lyft tham¹⁵ in his name, and wyrke anly¹⁶ for hys lufe, and he sall¹¹ receyve the. Do thus, and than lufes¹⁷ thou trewly and gase¹⁸ in the way of perfitenes. Delyte the sa¹⁹ in hym that thi hert receyve nowther²⁰ worldes joy ne worldes sorow, and drede no anguys²¹ ne noy²² that may befall bodyly on the⁶ or on any of thi frendes; bot betake²³ all in-til Goddes will and thank hym ay of all hys sandes,²⁴ swa¹⁹ that thou may have rest and savoure in hys lufe. For if thi hert owther²⁵ be ledde with worldes drede or worldes solace, thou ert²⁶ full fer²⁷ fra the swetnes of Cristes lufe. . . . Wasche thi thoght clene wyth lufe-teres²⁸ and brennand²⁹ yernyng,³⁰ that he fynd na³¹ thyng fowle in the, for his joy es that thou be fayre and lufsom³² in his eghen.³³ Fayrehede³⁴ of thi sawle, that he covaytes, es that thou be chaste and meke, mylde and sufferand, never irk³⁵ to do his wille, ay hatand all wykkednes. In al that thou dose,³⁶ thank ay to com to the syght of his fairehede,³⁴ and sett al thine entent³⁷ thar-in, that thou may com thar-til³⁸ at thine endyng; for that aght³⁹ to be the ende of al oure traveyle, that we evermare, whils we lyve here, desyre that syght, in all oure hert, and

¹ passion, suffering ² memory ³ wilt ⁴ casting
⁵ know ⁶ thee ⁷ hast ⁸ wholly ⁹ vain ¹⁰ world's, worldly
¹¹ shall ¹² comfort ¹³ hands ¹⁴ works ¹⁵ them
¹⁶ only ¹⁷ lovest ¹⁸ goest ¹⁹ so ²⁰ neither
²¹ anguish ²² annoy, injury ²³ commit ²⁴ sendings, dispensations
²⁵ either ²⁶ art ²⁷ far ²⁸ love-tears
²⁹ burning ³⁰ yearning, desire ³¹ no ³² lovable
³³ eyes ³⁴ fairness ³⁵ weary ³⁶ dost ³⁷ intent
³⁸ thereto ³⁹ ought

that we thynk ay lang thar-till.¹ Als sa² festen³ in thi hert the mynd⁴ of his passyon and of his woundes: grete delyte and swetes sal thou fele if thou halde thi thought in mynde⁵ of the pyne⁶ that Cryst sufferd for the. . . I wate⁷ na thyng that swa⁸ inwardly sal take thi hert to covayte Goddes lufe and to desyre the joy of heven and to despise the vanitees of this worlde, as stedfast thynkyng of the myscheves and grevous woundes and of the dede⁹ of Jhesu Criste. It wil rayse thi thought aboven erthly lykyng,¹⁰ and make thi hert brennand¹¹ in Cristes lufe, and purches in thi sawle delitabelle¹² and savoure of heven.

Bot per-aunter¹³ thou will say: "I may noght despise the worlde, I may not fynd it in my hert to pyne¹⁴ my body, and me behoves¹⁵ lufe my fleschly frendes and take ese when it comes." If thou be temped¹⁶ with swilk¹⁷ thoughtes, I pray the that thou umbethynk¹⁸ the,¹⁹ fra the begynnyng of this worlde, whare²⁰ the worldes lovers er²¹ now, and whare the lovers er of God. Certes thai war²² men and wymen as we er, and ete and drank and logh;²³ and the wrechtes that lofed²⁴ this worlde toke ese til²⁵ thair body and lyved as thaim lyst,²⁶ in likyng of thair wikked will, and led thair dayes in lust and delyces;²⁷ and in a poynt²⁸ thai fel intil hell. Now may thou see that thai wer²⁹ foles and fowle glotons, that in a few yeres³⁰ wasted endles joy that was ordand³¹ for thaim if thai walde³² have done penance for thair synnes. Thou sese³³ that al the ryches of this world and delytes vanys³⁴ away and commes til noght. Sothely,³⁵ swa dose³⁶ al the lofers³⁷ thar-of; for nathyng may stande stably on a fals gronde. Thair bodys er gyn³⁸ til wormes in erth, and thair sawles til the devels of hell. Bot all that forsoke the pompe and the vanite of this lyfe and stode stalworthly³⁹ agaynes all temptacions and ended in the lufe of God, thai ar now in joy and hase⁴⁰ the erytage⁴¹ of heven, thar to won⁴² with-owten end, restand⁴³ in the delyces⁴⁴ of Goddes syght. . .

¹ thereto ² also ³ fasten ⁴ memory ⁵ torture ⁶ know
⁷ so ⁸ death ⁹ liking, desire ¹⁰ burning ¹¹ delight
¹² peradventure ¹³ behooves (*impersonal*) ¹⁴ tempted
¹⁵ such ¹⁶ consider ¹⁷ Reflexive, not to be translated.
¹⁸ where ¹⁹ are ²⁰ were ²¹ laughed ²² loved ²³ to
²⁴ pleased (*impersonal*) ²⁵ pleasures ²⁶ moment
²⁷ years ²⁸ ordained ²⁹ would ³⁰ seest ³¹ vanish
³² truly ³³ do ³⁴ lovers ³⁵ given ³⁶ steadfastly ³⁷ have
³⁸ heritage ³⁹ dwell ⁴⁰ resting ⁴¹ joys

SIR JOHN MANDEVILLE? (D. 1371)

THE VOIAGE AND TRAVAILE OF SIR JOHN MAUNDEVILE, KT.

FROM CHAP. IV

And from Ephesim Men gon¹ throghe many Iles in the See, unto the Cytee of Paterane, where Seynt Nicholas was born, and so to Marthia, where he was chosen to ben² Bischoppe; and there growethe right gode Wyn and strong; and that Men callen Wyn of Marthia. And from thens³ gon Men to the Ile of Crete, that the Emperour yaf⁴ somtyme⁵ to Janeweys.⁶ And thanne passen Men throghe the Isles of Colos and of Lango; of the whiche Iles Ypocras was Lord offe. And some Men seyn,⁷ that in the Ile of Lango is yit⁸ the Doughtre of Ypocras, in forme and lykeness of a gret Dragoun, that is a hundred Fadme⁹ of lengthe, as Men seyn: For I have not seen hire. And thei of the Isles callen hire, Lady of the Lond.¹⁰ And sche lyethe in an olde castelle, in a Cave, and schewethe¹¹ twyes or thryes in the Yeer. And sche dothe none harm to no Man, but-yif¹² Men don hire harm. And sche was thus chaunged and transformed, from a fair Damysele, in-to lyknesse of a Dragoun, be¹³ a Goddesse, that was clept¹⁴ Deane.¹⁵ And Men seyn, that sche schalle so endure in that forme of a Dragoun, unto the tyme that a Knyghte come, that is so hardy, that dar come to hire and kiss hire on the Mouthe: And then schalle sche turne ayen¹⁶ to hire owne Kynde,¹⁷ and ben a Woman ayen: But aftre that sche schalle not liven longe. And it is not long siththen,¹⁸ that a Knyghte of the Rodes, that was hardy and doughty in Armes, seyde that he wolde kyssen hire. And whan he was upon his Coursere, and wente to the Castelle, and entred into the Cave, the Dragoun lifte up hire Hed ayenst¹⁹ him. And whan the Knyghte saw hire in that Forme so hidous and so horrible, he fleyghe²⁰ away. And the Dragoun bare²¹ the Knyghte upon a Roche,²² mawgre his Hede,²³ and from that Roche, sche caste him in-to the See: and so was lost bothe Hors and Man. And also a yonge²⁴ Man, that wiste²⁵ not of the Dragoun,

¹ go ² be ³ thence ⁴ gave ⁵ formerly, once upon a time
⁶ the Genoese ⁷ say ⁸ yet ⁹ fathom ¹⁰ land
¹¹ appears ¹² unless ¹³ by ¹⁴ called ¹⁵ Diana ¹⁶ again,
back ¹⁷ nature ¹⁸ since ¹⁹ against ²⁰ fled ²¹ bore
²² rock ²³ despite his head (=despite all he could do)
²⁴ young ²⁵ knew

FROM CHAP. XVII

wente out of a Schipp, and wente thorghe the Ile, til that he come to the Castelle, and cam in to the Cave; and wente so longe, til that he fond a Chambre, and there he saughe¹ a Damysele, that kembed² hire Hede, and lokede in a Myroure; and sche hadde meche³ Tresoure abouten hire: and he trowed,⁴ that sche hadde ben a comoun Woman, that dwelled there to receyve Men to Folye. And he abode, till the Damysele saughe the Schadewe of him in the Myroure. And sche turned hire toward him, and asked hym, what he wolde. And he seyde, he wolde ben hire Limman⁵ or Paramour. And sche asked him, yif⁶ that he were a Knyghte. And he seyde, nay. And than sche seyde, that he myghte not ben hire Lemman:⁷ But sche bad him gon ayen⁸ unto his Felowes, and make him Knyghte, and come ayen upon the Morwe, and sche scholde come out of the Cave before him; and thanne come and kysse hire on the mowthe, and have no Drede; "for I schalle do the no maner harm, alle be it that thou see me in Lyknesse of a Dragoun. For thoughe thou see me hidouse and horrible to loken onne, I do⁹ the to wytene,¹⁰ that it is made be Enchaument. For withouten doute, I am non other than thou seest now, a Woman; and therefore drede the noughte. And yif thou kysse me, thou schalt have alle this Tresoure, and be my Lord, and Lord also of alle that Ile." And he departed fro hire and wente to his Felowes to Schippe, and leet¹¹ make him Knyghte, and cam ayen upon the Morwe, for to kysse this Damysele. And whan he saughe hire comen¹² out of the Cave, in forme of a Dragoun, so hidouse and so horrible, he hadde so grete drede, that he fleyghe¹³ ayen to the Schippe; and sche folewed him. And whan sche saughe, that he turned not ayen, sche began to crye, as a thing that hadde meche¹⁴ Sorwe: and thanne sche turned ayen, in-to hire Cave; and anon the Knyghte dyede. And siththen¹⁵ hidrewards,¹⁶ myghte no Knyghte se hire, but that he dyede anon. But whan a Knyghte comethe, that is so hardy to kysse hire, he schalle not dye; but he schalle turne the Damysele in-to hire righte Forme and kyndely¹⁷ Schapp, and he schal be Lord of alle the Contreyes and Iles aboveseyd.

¹ saw ² combed ³ much ⁴ believed, thought
⁵ lover ⁶ if ⁷ back ⁸ cause ⁹ know
¹⁰ let ¹¹ come ¹² fled ¹³ since ¹⁴ till now
¹⁵ natural

Also yee have herd me seye that Jerusalem is in the myddes¹ of the World; and that may men preven² and schewen there be a Spere that is pighte³ in-to the Erthe, upon the hour of mydday, whan it is Equenoxium, that schewethe no schadwe on no syde. And that it scholde ben in the myddes⁴ of the World, David wytnessethe it in the Psautre, where he seythe, *Deus operatus est salute[m] in medio Terre.*⁵ Thanne thei that parten⁶ fro the parties⁷ of the West for to go toward Jerusalem, als many jorneyes⁸ as thei gon upward for to go thidre, in als many jorneyes may thei gon fro Jerusalem, unto other Confynes of the Superficialtie of the Erthe beyonde. And whan men gon beyonde tho⁹ jorneyes toward Ynde and to the foreyn Yles, alle is envyronyng the roundnesse of the Erthe and of the See, undreoure Contrees on this half.¹⁰ And therefore hathe it befallen many tymes of o¹¹ thing that I have herd cownted¹² whan I was yong: how a worthi man departed somtyme from oure Contrees for to go serche the World. And so he passed Ynde and the Yles beyonde Ynde, where ben mo¹³ than 5000 Yles; and so longe he wente be¹⁴ See and Lond and so environed the World be many seyns, that he fond an Yle where he herde speke his owne Langage, callynge on Oxen in the Plowghe, suche Wordes as men speken to Bestes in his owne Contree; whereof he hadde gret Mervayle,¹⁵ for he knewe not how it myghte be. But I seye, that he had gon so longe be Londe and be See that he had envyround alle the Erthe, that he was comen ayen¹⁶ envyrounyng, that is to seye, goyng aboute, unto his owne Marches,¹⁷ yif he wolde have passed forthe til he had founden his Contree and his owne knoueleche.¹⁸ But he turned ayen from thens, from whens he was come fro; and so he loste moche peynefulle labour, as him-self seyde a gret while aftre that he was comen hom. For it befelle aftre, that he wente in to Norweye; and there Tempest of the See toke him; and he arryved in an Yle; and whan he was in that Yle, he knew wel that it was the Yle where he had herd speke his owne Langage before and the callynge of the Oxen at the Plowghe; and that was possible thinge. But how it semethe to symple

¹ middle ² prove ³ stuck ⁴ God has wrought salvation in the middle of the earth. ⁵ depart ⁶ parts
⁷ jorneyes (*i.e.* days' travel) ⁸ those ⁹ side ¹⁰ one
¹¹ recounted, told ¹² more ¹³ by ¹⁴ wonder ¹⁵ back
¹⁶ boundaries, borders ¹⁷ acquaintances

men unlearned that men ne mowe¹ not go undre the Erthe, and also that men scholde falle toward the Hevene from undre! But that may not be, upon lesse than wee mowe falle toward Hevene fro the Erthe where wee ben.² For fro what partie of the Erthe that men duelle,³ outh⁴ aboven or benethen, it semethe always to hem⁵ that duellen that thei gon more righte than ony other folk. And righte as it semethe to us that thei ben undre us, righte so it semethe hem that wee ben undre hem. For yif a man myghte falle fro the Erthe unto the Firmament, be grettere resoun, the Erthe and the See, that ben so grete and so hevy, scholde fallen to the Firmament: but that may not be; and therefore seithe oure Lord God, *Non timeas me, qui suspendi Terra[m] ex nichilo?*⁶ And alle be it that it be possible thing that men may so envyrone alle the World, natheles⁷ of a 1000 persones on⁸ ne myghte not happen to returnen in-to his Contree. For⁹ the gretnesse of the Erthe and of the See, men may go be a 1000 and a 1000 other weyes, that no man cowde redye¹⁰ him perfetely toward the parties that he cam fro, but-yif¹¹ it were be aventure and happ or be the grace of God. For the Erthe is fulle large and fulle gret, and holt¹² in roundnesse and aboute envyrone, be aboven and be benethen, 20425 Myles, afre the opynyoun of the olde wise Astronomeres. And here Seyenges I repreve¹³ noughte. But afre my lytyle wytt, it semethe me, saynge here¹⁴ reverence, that it is more.

FROM CHAP. XXVII

In the Lond of Prestre John ben many dyverse thinges and many precious Stones, so grete and so large that men maken of hem⁵ Vesselle;¹⁵ as Plateres, Dissches, and Cuppes. And many other marveylls ben there; that it were to¹⁶ combrous and to¹⁶ long to putten it in scripture¹⁷ of Bokes.

But of the princypalle Yles and of his Estate and of his Lawe I schalle telle you som partye.¹⁸ This Emperour Prestre John is Cristene; and a gret partie of his Contree also: but yit thei have not alle the Articles of oure Feythe, as wee have. Thei beleven wel in the

¹ may ² are ³ dwell, inhabit ⁴ either ⁵ them
⁶ Dost thou not fear me who have suspended the earth upon nothing? ⁷ nevertheless ⁸ one ⁹ because of
¹⁰ direct ¹¹ unless ¹² holds, contains ¹³ reprove, criticise ¹⁴ their ¹⁵ vessels ¹⁶ too ¹⁷ writing
¹⁸ part

Fadre, in the Sone, and in the Holy Gost: and thei ben fulle devoute and righte trewe on¹ to another. And thei sette not be² no Barettes,³ ne be Cawteles,⁴ ne of no Disceytes.⁵ And he hathe undre him 72 Provynces; and in every Provynce is a Kyng. And theise Kynges han⁶ Kynges undre hem; and alle ben tributaries to Prestre John. And he hathe in his Lordschipes many grete marveyles. For in his Contree is the See that men clepen⁷ the Gravely⁸ See, that is alle Gravelle and Sond⁹ with-outen ony drope of Watre; and it ebbethe and flowethe in grete Wawes¹⁰ as other Sees don; and it is never stille ne in pes¹¹ in no maner¹² cesoun.¹³ And no man may passe that See be Navye¹⁴ ne be no maner of craft:¹⁵ and therefore may no man knowe what Lond is beyond that See. And alle-be-it that it have no Watre, yit men fynden¹⁶ there-in and on the Bankes fulle gode Fische of other maner of kynde and schappe thanne men fynden in ony other See; and thei ben of right goode tast and delycious to mannes mete.

And a 3 journeyes long fro that See, ben gret Mountaynes; out of the whiche gothe¹⁷ out a gret Flood,¹⁸ that comethe out of Paradys; and it is fulle of precious Stones, withouten ony drope of Water; and it renne¹⁹ the thorghe the Desert, on that²⁰ o¹ syde, so that it makethe the See gravely; and it berethe¹⁷ in-to that See, and there it endethe. And that Flome¹⁸ renne¹⁹ also 3 dayes in the Woke,²¹ and bryngethe with him grete Stones and the Roches²² also therewith, and that gret plentee. And anon as thei ben entred in-to the gravely See, thei ben seyn²³ no more, but lost for evere more. And in tho 3 dayes that that Ryvere renne¹⁹ no man dar²⁴ entren in-to it: but in the other dayes men dar entren wel ynow.²⁵ Also beyonde that Flome,¹⁸ more upward to the Desertes, is a gret Pleyn alle gravely betwene the Mountaynes; and in that Playn every day at the Sonne risynge begynnen to growe smale Trees; and thei growen til mydday, berynge Frute; but no man dar taken of that Frute, for it is a thing of Fayrye.²⁶ And afre mydday thei discreen²⁷ and entren ayen²⁸ in-to the Erthe; so that at the goynge doun of the Sonne thei apperen no more; and so thei don every day: and that is a gret marvaylle.

¹ one ² set not by (= do not practice) ³ frauds
⁴ tricks ⁵ deceits ⁶ have ⁷ call ⁸ gravely ⁹ sand
¹⁰ waves ¹¹ peace ¹² kind of ¹³ season ¹⁴ ship
¹⁵ device ¹⁶ find ¹⁷ goes, flows ¹⁸ river ¹⁹ runs
²⁰ the ²¹ week ²² rocks ²³ seen ²⁴ dare ²⁵ enough
²⁶ magic ²⁷ decrease ²⁸ again

JOHN WICLIF (D. 1384)

THE GOSPEL OF MATHEW (FIRST VERSION)

CHAP. V

Jhesus forsothe,¹ seyng² cumpanyes, wente up in-to an hill; and when he hadde sete,³ his disciplis camen nighe to hym. And he, openynge his mouthe, taughte to hem, saynge, "Blessid be the pore in spirit, for the kingdam in hevenes is heren.⁴ Blessid be mylde men, for thei shuln⁵ welde⁶ the eerthe. Blessid be thei that mourmen, for thei shuln⁵ be comfortid. Blessid be thei that hungren and thristen rightwisnesse,⁷ for thei shuln ben fulfillid. Blessid be merciful men, for thei shuln gete mercye. Blessid be thei that ben⁸ of clene herte, for thei shuln see God. Blessid be pesible men, for thei shuln be clepid⁹ the sons of God. Blessid be thei that suffren persecucioun for rightwisnesse,⁷ for the kyngdam of hevenes is herun.⁴ Yee shuln⁵ be blessid, when men shulen curse you, and shulen pursue you, and shulen say al yvel¹⁰ ayeins¹¹ you leezing,¹² for me. Joye¹³ yee with-yn-forth,¹⁴ and glade yee with-out-forth, for youre meede¹⁵ is plentevoue¹⁶ in hevenes; forsothe so thei han¹⁷ pursued and¹⁸ prophetis that weren before you. Yee ben⁸ salt of the erthe; that yif¹⁹ the salt shal vanysche away, wherynne shal it be saltid? To no thing it is worth over,²⁰ no²¹ bot²² that it be sent out, and defouled of men. Yee ben⁸ light of the world; a citee putt on an hill may nat be hid; nether men tendyn²³ a lanterne, and putten it undir a busshel, but on a candilstike, that it yeve²⁴ light to alle that ben in the hous. So shyne²⁵ youre light before men, that thei see youre good werkis, and glorifie youre Fadir that is in hevens. Nyle²⁶ ye gesse, or deme,²⁷ that Y came to undo, or distruye, the lawe, or the prophetis; I came not to undo the lawe, but to fulfillle. Forsothe²⁸ I say to you trewth, til heven and erthe passe, oon²⁹ i, that is leste³⁰ lettre, or titil, shal nat passe fro the lawe, til alle thingis be don. Therefore he that undoth, or breketh, oon of these leste³⁰ maundementis,³¹ and techith thus men, shal be clepid³² the leste in the rewme³³ of hevenes; but he that doith, and techith, schal be clepid greet in the kyngdom of hevenes. And Y seie to you, that but your rightfulness be more plentevoue than of scribis and of Farisees, ye

¹ indeed ² seeing ³ sat ⁴ theirs ⁵ shall ⁶ rule
⁷ righteousness ⁸ are ⁹ called ¹⁰ evil ¹¹ against
¹² lying ¹³ rejoice ¹⁴ with-yn-forth = inwardly ¹⁵ re-

THE GOSPEL OF MATHEW

(SECOND VERSION)

CAP. V

And Jhesus, seyng² the puple, wente up in-to an hil; and whanne he was set, hise disciplis camen to hym. And he openyde his mouth, and taughte hem, and seide, "Blessed ben pore men in spirit, for the kyngdom of hevenes is herne.⁴ Blessid ben mylde men, for thei schulen⁶ welde⁶ the erthe. Blessid ben thei that mornen, for thei schulen be coumfortid. Blessid ben thei that hungren and thristen rightwisnesse, for thei schulen be fulfillid. Blessid ben merciful men, for thei schulen gete merci. Blessid ben thei that ben of clene herte, for thei schulen se God. Blessid ben pesible men, for thei schulen be clepid⁹ Goddis children. Blessid ben thei that suffren persecucioun for rightfulness, for the kingdam of hevenes is herne.⁴ Ye schulen be blessid, whanne men schulen curse you, and schulen pursue you, and shulen seie al yvel¹⁰ ayens¹¹ you liynge, for me. Joie¹³ ye, and be ye glad for youre meede¹⁵ is plentevoue¹⁶ in hevenes; for so thei han¹⁷ pursued also profetis that weren bifor you. Ye ben salt of the erthe; that if the salt vanysche away, wherynne schal it be saltid? To no thing it is worth over,²⁰ no²¹ but²² that it be cast out, and be defouled of men. Ye ben light of the world; a citee set on an hil may not be hid; ne me teendith²³ not a lanterne, and puttith it undur a busschel, but on a candilstike, that it yve light to alle that ben in the hous. So schyne²⁵ youre light befor men, that thei se youre goode werkis, and glorifie youre Fadir that is in hevenes. Nil²⁶ ye deme,²⁷ that Y cam to undo the lawe, or the profetis; Y cam not to undo the lawe, but to fulfillle. Forsothe Y seie to you, til hevene and erthe passe, o²⁹ lettir or o²⁹ titel shal not passe fro the lawe, til alle thingis be doon. Therfor he that brekith oon of these leeste³⁰ maundementis,³¹ and techith thus men, schal be clepid³² the leste in the rewme³³ of hevenes; but he that doith, and techith, schal be clepid greet in the kyngdom of hevenes. And Y seie to you, that but your rightfulness be more plentevoue than of scribis and of Farisees, ye

ward ¹⁶ plenteous ¹⁷ have ¹⁸ also ¹⁹ if ²⁰ besides
²¹ not ²² but ²³ light ²⁴ give ²⁵ Subj. of command. ²⁶ do
not, literally, wish not (Lat. nolite) ²⁷ think ²⁸ verily
²⁹ one ³⁰ least ³¹ commandments ³² called ³³ king-
dom ³⁴ he ³⁵ unless

plentevoue than of scribis and Pharisees, yee schulen not entre in-to kyngdam of hevenes. Yee han¹ herde that it is said to olde men, Thou shal nat slea; forsothe he that sleeth, shal be gylty of dome.² But I say to you, that evereche³ that is wrothe to his brother, shal be gylty of dome; forsothe he that shal say to his brother, Racha, that is, a word of scorn, shal be gylty of counseile;⁴ sothly he that shal say, Fool, that is, a word of dispisyng, shal be gylty of the fjr⁵ of helle. Therfore yif thou offrist thi yift⁶ at the auter,⁷ and there shalt bythenke,⁸ that thi brother hath sum-what ayeins⁹ thee, leewe there thi yift before the auter, and go first for to be recounseilid, or acordid, to thi brother, and thanne thou cummyng shalt offre thi yifte. Be thou consentyng to thin adversarie soon, the whyle thou art in the way with hym, lest peraventure thin adversarie take thee to the domesman,¹⁰ and the domesman take thee to the mynystre,¹¹ and thou be sente in-to prisoun. Trewely I say to thee, Thou shalt not go thennes, til thou yelde¹² the last ferthing. Ye han herd for it was said to olde men, Thou shalt nat do lecherye. Forsothe Y say to you, for-why¹³ every man that seeth a womman for to coveite hire, now he hath do lecherie by hire in his herte. That yif thi right eie sclaudre¹⁴ thee, pulle it out, and cast it fro thee; for it speedith¹⁵ to thee, that oon¹⁶ of thi membrs perishe, than al thi body go in-to helle. And yif thi right hond sclaudre thee, kitt¹⁷ it away, and cast it fro thee; for it spedith to thee, that oon of thi membrs perishe, than that al thi body go in-to helle. Forsothe it is said, Who-ever shall leewe his wyf, yeve¹⁸ he to hir a libel, that is, a litil boke, of forsakyng. Sothely Y say to you, that every man that shal leewe his wyf, outaken¹⁹ cause of fornicacioun, he makith hire do lecherie and he that weddith the forsaken wijf, doth avoutrie.²⁰ Efte-soonys²¹ yee han herd, that it was said to olde men, Thou shalt not forswere, sothely²² to the Lord thou shalt yeeld²³ thin cethis.²⁴ Forsothe Y say to you, to nat swere on al manere; neither by hevene, for it is the trone of God; nether by the erthe, for it is the stole of his feet; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the citee of a greet kyng; neither thou shalt swere by thin heved,²⁵ for thou maist not make oon heer whyt or blak; but be youre word yea, yea; Nay, nay; forsothe that that is more

¹ have ² judgment ³ every one ⁴ the council ⁵ fire ⁶ gift ⁷ altar ⁸ remember ⁹ against ¹⁰ judge ¹¹ officer ¹² pay ¹³ that

schulen not entre into the kyngdom of hevenes. Ye han¹ herd that it was seid to elde men, Thou schalt not slee; and he that sleeth, schal be gilty to doom.² But Y seie to you, that ech man that is wrooth to his brothir, schal be gilty to doom; and he that seith to his brother, Fy! schal be gilty to the counseil;⁴ but he that seith, Fool, schal be gilty to the fier of helle. Therfor if thou offrist thi yifte⁶ at the auter,⁷ and ther thou bithenkist, that thi brothir hath sum-what ayens⁹ thee, leewe there thi yifte bifor the auter, and go first to be recounselid to thi brothir, and thanne thou schalt come, and schalt offre thi yifte. Be thou consentyng to thin adversarie soone, while thou art in the weie with hym, lest peraventure thin adversarie take thee to the domesman,¹⁰ and the domesman take thee to the mynystre,¹¹ and thou be sent in-to prisoun. Treuly Y seie to thee, thou shalt not go out fro thennus, til thou yelde¹² the last ferthing. Ye han herd that it was seid to elde men, Thou schalt do no letcherie. But Y seie to you, that every man that seeth a womman for to coveite hir, hath now do letcherie bi hir in his herte. That if thi right iye sclaudre¹⁴ thee, pulle hym out, and caste fro thee; for it spedith¹⁵ to thee, that oon¹⁶ of thi membrs perishe, than that al thi bodi go in-to helle. And if thi right hond sclaudre thee, kitte¹⁷ hym away, and caste fro thee; for it spedith to thee that oon¹⁶ of thi membrs perishe, than that al thi bodi go in-to helle. And it hath be seyde, Who-ever leeveth his wiif, yyve he to hir a libel of forsakyng. But Y seie to you, that every man that leeveth his wiif, outakun cause of fornicacioun, makith hir to do letcherie, and he that weddith the forsakun wiif, doth avowtrye. Eftsoone ye han herd, that it was seid to elde men, Thou schalt not forswere, but thou schalt yelde thin othis to the Lord. But Y seie to you, that ye swere not for any thing; nether bi hevene, for it is the trone of God; nether bi the erthe, for it is the stole of his feet; nether bi Jerusalem, for it is the citee of a greet kyng; nether thou shalt not swere bi thin heed, for thou maist not make oon heere white ne blacke; but be youre word, yhe, yhe; Nay, nay; and that that is more than these, is of yvel. Ye han herd that it hath be seid, Iye for iye, and tothe for tothe. But Y seie to you, that ye ayenstonde²⁶ not an yvel man; but if any

¹⁴ slander ¹⁵ profiteth ¹⁶ one ¹⁷ cut ¹⁸ give (subj. of command) ¹⁹ except ²⁰ adultery ²¹ again ²² truly ²³ pay ²⁴ oaths ²⁵ head ²⁶ resist

than this, is of yvel. Yee han herde that it is said, Eieye¹ for eieye,² toth for toth. But Y say to you, to nat ayein-stonde² yvel; but yif any shal smyte thee in the right cheeke, yeve to hym and³ the tother; and to hym that wole stryve with thee in dome,⁴ and take away thi coote, leewe thou to hym and² thin over-clothe; and who-ever constrayneth thee a thousand pacis, go thou with hym other tweyne. Forsothe yif⁶ to hym that axith of thee, and turne thou nat away fro hym that wol borwe⁶ of thee. Yee han herd that it is said, Thou shalt love thin neighbore, and hate thin enemy. But Y say to you, love yee youre enmyes, do yee wel to hem⁷ that haten⁵ you, and preyre yee for men pursuyng, and falsly chalengyng⁹ you; that yee be the sonys of youre Fadir that is in hevenes, that makith his sune to springe up upon good and yvel men, and rayneth upon juste men and unjuste men. For yif ye loven hem that loven you, what meed¹⁰ shul¹¹ yee have? whether and³ puplicans don nat this thing? And yif yee greten, or saluten, youre bretheren oonly, what more over¹² shul yee don? whether and³ paynymys¹³ don nat this thing? Therfore be yee parfit,¹⁴ as and³ youre heavenly Fadir is parfit. Take yee hede, lest ye don your rightwisnesse before men, that yee be seen of hem, ellis¹⁵ ye shule nat han meed at youre Fadir that is in hevenes. Therfore when thou dost almesse,¹⁶ nyle¹⁷ thou syng byfore thee in a trumpe, as ypocritis don in synagogis and streetis, that thei ben maad worshipful of men; forsothe Y saye to you, thei han resceyved her¹⁸ meede. But thee doynge almesse,¹⁶ knowe nat the left hond what thi right hond doth, that thi almes be in hidlis,¹⁹ and thi Fadir that seeth in hidlis, shal yelde²⁰ to thee."

smyte thee in the right cheke, schewe to him also the tothir; and to hym that wole stryve with thee in doom,⁴ and take away thi coote, leewe thou to him also thi mantil; and who-ever constreyneth thee a thousynde pacis, go thou with hym othir tweyne. Yyve⁵ thou to hym that axith of thee, and turne not away fro hym that wole borewe⁶ of thee. Ye han herd that it was seid, Thou shalt love thi neighbore, and hate thin enemye. But Y seie to you, love ye youre enemyes, do ye wel to hem that hatiden you, and preyre ye for hem⁷ that pursuen, and sclaudren you; that ye be the sones of your Fadir that is in hevenes, that makith his sunne to rise upon goode and yvele men, and reyneth on just men and unjuste. For if ye loven hem⁷ that loven you, what meed¹⁰ schulen ye han? whether pupplicans doon not this? And if ye greten youre bretheren oonly, what schulen ye do more? ne doon not hethene men this? Therfore be ye parfit, as youre hevenli Fadir is parfit."

[It will be observed that the Second Version agrees with the Authorized Version in the division into chapters, while the First Version contains a few verses usually assigned to Chapter VI.]

¹ eye ² resist ³ also ⁴ a lawsuit ⁵ give ⁶ borrow ⁷ them ⁸ hate ⁹ accusing ¹⁰ reward ¹¹ shall ¹² besides ¹³ heathen ¹⁴ perfect ¹⁵ else ¹⁶ alms ¹⁷ do not ¹⁸ their ¹⁹ secret ²⁰ pay

JOHN DE TREVISA (1326-1412)

HIGDEN'S POLYCHRONICON

BOOK I. CHAPTER LIX

As it is i-knowe¹ how meny manere peple beeth² in this ilond,³ there beeth also so many dyvers longages⁴ and tonges; notheles⁵ Walsche men and Scottes, that beeth nought i-medled⁶ with other naciouns, holdeth wel nyh hir⁷ firste longage and speche; but-yif⁸

¹ known ² are ³ island ⁴ languages ⁵ nevertheless ⁶ mixed ⁷ their ⁸ except

the Scottes that were somtyme confederat and wonede¹ with the Pictes drawe² somewhat after hir speche; but the Flemmynges that woneth³ in the weste side of Wales haveth i-left her⁴ straunge speche and speketh Saxonliche i-now.⁵ Also Engliche men, they⁶ thei hadde from the bygynnyng thre manere speche, northerne,

¹ dwelt ² incline ³ dwell ⁴ their ⁵ enough ⁶ though

sowtherne, and middel speche in the myddel of the lond, as they come of thre manere peple of Germania, notheles¹ by comyxtioun and mellynge² firste with Danes and afterward with Normans, in meny the contray³ longage is apayred,⁴ and som useth straunge wlafterynge,⁵ chiterynge,⁶ harraynge,⁷ and garraynge⁸ grisbayting.⁹ This apayrynge of the burthe of the tunge is bycause of tweie thinges; oon is for children in scole ayenst the usage and manere of alle othere nacions beeth compelled for to leve¹⁰ hire¹¹ owne langage, and for to construe hir¹¹ lessouns and here¹¹ thynges in Frensche, and so they haveth¹² seth¹³ the Normans come¹⁴ first in-to Engelond. Also gentil-men children beeth i-taught to speke Frensche from the tyme that they beeth i-rokked in here cradel, and kunne¹⁵ speke and playe with a childes broche;¹⁶ and uplondisse¹⁷ men wil likne hym-self to gentil-men, and fondeth¹⁸ with greet besynesse for to speke Frensche, for to be i-tolde¹⁹ of. *Trevisa*.²⁰ This manere was moche i-used to-for²¹ [the] Firste Deth²² and is siththe²³ sumdel²³ i-chaunged; for John Cornwaile, a maister of grammer, chaunged the lore in grammer scole and construccoun of²⁴ Frensche in-to Engliche; and Richard Pencriche lerned the manere²⁵ techynge of hym and othere men of Pencrich; so that now, the yere of oure Lorde a thowsand thre hundred and foure score and fyve, and of the secoude kyng Richard after the conquest nyne, in alle the gramere scoles of Engelond, children levedh Frensche and construeth and lerneth an²⁶ Engliche, and haveth¹² therby avauntage in oon side and disavauntage in another side; here¹¹ avauntage is, that they lerneth her¹¹ gramer in lasse²⁷ tyme than children were i-woned²⁸ to doo; disavauntage is that now children of gramer scole conneth²⁹ na more Frensche than can³⁰ hir¹¹ lift³¹ heele, and that is harme for hem³² and³³ they schulle passe the see and travaille in straunge landes and in many other places. Also gentil-men haveth now moche i-left³⁴ for to teche here¹¹ children Frensche. *R*.³⁵ Hit semeth a greet wonder how Engliche, that

¹ nevertheless ² mixing ³ country, native ⁴ corrupted ⁵ stammering ⁶ chattering ⁷ snarling ⁸ howling ⁹ gnashing of teeth ¹⁰ leave, give up ¹¹ their ¹² have ¹³ since ¹⁴ came ¹⁵ can ¹⁶ brooch (ornament in general) ¹⁷ country ¹⁸ attempt ¹⁹ accounted ²⁰ *What follows, to R.*, is *Trevisa's* addition. ²¹ before ²² the First Plague, 1348-1349 ²³ somewhat ²⁴ from ²⁵ kind of ²⁶ in ²⁷ less ²⁸ accustomed ²⁹ know ³⁰ knows ³¹ left ³² them ³³ if ³⁴ ceased ³⁵ *What follows, to Trevisa, is from Higden.*

is the burthe tonge of Englishe men and her¹ owne langage and tonge, is so dyverse of sown² in this oon³ ilond, and the langage of Normandie is comlynge⁴ of another londe, and hath oon⁵ manere⁵ soun² among alle men that speketh hit aright in Engelond. *Trevisa*.⁶ Nevertheles there is as many dyvers manere⁷ Frensche in the reem⁸ of Fraunce as is dyvers manere Engliche in the reem of Engelond. *R*.⁹ Also of the forsaide Saxon tonge that is i-deled¹⁰ athre¹¹ and is abide¹² scarsliche¹³ with fewe uplondisse¹⁴ men is greet wonder; for men of the est with men of the west, as it were undir the same partie¹⁵ of hevene, acordeth more in sownynge¹⁶ of speche than men of the north with men of the south; therefore it is that Mercii, that beeth men of myddel Engelond, as it were parteners of the endes, understandeth bettre the side langages, northerne and southerne, than northerne and southerne understandeth either other. *Willelmus de Pontificibus, libro tertio*.¹⁷ Al the longage¹⁸ of the Northhumbres, and specialliche at York, is so scharp, slitting, and frotyng¹⁹ and unschape, that we southerne men may that longage unneth²⁰ understonde. I trowe²¹ that that is bycause that they beeth nyh²² to straunge men and nacions that speketh strongliche,²³ and also bycause that the kynges of Engelond woneth²⁴ alwey fer from that cuntrey; for they beeth more i-torned²⁵ to the south contray, and yif they gooth to the north contray they gooth with greet help and strengthe.²⁶ *R*.²⁷ The cause why they beeth more in the south contray than in the north, is for²⁸ hit may be better come londe,²⁹ more peple, more noble citees, and more profitable havenes.³⁰

GEOFFREY CHAUCER (1340?-1400)

A TREATISE ON THE ASTROLABE³¹

PROLOGUS

Litell Lewis³² my sone, I have perceived wel by certeyne evidences thyn abilite to lerne

¹ their ² sound ³ one ⁴ comer, immigrant ⁵ kind of ⁶ *Trevisa* adds a very intelligent observation. ⁷ kinds of ⁸ realm ⁹ *What follows is from Higden.* ¹⁰ divided ¹¹ in three (dialects) ¹² has remained ¹³ scarcely ¹⁴ country ¹⁵ part ¹⁶ sounding, pronouncing ¹⁷ *The historian, William of Malmesbury, is Higden's authority for what follows* ¹⁸ language ¹⁹ chafing, harsh ²⁰ scarcely ²¹ believe ²² nigh ²³ harshly, or (perhaps) strangely ²⁴ live ²⁵ turned ²⁶ i.e. with a large army ²⁷ *Higden* adds a remark of his own to his quotation. ²⁸ because ²⁹ land ³⁰ havens, harbors ³¹ an astronomical instrument; consult the dictionary ³² Lewis

TRANSLATION OF BOETHIUS

sciencez touchinge nombres and proporciouns; and as wel considere I thy bisy¹ preyere² in special to lerne the Tretis of the Astrolabie. Than,³ for as mechel⁴ as a filosofre seith, "he wrappeth him in his frend, that condescendeth to the rightful preyers of his frend," therfor have I yeven⁵ thee a suffisaunt Astrolabie as for oure orizonte,⁶ compowned⁷ after the latitude of Oxenford; upon which, by mediacion⁸ of this litel tretis, I purpose to teche thee a certain nombre of conclusions⁹ apertening¹⁰ to the same instrument. I seye a certain of conclusions, for three causes. The furste cause is this: truste wel that alle the conclusiouns that han¹¹ ben founde, or elles¹² possibly mighten be founde in so noble an instrument as an Astrolabie, ben¹³ unknowe perfilty to any mortal man in this regioun, as I suppose. Another cause is this: that sothly,¹⁴ in any tretis of the Astrolabie that I have seyn,¹⁵ there ben¹³ some conclusions that wole¹⁶ nat in alle thinges performen hir¹⁷ bihestes;¹⁸ and some of hem ben¹³ to¹⁹ harde to thy tendre age of ten year to conseyye.²⁰ This tretis, divided in fyve parties,²¹ wole¹⁶ I shewe thee under ful lighte²² rewles²³ and naked wordes in English; for Latin ne canstow²⁴ yit but smal, my lyte²⁵ sone. But natheles,²⁶ suffyse to thee these trewe conclusiouns in English, as wel as suffyseth to these noble clerkes Grekes these same conclusiouns in Grek, and to Arabiens in Arabik, and to Jewes in Ebrew, and to the Latin folk in Latin; whiche Latin folk han¹¹ hem²⁷ furst out of othre diverse langages, and writen in hir¹⁷ owne tonge, that is to sein,²⁸ in Latin. And God wot,²⁹ that in alle these langages, and in many mo,³⁰ han¹¹ these conclusiouns ben³¹ suffisantly lerned and taught, and yit by diverse rewles,²³ right as diverse pathes leden diverse folk the righte way to Rome. Now wol I prey meekly every discret persone that redeth or hereth this litel tretis, to have my rewde³² endyting³³ for excused, and my superfluite of wordes, for two causes. The furste cause is, for-that³⁴ curious³⁵ endyting³³ and hard sentence³⁶ is ful hevyl³⁷ atones³⁸ for swich³⁹ a child to lerne. And

¹ eager ² prayer, request ³ then ⁴ much ⁵ given ⁶ horizon ⁷ composed ⁸ means ⁹ problems and their solutions ¹⁰ pertaining ¹¹ have ¹² else ¹³ are ¹⁴ truly ¹⁵ seen ¹⁶ will ¹⁷ their ¹⁸ promises ¹⁹ too ²⁰ understand ²¹ parts ²² easy ²³ rules ²⁴ knowest thou ²⁵ little ²⁶ nevertheless ²⁷ them ²⁸ say ²⁹ knows ³⁰ more ³¹ been ³² rude ³³ composition ³⁴ because ³⁵ elaborate ³⁶ meaning, sense ³⁷ difficult ³⁸ at once ³⁹ such

the secoude cause is this, that sothly¹ me-semeth² betre to wryten unto a child twyes³ a good sentence, than he forgete it ones.⁴ And, Lowis, yif⁵ so be that I shewe thee in my lighte⁶ English as trewe conclusiouns touching this matere, and naught⁷ only as trewe but as many and as subtil conclusiouns as ben⁸ shewed in Latin in any commune tretis of the Astrolabie, con me the more thank;⁹ and preye God save the king, that is lord of this langage, and alle that him feyth bereth¹⁰ and obeyeth, everech¹¹ in his degree, the more¹² and the lasse.³ But considere wel, that I ne usurpe nat to have founde this werk of my labour or of myn engin.¹⁴ I nam¹⁵ but a lewd¹⁶ compilatour¹⁷ of the labour of olde Astrologiens, and have hit translated in myn English only for thy doctrine; and with this swerd¹⁸ shal I sleen¹⁹ envye.

BOETHIUS: DE CONSOLATIONE
PHILOSOPHIAE

BOOK III

PROSE IX

"It suffyseth that I have shewed hider-to the forme of false wefulnessse,²⁰ so that, yif⁵ thou loke now clearly, the order of myn entencioun requireth from hennes-forth²¹ to shewen thee the verray²² wefulnessse."

"For-sothe,"¹ quod I, "I see wel now that suffisaunce²³ may nat comen by richesces, ne power by reames,²⁴ ne reverence by dignitees, ne gentilesse²⁵ by glorie, ne joye by delices."²⁶ "And hast thou wel knowen the causes," quod she, "why it is?"

"Certes,²⁷ me-semeth," quod I, "that I see hem right as though it were thorough a litel clifte;²⁸ but me were levere²⁹ knowen hem³⁰ more openly of thee."

"Certes," quod she, "the resoun is al redy. For thilke³¹ thing that simply is o³² thing, with-outen any devisioun, the error and folye of mankinde departeth and devydeth it, and misledeth it and transporteth from verray²²

¹ truly ² it seems to me ³ twice ⁴ once ⁵ if ⁶ easy ⁷ not ⁸ are ⁹ con thank ¹⁰ means thank, be grateful ¹¹ bear ¹² every one ¹³ greater ¹⁴ less ¹⁵ ingenuity ¹⁶ am not ¹⁷ ignorant ¹⁸ compiler ¹⁹ sword ²⁰ slay ²¹ happiness ²² henceforth ²³ true ²⁴ sufficiency ²⁵ kingdoms ²⁶ good breeding ²⁷ pleasures ²⁸ certainly ²⁹ cleft, crack ³⁰ liefer, preferable ³¹ them ³² that ³³ one

and parfit good to goodes that ben¹ false and unparfit.² But sey me this. Wenest³ thou that he, that hath nede of power, that him⁴ ne lakketh no-thing?⁵

"Nay," quod I.

"Certes," quod she, "thou seyst a-right. For yif⁶ so be that ther is a thing, that in any partye⁷ be febler of power, certes, as in that, it mot⁷ nedes ben nedy of foreine⁸ help."

"Right so is it," quod I.

"Suffisaunce and power ben thanne of o⁹ kinde?"¹⁰

"So semeth it," quod I.

"And demest³ thou," quod she, "that a thing that is of this manere, that is to seyn,¹¹ suffisaunt and mighty, oughte ben¹² despysed, or elles that it be right digne¹³ of reverence aboven alle thinges?"

"Certes," quod I, "it nis no doute, that it is right worthy to ben revered."

"Lat¹⁴ us," quod she, "adden thanne reverence to suffisaunce and to power, so that we demen¹⁵ that these three thinges ben al o⁹ thing."

"Certes," quod I, "lat us adden it, yif we wolen¹⁶ graunten the sothe."¹⁷

"What demest³ thou thanne?" quod she; "is that a derk thing and nat noble, that is suffisaunt, reverent, and mighty, or elles that it is right noble and right cleer by celebritee of renoun? Consider thanne," quod she, "as we han¹⁸ graunten her-biforn,¹⁹ that he that ne hath nede of no-thing, and is most mighty and most digne¹³ of honour, yif him nedeth any cleernesse of renoun, which cleernesse he mighte nat graunten of him-self, so that, for lakke of thilke²⁰ cleernesse, he mighte seme the febler on any syde or the more out-cast?"

GLOSE:²¹ *This is to seyn, nay; for who-so that is suffisaunt, mighty, and reverent, cleernesse of renoun folweth of the forseide²² thinges; he hath it al redy of his suffisaunce.*

Boece. "I may nat," quod I, "denye it; but I mot⁷ graunte, as it is, that this thing be right celebrable by cleernesse of renoun and noblesse."

"Thanne folweth it," quod she, "that we adden cleernesse of renoun to the three forseide thinges, so that ther ne be amonges hem no difference?"

"This is a consequence," quod I.

¹ are ² imperfect ³ thinkest ⁴ to him ⁵ if ⁶ part ⁷ must ⁸ foreign, external ⁹ one ¹⁰ nature ¹¹ say ¹² to be ¹³ worthy ¹⁴ let ¹⁵ consider ¹⁶ will ¹⁷ truth ¹⁸ have ¹⁹ heretofore ²⁰ that ²¹ an explanation ²² aforesaid

"This thing thanne," quod she, "that ne hath nede of no foreine¹ thing, and that may don alle thinges by hise strengthes, and that is noble and honourable, nis nat that a mery² thing and a joyful?"

"But whennes,"³ quod I, "that any sorwe⁴ mighte comen to this thing that is swiche,⁵ certes, I may nat thinke."

"Thanne moten⁶ we graunte," quod she, "that this thing be ful of gladnesse, yif⁷ the forseide⁸ thinges ben sothe;⁹ and certes, also mote⁶ we graunten that suffisaunce, power, noblesse, reverence, and gladnesse ben only dyverse by names, but hir¹⁰ substaunce hath no diversitee."

"It mot⁶ needly¹¹ been so," quod I.

"Thilke¹² thing thanne,"¹³ quod she, "that is oon¹⁴ and simple in his¹⁵ nature, the wikkednesse of men departeth it and devydeh it; and whan they enforcen hem¹⁶ to geten¹⁷ partye¹⁸ of a thing that ne hath no part, they ne geten hem neither thilke¹² partye that nis non,¹⁹ ne the thing al hool²⁰ that they ne desire nat."

"In which manere?" quod I.

"Thilke man," quod she, "that secheth²¹ riches to fleen povertie, he ne travailleth²² him nat for to gete¹⁷ power; for he hath levere²³ ben derk and vyl; and eek²⁴ withdraweth from him-self many naturel delys, for he nolde²⁵ lese²⁶ the moneye that he hath assembled. But certes, in this manere he ne geteth him nat suffisaunce that power forleteth,²⁷ and that molestie²⁸ prikketh, and that filthe maketh out-cast, and that derkenesse hydeth. And certes, he that desireth only power, he wasteth and scatereth riches, and despyseth delys, and eek²⁴ honour that is withoute power, ne he ne preyseth²⁹ glorie no-thing.³⁰ Certes, thus seest thou wel, that manye thinges faylen to him; for he hath somtyme defaute of many necessitees, and many anguissches byten³¹ him; and whan he ne may nat don³² tho³³ defautes a-vey, he forleteth²⁷ to ben mighty, and that is the thing that he most desireth. And right thus may I maken semblable³⁴ resouns³⁵ of honours, and of glorie, and of delys. For so as every of these forseide⁸ thinges is the same that these other

¹ external ² pleasant ³ whence ⁴ sorrow ⁵ such ⁶ must ⁷ if ⁸ aforesaid ⁹ true ¹⁰ their ¹¹ necessarily ¹² that ¹³ then ¹⁴ one ¹⁵ its ¹⁶ them ¹⁷ get ¹⁸ part ¹⁹ none ²⁰ whole ²¹ seeks ²² labors ²³ liefer, rather ²⁴ also ²⁵ would not ²⁶ lose ²⁷ forsakes ²⁸ annoyance ²⁹ praises, esteems ³⁰ not at all ³¹ bite ³² put ³³ those ³⁴ similar ³⁵ arguments

thinges ben, that is to seyn, al oon thing, who-so that ever seketh to geten that¹ oon of these, and nat that¹ other, he ne geteth nat that² he desireth."

Boece. "What seyst thou thanne, yif that a man coveiteth to geten alle these thinges to-gider?"

Philosophie. "Certes," quod she, "I wolde seye, that he wolde geten him sovereyn³ blisfulnesse; but that shal he nat finde in the thinges that I have shewed, that ne mowen⁴ nat yeven⁵ that² they beheten."⁶

"Certes, no," quod I.

"Thanne," quod she, "ne sholden men nat by no wey seken⁷ blisfulnesse in swiche thinges as men wene⁸ that they ne mowen⁴ yeven⁵ but o⁹ thing senglely¹⁰ of alle that men seken."

"I graunte wel," quod I; "ne¹¹ no sother¹² thing ne may ben sayd."

"Now hast thou thanne," quod she, "the forme and the causes of false welefulnesse. Now torne¹³ and flitte¹⁴ the eyen of thy thought; for ther shalt thou sen¹⁵ anon¹⁶ thilke verray¹⁷ blisfulnesse that I have bihight¹³ thee."

"Certes," quod I, "it is cleer and open, though it were to a blinde man; and that shewedest thou me ful wel a litel her-biforn, whan thou enforcedest thee to shewe me the causes of the false blisfulnesse. For but-yif¹⁹ I be bigyled, thanne is thilke²⁰ the verray blisfulnesse parfit,²¹ that parfitly maketh a man suffisaunt, mighty, honourable, noble, and ful of gladnesse. And, for thou shalt wel knowe that I have wel understanden these thinges with-in my herte, I knowe wel that thilke blisfulnesse, that may verrayly yeven⁵ oon of the forseide thinges, sin²² they ben al oon, I knowe, douteles, that thilke thing is the fulle blisfulnesse."

Philosophie. "O my norie,"²³ quod she, "by this opinioun I seye¹⁶ that thou art blisful, yif thou putte this ther-to that I shal seyn."²⁴

"What is that?" quod I.

"Trowest²⁵ thou that ther be any thing in these erthely mortal tounbling thinges that may bringen this estat?"

"Certes," quod I, "I trowe it naught;²⁶ and thou hast shewed me wel that over²⁷ thilke good ther nis no-thing more to ben desired."

¹ the ² what ³ supreme ⁴ may ⁵ give ⁶ promise ⁷ seek ⁸ think ⁹ one ¹⁰ singly ¹¹ nor ¹² truer ¹³ turn ¹⁴ flit, move ¹⁵ see ¹⁶ at once ¹⁷ true ¹⁸ promised ¹⁹ unless ²⁰ that, that same ²¹ perfect ²² since ²³ nursling ²⁴ say ²⁵ believest ²⁶ not ²⁷ beyond

"These thinges thanne," quod she, "that is to seyn, erthely suffisaunce and power and swiche¹ thinges, either they semen² lykenesses of verray³ good, or elles it semeth that they yeve to mortal folk a maner of goodes that ne ben nat parfit; but thilke good that is verray and parfit,⁴ that may they nat yeven."

"I acorde me wel," quod I.

"Thanne," quod she, "for as mochel⁵ as thou hast knowen which is thilke verray blisfulnesse, and eek⁶ whiche⁷ thilke thinges ben that lyen⁸ falsly blisfulnesse, that is to seyn, that by deceite semen² verray goodes, now behoveth thee to knowe whennes⁹ and where thou mowe¹⁰ seke thilke verray blisfulnesse."

"Certes," quod I, "that desire I greetly, and have abiden¹¹ longe tyme to herknen it."

"But for as moche," quod she, "as it lyketh¹² to my disciple Plato, in his book of 'in Timeo,' that in right litel thinges men sholden bisechen¹³ the help of God, what jugest thou that be now to done,¹⁴ so that we may deserve to finde the sete¹⁵ of thilke verray good?"

"Certes," quod I, "I deme¹⁶ that we shollen clepen¹⁷ the Fader of alle goodes; for withouten him nis ther no-thing founden a-right."

"Thou seyst a-right," quod she; and bigan anon to singen right thus:—

METRE IX

"O thou Fader, creator of hevene and of erthes, that governest this world by perdurable¹⁸ resoun, that comaundest the tymes to gon¹⁹ from²⁰ sin²¹ that age²² hadde beginninge; thou that dwellest thy-self ay stedefast and stable, and yevest²³ alle othere thinges to ben moeved;²⁴ ne foreine²⁵ causes necesseden²⁶ thee never to compoun²⁷ werk of floteringe²⁸ matere, but only the forme of sovereyn²⁹ good y-set with-in thee with-oute envye, that moevede thee freely. Thou that art alder-fayrest,³⁰ beringe³¹ the faire world in thy thought, formedest³² this world to the lykenesse semblable of that faire world in thy thought. Thou drawest al thing of thy sovereyn²⁹ ensampler,³³ and comaundest that this world, parfitliche³⁴ y-maked,³⁵ have

¹ such ² seem ³ true ⁴ perfect ⁵ much ⁶ also ⁷ of what sort ⁸ lie, impersonate ⁹ whence ¹⁰ mayst ¹¹ abided, waited ¹² pleases ¹³ beseech ¹⁴ do ¹⁵ seat, dwelling-place ¹⁶ judge ¹⁷ call upon, pray to ¹⁸ everlasting ¹⁹ go ²⁰ forward ²¹ since ²² finite time ²³ givest ²⁴ moved ²⁵ external ²⁶ compelled ²⁷ compose ²⁸ fluid ²⁹ supreme ³⁰ fairest of all ³¹ bearing ³² didst form ³³ model ³⁴ perfectly ³⁵ made, formed

freely and absolut his parfit parties.¹ Thou bindest the elements by nombres proportionables, that the colde thinges mowen² acorden with the hote thinges, and the drye thinges with the moiste thinges; that the fyr, that is purest, ne flee³ nat over hyc, ne that the hevynesse ne drawe nat adoun over lowe. the erthes that ben plounged in the wateres. Thou knittest to-gider the mene⁴ sowle of treble kinde, moevinge⁵ alle thinges, and devydest it by membres acordinge; and whan it is thus devyded, it hath assembled a moevinge⁵ in-to two roundes;⁶ it goth to torne⁷ ayein⁸ to him-self, and envirouneth a ful deep thought, and torneth⁹ the hevene by semblable¹⁰ image. Thou by evene-lyke¹¹ causes enhanset the sowles and the lasse¹² lyves, and, ablinge¹³ hem heye¹⁴ by lighte cartes,¹⁵ thou sowest¹⁶ hem in-to hevene and in-to erthe; and whan they ben converted¹⁷ to thee by thy benigne lawe, thou makest hem retorne ayein¹⁸ to thee by ayein-ledinge¹⁹ fyr.

"O Fader, give²⁰ thou to the thought to styen²¹ up in-to thy streite²² sete,²³ and graunte him to enviroune the welle of good; and, the lighte y-founde, graunte him to fichen²⁴ the clere sightes of his corage²⁵ in thee. And scater thou and to-breke²⁶ thou the weightes and the cloudes of erthely hevynesse, and shyne thou by thy brightnessse. For thou art cleernesse; thou art peysible²⁷ reste to debonaire²⁸ folk; thou thy-self art bigynninge, berer, leder, path, and terme;²⁹ to loke on thee, that is our ende."³⁰

REGINALD PECOCK (1395?-1460?)

THE REPRESSOR OF OVER MUCH
BLAMING OF THE CLERGY

PART I. CHAP. XIII

A greet cause whi thei of the lay parti which han³¹ usid the hool³² Bible or oonli the Newe Testament in her modris³³ langage han³¹ holde³⁴ the seid³⁵ opinioun was this, that the

¹ parts ² may ³ fly ⁴ mean, middle ⁵ moving ⁶ orbs ⁷ turn ⁸ back ⁹ turns ¹⁰ similar ¹¹ like ¹² lesser ¹³ abling, raising ¹⁴ high ¹⁵ vehicles (for the souls) ¹⁶ plantest ¹⁷ turned ¹⁸ again ¹⁹ reductive, leading back ²⁰ give, grant ²¹ mount ²² narrow ²³ seat ²⁴ fix ²⁵ heart ²⁶ break to pieces ²⁷ peaceful ²⁸ right-thoughted ²⁹ end ³⁰ purpose ³¹ have ³² whole ³³ mothers' ³⁴ held ³⁵ said

reeding in the Bible, namelich¹ in the historial parties of the Oold Testament and of the Newe, is miche² delectable and sweete, and drawith the reders into a devocioun and a love to God and fro love and deinte³ of the world; as y⁴ have had her-of experience upon suche reders and upon her⁵ now-seid⁶ disposicioun. And thanne bi-cause that the seid reeding was to hem so graceful, and so delectable, and into the seid⁶ eende so profitable, it fil into her⁵ conceit⁷ forto trowe⁸ ful soone, enformyng and tising⁹ ther-to insufficient[1] leerned clerkis, that God had mad or purveied the Bible to mennis bihove¹⁰ after¹¹ as it were or bi the utterist¹² degre of his power and kunnyng¹³ for to so ordeyne, and therefore al the hool¹⁴ Bible (or, as summen trowiden,¹⁵ the Newe Testament) schulde conteyne al that is to be doon in the lawe and service to God bi Cristen men, withoute nede to have ther-with eny doctrine.¹⁶ Yhe,¹⁷ and if y⁴ schal seie¹⁸ what hath be¹⁹ seid to myn owne heering, sotheli²⁰ it hath be seid to me thus, "that nevere man errid bi reding or studyng in the Bible, neither eny man myghte erre bi reeding in the Bible; and that for such cause as is now seid:" notwithstanding that ther is no book writen in the world bi which a man schal rather take an occasioun forto erre, and that for ful gode and open trewe causis, whiche ben spoken and expressid in the ij. parti²¹ of the book clepid²² *The Just Apprising of Holi Scripture*.²³ But certis thei taken her⁵ mark amys: for thei puttiden²⁴ al her motyve²⁵ in her affeccioun or wil forto so trowe;⁸ and not in her⁵ intellectuoun or resoun; and in lijk maner doon wommen, for thei reulen hem silf as it were in alle her governauncis aftir her affeccioun and not aftir resoun, or more aftir affeccioun than after doom²⁶ of resoun; bicause that affeccioun in hem is ful strong and resoun in hem is litle, as for the more parti of wommen.

And therefore even right as a man jugid amys and were foule begilid and took his mark amys; if he schulde trowe that in hony were al the cheer, al the comfort, al the thrift which is in al other mete, bi-cause that hony is swettist to him of alle othere metis; so he is begilid and takith his mark amys, if he therefore

¹ especially ² much, very ³ delight ⁴ I ⁵ their ⁶ said ⁷ imagination ⁸ believe ⁹ enticing ¹⁰ behoof ¹¹ according ¹² uttermost ¹³ ability ¹⁴ whole ¹⁵ believed ¹⁶ teaching ¹⁷ yea ¹⁸ say ¹⁹ been ²⁰ truly ²¹ part ²² called ²³ a book by Pecoek ²⁴ put ²⁵ motive ²⁶ decision

trowe that in Holi Scripture is al the doctrine necessarie to man for to serve God and forto kepe his lawe; bi cause that Holi Scripture is so miche¹ delectable, and for² that bi thilk³ delectacioun he bringith yn myche cheer and coumfort and strengthith the wil forto the more do and suffre for God. And so me thinkith to suche men good counseil were forto seie to hem, that thei be waar of childrenys perel,⁴ which is that bi-cause children loven sweete meetis and drinkis ful miche, therefore whanne thei comen to feestis thei feeden hem with sweete standing-potagis⁵ and with sweete bake-metis,⁶ and leven⁷ othere substancial and necessarie metis; trowing⁸ that bi so miche tho⁹ sweete meetis ben the more holsum, how miche more thei ben swetter than othere metis: and therefore at the laste thei geten to hem therbi bothe losse of dewe nurisching and also sumtyme vilonie.¹⁰ Certis in lijk maner y have wiste suche men, that han¹¹ so over miche¹² yeven hem¹³ to reding in the Bible aloone, have gete to hem losse¹⁴ of sufficient and profitable leernyng which in other wheris¹⁵ thei mighten have gete,¹⁶ and also vilonie forto avowe and warante that thei couthen¹⁷ the trewe sentence¹⁸ and trewe understanding of the Bible, whanne and where thei not couthen¹⁹ so understonde, neither couthen¹⁹ mentene²⁰

¹ much, very ² because ³ that same ⁴ peril, danger ⁵ A dish made variously of boiled apples, sweet wine, honey or sugar and currants, almonds, etc. Recipes are given in Two Fifteenth Century Cook-books, pp. 15 and 29. ⁶ pies and pasties ⁷ neglect ⁸ thinking ⁹ those ¹⁰ injury ¹¹ have ¹² much ¹³ devoted themselves ¹⁴ loss ¹⁵ wheres, i.e. places ¹⁶ got ¹⁷ knew ¹⁸ meaning ¹⁹ could ²⁰ maintain

what thei ther ynne understoden, and also forto avowe and warante that in the Bible were miche more and profitabler and of other soort kunnyng¹ than can ther-yn be founde. And therefore to alle suche men mai be seid what is seid Proverbs XXV.² c.² in sentence thus: *Thou hast founde hony, etc therof what is ynough and no more; lest thou overfillid caste it up out ayen,³ and thanne is it to thee vilonie:* and what is writen aftir in the same chapter there in sentence thus: *For to ete miche of hony is not good to the eter.* So that whanne-ever thou takist upon thee forto understonde farther in the Bible than thi wit⁴ may or can therto suffice withoute help of a substancial clerk, thanne etist thou of hony more than ynough, and doost ayens⁵ the bidding of Seint Poul, Romans xij.⁶ c. soone after the bigynnyng.⁵ And whanne thou attendist forto leerne Holi Scripture, and attendist not ther-with forto have eny other leernyng of philsofie or of divynite, bi thin owne studie in bookis ther-of maad⁷ or bi teching and informacioun of sum sad clerk⁸ yovun⁹ to thee, thanne thou etist hony aloon and feedist thee with hony oonli. And this feding schal turne into thin¹⁰ unhoosumnes,¹¹ right as if thou schuldist ete in bodili maner noon other mete than hony, it schulde not be to thee hoolsum.

¹ knowledge ² Chap. 25 ³ again ⁴ intelligence ⁵ against ⁶ Romans 12: 3-6 ⁷ made ⁸ trustworthy scholar ⁹ given ¹⁰ thine ¹¹ ill health