LYDGATE'S
FALL OF PRINCES

EDITED BY
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PART III. (Books VI.–IX.)
LYDGATE'S FALL OF PRINCES

PART III.

BOOKS VI.–IX.

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ERRATA

P. 733, line 2172: read thassaut.
P. 889, line 2363: for epsecial read especial.
THE FALL OF PRINCES
BOOK VI

Here Bochas sitting in his studie allone writeth a grete processe, how Fortune like a monstruous ymage hauyng an hundred handys appered vn to him and spak / and Bochas vn to hir makyng betwixt hem bothe many grete argumentys & resouns of Fortunys chaunces.]

IN his studie allone as Bochas stood, his penne on honde, of sodeyw auenture To remembre he thouhte it ded hym good, How bat no man may hymself assure In worldli thynges fulli to recure Grace of Fortune, to make hir to be stable, Hir dayli chaungis been so variable. She braideth euer on the chaunteplure: Now song, now wepyng, now wo, now gladnesse, Now in merthe, now peynis to eendure, Now liht, now heuy, now bittir, now suetnesse, Now in trouble, now free, now in distresse, Shewyng to vs a maner resemblaunce, How* worldli welthe hath heer non assurauce. Whil Bochas pensiFF stood sool in his librarie With cheer oppressid, pale in his visage, Sumdeel abasshed, alone & solitarie, To hym appered a monstruous ymage, Partid on tweyne of colour & corage, Hir riht[e] side ful of somer flowers, The tothir oppressid with wyntris stormy shours. Bochas astonid, feerful for to abraide Whan he beheeld the wonderful figure Of Fortune, thus to hymself he saide: "What may this meene? is this a creature Or a monstre transffoormyd ageyns nature, Whos brennyng eyen sparklyng of ther liht As doon sterris the frosti wyntres niht?"

1 MS. J. leaf 121 recto.
Her face was cruel and terrible, her hair untressed, her figure loathsome and she had 100 hands.

And of her cheek[e] ful good heed he took,  
Hir face seemynge cruel & terrible,  
And bi disdeyne[e] manacynge of look,  
Hir her vnstressid, hard, sharp & horrible,  
Froward of shappe, lothsum & odible.  
An hundred handis she hadde on ech part  
In sondri wise hir giftes to depart.

which lift men up to high estate and cast them down into adversity.

Summe off hir handis lefft up men aloft  
To hih estat of worldli dignite,  
Anothir hand griped ful vnsoffte,  
Which cast another in gret aduersite:  
Gaff oon richesse, anothir pouerete,  
Gaff summe also bi report a good name,  
Noised anothir of sclaundre &* diffame.

Her garment was of manyfold colours:  
Wachet bleuh of feyned stedfastnesse,  
Hir gold allaied like sonne in wattri shours,  
Meynt with liht greene for chang & doubilnesse.  
A pretens red: dreed meynt with hardynesse;  
Whiht for clennessse, lik soone for to faille;  
Feynt blak for moornyng, russet for travaile.

Hir habit was of manyfold colours:  
Wachet bleuh of feyned stedfastnesse,  
Hir gold allaied like sonne in wattri shours,  
Meynt with liht greene for chang & doubilnesse.  
A pretens red: dreed meynt with hardynesse;  
Whiht for clennessse, lik soone for to faille;  
Feynt blak for moornyng, russet for travaile.

Sometimes she is a coward,  
sometimes as bold as a lion;  
Sometines Agamemnon; to-day a man, to-morrow a woman.

Hir colours meynt of wollis mo than oon;  
Sumwhile eclipsed, sumwhile she shon briht.  
Dulle as an asse whan men hadde haste to gon,  
And as a swalwe gerisshe of hir flht,  
Tween slouh & swifft; now crokid & now vpriht,  
Now as a crepil lowe coorbid down,  
Now a duery and now a champiou'n.

Now a coward, durst nat come in pres,  
And* sumwhile hardi as leoun;  
Now lik Ector, now dreedful Thersites,  
Now was she Cresus, now Agamenoun,  
Sardanapallus off condicioun;  
Now was she mannyssh, now was she femynyne,  
Now coude she reyne, now koude she falsli shyne.

34. hundrith H.  42. &] & off B, R.  
44. stedfastnesse] stablenesse H, stablinesse R 3.  
56. and] an R.  
58. And] Now B, R, J — as] as a P.  
60. 2nd now] now was she H.
Now a mermaid with angelic face and the tail of a serpent; now a lamb and again a wolf.

Thus John Bochas consideryng hir figure,
Al hir fetures in ordre he gan beholde,
Hir breede, hir heihte, hir shap & hir stature,
An hundrid handis & armys ther he tolde:
Wheroff astonid, his herte gan to colde;
And among alle hir membris euerichon,
He sempte she hadde no feet upon to gon.

"Bochas," quod she, "I knowe al thyn entent.
How thou traualiest, besiest the in veyn,
In thi studie euer dilligent,
Now in the west, now in the orient
To serche stories, north & meredien,
Of worthi princis that heer-toforn ha been.

"I have seen you describing their deeds in plain unadorned language,"
Be humble stile set in pleyn langage, —
Nat maad corious be non auauntage
Of rethoriques, with musis for to stylue,
But in pleyn foorme ther deedis to descryue.

In which processe thou dost gret dilligence,
As thei disserue to yuye hem thank or blame:
Settest up oon in roiall excellence
Withynne myn hous callid the Hous of Fame, —
The goldene trumpet with blastis off good name
Enhaunceth oon to ful hih[e] parties,
Wher Iubiter sit among the heuenli skies.

Another trumpet, of sownis ful vengable,
Which bloweth up at feestis funerall,
Nothyng briht[e], but of colour sable,
Fer fro my fauour, dedli & mortall,
To plonge pryngcis from ther estat roiall,
Whan I am wroth, to make hem loute lowe,
Than of malis I do that trumpet blowe.

Thou hast writyn & set togidre in gros,
Lik ther desert worldli mennys deedis,
Nothyng conceale nor vnvr[e] court eloos,
Spared [not] ther crownyes nor ther purpil weedis,
Ther goldene sceptris; but yewe to them ther meedis:
Crownid oon with laureer hih on his hed vpset,
Other with peruyne maad for the gibe.

Thus dyuersli my gifftes I* departe,
Oon acceptid, a-nothir is refusid;
Lik hasardours my dees I [do] iuparte,
Oon weel foorthrid, anothir is accusid.
My play is double, my trust is euer abusid,
Thou oon to-day hath my fauour wonne,
To-morwe ageyn I can eclipse his sonne.

Cause of my comyng, pleynli to declare
Bi good ausis, vnto thi presence,
Is to shewe my maneris & nat spare,
And my kondiciouns, breesflli in sentence,
Preued of old & newe experience,
Pleynli to shewe, me list nat for to rowne,
To-day I flatre, to-morwe I can weel frowne.

104. gret[.] bli H.
113. sownis] sown H. 120. &] an R. 123. not] om. R.
Fortuna defends her Ways with Men

This hour I can shewe me merciable,  
And sodenli I can be despitous:  
Now weelwillid, hastili vengable,  
Now sobre of cheer, now wood &* furious.  
My play vnkout, my maners merueilous  
Braid on the wynd; now glad & now I mourne;  
Lik a wedircok* my face ech day I tourne.

Wheryn Bochas, I telle the yit ageyn,  
Thou dost folie thi wittis for to plie;  
All* thi labour thou spillest in veyn,  
Geyn my maneres so felli to replie, —  
Bi thi wrytyng to fynde a remedie,  
To interupte in thi laste dawes  
My statutis [and] my custumable lawes.

Al the labour off philisophres olde,  
Trauaile off poetis my maner to depraue,  
Hath* been of yore to seyn lik as thei wolde  
Ouer my fredam the souereynte to haue.  
But of my lawes the libertes to saue,  
Vpon my wheel thei shal hem nat diffende,  
But whan me list[e] that thei shal dessende.

Whi sholde men putte me in blame,  
To folwe the nature of my double play?  
With newe buddis doth nat ver the same,  
Whau premeroles appeere fresh & gay? —  
To-day thei shewe, to-morwe thei gon away;  
Somer afftir of flouris hath foisoun,  
Til Iun with 3ithes aftir mowe hem doun.

Now is the se calm and blandisshyng;  
Now ar the wyndis confortable & still;  
Now is Boreas sturdi in blowyng,  
Which yong[e] sheep & blosmys greueth ille.  
Whi also shold I nat haue my wille,  
To shewe my-silf now smothe and aftir trouble,  
Sith to my kynde it longeth to be double?

"I am as fickle as the wind or a weathercock, and my ways are marvelous."

"It is foolish of you, Bochas, to try to change my habits and nature."

"All the labour of old philosophers was of no avail against me: when I desire it they must descend."

"Why should men blame me? Is it not the same with the changing seasons?"

"Why should I not have my will?"

"And the sea, now calm, now stormy. Why should I not have my will?"

144. &] now B.  
150. All] And B.  
155. labours H, R 3, laboures P.  
157. Hath] Haue B.  
165. primerolis R, primrollis H, premerollis R 3, Prymerolis J.  
170. comfortable H.
No man so falle is fallen in wretchidnesse
But that he stant in trust to rise ageyn;
Nor non so deepe plunged in distresse,
Nor with dispeir nor wanhope ouerleyn,
But that ther is sum hope left certeyn
To yue hym countforte, seruyng his entente,
To be releued whan me list assente.

The works and green of spring disappears
in August,
and only fools blame me for my inconstancy.

Who sholde thanne debarre me to be double,
Sith doublinesse longeth to me of riht?
Now fressh with somer, now with wyntir trouble,
Now byld of look, dirk as the cloudi niht;
Now glad of cheer, of herte murie & liht:
Thei ar but foolish ageyn my myght that muse
Or me atwite; thouh I my poweer vse.

Seelde or neuer I bide nat in o poynt:
Men must at lepis take me as thei fynde;
And when I stonde ferthest out of ioynt
To sette folk[es] bakward ferre behynde,
Than worldli men with ther eyen blynde
Sore compleyne upon my doublinesse,
Calle me thanne the froward fals goddesse.

Thus bi your writyng & meruellous langage
I am disclaundrid of mutabilite,
Wheroff be riht I cach gret* auauntage,
Sith doublinesse no sclaundre is to me,
Which is a parcel of my liberte,
To be callid, be title off rihtwisnesse,
Off chaungis newe ladi & pryncesse.”

Thus whan Fortune hadde said hir will,
Parcel declared of hir gouernaunce,
Made a stynt & sobirli stood still.
John Bochas sat & herd al hir daliaunce,

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176. comforte H. 187. into] vnto B.
194. of herte] sadde H.
195. lepis] lopis R, loopis H, J, lopis R 3, lepys H 5, loupes P.
Feerful of cheer[e], pale of contenauce,
In ordre enpreentid ech thyng that she saide,
Ful demurli thus he dede atraide.

He took onto hym vertu & corage
Vpon a paynt for to abide* stable:
"Certis," quod he, "lik to thi visage,
Al worldli thyngis be double & chaungable;
Yit for my part bi remebrauraunce notable*
I shal parfourme, sothli yf I conwe,
This litil book that I ha[ue] begonne.

And lest my labour deie nat nor [a]palle,
Of this book the title for to saue,
Among myn othir litil werkis alle,
With lettres large aboue vpon my graue
This bookis name shal in ston be graue,
How I, John Bochas, in especiall
Of worldli princis writyn haue the fall.

Off which emprise the cause to descryue,
—
This was first ground, I wil it nat denye,
Teschewe slouthhe & vices al my lyue,
And specialli the vice of gletonye,
Which is notice vnto lecherie:
This was cheeff cause whi I vndirtook
The compilaciouw off this litil book.

Yit bi thi talkyng, as I vndirstonde,
Ech thyng heer of nature is chaungable,
Affir thi sentence, bothe on se & londe;
Yit koude I rekne thynges that be stable:
As vertuous [lyf] abidyng vnmutable,
Set hool to Godward of herte, will & thouht,
Maugre thi poweer, & ne chaungith nouht.

Thou maist eek callyn [vn]to remebrauraunce
Thynes maad stable bi grace which is dyuyne,—
Hastow nat herd[e] the perseuerauraunce
Of hooli martirs, which list nat to declyne
Fro Cristis feith til thei dide fyne?
Thi wheel in hem hadde non interesse,
To make hem varie fro ther stabilnesse.
A man that is enarmed in vertu 
Ageyn thi myht to make resiitence, 
And set his trust be grace in Crist Iesu, 
And hath al hool his hertli aduerrence 
On rihtwisnesse, force & on prudence, 
With ther sustor callid attemperance, 
Hath a saufconduit ageyn thi variaunce! 

Such men pa
no attention to 
your wheel, 
their trust 
stands on faith, 
and 
charity, which 
are called 
thologic virtues. 

If I had 
no wings to fly to 
heaven, I should 
se, that you 
had nothing to 
do with the 
seven planets: 
it is only 
worldly fools 
who call you 
a goddess. 

The virtues 
are far removed 
from your 
domain. 

And fools 
blame you in 
their adversity 
only to excuse 
them 
only themselves. 

But I, who 
am unable to 
solve the prob-
lems of exis-
tence, leave 
them to those 
who are 
scholars by 
profession. 

I eschewe to clymbe to hih aloft,  
List for presumpiou[n] I shold nat fall[e] softe.

But yif I had hid in my corage  
Such mysteries of dyuyn prouidence,  
Withoute envie I wolde in pleynlangage  
Vttre hem be writyng with humble reuerence, —  
Predestynacioun nouthere prescience  
Nat apperteene, Fortune, vnto the;  
And for my part I wil excuse me,

And proceeide lik as I vndirtook,  
Aftir that I haue told my mateer,  
Of Fall of Princis for to write a book.  
But yit afforn[e], yif thou woldest heere,  
I desire of hool hert & enteer  
To haue a copee of princis namys all,  
Which fro thi wheel[e] thou hast maad to fall.

Thi secre bosum is ful of stories  
Of sondry princis, how thei ther liff haue lad,  
Of ther triumphes & ther victories,  
Which olde poetis & philisophres sad  
In meetre & prose compiled han & rad,  
Sunge ther laudis, ther fatis eek reserued  
Bi remembrance, as thei haue disserued.

Of which I haue put sumwe in memorie,  
Theron sette my studie & my labour,  
So as I coude, to ther encre of glorie,  
Thouh of langage I hadde but smal fauour,  
Cause Caliope dede me no socour,  
For which thou hast duryng al this while  
Rebuked me of my rud[e] stile.

Men wolde acounte it wer a gret dulnesse,  
But yiff langage conviede be bi prudence,  
Out declared bi sobre auysynesse,  
Vndir support fauoured be diffence  
Of Tullius, cheef prince of eloquence, —  
Sholde mor proffite, shortli to conclude,  
Than my stile, spoke in termys rude.
Yet it often happens that good grain is found growing under husks, and good counsel spoken in blunt terms sometimes succeeds where rhetoric fails.

"It was through music and philosophy that the commons first became civilized: for music is harmony, and philosophy sprang from prudence, and upon concord and wise policy were built the walls of Thebes.

"Discord goes hand in hand with diversity, peace with prudent policy, and quarrels were first brought in by you, Lady of Contest and Strife —

slaughter, debate, forward diversions and the desolation of towns and countries.

"It is you who first got men into trouble with your uncouth snares, and made them hate one another;

Yet oft times it hath be felt & seyn, Vnder huskes growyng on lond* arable, Hath be founde & tried out good greyn; Vndir rude leys, shakyng & vnstable, Pulld fair frut, holsum & delectable. And semblably, wher rethorik hath failed, In blunt termys good counseil hath availed.

Philisophres of the goldene ages And poetes that fond out fressh ditees, As kyng Amphioun with his fair langages And with his harpyng mad folk of louh degrees, As laborers, tenhabite first cites; — And so bi musik and philosophie Gan first of comouns noble policie. The cheeff of musik is mellodie & accord; Welle of philosophie sprang out of prudence, Bi which too menyss gan vnite & concord With politik vertu to haue ther assitance: Wise men to regne, subiectis do reuerence. And bi this ground, in stories men may see, Wer bilt the wallis of Thebes the cite.

Accord in musik causith the mellodie; Wher is discord, ther is dyuersite, And wher is pes is prudent policie In ech kyngdam and euery gret contre. Striff first induicd bi thi duplicite; For which thou maist, as clerkis the descryues, Be callid ladi of contekis & of stryues.

First wer founde out hatful dyuysious Be thi ctreued fals mutabilites, — Slaughtre, debat, forward discenciouns In regiouns, prouynces and cites, Desolacioun off townis & contrees, Wheroff men hadde first experience Bi thi chaungable geri violence.

Thus bi thoppynyoun of thi wheel most double, As ferr be nature as it was possible, Ouercrhowltli thou broughest men in trouble, Madest ech to other froward & odible

Bi thi treynys vnkouth & terrible,

Lik a corsour makth coltis that be wilde
With spore & whipp to be tame & mylde,
Thus bi the tempest off thyn aduersites,
   and then you would tame
To make men mor tame of ther corage.
In [ther] discordes tween kyngdames & cites,
   was fair speech that reconciled
Affir the sharpe[nesse] of thi cruel rage*
Onli bi mene of speche & fair langage,
Folk be thi fraude fro grace ferr exilid,
Wer be fair speche to vnite reconcilid.

Peeplis of Grece, of Roome & off Cartage,
Next in Itaille, with many a regeoun,
Wer inducid bi swetnesse* of langage
To haue togidre ther conuersacioun,
To beelde castellis & many roial toun.
What caused this? — to telle in brefs the foorme,

But eloquence rud peeplis to refforme.
Affor tyme thei wer but bestiall,
Till thei to resoun be lawes wer constreyned,
Vndir discrecioun bi statutis naturall
Fro wilful lustis be prudence wer restreyned.
Bassent maad oon, & togidre [en]cheynyd
In goldene cheynys of pes and vnite;
Thus gan the beeldeing of eueri gret cite.

But whan thou medlist to haue an interesse,
Thei that wer oon to brynge hem at discord,
To interupte with thi doubilnesse
Cites, regiouns, that wer of oon accord, —
Lik as this book can ber [me] weil record,
Fro the tyme that thou first began
Thi mutabilite hath stroied many a man.
Thou causest men to been obstynat
In ther corages & incorrigible,
Wilful, froward, causeles at debat,
Ech to other contrarious & odible,
Them to refourme almost impossible, —
Til fair[e] speche, voidyng dyuisioun,
Pes reconcilid tween many a regeoun.*

375. sharpennesse] sharp J, R 3, H 5, R 2, H 3, H 4 — rage]
   outrage B, H, H 5, rages J, P.
381. bi] with H — swetnesse] Record B, swiftnesse H — of ]
of fair J.
383. roial toun] regioun H. 387. to] bi H — be] to H.
401. corage H.
Bochas repeats his Request to Fortuna

For ther is non so furious outrage,
Nor no mateer so ferr out of the weie,
But that be mene of gracious language
And faire speche may a man conveie
To al resoun meekli for to obie, —
Bi an examiple which I reherse shall
Weel to purpos and is historiall.

"When Achilles was in his
wrath nothing served to still
the tempest of his rage but
the sweet sound of a harp.

Which instrument bi his gret suet[e]nesse
Put al rancour out of his remembrance
Wrestid hym ageyn to al gladnesse,
From hym auoidyng al rancour & greuance.
Semblabli, faire speche and daliaunce
Set men in reste in rewmys heer & yonder
Bi good langage that wer ferr assonder."

With these woordes Bochas wex debonaire,
Toward Fortune as he cast his look,
Withdrouh his rancour & gan speke faire
Touchyng his labour which he upon hym took,
Besechyng hir for to forthre his book,
That his name, which was litil knowe,
Be good report myhte be ferther blowe.

That his fame myhte ferther spreede,
Which stood as yit shroudid in dirkenesse,
Bi hir fauour his name forth to leede,
His book to forthre doon hir bysynesse
Bi good report to yiuie it a brijntesse,
With laureat stremys shad foorth to peeplis all,
Bi foyretiilnesse that it neuer appall.

This was the bille which that John Bochas
Made vnto Fortune with ful humble stile.
Whan Fortune hadde conceuyd al his* caas,
Sobirli stood and gan [to] stynte a while,
Fortuna says that Bochas slandered her

And glad of cheer[e] aftir she gan smyle
On myn auctour, & with a fresh visage
In sentence spak to hym this language:

[Hic loquitur Fortuna.] ¹

"Truly, I see how curious you men are to learn my secrets, although you do not come by them easily.

"Soothli," quod she, "I see thi besynesse,
Of mortal men, how curios thati bee,
How thei studie bi gret auisynesse
Off my secretes for to been preue,
To knowe the conceitis hid withynne me
And my counsailles, ye men doon al your peyne,
Al-be nat lihtly* ye may therto atteyne.

"You imagine me in all forms: sometimes a woman with wings, sometimes blind; but the cause of all this is your own covetousness.

In this mateer your witt doth neuer feynte,
Ymagynyng liknessis in yoMr mynde,
Lik your conceitis ye forge me & peynte,
Sumtyme a woman with wenges set beynde,
And portreye me with eien that be blynde.

"You have strange desires, and you are always full of deceit, malicious and perverse, and ever seeking worldly dignity.

Your appetitis most strauenge & most dyuers,
And euir ful of chaung & doublinesse,
Froward also, malicious & peruers,
Be hasti clymbyng to worshepis & richesse,
Alway void of trouthe & stabilnesse,
Most presumptuous, serche out in al degrees,
Falsli tatteyne to worldli dignites.

"Bochas, I understand and know very well the great difference between your words and thought.

Bochas, Bochas, I parcyue eueri thyng
And knowe ful weel the grete difference
Hid in thi silff of woordes & thynkyng,
Atween hem bothe the disadvonence.
Hastow nat write many gret sentence
In thi book to sclauンドre with my name,
Off hool entent my maneres to diffame?

"Have you not written many a slanderous sentence about me, calling me an unkind stepmother, a false enchantress, a mermaid with a tail behind, an instigator of murder?

Thou callest me stepmooder most vnkynde,
And sumtyme a fals enchaunteresse,
A mermaide with a tail behynde,
Off scorn sumwhile me namyng a goddesse,
Suynyme a wichen, sumtyme a sorceresse,
Fyndere off moordre & of deceitis alle;
Thus of malis mortel men me calle!

⁴⁸¹. wich] wrecch H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 124 verso.
"All this in despite of me: accusing my mutability when I refuse your covetous requests."

Al this is doon in despiht of mee;
Bi accusacioun in many sondri wise
Ye offte appeche my mutabilite,
Namli when I your requestis do despise,
For tacomplisshe your gredi couetise:
When ye faille ye leyn on me the wite,
Off your aduersites me falsli tatwite.

"And only to slander me you wrote an unpleasant story of how I wrestled with Glad Poverty, whom you favoured, and now you beg me to help you!"

And thou of purpos for tesclaudre me
Hast writt vngoodli a contrarious fable,
How I wrastled with Glad Pouerte,
To whos parti thou wer fauourable,
Settest me abak, geyn me thou wer vengable,—
Now of newe requerist my fauour
The for to helpe & foorthre thi labour!

"As if I were changeable as a woman or the wind! Yet that is your doctrine."

As-scauns I am off maneres most chaungable,
Off condiciouns verry femynyne;
Now heer, now ther, as the wynd vnstable,
Be thi descripcioun and be thi doctryne,
To eueri chaung[e] reedi to enclyne,
As women be & maidnes tendre of age,
Which of nature be dyuers of corage.

"However, I am willing to help you.

But for to forthrre in parti thyn entent, [p. 304]
That of thi book the processe may proceede,
Be my fauour to the accomplishment
I am weelwillid to helpe the in thi neede.
Lik thi desir the bettir thou shalt* speede,
When I am toward with a benigne face
To speede thy iourne bi support of my grace,

That thi name and also thi surname,
With poetis & notable old aucours,
May be registrid in the Hous off Fame
Bi supportacioun of my sodeyn fauours,
Bi assistance also of my socours
Thi werk texpleite the laurer for to wynne,
At Saturninus I will that thou begynne.

484. is] om. J.
491. tesclaudre] to sclaudre H.
495. ageyn H.
509. the bettir thou shalt] thou shalt the bettir B.
Fortuna tells about the Downfall of Saturninus

[Here herveth Fortune hir condiciouns vnto Bochas shewyng how many oon she enhaunced for a tyme/ and anoon after hem sodenly overthroweth.] ¹

Among Romeyns this said[e] Saturnyne Was outraious off condiciouns, Caused in Roome whan he gan maligne Gret debatis and gret sediciouns. And bi his froward conspiraciouns He was sharp enmy ageyn the prudent iuge Callid Metellus,* deoid of al refuge. Fro the Capitoille fette with myhti hond, Fond no socour Metellus in the toun,— The same tyme, thou shalt vndirstond, How be myn helpe and supportacioun Oon that was smal of reputaciouw Callid Glauceya, in pouert brouht up lowe, Maad consuleer, the stori is weel knowe. A seruaunt first & almost set at nouht; And aftirward I made hym fortunat, Lefte neuere til I hadde hym brouht Bi a prerogatiff chose of the senat To been a pretour, an offise of estat. Which also wrouhte be conspiraciouw To brynge Metellus to destruccioun. Off whos assent ther was also another Callid Marius, beyng the same yeer, Texpleite this*tresou beyngther [own]sworn brother, Which was also that tyme a consuleer. I, Fortune, made hem ful good cheer, Lik ther desirs gaff hem liberte To banshe Metellus out of ther cite. Of the[s] [thre] Romeyns, the first[e] Saturnyne, And Glauceya was callid the secounde, And Marius, leid out hook & lyne, As I haue told, Metellus to confounde.

¹ MS. J. leaf 124 verso.
To ther purpos I was also founde  
Fauourable to brynge hem to myscheeff,  
As ther stori sheweth an open preef.  

Those who ascend highest shall soonest fall  

Thei ban[y]shid hym out of Roome toue;  
And Saturnynus bi his subtil werkynge  
Clamp up faste, of hih presumpecioun,  
To be callid of Roome lord & kyng.  
I gaff hym fauour bamaner fals Smylyng,  
Til at the laste, pleynli to declare,  
Off his destruccioun I brouht hym in the snare.  

To be callied of Roome lord & kyng.  
I gat hym fauour bamaner falsmyng,  
Til at the laste, pleynli to declare,  
Off his destruccioun I brouht hym in the snare.  

Thei barrie d be Marrius of vitaille,  
The Capitoille beseged round aboute;  
At the entryng was a strong bataille,  
On outher parti slay[e]n a gret route.  
Thus of my fauour he gan stonde in doute,  
This Saturnynus brouht in gret distresse,  
His good achetid, lost al his richesse.  

Experience ful openli men lereth,  
Such as hiest therupon ascende,  
Lik as the tourn of my wheel requereth,  
Whan thei lest weene doun thei shal descende.  
Thei haue no powere themsiluen to diffen de  
Ageyn my myh, whan thei been ouerthrowe:  
What do I than, but lauhe & make a mowe!
Drusus also born of gret lynamge  
And descendid of ful hih noblesse,  
Vnto vertu contraire of his corage,  
Froward founde to al gentilesse;  
Yit chose he was, the stori doth expresse,  
Questour of Asia, an offis of degree,  
For his berthe to gourner that contre.  
But ofte tyme vertu nor gentilesse  
Come nat to heires bi successioun, —  
Exaumple in Drusus, the stori berth witnesse,  
Which bothe of corage and disposicioun  
Was euere froward off condicioun.  
For which lat men deeme as thei mut needis,  
Nat affrir berthe but afftir the deedis.  
Vertues alle in hym wer set aside:  
Slouh to been armyd, hatid cheualrie,  
Most coueitouus, deyncus, ful of pride,  
His deedis frowal, ful of trecherie.  
To hih estat I dede hym magnifie,  
Yit al my gifftes in hym ne myhte strechche,  
For heer tofor the, he komcch lik a wretchche.  
He dar for shame nat shewen his visage,  
So ferr disclaundrid is his wretchidnesse,  
Whos couetise and vicious outrage  
Falsli causid bi his doublinesse,  
Maguldusa, a prince of gret noblesse,  
Betrawshed was for meede to the kyng  
Callid Boccus bi Drusus fals werkyng.  
What maner torment or what greuus payne  
Wer compotent, couenaile or condigne  
To hym that can outward flatre &* feyne,  
And in his herte couerli maligne,  
As Drusus dede, which shewed many a signe  
To Maguldusa of loue and frendliheede;  
Vndirnethe fals tresoun hid in deede.  
But Maguldusa, lik a manli kniht,  
Geyn kyng Boccus hath hymsilff socourid,  
Whan he bi doom was iugid ageyn riht  
Of an olifaunt for to be deouurid.  
Scapid freeli, & aftir that labourid

Drusus, born of high lineage and contrary to all virtue was chosen quaestor of Asia.  
Drusus was lazy, covetous, disdainful and full of treachery.  
"I could not help him.  
Here he comes before you like a wretch,  
and dares not shew his face for shame.  
Magulsa to Bocchus.  
And what torment were appropriate to him who can outwardly flatter and in-wardly hate, as Drusus did?  
"But Magulsa, sentenced to be devoured by an elephant, escaped and afterwards slew Drusus in Rome.  
595. that] be H.  596. gentiliesse H.  597. Come] cam H.  
614. Magulsa P.  618. competent H, J, R 3, H 5, P.  619. &] or B.
Taquite hynsill[e] throuth his hih renoun,  
Slouh fals Drusus myd of Roome toun.

"Bochas, men blame me for being the cause
of the destruction of Scipio,"  

\"Bochas, also, men put the lak in mee,
That I was cause of the destruccioun\"  

Be my contrarious mutabilite
Off the notable famous Scipioun,
Which in the tyme of Sensory n Catoun
Gat the tryumpe for many gret victorie
To putte his name perpetuall[y] in memorie.

For his meritis chose a consuleer
And cheeff bisshop to gouerne ther cite,
To al the senat patroun most enter,
Most famous off name and dignite,
Saued Romeyns from al aduersite,
Tyme whan the werte dredefull & despitous
Gan atween Pompeie & Cesar Iulius.

Thus whan the said[e] famous Scipioun
Was thoruh my fauvour acountid most notable,
He fro my wheel was sodenli cast doun,
Which neuer in woord nor deede was coupable.
But the Romeyns malicious & vnstable, —
Bi ther hangman first cheynid in prisoun,
Affir rakked, ther geenid no raunsoun.

Thus he that hadde auailed hem so ofte,
To saue hymself fond socour on no side;
His dede bodi thei heeng it hih aloffe
For a spectacle longe ther tabide.
Thus gerisshli my giftes I deuide,
Stound[e]meel, now freend, now aduersarie,
Rewarde goode with guerdouws ful contrarie.

This was expert ful weel in Scipioun:
Gan with ioe, endid in wrechidnesse.
Bochas, remembre, mak heeroff mencioyn,
And off Fanaticus, how I off gentilesse
Made hym ascende to notable hih prowesse;
Yt bookis sey[e]n touchyng his kynrede,
Manli of persone, born a cherl* in deed.

For my disport[e] with a glad visage
I sette hym up ful hih upon my wheel,
Gaff hym lordship, out of louh seruage;

665. born a cherl] a cherl born B, J, P.
The Fate of Fanaticus, the Charlatan

To doon hym fauour it liked me ful weel. Wherfor Bochas, his stori euerideel, Note it weel, & in especiall How he be sleihte cam to estat roiall.

Be sleiht feynyng to dyuers folk he tolde, How that he spak with Cirra the goddessse At eueri hour pleylnli when he wolde, Of presumciouw descryued hir liknesse, Seide also how that she of hir goodnesse Hadde grauntid hym, his staat to magnefie, Duryng his lyff a sperit off prophecie. And ferthermore the peeple for to blynde He fantasied hi a crafft vnkouth, Withynwe a scale, the stori maketh mywde, Of a note to haue fyr in his mouth, Blewe it out sparklyng north & south, AfFermede, wherwith folk wer blent, It was a sperit to hym fro heuene sent. Bi which he wrouhte many gret vertu, Gadred peeple til he hadde in deede Two thousand cherlis at his retenu, Which afterward, his purpos for to speede, To sixti thousand encreced, as I reede. I suffrid al; seruid hym at the tide Til al the contre gruchchede at his pride. Thouh of berthe he was but a vileyn, Roos up of nouht bi sodeyn aventure, My geri fauour made hym to be seyn Roial of port, dede his besi cure To reise his baner, wered a cote-armure, And be my gracious supportaciouw Brouht gret peeple to his subieccioun. At the laste my lust gan to appall,* Towards hym nat beyng fauourable; Doun fro my wheel anon I made hym fall, For bi Romeyns was sent a gret constable Callid Porpenwa, a prynce ful notable, Which fill on hym, venquisshid hym anon, Slouh and outraied his cherlis euerichon.

"I remain with no man always,
Hymnsilp was hanged on an hih gibet;
Summe of his myne wer cast in prisoun.
Thus to his pride I gaff a gret tripet
And fro my wheel I caste hym lowe doun.
In his most hiest domynacions —
Took non heed wher he dede lauhe or mourne,
For with no man I do alway soiourne.

"Bochas, I can both further and injure; see how Athenion
once a shepherd became a robber.

"Bochas," quod Fortune, "tak good heed also
How I can bothe foorthre & disauaile:
For exaumle see how Athenyo,
That whilom was a shepperde in Ytaille,
A brigaunt aftir, marchautis to assaille,
Lay in a-wait beside a gret mounteyn,
Off fugityues he was made a capteyn.

"He slew his lord and broke out of many
prisons, and for a time I helped him gather churls
together and make war on Rome.
Slouh first his lord, a riche senatour,
Bi violence brak many strong prisoun;
And for a tyme I gaff hym gret favour.
To gadre robbours aboute hym envioun,
Alle the cherlis of that regeoun
He assembled thourh his inquite,
To holde a werre with Roome the cite.

"He besieged castellis and slewed and
robbed through-out the country
and wore purple like a king,
Beseged castellis, brak doun myhti tours,
Slouh & robbede aboute in ech contre,
Spoiled paleis of worthi senatours,
Title hadde he non sauff title of volunte,
Took upon hym of pride & cruelte
For to be clad in purpre lik a kyng,
Bar a sceptre among his men ridyn.

and a coiffe embroidered
with rich stones on his head.
"I laught to think of him,
a false robber, upheld by my favour.
Vpon his hed ordeyned for the nonys
His gold her tressid lik an emperour,
A coiffe enbroudid al of riche* stonis —
Me list to lauhte, that a fals robbour
Be supportacioun of my geri favour,
Which last nat longe, — for aftir in short while
As is my custum I dede hym begile.
I suffred hym, made hym feyned cheer,
As I haue do to othir mo ful ofte,
Till doun fro Roome was sent a consuleer,
Which took hym proudli & heeng hym hih alofte.

709. is replaced by 702 in H.
734. purple H. 737. goldher B.
738. coiffe} coiff H, coive R 3 — of riche] riche off B.
His cherlis slayn; & summe of hem nat softe
In cheynys bounde, for short conclusioun, 748
Wer dempt be lawe to deien in prisoun.

7 Bi which[e] stori[es], Bochas, thou maist lere
A gret parti of my condicioun.
But now in haste a stori thou shalt heere,
How in the yere fro the fundacioun 752
Mor than sixe hundred — I meene of Roome toun —
Was a gadryng & a gret cumpanye
Togidre sworn bi fals conspiracye,
Them to withdrawe fro the obeisaunce* [p. 307] when the
Of a tribun callid Lodonee,
Which for kniithod hadde gouernaunce,
And was sent dou[n] fro Roome [the] cite
With myhti hand to reule a gret contre
callid Chaumpayne; & pleynli for to seie.
The peele ther list hym nat obeie.
Thre score & foure wer of hem in noumbre 764
That named wer[e] cheeff conspirato^rs,
Which that caste hem ther capteyn n to encouwbre
With multitude of theuis & robbours,
Which ches among hem to been ther supportowrs
Thre myhti capteyns, off which ther was oon
Callid Spartharchus, cheuest of echon.

Gadred cherlis, made hemsiluen strong,
On an hih hill took ther duellyng place,
Hauyng no reward, wer it riht or wrong,
To spoille the contre, bestis to enchace.
I cherisshed hem with a benigne face
For a sesoun, & gaff hem liberte
Bi fals rauyne to robbe the contre.

What thyng mor cruel in comparisoun
Or mor vengable of will & nat off riht,
Than whan a cherl hath domynacioun!
Lak of discrecioun bleadith so the siht
Of comouneres, for diffaute of liht,
The Story of Spartacus and his Churls

When thei haue powere contrees to gournerne
Fare lik a beeste [that] can nothynge disserne.

Gladiatores folkes dede hem calle;
For ther suerdis wer with steel maad fyn
For to fifte geyn wyld beestis alle,
As leouns, beres, bores, wilde swyn.
And the mounteyn wher thei dede lyn
Callid Venuse, and thurh ther crueltie
Slouh & robbede aboute in echcontre.

Spartharchus was ther cheeff capteyn,
Brouht up of nouht & born of louh dege;
But Claudius, a myhti, strong Romayn,
Was sent with powere fro Roome the cite
For to diffende & saue that contre,
The hill besegyng afforn hem as he lay:
He was rebukid, bete & dryue away.

Many of them that kepte the mounteyn
Wer hurt that day, the stori tellith thus,
Amongis which was slayn a gret capteyn
That was felawe vnto Spartharchus.
As I fynde, he hihte Ynomaus;
For whos deth was take so gret vengaunce,
That al the contre felte therof greuaunce.

Thei of the mounteyn, alle off oon assent,
Withoute merci or remyssioun,
Most vengable, haue robbed & Ibrent
Al the contre aboute hem enviroun,
Til too consuleris cam fro Roome doun:
The firste off hem callid Lentulus,
Bothe put to flhte be said[e] Spartarchus.

Wherof the Romeyns gretli wer dismaied.
The senatours off indignacioun,
Bothe ashamed and in hemsilff affraied,
Sente oon Crassus, a gret lord of the toun,
With the noumbre off a legioun.
And whan that he on Spartarchus first sette,
Slouh of his men six* thousand whan thei mette.

792. Spartacus H, Spartachus R 3.
818, 22, 34. Spartachus H, R 3. 819. six] vj B.
And afterward beside a gret ryueur
Callid Salaire thei hadde a gret bataile,
Wher Spartarchus stood in gret daungeer;
For his cheer and contenaunce gan faille.
Thretti thousand clad in plate & maille
Wer slayn that day, ther geyned no raunsoun,
Al ther capteyns assigned to prisoun.

Withoute al this, as maad is mencioun,
Sixti thousand in the feeld lay ded,
And six thousand wer sent to prisoun,
The feeld with blood[e] steyned & maad red.
And foure thousand, quakyng in ther dreed,
Wer thilke day, aftir the Romeyn gise,
Take to merci, rescuyed to franchise,
And Spartarchus at mischeeff put to fliht.
When I from hym turnyd my visage,
He loste his cheer; he loste also his myht
When I appalled the fyn of his passage.
And for he was a cherl off his lynage,
Off his encres I likid nothyng weel,
Therfor vnwarli I cast hym fro my wheel.

Off [my] maneres to make a gretter preeff,  [p. 308]
Ther was another famous gret robbour,
Which thoruh Spaigne was a disclaundrid theeff.
And for he dradde of iustise the rigour,
Trustyng he sholde fynde in me socour,
Callid Viriatus,* he Spaigne anon forsook
And to Roome the riht[e] weie he took.

Gadred mayne of his condicioun
Of eueri sect to make hyseluen strong,
Theuys, robbours of eueri regiouw,
Many a cherl was medlid hem among.
His name tencrece, wer it riht or wrong,
What-euer he gat in cite or village,
With his soudiours he partede the pillage.

Thus be myn helpe he cam to gret richesse,
Which brouhte in pride & presumpcioun;
He nat prouided, of my doublinesse,
Gan to maligne ageyn[e]s Rome tourn;

845. fynde in me] in me fynde H, P.
854. the] his H. 858. ageynes] geyn H.
But by the prudence of laste Scipioun,
Sone of Lepidus, makyng therof no bost,
He slay[en] was bi them he trustede most.

"Thus, Bochas, you may see
my power and
my mutability.

Bi which example[s] notable of remembraunce
Shewed heer-toform, Iohn Bochas, vnto the,
Thow maist knowe in parti my puissauence,
Mi sodeyn chaungis, my mutabilite.
And for tautoide al ambiguite,
To declare the somme of myn entent,
Grete Marius to the I do presente.

Blak his weede & his habite also,
His hed vnkempt, his lokkis hor & gray,
His look down cast in tokne of sorwe & wo,
On his cheekis the salt[e] teris lay,
Which bar record off his dedli affray,—
Wherfor, Bochas, do thi penne dresse
To descriye his mortal heuynesse.

His robe was stained with
Roman blood,
and all his
delight lay in
slaughter.

His robe steyned was with Romeyn blood,
His suerd ay redi whet to do vengauunce,
Lik a tiraunt most furious & wood,
In slaughtre & moordre set al his plesaunce.
Yit nat for thi I gaff hym gouernaunce
Ouer the peopple, ros on my wheel up faste,
But as vnwarli doun I dede hym caste.

Twen hym & Scilla the woful dedli stryues
At large heerafftir, Bochas, thou shalt write,—
How many Romeyns lost bi them ther lyues,
I will also in ordre that thou endite.
And yiff I shall rebuke hem & atwite,
As I fro nouht made hem in honour shyne,
So I ageynward made hem in myscheef fyne.

Forget nat also the dedli pitous fate
Off hym that was so notable in his lyff,—
I meene the grete famous Mitridate,
Whos name yit is ful kouth and ryff,
To whom I gaff a gret prerogatif,
Fourti wyntir, the deede was weel seenne,
Ageyn Romeyns the werre to susteene.

862. which] whos H — exaumple J.
896. werre] werris H.
For which heer-aftir I gyue it the in charge
Of Mitridate the stori set along;
Whan thou hast leiser & a space large,
Remembre his conquest & his deedis strong,
And how that I medlid me among,
For al his noblesse and felicite,
To yiue hym part of gret aduersite.”

Next in order, aftir hir owne chois,
Fortune, vntrusti vpon ech partie,
To John Bochas hath conveyed fro Parthois
Strong Herodes regnyng in Parthie.
“Loo, John,” quod she, “tak heed of this storie,
Al his kynreede, yiff it be weel out souht,
Wer be Sithiens chacid & brouht to nouht.
And yit, for al my mutabilite,
Somme of hem which stood[e] disespeired
I restored to ther dignite,
Vnto which whan thei wer repeired,
This Herodes was hyndred & appeired
Bi my chaunges for his hatful pride,
Whan he lest wende, vnwarli set aside.”

Soon afterwards
Fortune began to smile falsely, and
caused a mighty Roman prince
to appear.

And Bochas, looking closely at his disfigured countenance,
saw that it was Pompey, who
was so long at war with Cesar.

Disconsolat thoruh his vnhappi caas,
His face soiled with water of the se,
Tyme whan Fotynus & cruel Achillas
Drowned his bodi of furious enmyte.
His face disfigured at the solempnite

For which I helped make war against Rome for forty years.”
Fortuna's Play with Pompey

With smokes black, dedli & mortall,
Callid of clerkis the feeste funerall.

Fortunas

Codrus caused that the corps was brent
And consumed into asshes dede;
To Cesar aftir his hed was born & sent
Vpon a pole, his stori who list reede.
Aftir al this, Bochas took good heede,
How Fortune bamaner mokerie,
In scorn of hym gan thus to specefie:

"Vp to the heuene aftir his deuys
I gan enhance & encrece his glorie.
Bi my fauour I gaff hym many a pris,
Conquest of kynges with many gret victorie;
And mor to putte his noblesse in memorie,
Bi my support thoruh his cheualrie,
With Cesar Iulius to holde chaumpartie.

And while I shewed him my favour his
fame arose until I withdrew it again.

"Finally he was taken and slain: I gave
him up, and he lost his head.
"Yet no man takes heed of my changes,
except that you are busy to set them in your book.

"I raised his glory to the heavens and
enabled him to give battle to Cesar,

And whil that I my fauour did applie
Toward hym his victories to assure,
His fame aros, til that in Thesalie
I gan withdrew his parti to socoure
Suffryng his enmyes make disconfiture
Vpon this Pompeie, hyndred in my sght,
Whan he to Lesbos at myscheeff took his fliht.

Bi the seruauntis of yonge Tholome,
Regnyng in Egipt, Pompeie in his dreed
Was take & slayn; he fond no* help in mee:
I gaf hym vp; & so he lost his hed.
Yt of my chaunges no man taketh heed,
Nor how vnseurl I cast my dreadful look,
Sauf thou art besi to sette hem in thi book."

Bochas astoned, parcel of hir presence,
Bothe of cheer[e], face and contenaunce,
And in this while hauyng his aduenture,
Thouhte he sauh a manner resemblaunce
Of a persone, which stood in gret greuaunce;
Til at the laste Fortune caste hir sihte
Toward Bochas, & told[e] what he hihte:

940. 944. Codrus
948. 952. Fortune
956. 960. Bochas
964. 968. Bochas
972. 971.
"This is," quod she, "pleynli to termyne, The famous man, [the] prynce of eloquence That gaf to Latynes the scole & the doctrine Of rethorik, as welle of that science. For which I will thou do thi dilligence To write with othir of this Tullius Al hool the caas, & gynne at Marrius."

These wordes saide, Fortune made an eende; She beet hir wynges & took hir to the fliht: I cannat seie what weie she dede weende, Sauf Bochas tellith, lich an aungel briht

At hir partyng she shewed a gret liht.

Fortune made an eende; She beet hir wynges & took hir to the fliht: I cannat seie what weie she dede weende, Sauf Bochas tellith, lich an aungel briht

But as soone as she gan disapeere, He took his penwe [&] wrot as ye shal heere.

[How Gayus Marrius, of low birthe born/ cam to high estat whiche blent with couetise after many grete batailes deied att mischeef.] 1

HEER Bochas gynne th to tellen of be man Callid in his tyme Gayus Marius, Born at Aprina[s], a castel of Tuscan, Sone of a carpenter, the stori tellith thus, Pursued armys, manli & vertuous; Thoruh al Rome nor in that contre Was ther no man hold so strong as he. Disciplyne and gret subtilite He hadde also, as bookis specifie, Prudence, manhod and habilite Bothe in armys and in cheualrie, Most famous holde toward that partie, Withynne a while, myn auctour seith certeyn, Chose a tribun & a gret capteyn. But fro the gynyng of his tendre age, As histories put in remembraunce, He was priked so sore in his corage Bagredi fret of long contynuaunce, Neuer to stauinch[e] with non habundaunce; —

975. 2nd the] om. J. 977. that] be H.
990. Aprina] Arpynas H 5, Arpinas P.
1003. histories] stories H. 1005. by a gredy H.

1 MS. J. leaf 126 recto.
The world nor Fortune, with all their great richesse,  
Suffised nat tappese his gredynesse.  

Entering a temple he fond a dyounour,  
Counselled [him] ther bi his dyuynaille  
Tentre Rome & holde ther soiour,  
Bi good anys and knihtli apparraille;  
Made hym promys that he shal'nat faille  
Tatteyne be faoure of the comoute  
To gret offis & staat in the cite.

Fauour of comouns brouht hym to hih estat,  
Bi them rescuyed vnto the dignite  
Of consuler, al-be that the senat  
Hadde disdeyn off his felicite,  
Because he was born of louh degre.  

He became a consul, although  
the Senate scorned his low birth.

Grantd a commiission to lead  
the Roman legions, he con-  
quered Numidia  
and captured  
Jugurtha, for which he was  
given a triumph.

The commons believed that  
all their prosperity lay in  
his hand;

for he brought  
many nations  
into subjection  
to Rome, and  
overcame the  
Cimbr and the  
Tigurini, who  
preumptuously took upon  
themselves to  
pass the moun-  
tains of Italy.

The Story of Gaius Marius  
[BK. VI]  
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Suffised nat tappese his gredynesse.  

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Counselled [him] ther bi his dyuynaille  
Tentre Rome & holde ther soiour,  
Bi good anys and knihtli apparraille;  
Made hym promys that he shal'nat faille  
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Fauour of comouns brouht hym to hih estat,  
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Tigurini, who  
preumptuously took upon  
themselves to  
pass the moun-  
tains of Italy.
Thei took upon hem of fals presumpcioun
To passen alle the mounteyns of Itaille,
First discountified, as maad is menciouw,
Thre Romeyn dukis felli in bataille,
Four scorre thousand clad in plate & maile
Slayn of Romeyns, the stoi is weel knowe,
Vnder Thalpies at myscheef ouerthrowe.

This Marrius of marcial auenture
In Germanye hadde a gret bataille
With Tewtobochus, a geauwt of stature,
Put first to fliht with al his apparaille;
For Marrius dide hym so sore assaille,
At the chas[e] proudli born to growde,
Maugre his miht, tak & in cheynis bounde.

Marrius aftir with his host hym drouch
Toward the peele off Cymbrois for to fiht:
Too hundred thousand*, I fynde, of hem he slouh, 1060
Eihte thousand take, thre thousand put to fliht;
Kyng Bolerus, a ful famous kniht,
Slayn in the feelde, for al his gret[e] pride,
Ageyn Marrius as he dide ride.

That day of Cymbrois was al the peele slayn,
The women aftir he list nat to reserue;
Yit thei proffered & wolde haue be ful fayn
Ther chastite deuoutli to obserue,
In the temple of Vesta for to serue.
But ther request[e] for he list nat heere.
With hym thei faught; echon slayn ifeere.

Except that sumwe, whan thei sauh non othir
Remedi, of purpós thei wer set,
Euerich of them to slen & moordren othir;
And somme thouhte also that it was bet
To hang hemsilff vpon an hih gibet,
Than tabide of Marius the outrage,
Perpetueli to lyuen in seruage.

Thus Marius of thre naciouns
Thoruh his conquest complisshed the victorie.
With prisoneres of sondri regiouns

He also put the Teutones to flight and took their leader prisoner.
Afterwards he slew 200,000 of the Cimbri and captured 8000.
They were all slain, even the women, who would gladly have served in the Temple of Vesta.
Some slew one another and the rest hanged themselves.
Thus Marius conquered three nations.
He was chosen consul six times.

Entred Roome to his encrees of glorie,
With special laudes notable of memorie:
First the tryumpe, a guerdoun synguleer,
He tymes sexe chose a consuleer.

Thus Fortune was to hym fauourable,
To sette hym up in worldli dignites
For a sessoun; but for she was chaungable,
Among hit giffes & gret prosperites
She gaf hym part of gret aduersites:
And specialli the tyme acountid than,
Tween hym & Scilla whan the werris gan.

Lucius Scilla abidyng in Chaumpayne,
Marrius at Roome tho present,
Whan the diysisiou gan atween hem tweyne,
Ech to other contrarie of entent,
Malencolius and impacient,
Which of bothe, the stori weil conceyued,
To gouerne sholde sonnest be receyued.

Al sodeni, wher it wer riht or wrong,
Toward Roome takyng his passage,
Ageyn Marrius to make hymseluen strong,
Gan slen & brenne, & of gret outrageous,
Wilful, hasti, furious of corage,
For sodeyn komyng & vnwar violence
Ageyn[e]s hym fond[e] no resistence.

Too myhti batailles he dede with hym leede,
Entryng the cite, gan thoruh the wall[e] myne;
With o bataille faste gan hym speede
To passe the gate callid Aquilyne
(The tothir gat[e] namyd was Colyne),
At whos entryng, bi record of the book,
Scilla be strengthe the Capitoile took.

But whan Marrius hadde knowlechyng
That Scilla hadde so gret power & myht,
Withoute arest or lenger abidyng,
Into a maris Gayus anon riht
With al his peple took sodeni his fiht.
Fet out be strengthe, koude hym nat diffende,
Scilla aftir to prisoun dede hym sende.

1099. sonnest shulde H, sonest shold R 3. 1117. Marish P.
1119. be] with H.
Thus the prowess for a while slept
Of Marrius liggyng in prisoun.
Scilla that tyme the Capitoille kepte,
Wherbi al Roome stood in subieccioun.
And of hatrede in haste he sente doun
A stordi cherl to Marius in his dred,
Whil he lay bounde to smyten of his hed.

This cherl weel compact of braun & of bonys,
Sent of purpos Marrius for toppresse,*
For his strengthe ordyned for the nonys,
To the prisoun the cherl gan faste hym dresse,
Wher Marrius was fetrid in distresse,
Fulli in purpos, withoute mor delay,
To heuedyn hym in prisoun ther he lay.

Losed hym first, liggyng on his couche;
And Marius [a]roos up lik a man,
The cherl feerful to smyte or to touche.
And Marius ful proudli tho began
To entre a place beside of a woman,
Fond an assे ther of aventure,
Vpon whos bak the se he gan recure.

Toward Affrik ther he fond passage,
Bi enprisownyng thouch he wer wax[e] feynt;
Yit ther abood, stille in his corage,
Hih worthynesse with prudence meynt,
Which in his persone wer* nat [fully] queynt,
Ageyn the malis to make a countiertaille,
Off proude Scilla the malis eft tassaille.

Of Itaille rood thoruh the contre,
Took his viage towarde* Roome tou[n,
With foure batailes entreth the cite,
Sixe hundrid knihtis be computacioun
Slayn in the feeld, as maad is mencioun.
Wher men may seen, who list looke a-ferre,
What damage diuysioun doth in werre.

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1123 is misplaced at end of stanza and marked a, 1124 is marked b, H.
1128. 2nd of] om. H.
1129. to oppresse B.
1146. wer] was B, H — fully] om. J, P.
1150. towarde] thoruh B.
including the great consul Octavius, whose head was set on a pole.

First bi the manhood off this Marius, In this dyuisioun, the stori who list reede, The grete consul callid Octauyus Lost his hed[e] & his lyff in deede; — Vpon a pole whil it dede bleede Was cruelli presentid of entent Tofor the iuges sittying in iugement.

Merula, priest of the Temple of Jupiter, was also slain, and Crassus and Catulus.

Of whos deth[e] summe of hem wer fayn, Summe sorii, of loue as thei wer bounde. And in this werre Merula was slayn, Preest in the temple, lik as it is founde, Of Iubiter, with many mortal wounde. The Romeyn slayn that callid was Crassus; With fyr consumyd was pride Catulus.

Marius held his own against his enemies

Alle his ennyes Marius dede encoumbre, Which ageyn hym be conspiracioun Wer assentid with a ful gret noumbre In ther ayys for to haue put hym doun, Take from hym his domynacioun. But he abood the torment & the shours, Strong to condempne alle his conspiratours.  

and was chosen consul six times, Finally, Fortune turned away from him. Sixe tymes, afforn rehearsed heer, Of condicioun thouh he wer despitous, He was chose so ofte consuleer; Til Fortune gan wexen envious Ageyn this saide cruel Marius, Which made the senat with al the cheualrie To gruchche ageyn his hatful tirannye. In this tyme, the stori maketh mynde, Damasippus, a pretour of the toun, Freendli to Marius & helpyng, as I fynde, Vnder a shadwe of decepcioun Vnsto ther cite for to do tresoun, Causyng foure Romeyns come I-feere Toffor Marrius a certeyn day tapere. And ther namys to putte in memorie, Sceuola, Carbo and Domycius, The fourthe off them, as seith the stori, Callid in Roome the wise Antistius.

[p. 312]

The Wars of Marius and Sulla

Togidre assemblid tofor Marrius,
He of rancour, geyn iugement or lawe,
Made hem be slayn & thoruh the cite drawe.

Their bodies were thrown into the Tiber.

Bi cruelte of saide Marius,
Alle this while the cruel werre last
Tween hym & Scilla, til duk Campanyus
Cam on the parti, hard[y] & despitous,
To helpe Scilla ther baneres first displaied,
Wherof al Roome was sodenli affraied.

Duke Campanus aided Sulla,
and Marius was defeated in a great battle, losing four score thousand of his men.

At the gate that callid was Colyne
Marrie & Scille hadde a gret bataille, —
Foure score thousand, the noumbre to termyne
On Marrius side slayn, it is no faille;
Scilla victorious, with marcial apparaile
Entryng the town, ageyn his oth, parde,
Thre thousand citeseyns slouh of the cite.

Sulla massacred the people until an old prince named Catullus

Of folk disarmyd & naked in the town,
Thei nouther spared old nor yong of age,
The cruel moordrers walkyng up nor doun
Be Scilla sent in that mortal rage,
Till Catullus, a prince fall in age,
Saide vnto Scilla, "we can no difference
Atween rebellion nor atween innocence;
We moordre & slen withoute excepcioun
Both hih & louh, holdyng no maneere;
Ageyn al kniifthod, to myn oppynyoun,
We do procede in our conquest heere, —
Our title is lost the tryumphe to require
Of hih prowess, whan we canat observe
No difference to slen nor [to] reserve."

Remonstrated with him, saying that if they continued thus to slaughter they would have no title of triumph.

And in this while, of hatful cruelte
Scilla contreued lettres diffamable,
Wherbi fyue hundred out of that cite
Wer falsli banshed, citeseyns notable, —
Ageyn[e]s hem he was so vntretable, —
Alle ther goodes achetid in that rage
Of avarice and of fals pillage.

Sulla also banished 500 notables and confiscates their goods out of avarice.
A brother of Marius hid in a goat-house, but was dragged to Catullus's grave.

Another Romeyn namyd Marrius, Brother to Marrius, of whom tofor I tolde, For dred of Scilla fledde & took an hous Which vnto goot was set up for a foolde; Found & rent out in his daies olde, With cordes drawe (no rescus myhte hym saue) Of cruel vengauce to Catullus graue,

Wher Scilla made bi cruel* iugement, With a sharp suerd[e], forgid for to bite, Afrir tyme his eien wer out rent, Bothe attonys his handis of to smyte. His hed smet of, no raunsoun myhte hym quite, Set on a pole, it wolde be non othir, And off despiht[e] sent vnto his brothir, To grete Marius, of whom I spak now riht,— The grete duk, so mihti & so huge, Which hadde afforn[e] tak hym to the flht For feer of Scilla in that mortal deluge, Into a cite to fynde ther refuge, Callid Preueste, ther stondyng in greet dreed, Namli when he beheeld his brothris hed.

For-asmoche as he no socour fond, Disespeired, this was his purpos: To slen hymsilff[e] with his owne hond In thilke place wher he was kept[e] cloos. Drouh out a suerd, up anon he roos, Constreynd his seruaunt in that sodeyn affray Smyte off his hed, the silue same day. 

Men may see that death is the end of all trouble and adversity. Fortune once more shewed in the case of Marius how she can vary her course.

Men seen how deth is fyn of al myscheeff, [p. 313] Eende off aduersite that doth wrecchhis tarie. Fortune heer maketh another preeff In Marrius, how she hir cours can varie, Bi an eudence hateful and contrarie To shewe hir malis and vngoodliheed Ageyn this duk, alas, when he was ded. This frowarde* ladi, of malis most vengable, Whan hir list furiousli to raue And shewe hirsilff[e] cruel & vnstable,

To non estat she list no reward haue.
Causede Marius be take out of his graue
Bi cruel Scilla, in stori it is founde,
Hisouglyn smet on pecis rounde.

And aftir, mor to shewe his cruelte, —
Marius sholde haue no burying place, —
Caste his careyn, of kankrid enmyte,
Into Tiber, ther was non othir grace.
Loo, thus can Fortune for hir folk purchace!
Bi which examplte touchyng Marius,
Off worldly chaunges Bohchas writeth thus,

Maketh in this chapitle a descripstioun,
First what thyng is verray gentilesse,
To sette a preef & a probacioun,
No thyng atteyneth vnto hih noblesse
But the cleer shynyng of vertuous clennesse,
Which may nat shewe, in louh nor hih* parage,
But wher it growth out of a peur corage.

Worldli poweer, oppressioun, tirannye,
Erthli tresour, gold, stonis nor richesse
Be no mens vnto gent[e]rie,
But-yif vertu reule ther hih provesse:
For wher vices haue any interesse
In hih[e] berthe, mene, or louh kynreede,
Deeme no man gentil, but onli bi his deede.

In roial paleisis of ston & metal wrouht,
With galleries or statli cloistres rounde,
Gentilesse or noblesse is nat souht,
Nor in cileris nor in voutis rounde;
But onli ther wher vertu doth habounde:
Corious clothes nor gret pocessiouws
Maketh nat men gentil but condic[i]ouns.

Philisophres conclude* in ther entent
And alle thes worthi famous old auctours,
No man may quethe in his testament
Gentilesse vnto his successours;
Of wikked weed[e] come non holsum flours.
Concludyng thus: of good[e] men & shrewes,
Calle ech man gentil aftir his good[e] thewes.

After his burial, Sulla had his body
dug up again, and his ugly
corpse cut into round pieces
and cast into the Tiber.

Bochas says that nothing attains to high
noblesse except the clear
shining of virtue, that can
spring only from a pure

Worldly power,
tyranny, and
wealth are no
means to
genility unless
they are ruled
by virtue.

No man is
genle except
by his deeds;
and gentility
cannot be de-
vised by
testament to
our successors.
Wholesome
flowers do not
grow on weeds.
Duk Marrius, of whom I spak toforn, Of nature, the stori berth witnesse, As* be descent [both] poore and nedi born, Bi disposicioun of coraious noblesse, Hadde in his persoone wit, strengthe [&] hardynesse; Vndir al this, ther dide his herte myne A worm of avarice his worship to declyne. What availas plenty that can never suffice? The river of Tantalus cannot assuage the thirst of greed. What wailleth plente, that neuer may suffice? Or what the flood, that staunche may not thrust? Or what an appet, that euer doth arise, Alwey to cte, and euer to cte hath lust? Of kankrid hunger so fretyng is the rust, That the ryuer of Tantalus in his rage Of gredi etikes the frett may nat asswage. You have heard the end of Marius. Three Cleopatras next appeared before Bochas, with woeful downcast looks. The first of them had had three husbands, of whom the last was Anthiochus; and as Bochas has already written their unfortunate fate and her son’s great unkindness, it were idle to rehearse it all again. The second Cleopatra was wedded to Ptolemey Euergetes, who served her son up to her at table.

Dialogue:

Duke Marius, of whom I spak toforn, Of nature, the stori berth witnesse, As* be descent [both] poore and nedi born, Bi disposicioun of coraious noblesse, Hadde in his persoone wit, strengthe [&] hardynesse; Vndir al this, ther dide his herte myne A worm of avarice his worship to declyne. What availas plenty that can never suffice? The river of Tantalus cannot assuage the thirst of greed. What wailleth plente, that neuer may suffice? Or what the flood, that staunche may not thrust? Or what an appet, that euer doth arise, Alwey to cte, and euer to cte hath lust? Of kankrid hunger so fretyng is the rust, That the ryuer of Tantalus in his rage Of gredi etikes the frett may nat asswage. You have heard the end of Marius. Three Cleopatras next appeared before Bochas, with woeful downcast looks. The first of them had had three husbands, of whom the last was Anthiochus; and as Bochas has already written their unfortunate fate and her son’s great unkindness, it were idle to rehearse it all again. The second Cleopatra was wedded to Ptolemey Euergetes, who served her son up to her at table.
And the seconde, to hir confusioun,
Bi Euergetes, wher she wer wo or fayn,
Was with hir child[e] seruid, that was slayn.

The thridde weddid was to kyng Grispus,
Slayn in a temple bi ful gret outrage,
For dreed & shame gan were furious,
To saue hirsil[l]f knew non auauntage,
Saue she embraci of lubiter an image,
In the stori as heer-tofforn is founde,
Or she was ded suffred many a wounde.

[How kyng Mitridate bood vij. yere in wylderesse
had grete tormentys bothe in see & londe, by
his blood brouht to vtraunce slouh himsillf with
a swerde.] ¹

I

WIL passe ouer thes Cleopatras thre,
Fouth proceede to the hasti fate
Soone execut bi Parchas cruelte
Vpon the duk callid Mitridate.
First reherse the grete vnkyndli hate
Of then that wern his tutours, as I reede,
Hym to destroie bassent of his kynreede.

Which of purpos dide his deth prouide
Bi many vnkouth straunge occasioun:
In tendre youth[e] first thei made hym ride
Vpon an hors wildere than [a] leoun,
Off purpos onli for his destruccioun.
But al-be-so that he was yong of age,
The hors he reuled in al his moste rage.

Nat of doctryne, but onli of nature
He was disposid kon[n]yngli to ride,
Ouer hym the maistri to recurse,
Maugre the hors, of wit he was his guide.
What weye he took[e], froward or a-side,
He daunted hym, that wher-so-euer he rood
Bridled hym & on his bak abood.

His owne kyn & his next allies
Most laboured to brynge hym to myscheeff,
With venymous drynk set on hym espies

¹ MS. J. leaf 128 recto.
The Story of Mithridates' Youth

At good leiseer, as dooth a couert theeff,
Of ther fell poisoun for to make a preef,
In ther entent, the stori is weel kouth,
Hym to moordre in his tendre youth.

But whan that he apparyued ther tresoun,
To saue hymself[e] made gret ordenaunce;
Anon as he gan haue suspicioun
Of the[r] vnkyndli hatful purueyaunce,
For remedies made cheuisaunce:
Was prouided ther malis to declyne,
Be many notable preeued medecyne.

And ther malis prudentli teschewe,
Is remembred, whil he was yong of age,
With certeyn freendes, which that dede hym sue,
He disposed of custum his corage
To hunte & chase beestis most savage;
Vndir that colour he dede it for a wile,
Ferr from his contre absente hym for a while.

Of o corage, of oon hert & o cheer
Suffred manli, took non heuynesse,
In desertis space of seuene yeer,
Among hih hilles abood in wildirnesse.

Set in Asia, the stori berth witnesse,
Fond no loggyng, tracyng the contres,
Saue in kauernys & in holwe trees.

The book remembreth how that his diete
Wer beestis wilde enchacid with gret miht,
Fledde idilnesse, eschewed al quiete,
And litil sleep suffised hym at niht;
Bexercise his bodi was maad lihte:
Ther was nouther, whan hym list pursue,
Hert nor hynde that miht his hand eschewe.

He nouther dradde tigres nor leouns;
He was so swifft, thou thei dede hym asaille, —
Lik of strengthe to olde champiouns,
No wilde beeste of gret nor smal entaille
Tescape his hand[e] myht nat countiruaille
Yif he wer war[e], erli outhere late,
So gret[e] swiftnesse hadde Mitridate.
Among he hadde in armys excersise,
Among to tourneye & renne on hors[e]bak;
Al delicat fare he dede also despise,
Of gredy excesse; in hym ther was no lak:
A-nihter-tyme his slep ful ofte he brak,
Stoundemeel the hour[e]s for to marke;
In the dawenyng roos up or the larke.

The space accomplisshid fulli of seuene yeer, [p. 315]
He is repeired hom to his contre;
Shewed hymself of manhod and of cheer
Ful lik a kniht, his stori who list see.
Wherof his enmyes sore astoned bee;
Kauhte of his comyng in herte a maner dreed,
Supposyng afForn that he was ded.

In whos absence his wif Leodices
Conceyued a childe, as maad is mencion.
For the dffame sholde nat kome in pres,
Hym for to moordre she souhte occasioun,
Fulli in purpos to slen hym be poisoun.
Of which diffautis hir lord was nothyng fayn,
Knowyng the trueth, made hir to be slayn.

Took on hym aftir many knihtli deede:
First to conquere al Pafflagonye
Bi the helpe of worthi Nychomeede,
That tyme callid kyng of Bithynye,
Togidre assurid to been of allie
In losse or lucre, Fortune to be ther guide,
And therto swor[e]n neuer to deuyde.

To Mitridate legates wer dou sent
From the Romeynts, hym lowli requeryng,
That he wolde, lik to ther entent,
Paffagonie restore vnto ther kyng,
Which he hadde wonne, the cite assailynge.
But he list nat advertise ther praiereere,
Nor on no parti ther requestis heere.

He dradde nat ther thretis nor manacis,
Gat prooudli after the lond of Galathie,
In his conqueres wan* many othir placis,
Capadoce took to his partie,

1424. He was a good jouster and rider and despised luxury.
1428. At the end of the seven years he went home and was feared by all his enemies.
1432. During his absence his wife had a child, and to hide her shame sought to poison him, for which he caused her to be slain.
1436. He conquered Paphlagonia with the help of Nicomedes.
1440. He had no fear of them, and soon conquered Galatia and Cappadocia.
1444. and afterwards was required by the Romans to restore the kingdom. This he refused to do.
1448. He conquered
1452. He had no fear of them, and soon conquered Galatia and Cappadocia.
1456. He had no fear of them, and soon conquered Galatia and Cappadocia.
1460. He had no fear of them, and soon conquered Galatia and Cappadocia.

1426. full offt his sleep H.
1435. that] trowd hat H.
1459. wan] gat B.
He then fell out with Nicomedes, who took the crown of Cappadocia without Mithridates' consent.

Although he had married his sister.

After Nicomedes' death he deprived his two sons of the kingdom and had his own son crowned there.

The Romans sent down Ariobarzanes to chase him out, but Mithridates allied himself with Tigranes and was victorious.

In Capadoce, bi help of Mithridate, Cleymed a title, iustli for tatteyne
Vnto the crowne, ther fadir ded but late.
For which thei gan felli to debate,
Til Mitridate falsli gan contruye
His too neuews vngoodli to depreyue.

Al Capadoce he took into his hand,
His owne sone he hath ther crowned kyng.
Capadociens, bassent of al the lond,
Gan disobeie of purpos his werkynge,
When the Romeyns consirdred al thys thing,
Ariobarzanes in haste thei sente doun
Geyn Mitridate to keep that regioun.

The sone of whom fro them thei ha[n] refusid,
Out of ther kyngdam gan hym to enchase;
For thei sempte ther franchise was abusid,
To seen a foreyn occupie that place.
Mitridate gan newli hem manace,
And took with hym to susteene his partie
Tigranes the kyng of Armenye.
Ariobarzanes, that was fro Roome sent
To Capadoce to helpe hem & counsaille,
Of Mitridate knowyng the entent,
How he cam down proudli hym tassaille
With Tigranes set in the fерьt bataille,
Of Capadoce that al the regioun
Was brouth that day to ther subieccioun.
Thus Mitridate hauyng his entent,
In short tyme cowtrees cowqueryng,
Was myhtiest prince of al the orient,
And as it is remembred be writywg,
He delitid most in astronomye,
And with al these, he dede his besi cure
For to lerne vnkouth conclusiouws
And secretes souht out hi nature,
Knew the langage of dyuers regiouws,
Of too and twenty sondri naciouns,
And heeld[e] women many mo than oon,
Loued Hypsicrata aboue hem euerechin.
To the Romeyns this manli Mitridate,
As bookis olde recorde of hym & seyn,
Vpon a day, of verray cruel hate
Thoruh al Asie he bad that ech Romeyn
Sholde of his men merciles be slayn:
Twenti thousand he slouh eek on o day
Of Romeyn marchauwtes, ther durst no man sei nay.
To hym he drouh dyuers naciouns
To encrece* his parti bi puissaunce,
Kymbrois, Gallois, with othir regiouws,
Bastornois took to his alliaunce;
With straunge peeple made his aqueeuntaunce
Wher that euer he rood nyh or ferre,
With them of Roome for to holde werre.*
In Greece also he gat many an ile,
Al Ciclades to his subieccioun;
Conquered so, that withynne a while
Of Athenes he gat the famous town.
But whan Romeyns knew his entencioun,
Thei sente Scilla in a furius heete
With Mitridate in Greece for to meete.
The Wars of Mithridates with Rome

Archelaus, which that was constable, Leedyng the host of kyng Mitridate, Gan ageyn Scilla, trustyng he was able, Maugre Romeynes* with hym to debate. As thei mette in ther furious hate, Beside Ortonia of Greece a gret[\(c\)] toun, Of Archelaus the parti was born doun.

Ther gan Scilla to been victorious Geyn Mitridate, & be gret violence Gat al Ephese, a kyngdam ful famous, Rood thoruh Asie, fond no resistence; Bi his kniththod & manli prouidence Capadoce, Bithynye eek also To Romeyn handis he gat hem bothe too.

Whan Mitridate parceyued hath this thyng, How the conquest of Scilla took encrees, Anon he caste withoute long tarieng, For a tyme with hym to haue a pes. Of hih[\(e\)] wisdam he was nat rek[\(e\)les To dissymule til* he fond tyme & space In Fortune to fynde bettre grace.

Abood his tyme, kept hymsilue cloos Til he fond leiseer lik his oppynyoun. In this while of auenture aroos Withynne Roome a gret discencioun Tween too consuleris beyng in that toun, Which tappese bi his auctorite Scilla cam up ageyn to the cite.

Whan Mitridate his absence dede espie, To his purpos fond oportunyte, Gadred peele, & with his cheualrie A siege leid to Cizite the cite, Of al Asie most off auctorite. Til Lucullus, a myhti consuleer, To breke the seege aproche gan ful neer.

Mitridate hadde on fyue capteyns Tofor the toun made a disconftiture, Of hih despiht he hadde to Romeyns. But Lucullus the damage to recure,

Tenclose ther enmyes dide his* besi cure: 1580
To his mynours gaf anon in charge
Aboute the siege to make a dich ful large.

Thei withynne hadde knowlechyng
Be certeyn toknys of al her gouernaunce; 1584
Wherupon thei made no taryeng
to caste a weie for ther deliueraunce.
Mitridates seyng ther ordenauwce,
Of hih prudence scaped away beside,
And at the seege no linger list abide.

To his mynours gaf anon in charge
Aboute the siege to make a dich ful large.

Lucullus than, the myhti consuleer,
Pursued aftir, slouh of his meyne
Swich multitude, that Asopus the ryueer
Was maad with blood[e] lik the Rede Se.
With wynd & tempest fordryue also was he,
And whan he sauh no socour on the lond,
To shipp he wente with strong & myhti bond. 1596

He fond Fortune cruel aduersarie
On lond & se, this worthi Mitridate;
And Neptunus made the se contrarie,
Ageyn[e]s hym his puissauwce to abate.
What shal men calle it? — influence or fate? —
So sodenli a prince of hih renoun
From hih noblesse to be plongid doun.

For any myscheef he kept ay o visage,
This Mitridate, & loth was for to plie
Or for to bowe, so strong was his corage,
But efFt ageyn goth with his cheualrie
Toward Adrastus, an hill of Armenye,
Where-as Pompeie besette hym enviroun, 1608
Sent fro Roome to his destruccioun.

Mitridate makyng his loggyng place
Vndir that hill, whan it drouh to niht, 1612
The troublie heuene with thundryng gau manace;
The frye leuene dirkid hath his siht;
The cloudi moone clipesed of hir liht,
Astoned hym bi vnwar violence,
That he stood confus of al prouidence.

1580. his] ther B.  1582. the] his H.  1587. Mitridate H.
1608. Armonye H.
He grew almost weary of life; but his faithful wife never once left him and followed him wherever he went, disguised as a page.

Yet even when Fortune was most menacing, his courage did not fail him.

He showed no sign of weakness, although there was the greatest occasion for despair.

With him was a bailiff named Castor, who traitorously sent his master’s children as hostages to Rome, and murdered one of his sons. Another son, Pharnaces, was ungrateful and disloyal, and, taking possession of the army,

He was be tempest & vnwar dirknesse
Almost maad wery of his woful liff;
Yit I fynde, of vretyr kyndenesse,
Hipsicrata, which that was his wiff,
Nouther for werre nor no mortal stryff
Left hym neuere: disgised of visage
Folwed hym arraied as a page.

Yit in his moste mortal heuynesse,
Whan cloudi Fortune gan hym most manace,
Of his corage the naturel quiknesse
Appalled nat nor remeued from his place,
So hih prowesse dide his hert enbrace.
Nat disespeired for no sodeyn fall,
Of condiciouns he was so marciall.

In tokne wherof, he stondyng at myscheef, Chauanged nouthier cheer nor contenaunce:
An evidenece & a ful gret preeff
Of manli force and hertli assuraunce.
Deflyng Fortune, with al hir variaunce,
Whan that he fond to his destruccioun
Of disespeir grettest occasioun.

With hym he hadde a bailiff, as I fynde, Callid Castor, which of condicioun
Was to his lord[e] fals & eek vnkynde,
And conspired ageyn hym fals tresoun.
In tokne wherof, up to Roome toun
His lordis childre, yong & tendre of age,
Lik a fals theeff he sent hem in hostage:
Oon of his sones he moordred be tresoun,
Which Mitridate took ful sore at herte.
Another sone, as maad is mencioun,
Fals to his fader, which whan he dide aduerte,
The vnkyndnesse made hym sore smerte;
For of al vicis, shortli to conclude,
Werst of alle is ingratitude.

This same child, of whom I make mynde, Callid Pharnax, which ageyn nature
To his fadir tretour & vnkynde, —
And his purpos ageyn hym to recure
In al hast[e] dide his besi cure;
For tacomplissehe his purpos in partie,
Took to hym hool his fadris cheualrie.

He was be tempest & vnwar dirknesse
Almost maad wery of his woful liff;
Yit I fynde, of vretyr kyndenesse,
Hipsicrata, which that was his wiff,
Nouther for werre nor no mortal stryff
Left hym neuere: disgised of visage
Folwed hym arraied as a page.

Yit in his moste mortal heuynesse,
Whan cloudi Fortune gan hym most manace,
Of his corage the naturel quiknesse
Appalled nat nor remeued from his place,
So hih prowesse dide his hert enbrace.
Nat disespeired for no sodeyn fall,
Of condiciouns he was so marciall.

In tokne wherof, he stondyng at myscheef, Chauanged nouthier cheer nor contenaunce:
An evidenece & a ful gret preeff
Of manli force and hertli assuraunce.
Deflyng Fortune, with al hir variaunce,
Whan that he fond to his destruccioun
Of disespeir grettest occasioun.

With hym he hadde a bailiff, as I fynde, Callid Castor, which of condicioun
Was to his lord[e] fals & eek vnkynde,
And conspired ageyn hym fals tresoun.
In tokne wherof, up to Roome toun
His lordis childre, yong & tendre of age,
Lik a fals theeff he sent hem in hostage:
Oon of his sones he moordred be tresoun,
Which Mitridate took ful sore at herte.
Another sone, as maad is mencioun,
Fals to his fader, which whan he dide aduerte,
The vnkyndnesse made hym sore smerte;
For of al vicis, shortli to conclude,
Werst of alle is ingratitude.

This same child, of whom I make mynde, Callid Pharnax, which ageyn nature
To his fadir tretour & vnkynde, —
And his purpos ageyn hym to recure
In al hast[e] dide his besi cure;
For tacomplissehe his purpos in partie,
Took to hym hool his fadris cheualrie.
The Death of Mithridates

Be sleihte & meede whan he was maad[e] strong, 1660 laid siege to his father (which, it seems to me, was wrong).

He beseged his fadir round aboute, —
Vnto nature, me seemeth, he didde wrong
To putte his fadir in so gret a doute.

Kyndenesse was ferr shet withoute,
Whan the sone, with hate set affire, and compelled him to seek refuge in a tower.
Ageyns his fadir list falsli to conspire.

With multitude his fadir was constreyned,
Maugre his myht, into a tour to flee,
His sone vnkynde hath at hym disdeyned; 1672
And yit for al his straunge aduersite.

Of his corage the magnanymyte
In his persone stood hool, list nat varie,
Thouh Fortune was to hym contrarie.

Yit myn auctour Bochas berth record,
That Mitridate, yif it wolde haue bee,
Requered his sone to been at accord 1676
And set aside al old contrariouste.

But he vnkynde, was indurat parde,
Euere froward, malicious of corage,
So disposed from his tendre age.

So that the kyng Mitridate, alas, 1680
Was overcomer be vnkyndenesse,
That neuer afforn[e] in no manner caas
Stood disamaied, but of hih prowesse
Kept ay o face al passiouns to represse.

This vertu force, bi marcial doctryne,
For non aduersite suffrid* hym declyne.

Eende of his werris & his mortall stryues, 1684
Of his debatis and discenciouns,
His concubynes, his douhtres & his wyues,
Be mene onli of certeyn pociouns,
Slouh hem alle be drynkyng of poisons;
For he nat wolde, the cause to descryue,
Aftir his deth thei sholde abide alyue.

His owne deth, of mortall fel rigour
Compassed afforn[e], thus he gan devised:
Made a Frensh kniht that was a soudiour,
With a sharp suerd in ful cruel wise
To renne hym thoruh; wherbi the fraunchise
Conserved was his purpos to fulfill,
He shold nat deie but bi his owne will.

1687. suffrid] listnat B. 1694. on live H. 1697. Franch H.
This was the end of Mitridates. Let all princes take heed of his death.

Loo, heer the eende of kyng Mitridate!
Lat princis alle of his deth take heede,
How reklesli he passed into fate
And bi assent made his herte bleede.
And Bochas heer, who list his book to reede,
Pleylnli rehersyng but in woordes fewe,
To worldli princis doth his conceit shewe.

M YHTI Princis, lefft up your corages,
Toward heuene doth your hertes dresse,
Of your memorie* toune up he visages,
Wher ioe is euere, concord and gladness,
Treve armonyne, celestial suetnesse, —
Countirpeiseth in your remembraunce
Worldli chaungis, Fortunys variaunce.

Think of the outrage of war
slaughter, murder, division,
deceit, brought about through a sudden change
of worldly variance.

Aduertiseth the mortal fel outrages
Of blodi werris impossible to represse,
Whil fals envie with his furious rages
In sondry rewmys hath so gret interesse, —
Slaughtre, moordre, deuisioune, falsnesse,
Which conscience haue brouht[e] to vttraunce
Thoruh sodeyn chaung of worldli variaunce.

Reckon up the princes, who sat on high
thrones, and their end, and the bloody
wages of tyrants.

Rekne up princis that sat on hih[e] stages:
What was the fyn of ther roial noblesse?
Or of tirauntis rekne up the bloodi wages:
Sodeyn slaughtre guerdouned ther woodnesse.
Mitridate can bern herof witnesse,
Bi blood vnkynde brouht vnto vtraunce,
Thoruh sodeyn chaung of worldli variaunce.

Remember the Golden Age,
when Saturn ruled, and the silver world of
Jupiter, and the fierce world
made sted by Mars.

Princis remembreth vpon the goldene ages,
Whan Satourn reuled the world in rihtwisnesse;
Next Iubiter, for peeplis auauntages,
In siluerean world conserued in clennesse,
Which Mars hath now tournid to felinesse,
Made it stelene, with suerd, dagger & launce,
Thoruh sodeyn chaung of worldli variaunce.

1711. memorie] memoire B, J.
1716. the] their H — outrages] Coragis H.
Of Mitridate registreth the viages,
Conspired poisouns taffraie his hih prowesse,
On lond and se tempestuous passages,
Bi constreynt bood seuen yeer in wwildnesse.
Of his wandryng peiseth thunsekirnesse,
His eende in myscheef, knew non auoidaunce
Geyn worldli chaung nor Fortunys variaunce.

Yif neccligence haue brouht you in rerages
Towardis God, or he rekne in streihtnesse,
Lat resoun medle for you to leyn hostages,—
CompassiouM, merci, partywg of almesse.
Toward heuene to supporte your feeblesse,
Wha« yoMr meritis shal peisen in ballauwce
Of worldli chauwgis & Fortunys variaunce.

Remember the warlike enter-prises and insecure life of
Mithridates, who could not avoid the varia-

ance of Fortune.

If you have been negligent towards God, let reason help
you to lay compassion, charity and mercy as
hostsages in heaven.

Death spares no man, but prudence may
preserve you against worldly change.

A woeful prince, Eucratides of Scythia next
appeared before Bochas.

He was besieged by Demetrius, king of
India, and finally captured and slain.

Next in ordre to Bochas dide appeere
A woeful prince, which put himself in pres,
Regnyng in Sithia, his stori doº us lere,
The name of whom was Eucratides.
But to disturbe his quiete & his pes,
Ageyn[e]s hym, pleylni, as I fynde,
Cam Demetrius the myhti* kyng of Ynde.

Of whom the poweer & the violence
To Eucratides was verray importable:
Beseegid first, and for lak of diffence
Take at myscheef, his foon nat merciable;
For Demetrius was on hym so vengable,
Whan he was slayn withynne his owne boundis,
Made the careyn [to] be caste out to* houndis.

1760. Sithia] Bactris P.  1764. myhti] worthy B.
1771. to] om. J, H 5 — out to] vnto B, out to the J.

1 MS. J. leaf 131 recto.
The Wars of Orodes and the Romans

Natwithstondyng he was a worthi kyng,

Born of hih blood, swich was his aventure.

Demetrius sone aboue al erthli thyng

Hatede hym, bi record of scripture,

Of rancour denied his sepulture.

And for the mateer is hatful & contrarie,

On his stori I wil no longer tarie.

[How herodes kyng of Parthos, werred with Romayns whiche aftir his sone & heir was slayn / made his bastard son kyng \( \text{bat anon aftir slouh his fadir.} \)\]

Arthabanus, king of Parthia, had two sons, Mithridates and Orodes,

and when he died was succeeded by Mithridates, the elder, who was a tyrant and, banished, fled to Babylon.

Orodes then became king, and, taking Babylon, caused his brother’s head to be cut off.

Afterwards he made war on Rome. Crassus, who came down against him,

Thus kam Herodes to estat roiall,

Pursude his brothir into Babiloun,

Leide a seege round aboute the wall;

Thei to hym yold[e] up the toun.

Thus was his brothir bouht to confusioun, —

Afforn the castel, withoute lenger date,

Made smyte of the hed of Mitridate.

In Parthos aftir he took pocessioun,

This yonge Herodes, of volunte & pride

Gan a werre geyn* hem of Roome toun,

Whom to withstonde thei list nat longe abide.

1784. elder] eldest B.
1785. Herodes] Orodes P.
1802. geyn] ageyn B, H, J, R 3, H 5, P.
1 MS. J. leaf 131 recto.
The consul Crassus kam doun on ther side, 1804
Comauudid was short processe to make,
Toward Parthos his viage for to take.
Crassus list nat tentren in that rewm,
Left Parthos, the stori doth deuise, — 1808
Took his weie toward Iherusalem
To take ther a solemrne enprise,
In the temple, onli of couetise,
Took ther, ageyn the title of rihtwisnesse, 1812
Vp al ther tresour & ther gret richesse.
Bi which he gat in dyuers regiouns
Gret multituede to holde up his partie,
Ladde with hym elleeuene legiouns,
Toward Parthos faste gan hym hie,
Bi his lettres proudli gan defe
The said Herodes, and with gret apparraille
Mid his contre proffred hym bataille. 1820
The nexte morwe whan Crassus took pe seeld,
To hym was brouht of blak a cotearmure,
Which whan his knihtes auysili beheeld,
Dempte it a tokne of disconfiture;
For in contrarie* Romeyns do ther cure,
Whan ther capteyn shal fihten, or ther hed,
His cotearmure is owther whit or red.
A-nother tokne froward to beholde,
The firste egle bete in his baneer,
Also soone as men it dide vnfolde
Contrariousli he tournid look & cheer,
The bak to Crassus, folk sauh that stood[e] neer: 1832
A pronostik to Romeyns ful certeyn,
How Fortune that day was hem ageyn.
Bi the flood passyng of Eufrates,
With vnwar tempest his standardis euericlon 1836
Into the ruyer wer cast among the pres,
To rekne hem all, vprhti stood nat oon.
Wherof astoned, thei wolde no fether gon,
Thes pronostiques made hem so affraied,
Lik men in herte dispeired & dismaied.

1804. The Wars of Orodes and the Romans 723
1806. Parthia P.
1810. emprise J, H, P. 1817. Parthia P.
1823. beheeld] tooke heede H. 1825. contraire B, J.
1836. tempestis H.
But Crassus was heedless of these tokens and crossed the Euphrates out of covetousness, so that he might despoil Parthia.

Of thes toknyss Crassus was rek[elles], The pronostikes he dede also despise, Took upon [hym] to passen Eufrates, Tentre Parthos onli for couetise.

To whom Herodes sendith in this wise, That his comynng was mor for pillage Than for knithhod, manhod or corage.

All the power of the country came down against him; his son was slain and he himself taken prisoner.

Al the powere of Parthos tho kam down [p. 320] With many prefect in that mortal rage Ageyn Crassus and them of Roome toun, Which, as I tolde, abood on ther pillage, That turnid after to ther gret damage: The sone of Crassus slayn in that affray: His fadir take, & al upon o day.

His head was cut off; and Orodes commanded it to be poured full of molten gold.

This thyng was doon for a moquerye, In signe onli, the stori doth deuise, That gold nor tresour, upon no partie, Staunche myht his thrust of couetise. Such gredynesse ech man owith despise; For auarice of custum in ech place Of hih prowesse doth the pris difface. Herodes aftir did serche al the wardis Thoruh al the feeld[e] upon Crassus side, Took the penouns, baneres & standardis, And in his templis, large, longe & wide Leet hang hem up of surquedie & pride, In signe onli, and eek for a memorie, He of Romeyns hath get[e] the victorie.

1849. Parthia P.
1850. in that mortal rage] & mych gret Costage H, & many gret costage R 3, & much great costage P, and many gret constable J, H 5.
1867. owith] doth H, should P. 1870. serche] sechen H.
With whiche he list nat onli be content, Weenyng his fortune sholde abide stable, Into Surrye he hath his sone sent, Callid Pachorus, made hym a constable, Of that regioun with hym to be partable, Of al tresours & meobles that he fond, Wher-euer he rood thorouhout al the* lond.

Thus Pachorus bi his cheualrie Encresse gan in his tendre age, Wherof Herodes, his fader, had envye, Feerful it sholde turne to his damage, List he wolde be title of heritage, Maugre hym, at his ageyn komynyg Take upon hym in Parthos to be kyng.

Than Pachorus was callid hom ageyn, And of Surrie, wher in conclusioun, Al that he had vrouht[e] was in veyn, Because oon Cassius fro Roome was come doun, — Slouh al the peele in that regeuon Which apartened to Pachorus, as I fynde, Withoute capteyn for thei wer lefft behynde.

To withstonde this Romeyn Cassius Herodes hath his sone sent ageyn, Which anon aftir, the stori tellith thus, Amyd the feeld vnhappili was slayn. To truste Fortune it is a thyng but vayn, Which of custum to-day is fauourable, And to-morwe gerisshli chaungable.

Of Pachorus deth whan the noise aroos And the distrussysg of his cheualrie, And to Herodes abidyng in Parthos Tidyng was brouht, ferde as he wolde die, Of hertli sorwe fill into frenesie: Heir was non left of the roiallyn es, Sauf thretti bastardis born of concubynes.

Thus Herodes was cast in gret seeknesse, His sonis deth was to hym importable, His worldli ioie was gon and his gladnesse, Fortune contrarie, which neuer can be stable;

Not content with all this, and believing that his fortune would continue stable, he sent his son Pacorus to Syria and made him constable there.

1884 Afterwards, fearing that he should become too powerful, he recalled him.

During Pacorus’ absence Cassius came down from Rome and slew all the people in Syria.

1892

1888

1900 and so Orodus sent him back again to defend his country; but he was slain.

1904 When Orodus heard of Pacorus’ death, he acted as if he were going to die and nearly went mad; for he had no sons left except 30 bastards.

1912 He was a very sick man; his worldly joy gone, old in years, Fortune contrary.

Age still on; his lif was not durable:
And of o thyng most he dede hym dreede,
Cause he hadde non heir to succeede,
Which wold[e] nat suffre hym lyue in pes.
Til at the laste he cauhte a fantasie,
Ches a bastard callid Pharaectes,
Because he was famous in cheualtrie,
Gaf hym the crowne & the regalie,
Which anon afte, brefeili to conclude,
Slouh Herodes of ingratitude.

[How Fymbria a consul of Rome slouh himsylf.] 1

AFFTIR to Bochas, bi processe of the book,
Foure mihti princis notable of estat,
Towards hym thei caste cheere & look,
Lik vnto folk that wer infortunat,
With whom Fortune had been at debat;
For be ther maner, as it sempte weel,
Thei wer at mischeeff fallyn from hir wheel.
First Fymbria, a Romeyn consuleer, [p. 321]
Sent bi the Romeyns to a gret cite
Callid Nichomeed[y]e, cam* as a massageer
To helpe Flaccus, & entryng that contre,
Fond Flaccus slayn bi gret aduersite.
Aftir whos deth, his parti to auauence,
Of Flaccus meyne took the gouernaunce.
Of presumcioun, withoute auctori[t]e,
This Fymbria bi dilligent labour,
Ful ferr abouen his staat & his degre,
Took upon hym bi Fortunys fals fauour
To be callid capteyn and emperour
Thoru at that cunte, bokis specifie;
Of whos presumcioun Scilla had envie.
Pursued hym thoruh many gret cite,
To a castel made hym take his fliht,
Wher Fymbria of gret necessite
Constreyned was, maugre al his myhnt,
Disesperid, forsake of eueri wiht,
To slen hymself, the stori tellith thus,
Withynne the temple of Esclapius.
The Fate of Adrian and his Churls

[Of Albynius that was slayn with stonys.] ¹

A NOPER consul stood in cas semblable,
In his tyme callid Albynyus,
Whos hatful pride was abhominable,
To alle folkis lothsum and odious;
Which lik a rebel, wood & furious
Ageyn Romeyn[e]s oft[e]ner than onys,—
Whan he lest wende slay[e]n was with stonys.

[How Adriane of low degre falsly vsurped to be kyng of Rome whiche with his cherlys was aftir brent.] ²

N EXT Adrian, which ros to hih estat:
First in Roome born of louh degr[e],
Chose a pretour, sent bi þe senat
To gouerne of Affrik the contre,
Wher of his owne pompous auctorite
Took upon hym bi sotil fals werkyng,
Maugre Romeyns, ther to be crowned kyng.
Whom to supporte, shortli to conclude,
Was a gret noumbr[e] of the comounte,
Of cherlis gadred a confus multitude,
Title was non nor ground but volunte.
Gentil-men than beyng in that contre,
Alle off assent and oon oppynyoun,
Assemble[d] hem to his destrucciou.
At Vtices, a large gret cite,
Hym and his cherlis besette round aboute,
Of wode & faget with large quantite
In compas-wise closed hym withoute,
Gadred with hym of vileyns a gret route,
Leide on fyr, that with flawmes rede
Echon consumyd into asshes dede.

1955. Albinus P.
1961. This stanza is as follows in P:
Next came Adrianus which to estate full hye
Rose in his time (and that ful sodeynlye)
First in Rome borne but of lowe degr[e]
Toke upon him to gouerne the contre
Off Affrike through hys great auctorite,
And by hys sle, subtel, and false werking,
Mauger Romains ther to be crowned king.

¹ MS. J. leaf 131 recto. ² MS. J. leaf 131 recto.
Sothimus, whose Covetousness undid him

[How Synthoniys kyng of Trace pat moche coueted affor went and deied in pouerte.] ¹

EXT Adrian cam Synthoniys
Tofor Bochar, with teris spreynyt his face;
As the stori reheresith vnto us,
In his tyne he was kyng of Trace,
Falle sodenli fro Fortunis grace,
Cast doun lowe from his estat roiall,
Which kam to Bochar to compleyne his fall. ¹²

because he tried
to conquer
seven realms in
Greece that
were subject to
Rome.
He who covets
all loses all.

Whos purpos was, yiff it wolde haue be,
Seuene rewmys taue conquered with his hond,
That were soget to Roome the cite;
And alle seuene wer of Grekis lond.
Who al coueiteth, ye shal vndirstond,
He al forgoth, ful weel afferme I dar,
At vnset hour, wheroff ech man be war.

Longe or his conquest was brouht to a preeff, ¹⁹
From hir wheel Fortune cast hym doun.
The pretour Sencyus brouht hym to mysheef,
Deide in pouert, as maad is mencioun.
And Bochas heer maketh a digressioyn,
Compendiousli withynne a litil space
To descryue the regioun of Trace.

[Here Bochas in party makith a descripcioun of the
kyngdam of Trace and passith over lightly to
the accomplisshment of his book.] ²

The descripsion of pe same.

TRACE, whilom a centre of gret fame,
And conteneth a ful large space;
And of Tiras it took[e] first pe name,
Sone of Iaphet, & so was callid Trace.
Which many a day duelled in that place,
Toward Septemptrion, plenteuous of good,
Beside Dynoe, the large famous flood.

¹ MS. J. leaf 131 recto. ² MS. J. leaf 131 recto.
Southward Trace renneth the flood Egee, [p. 322] and the Aegean Sea is to the southward.
Macedoyne stant in the occident,
And the kyngdam callid Perpontide
Stant in Trace toward the orient,
Wher gret plente of blood was shad & spent,
Whan Sencyus thoruh his hih prowesse
Kyng Adrian ther manli dede oppresse.
Ebrus in Trace is the cheeff ryueer,
As myn auctour maketh mencion;
I caste nat to tarie in this mateer,
To make of Trace a descripcioun,
But to proceede in my translacioun,
Folwe myn auctour, which writ a long processe
Of gret Pompeye & of his worthynesse.

[How aftir many grete conquestes of Duk Pompeye/ began grete weree betwixt him and Iulius iiij: M! were slayn/ and at last the heed of Pompeye smyten of.] ¹

THIS Pompeius, of whom þe name is kouþ, Pompey was named after his father, whose army he once led
Wis & worþi & famous of prowesse,
Took upon hym in his tendre youth, —
Aftir his fadir bi fortunat duresse,
Callid Pompeye, the stori berth witnesse,
Distrussid was bi sodeyn deth komyng,
The stori seith, thoruh thundryng & lihtnyng,
His host destroied be the violence
Of vnwar tempest, lik as seith the book,
Fourti thousand slayn in that pestilence;
For feer the remnant anon þe feeld forsook, —
Til yonge Pompeie of corage on hym took
In his begynnyng proudli to procede
Ful lik a kniht his fadris host to leede.
Roome that tym þe ther discenciouns
Among hemyslf nih brouht[e] to ruyne,
Bi the froward fals dyuysiuons
Tween Marie & Scilla, brefli to termyne,
Till that a newe sonne gan to shyne
Of worthynesse, which that shadde his liht,
In manli Pompeie the noble famous kniht.

¹ MS. J. leaf 131 verso.
This said Pompeie, this noble knihtli man,
At his begynnynge, thoruh his cheualrie,
The proude capitayn slouh whan he began,
Which of Marrius heeld up the partie,
Callid Brutus, which in Lombardie
Was be Pompeye thoruh knihtli gouernaunce
With al his host[e] brought vnto myschauence.

In his begynnynge Pompeie eek also,
To sette Romeyns in reste & in quiete,
Oon that was callid Gneus Carbo,
He slouh hym knihtli whan he dede hym meete,
Which in Sicile proudli heeld his seete.
And alle the contres aboute hym enviroun
Pompeie made hem soget to Roome toun.

Aftir al this Pompeius on the se
With many a shippe stuffid with vitaille
Toward Affrik made a gret arme,
And ther in haste aftir his aryuaille
With Domicius hadde a gret bataille,
Brouhte the contre thoruh his hih renoun
To be to Roome vndir subieccioun.

He pursued
Hiarbas, king of
Numidia, Marrius's ally,

He pursued the grete myhti kyng
Callid Iertha, to Marrius fauourable,
And hadde also his roial abidyng
In Numedie, a contre ful notable.
Ageyn Pompeie his powere was nat hable;
For at a castell as thei mette in fiht,
He slouh kyng Iertha, ful lik a manli kniht.

Thus in breef tyme, holdyng his passage
For comoun profitt, as maad is mencioun,
Bi his wisdam & knihtli hih corage
Brouht al Affrik to subieccioun,
Which stood affor[e]n in rebellioun
To the Romeyns; but al ther sturdynesse
The said[e] Pompeie dede in haste redresse.

The grettest enmy ageyns Roome toun
Thilke daies was oon Sertorius;
And of fortune, which is now up now doun,
On Pompeie onys was victorious.
But aftir soone of hym it happid thus:
Among his meyne sallyng at debat,
He slay[en] was in his most hih estat.

Aftir the deth of this Sertorivs
Cam Pompena Pompei for tassaile;
And as thei mette anon[e] Pompeius
Ful lik a kniht slouh hym in bataile,
Which victorie gretli dide auail
To the Romeyns. Aftir bi gouernaunce
He brouht al Spayne to ther obeissaunce.

Bi auctorite youe bi the Senat,
This noble Pompei, for vail of the cite,
Vpon the se wolde suffre no pirat;
Wher-euer he cam from hym thei dede flee:
For with his shippis he scoured so the se
And bar hym ther so manli with his bond,
That maugre them he brouht hem to the lond.

Al the piratis and thes fals robbowrs
Igadred wern out of the regioun
Callid Silice*, which lik to raunynours
Made ageyn Roome a conspiracioun,
Robbede, spoillede, seillyng up & doun,
Romeyn marchauntis & peiple of ech contre,
That non was hardi to passe bi the se.

Aftir Pompei hath maad the se tobeie,
That pirat non durst[e] theron abide,
He bi the Senat was sent out to werreye
Toward thoriest, his knihtis be his side.
And wher-so-euer that he dide ride,
Myn auctour writ, bynfluence of heuene
His conquest was swifft as wynd or leuene.

And to encres of his eternal glorie,
Perpetueli to geten hym a name,
His laude & renoun to putte in memorie
He bilt a cite in Asia of gret fame,
Callid Nichopoli, Bochas seith the same,
Twen too floodis, the ton Araxzases,
And the tothir was callid Eufrates.

2100. brouht] brou H. 2101. the] this H.
2103. Silice] Sicile B, J.
He bilte this cite onli of entent
That Romeyn knihtis, which wer falle in age,
And such as wer|en in the warris spent,
Sike, woundid, in pouert or in rage,
Sholde of custum haue ther herbergaye
In that cite alway, & nat faille
Beddyng, clothes, spendyng & vitaille.

Pompeye aftir rood into Armenye,
Rebel to Roome, wher Tigranes was kyng.
Fauht with hym ther, & thoruh his cheualrie
Discountited hym, ther was non abidyng.
Wher Tigranes hymsilue submyttyng
Vnto Pompeie with eueri circumstaunce,
Euer tabide vndir his obeissau7tce.

Than in al haste Pompeie gan hym hie
To ride in Asia, wher lik a manli kniht
He gat the kyngdam callid Albanye,
Which took his name, who-so looke arith,
Of whiht|ene; for eueri maner wiht
That ther is born, be record of writyng,
Whiht as snouh[e] hath his her shynyng.

Ther been houndis merueilous of nature,
For tassaille bolis and leouns;
No wilde beeste ageyn hem may endure.
So Pompeye, bi many regiouns
Rood thoruh Armenye with his champiouns,
Wher growen herbes that may neuer feyne,
What-euer colour men list with hem peyne.

Conquered rewmys aboute in eueri cost:
Of Hiberie he gat the regeoun,
And Artaces the kyng with al his host
Discountited, as maad is menciouyn
With his powere to Surrie he cam doun,
Than to Fenise, a cite of gret fame,
Which of Fenix whilom took his name.

Brouhte al thes contres to subieccioun:
Of Sydonye, the myhti strong cite
Of Iturye, he took posessiouyn;
Thoruh Arabie he cam doun to Judee,
Which of Iewes was sumtyme the contre.
Of Libanus he passed the mounteyn,
Wher cedris grow[n], as auctour[e]s seyn.

Sent [to]forn hym, entryng in that reum,
Oon Gabynus, a myhti strong constable;
Regnyng that tyme in IHeresalem
Aristobolus, a prince ful notable.
And for the temple was strong & nat permiable,
Leide a siege aboute in breede & lengthe
Space of thre monethes, & gat it so bi strengthe.

Thre thousand Iewes vndir the wal wer founde,
Ded at thassat, which made resistance;
The wal aftir doun beten to the* grounde.
Pompeye affir bi sturdi violence
Is entrid in withoute reuerence,
Sancta sanctorum men that place call,
Made Hircanius hiest preest of all,
The grete bishopp Aristobolus,
Sent to Roome in myhti cheynis bounde.

Toward Septemptrion, I fynde write thus,
Gat seuene kyngdames with citees wallid rounde,
Rebel to Roome, he dide hem confounde;
With mihti suerd[e] gat al the contra
Fro Caucasus doun to the Red[e] Se.

In his conquest, it sempte verraily
As the goddis hadde doon ther cure,
And that Fortune was with hem eek besi,
This myhti Pompeye prince to assure,
What-euer hym list be conquest to recure:
In Spaigne he gat, whan thei wer rebell,
Thre hundred citees & sixty* strong castell.

Hard to remembre his conquestis euerichon,
Alle the prowessis of this knihtli man:
Toward the parti of Septemptrioun
A thousand castell I fynde that he wan,
Sixe hundred mo, fro tyme that he gan,
Eihte & thretti cites, out of doute,
With myhti wallis closed round aboute.

2164. toforn] frome H.
2173. doun beten to the] benen doun to B, J, H, R 3, P.
2191. sixty] thretti B. 2195. castellys J.
His marciall deeds to putte in remembrance,  
Oon was chose to do his diligence  
To enact* his conquest in substance  
And his knighthood of synguler excellence;  
And Triffanes, famous of eloquence,  
Assigned was onto that labour,  
Took his guerdoun of ther comun tresour.  

Pompeye of Roome was chief governour,  
Cesar absent in Gaule, a ferre* contre,  
Which tyme Pompeie stood in gret favour  
Bothe of Fortune and Roome the cite,  
Sumwhat maad byldy of his prosperite,  
Purposyng, in his clymbyng nat stable,  
He wolde haue non that wer to hym semblable.  

Vnto purpos was saide ful yore agon,  
How that loue nouther hih lordshippe, —  
Preeff hath be maad in many mo than oon, —  
Nouther of hem wolde haue no felashipe;  
Ech bi his oon wolde his parti keepe:  
In thes too caas, brothir onto brothir  
Failleth at a poynct; ech wil put out othir.  

To Pompeye resortyng now ageyn, —  
He took on hym al the gouernaille  
Of the Romeyns, as ye haue herd me seyn,  
Bothe of estatis, comunys & poraille,  
And for his part al that myhte [a]vaille  
In maken lawes, statut or decre,  
Al up engrosed bi his auctorite.  

The enemies of Cesar conspired against him  
and enacted a statute forbidding men to hold  
office while absent from Rome.  

Peise his deedis, his conquestis marciall:  
Thries consul chose for his encrees;  
Reed, ye shal fynde how he was egall  
To Alisandre or to Hercules.  
Wher that euere he put hymsilff in pres,  
Al cam to hand, concludyng, ye may see,  
To comoun profit of Roome the cite.  

Tryphanes, famous of eloquence, was  
chosen to put his conquests in writing at the public expense.

He was chosen consul three times; and if you read, you will find that he was the peer of Alexander and Hercules.
No man sholde, be wil of the Senat,  
In his absence be chose to non estat,  
Nor been admittid be no procutour  
Taue auctorite of dignite [n]or offis,  
In court of tribun nor off senatour  
To be promotid; this was ther ayus,  
Wer he neuer so manli nor so wis.  
This lawe ordeyned be folk envious,  
For hyndryng onli of Cesar Iulius.  

When Iulius knew al ther fals werking,  
Fro Gaule sente up to the cite,  
Al the Senat requeryng be writyng  
To graunte hym bi ther auctorite  
Of tryumphe the notable dignite,  
To haue also thoffis and thestat  
Calld in Roome the seconde consulat,  
For hym aleggynyng many gret victorie  
In dyuers contres doon for the cite,  
Many conquest notable of memorie  
Wrouht bi his kniht hod; for which of equite  
Requeryng them guerdoned for to bee.  
But contrarie vnto his entent  
Denied hym al bi oon assent,  
Which was cheeff ground, roote & occasioun [p. 325]  
That brought in first the contrauersie,  
Cyuile discordes, froward dyuysioun,  
Whan eueri man drouh to his partie  
Of old hatreede to kyndle newe envie,  
Causyng princis Iulius & Pompeie  
To ther confusioun ech othir to werreye.  

The tryumphe denied to Cesar, —  
Fraude of Pompey made hym therof faile,  
Of whos deceit Iulius was war,—  
Made hym redi with many strong bataille,  
Passed ouer the Alpies of Itaille,  
Fulli in purpos, pleynli, yiff he myhte,  
With the Romeyns and Pompeie for to fhtye.  
Thus gan the werre atween thes princis tweyne.  
Pompeye chose for parti of the toun  
To been ther duk & capteyn souereyne  
Ageyn Cesar, as maad is mencioun.

And thus alas the desolacioun
Suede of the cite, be many straunge signe,
With unkouth toknis, whan thei gan maligne.

At the gymanyng of thes woful werris,
In the heuene wer seyn dredeful sihtes —
Sparklyng brondis, cometis, unkouth sterris,
With flawme of fyr many feerful lihtes
Liks laumpis brennyng al the longe nihtes,
Castyng of speres, dartis in the hair,
Wherbi Romeyns fill in gret dispair.

From the parti of Septemptrion
Toward Roome cam ful gret lihtnyng;
At non seyn sterris; lik blood the sunne shon;
The moone eclipsed, terrible in shewyng;
The mount[e] Ethna, feerfulli brennyng,
From his cauernis cast up flawmys rede
Toward Itaille, which set hem in gret dreede.

Out of Karibdis, a daunger of the se,
Waves terrible boiled up lik blood;
From the rokke that in Cecile bee
Was herd howlyng of houndis that wer wood.
Vesta the goddesse, in Roome ther she stood,
Mid hir temple was al with teres spreynyt,
Whan the heuenli fyris wern afforn hir queynyt.

Afforn this goddesse, at the aultor princepall
Was fyr perpetuel brennyng day & niht,
Til werris cyuyle, hatful & mortal,
Gan* among Romeyns, & the contagious fht.
Than of vengaunce anon was queynyt the liht
Tofor Vesta, the fire partyng on tweyne,
Of dyuisioun a tokne ful certeyne.

Erthe-quaues sodeyn & terrible
Ouertournede castellis vp-so-doun;
With rage floodis hidous & horrible
Neptunvs dide gret destruccioun,
Drowned villages & many a mansioun,
Reuersed in templis of gold al ther vessellis,
Threw doune baners, standardis & penselis.

2292. noon H. J. 2302. hir[ ] his H.
The Senators inquire the Fate of Rome

Geyn these signes was founde non arest,  
The vnwar myscheeff koude no man.declyne.  
Leouns, wolues kam doon fro the forest  
With many othir beestis sauagyne;  
Wilde beris & serpents of rauyne  
Kam to the cite; & summe ageyn[e]s kynde  
Spak as do men, in Bochas thus I fynde.

Dyuers foulis,* which of ther nature  
Haue in custum to fleeen but a-niht,  
Affor thes werris dede hewsilf assure  
Euene at mydday, whan Phebus is most briht,  
Thoruh the cite for to take her fliht.  
Womwen with childre — the stori list nat feyne —  
Brouht foorth summe that hadde hedis tweyne.

Tofor thes werris, that callid wer cyuile,  
Senatours beyng in Roome touw  
Cam to the woman that callid was Cybile,  
Vnto hire made this questioun:  
To declare bi short conclusioun,  
Among ther other questioun[e]s all,  
Of ther cite what fortune sholde fall?

To whom she gaff an ansuere ful obscure,  
Wherupon she made hem sore muse:  
Took hem sixe lettres set in pley[n] scripture,  
Which in no wise thei myhte nat refuse,  
For false rihtis that thei dede vse;  
Lik the thre lettres twies set in noumbre,  
Who vndistondesth, thei shal the toun encouwbre.

Thre R. R. R. first[e] she set on a Rowe  
And thre F. F. F. in ordre faste bi, —  
Long tymre aftir or thei koude knowe  
Theexposicioun therof openly,  
Til ther dyuynours gan serche sotilly  
To fynde[n] out, lik to ther entente,  
Be the sexe lettres what Cibile mente.

Off this word Regnum the first lettre is R,  
So is the capital off Roome the cite;  
Who looke ariht, the thridde is nat ferre, —

No man could turn away the mischief.  
Lions and wolves came down from the forests to Rome, wild bears and ferocious serpents speaking the language of men.  
Night birds were seen flying at midday; and some women brought forth children with two heads.

Before the wars the senators went to Sibylla and inquired the fate of the city.  
She set six letters in a row,  
three R's and three F's; and it was long before the diviners could find out that the letters meant,
This woord Ruet gynyneth with R, parde.
Of which[e] woordes whan thei ioyned be,
The sentence concludeith in meenyng,
Off ther cite the ruynous fallyng.

Touchyng thre F. F. F., who can aduertise,
Of this woord Ferro, F go[e]th to forson;
And the cheeff lettre off Fames to deuyse
Is F also, the processe weel forth born.
The same of Flamma, bi which pe toun was lorn,
Off which resoues make a coniuncioun,
Causyng of Roome fynal destruccioun.

Fiyr, swerd & hunger caused be the werris,
Desyr of clymbyngh, froward ambicioun,
Shewyng of cometis & of vnkouth sterris,
With pronostikes off [ther] deserciouw,
Wrst of alle, wilful dyuysioun
Among hemsilff bi vnwar violence,
Off lettres sexe accomplisshid the sentence.

The suerd of Cesar, werris of Pompeye,
Twen thes tweyne lastyng a long[e] while,
Made many Romyne & Italien to deie,
Bi the batailes that callid wer cyuile,
With prophecies remembred of Cebile,
As the writyng ful weel reherse can,
Of the old poete that callid was Lucan.

In Martes temple on heithe wher he stood,
And Bellona, the goddesse despitous,
The preestes cried & offred up ther blood
With lamentaciouns, lik folkis furious,
Cause off toknys fell and contrarious
Which that wer shewed in that seyntuarie,
How ther goddis to Romyeens wer contrarie.

Mong dede bonys that leyen in ther grauis
Wer voises herd lik wood men in ther rages,
Cry of goostis in cauernys & cauys,
Herd in feeldis, paththis & passages;
Laboureres fledde hom to ther villages.
Serpentis, adderes, scaled siluer* briht,
Wer ouer Roome seyn fleeyng al the niht.

2373. sexe] vj B.
2374. attween H — longe] gret H, J, great P. 2378. of] by H.
2376. the] hat H. 2390. &] & in H.
2393. siluer] wonder B.
Another tokne, pitous for to heere,  
Which astoned many proud Romeyn,
Dede bodies* dide in the feeld appeare,  
Which in bataille hadde afforn be slayn,  
From ther tombis arisyng wher thei layn,  
Which in the werris, woful & despitous,  
Wer slayn be Scilla & proude Marrius.

It was eek tolde bi ther dyuynours,  
How Pompeyus was lik to haue a fall,  
And how thestat of Romeyn emperours  
With ther tryumphes that been imperial  
At Iulius first ther begynne* shal;  
And afftir hym thestat shal foort[h] procede
Be eleccioun or lyneal kynrede.

To withstonde the power of Cesar,  
Which toward Roome took his weie riht,  
Pompeye was sent, wis, mawli & riht war;  
But whan he herd[e] tellyn of the myht  
Of Iulius, he took hym to the fliht;  
Eek alle the senatowrs with hym dede flee  
Toward Epire, in Greece a strong cite.

Pompeye was old, famous in cheualrie,  
Cesar but yong [&] hardi for tassaille.  
Vppon the pleyns of Grece & Thesalie  
Pompeye & he hadde a gret bataille:  
Geyn Iulius suerd no Romeyn mihte auail;  
Constreyned of force the feeld[e] to forsake,  
Toward Egipt thei haue the weie take.

Pompeye thoruh Cipre cam to Tholome,  
Bi a gret watir at Paphus dede aryue;  
On the stronde ther he dide see  
A statli place, & up he wente blyue,  
The name of which, pleylni to descruyre,  
Cacabosile the contre dede it call,  
Of which[e] name the fortune is thus fall:

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2396. bodies] bonys B.  
2406. ther] om. J — begynyng B.  
2418. playn H.  
2424. Paphos P.  
2426. & ther he went vp blive H.  
2428. Cacobasile P.
The Death of Pompey

The name tokne of froward arryuail,
Sownyng in Greek vnhappy auenture.
Be which the trust of Pompeie did[e] faille, —
Fill in dispeir, myht it nat recure, —
Forsook that ile, dede his besi cure
To take a shipp, so bi the se saillyng
Toward Egipt, wher Tholome was kynge.

Of trust he fledde to this Tholome,
In hope he sholde fynde in hym socour:
Fair cheer shewyd vndir duplicite,
Faiyled at the poynt, gaf hym feynt fauour,
Al-be Pompeye bi his frendli labour
Crownid hym kynge in Egipt, as I fynde,
To whom ageyn he was fals & vnkynde.

To meete Pompeye he leet stuffe a barge
Be a maner pretence of freendliheede,
GafF his meyne that wer ther in charge
To moordre Pompeie, behiht hem a gret meede.
Tweyne ther wern, which to hyw bar hatreede;
And in the vessel, with sharp suerdis whette,
Or he was war[e], of his hed thei smette.

The ton of hem was callid Achillas,
And his felawe namyd was Fotyne.
Took up the hed[e] of that prince, alas,
Famous in knihtthod, born of gentil lyne,
Among Romeyns, as auctours determyne,
Holde in his tyme, yiff men doon hym riht,
Thoruh al the world[e] oon the beste kniht.

Thus erthli princis, with al ther pompous fame,
Which thoruh the* world yiueth so gret a soun,
Of slaughtre & moordre thei took[e] first her name, 2460
Bi fal[s] raunya and extorsioun
Clamb up so first to domynacioun.

Brennyng of contres, conquest bi violence
Sette hem in chaieres of worldli excellence.

In this bataile, which callid was cuyle,
Hold atween Pompeye & Cesar Iuilius,
Thre hundred thousand slay[en] in a while,
Thre thousand take, the stori tellith thus,
The Head of Pompey brought to Caesar

Withoute princis notable & glorious,
As kyngis, pretours, reknid all attonys,
Tribunys, consulis & centuryons.

Phebus on the soil myht nat his bemys spreade,
Nor on the ground shewe out his cleer[e] liht;
Men that wer slay[e]n lay so thikke on breede,
That of the erthe no man hadde a siht.
Wolues, beres, rauynous foul off fliht,
Kam grete plente to feede hem ther ech day
Beside the ryuer of Nile wher thei lay.

Gobetis of flessh, which foulis dede arace
Fro deede bodies, born up in the hair,
Fill from ther clees vpon Iulius face,
Amyd the feeld wher he had his repair.
Made his visage bloodi & nat fair,
Al-be that he to his encres of glorie
Hadde thilke day of Romeyns the victorie.

The head of Pompeye, brought with his statli ring,
Offrid up to Iulius hih presence,
He be compassionu, the moordre aduertisyng,
Of his innat imperial excellence
Brast out to weepe, & in his aduertense
Thouhte grete pite, a prince of so grete myht
Sholde so be slayn, that* was so good a knyht.

The corps abood withoute sepulture,
Til oon Coodrus of compassionu
Aftir the bataille & disconfiture
Besouht[e] hym, of grete affeccioun,
To hide the trunke lowe in the sondis doun.
Souhte tymbir, and ther he fond but smal,
To doon exequeies with fires* funeral.

Now, sithe this prince kam to such myscheeff,
Moordred and slayn bi Tholome the kyng:
Heer of hir poweer Fortune hath maad a preef,
What trust ther is in any worldli thyng.
Aftir his deth wantid he nat buriyng? —
This proude Pompeie, so famous of his hond,
Of fissh deuoured, as he lay on quik sond!

2472. The rays of the sun could not strike the ground for the dead, which were eaten by wolves and bears and ravenous fowls.
2476. Gobets of flesh fell from the claws of birds upon Iulius' face, soiling it with blood.
2480. 2484. 2488. 2492. 2496. 2500. 2504.
What shall men sette bi powere or noblesse
Of sliding goodis or any worldli glorie,
Which to restreyne may be no sekrinness?
Fortune and the world is transitorye;
Thouh Mars to-day yiue a man victorie,
Parcas to-morwe vnwarli he shal deie,—
I take record of Cesar and Pompeie.

Sith al stant vndir daunger of Fortune,
Ye worldli men doth your look up-dresse
To thilke place wher ioie doth ay contune;
The Blynde Ladi hath ther no interesse.
Set pride aside, tak you to meeknesse,
To sue vertu doth treuli your labour,
Geyn worldli pompe mak Pompeie your merour!

This tragedie of the duk Pompeie
Declareth in gros pe chief occasioun
Whi he and Cesar gan first to werreie,
Ech ageyn othir, thoruh veyn ambitioun
To haue lordshiphe and domynacioun
Ouer the Romeyns, bi fauour, fraude or myht,—
Pocessioun take no fors of wrong or riht.

To trouthis parti pride is loth tobeie;
Exort powere doth gret destructioun;
Wis policie al out of the weie,
Prudent counsell, age with discrucioun
Loste ther liberte of free eleccioun.
Who was most strong, with hym heeld eueri wiht,—
Pocessioun take no fors of wrong nor riht.

Swich dyuysioun made many man to deie,
Brouhte the cite to desolacioun.
With these too princis Fortune list to pleie,
Til from hir wheel she cast hem bothe doun.
Sotil deceit, fraude & collusioun
Bambicious clymbyng blente ther bothe liht,—
Pocessioun take no fors of wrong nor riht.

2508. Of] Or B.
Noble princis, remembreth what I seie,
Peiseth this stori withyne in your resoun,
Of fals surmountyng auarice berth he keie,
Record of Cesar, Pompeye of Roome toun,
Whos wilful wreiss, hatful discencioun
Yiueth cleer warnyng to you & eueri wiht,
No eleym is worth wythoute title of riht.

After the woeful complaint of Pompey's death and the manner of King Ptolemy's conspiring it,

How victorious Iulius Cesar brent the vessels of Tholome slouh Achillas that wolde ha moordred him & after grete victories himself was mordred with boidekens bi brutus Cassius.]

A FFTIR the woful compleint lamentable
Of Pompeis dethe, pitous for to heere,
Werris remembreth, with tressouns importable,
Compassid fraudis farcid with fair cheere,
Conspired moordre, rehersid the maneere
How kynge Tholome, fraudulent of corage,
The deth conspired of Pompeie fall in age.
The processe tolde, I holde it wer but veyn
Therof to write a newe tragedie;
Thyng onys said, it to reherse ageyn,
It wer but idil, as for that partie.
But how Cesar went out of Thessalie,
Kam Talisaundre to logge hym in that place,
I wil remembre with support of your grace.

He logged was in his paleis roiall,
Wher he was besi, be diligent labour
Thoruh that regiouw in templis ouerall
To spoile goddis and haue al ther tresour,
Wher he was mokkid, fond ther no fauour;
For Achillas, which that slouh Pompeie,
Cast hym with Cesar prouldi to werreite.

His purpos was to falle upon Cesar,
As of nature was his condiciouw
Falsli to moordre men or thei wer war,—
Bi sum sleihte to fynde occasioun
To destoye Iulius be tresouw,
And tacomplisshe his purpos in partie
Hadde twenti thousand in his cumpanye.

1 MS. J. leaf 134 recto. 2561. Alexandry P.
Achillas, who
was leader and
constable of the
Egyptians, in-
tended to give
battle to the
Romans, but
Cesar burnt
Ptolemy's navy
together with
a great part of
the city and
the famous
library of
40,000 volumes.

This Achillas, fals, cruel, deceyuable,
Cast hym deceyue Cesar yf he myhte,
Of Thegipciens leder and constable.
With the Romeyns purposeth for to fithte.
But when Cesar therof hadde a sihte,
He is descendid, & faste bi the se
Brent al the naue of kyng Tholome.
Alle the vesselis wer dryue up with a flood
To gret damage of seide Tholome;
Iulius brente hem euene ther thei stood,
And a gret part beside of the cite.
And ther was brent, which was full gret pite,
The famous librarie in Egipt of the kyng,
Ful fourti thousande volumys ther liggyng.

In which thyng Bochas reheareth in sentence,
How Tholome was gretli comendable,
That thoruh his besi roial prouydence
Made hysmilf a librarie so notable;
For to al clerkis in studie that wer hable,
Of seuene sciences, the stori maketh mynde,
Lik ther desire myhte bookis fynde.

After this fyr, in Farus the contre,
The Egipciens hadde a gret bataille,
Wher Cesar was of gret necessite
That day constreynd, whan the feeld gan faille,
Take a barge from Egipt for to saille,
But so gret pres[e] folwed at his bak,
Almost the vessel was lik to go to wrak.

Cesar armyd, with lettres in his hond,
Put his persone that day in aventure;
Two hundred pas manly swam to lond,
And kunnyngli to lond he doth recure,
Natwithstandyng his heuy strong armure.
But yit toforn or Cesar took the se,
He in the feeld hadde take Tholome.

And Achillas, the moordrere of Pompeie,
With alle his felawes that wer of assent
Wer slayn that day; ther went[e] non aweye:
Many Egipcien the same tyme brent.
Cesar of mercy for Tholome hath sent,

2598. Pharos P. 2604. to wrak] awrak H.
To Alisaundre sent hym hom of newe,  
Charyng he sholde to Romeyns forth be trewe.

But whan he was delyuered fro prisoun,  
Of Egipciens in Alisaundre the cite,  
From eueri coost he gadred gret foisoun,  
Ageyn Iulius kam doun with his meyne;  
But yit for al his hasti cruelte,  
Swich resistence Cesar gan to make,  
That* twenti thousand that day wer slayn & take.

Sixti galeis nat ferr fro the lond,  
Tuelue thousand men komyng to Tholome, —  
Echon wer yolde and brouht onto the hond  
Of Iulius his prisoneres to bee.  
Than Tholomeus besied hym to flee  
Toward the watir, wher maugre al his myht,  
He drowned was in his gret hasti fliht.

He knownen was bi his riche haberioun,  
Of gold and steel[e] it was entermayUd,  
Bi Cesar sent onto the roial toun,  
Which for difFence was strongli enbatailed, —  
Bokelis of gold richeli enamedailed,  
Which[e] toknis anon as thei haue seyn,  
Disespeired to Cesar sente ageyn.

Of them to Cesar was maad feith & homage;  
The rewmi of Egipt brought to subieccioun,  
Til he of grace and merciful corage*  
To Cleopatra gaff al that regioun,  
Longyng to hire be successioun,  
Be title of riht that tyne & non othir,  
Because only Tholome was hir brothir.

Kyng Lagus whilom in his testament,  
Fadir to Cleopatra & to Tholome,  
Toforn his deth bi gret aismeunt  
Cleerli enacted his laste volunte,  
That his kyngdam departid sholde be,  
Half to Tholome, as his bequeth he was,  
The tothir half to queen Cleopatras.
but Ptolemy
had kept his
sister in prison
to deprive her
of her share.

Then came
Juba, king of
Lybia, a proud
and cruel man,
who hated the
last Scipio be-
cause he suc-
cceeded Pompey
as consul and
wore purple,
which Juba
claimed was
fitting only for
himself as king.

Bochas makes
a digression here
and says that
no nation is so
wasteful of
clothing as the
people of
Almayne.

She bi hir brothir was holde in prisoun
To keepe hir wrongli from hir heritage,
Wheroff Cesar hadde compassioun,
Purposed hym to refourme hir damage.
And whil that he held ther his hostage,
Of equite, of lawe and of resoun,
Of al Egipt gaff hir poccioun.

Than kam Iuba, of Libie lord & kyng,
Sowre of stryues and discencioun,
Proud, hih of port, cruel in werkyng,
Which in especial hadde indignacioun
Vnto the worthi laste Scipioun,
Cause he was chose, lik as bookis seie,
To succeede next consul to Pompeie.

This Iuba eek bar to hym gret hatreede,
Souht a quarle ageyn hym for o thyng,
Cause that he was clad in purpil weede,
For hym alleggyng, how onli that clothlyng
No maner estat sholde vse but a kyng:
Mente for hymsilff, sittyng in roial throne,
He wold as kyng that colour were* allone.

Heer myn auctour maketh a digressiouw,
Puttyng exaumple of Almayne the contre;
Seith that ther is non othir nacioun
Touchyng array that is so disgise
In wast of cloth and superfluite,
Rehersyng her* in ful pleyn langage,
In many wise such wast doth gret damage.

It causeth pride and ambicioun,
Ageyn the vertu of humylite;
To lecherie it yiveth occasiouw,
Which is contrarie* vnto chastite.
Wast of array sett folk in pouertie,
Causeth also such costage spent in veyn
Off othir porere to haue ful gret disdeyn.

2656. that] om. H.
2660. dassenciouns H.
2674. that colour were] vse that colour B.
2680. her] ther B.
2685. contrarie B, J.
Wher superfluite is vsid of aray,  
Riot folweth, proud port & idinesse;  
With wast of tyme dryue forth the day,  
Late drynkyng, wach, surfet, dronkenesse,  
Engendreth feueres & many grete axcesse.  
Thus eueri surfet englued is to othir,  
And o mysreule bryngeth in another.

God suffreth welle ther be a difference  
Touchyng array, as men been of degre:  
Hih estatis, that stonde in excellence,  
Mut be preferrid, of resoun men may see;  
As cloth of gold, stonis & perre  
Was for princis, with othir fresh clothynges,  
But speciali purpil was for kyngis.

Thus was ther set, of hih discrecioun,  
Array accordyng to princis hih noblesse;  
And for othir estatis lower doun,  
Lik ther degrees tweeuen pouert & richesse,  
An ordre kept from scarsete & excesse,  
A mene prouided atween hih & lowe,  
Lich to hymsilff[e] ech man may be knowe.

But kyng Iuba, insolent & mad,  
Of surquedie kauht [an] oppynyoun  
That non but he in purpil shal* be clad,  
Causyng debat tweeuen hym & Scipioun.  
Yit wer thei parti bothe with Roome toun  
Ageyn Cesar, and drouh toward Pompetie,  
For which at myscheef bothe thei dide deie.

Whan Iuba felte hymsilff of nou power  
Ageyn Cesar to holde chaumpartie,  
For sorwe he loste contenance & cheer;  
Of hih disdeyn[e] and malencolie  
Callid on Petreus, a kniht off his allie,  
Made hym bassent that thei wer bothe fayn  
Felli to fhte til oon off hem was slayn.

Ageyn nature was this straunge fht,  
Ech to slen othir, & knew no cause whi, —  
But for kyng Iuba was an hardi kniht,  
He slouh his felawe and abood proudli.
The Death of Juba. Aristobolus

And rather ches to deien wilfully,
Of hih despiht[e] & of proud corage,
Than vndir Cesar to lyuen in seruage.

Maad calle a man whom he loued weel,
Gaff vnto hym gret gold & gret gerdoun
To take a suerd[e] forgid of fyn steel,
And make theroft no long dilacioun,
But bad he sholde, for short conclusioun,
Take upon hym, & haue no feer nor dreed,
Withoute tarieng to smyten of his hed.

Thus kyng Iuba rather ches to deie
Than lenger lyue in subieccioun
Vndir Cesar; he loued so weel Pompeye.

Which was to* Roome, afforn as I haue told,
Sent bi Pompeye to* be kept in hold.

[Asriobulus.]

Which aftir was delyuere droy prisoun
Bi help of Cesar in ful hasti wise,
Stondyng in hope of his regioun
To be restored vnto the fraunchise,
Wher Hircanus, as ye haue herd the guise,*
Preferred was, to his gret forth[er]lyng,
Bi Pompeie of Iewes crowned kyng.

Which Aristobolus hopeth to recure,
Caste mensys ther to regne ageyn,
Wrouhte theron, dide his besi cure,
Whos hasti labour was but spent in veyn.
Fill in the handis of a proud capteyn
Which that whilom was longyng to Pompeie;
And he with poisoun vnwarli made hym dye.

[How the last Scipion Consulere of Rome for he
not list to lyue in seruage of Iulyus roff himself
to be hert.] 1

Next came the last worthi Scipion,
Which aftir Pompeie was maad consuleer,
With whom Iuba was at discencioun
For weryng purpre, as it was told wol er,

1 MS. J. leaf 135 recto.
And afterward fill in ful gret[e] feer,  
Whan Cesar hadde withynne Libie-lond  
Outraied [hem] bothe with strong & myhty hond.

Whereby Sipioun gan fallen in despair,  
Loste his cheer, as man disconsolat,  
With thre Romeyns gan make his repair, —  
Damasippus, Plectorie and Torquat, —  
Goyng to shipe, the tyme infortunat,  
Toward Spayne; but tempest gan hem dryue,  
That thei in Affrik vnwarli dede aryue.  

Scipioun seeyng this woful caas sodeyne,  
How he was brouht vnwarli to myscheef;  
For Scicius, a myhty strong capteyn,  
Beyng a pirat and off the se a theeff,  
Which is a name of ful gret repreeff, —  
The same pirat, longyng to Cesar,  
Fill on Scipioun or that he was war,  
Beyng in purpos take hym prisoneer  
Withynne his shipp toforn his arryuall;  
For which, alas, dull gan his cheer,  
His contenauce appallen & eek faille.  
To fynde counfort no man coude hym couwsaille,  
Pullid out a suerd, whan he myht nat a-sterte,  
And roof hymsilff[e] euene to* the herte.

This was the eende of laste Scipioun:  
Leuere he hadde at myscheef for to deie  
Than vndir Cesar lyn fetrid in prisoun  
Or to his lordshipe in any wise obeye.  
To Bochas next hym cam Pompeye,  
Sone and heir to gret[e] Pompeius,  
Contraire also to Cesar Iulius,  
Hadde brethren & sistren mo than oon,  
And many another of ther alliauance.  
And of assent thei cast hem euerichon,  
Ther fadris deth hauyng in remembraunce,  
Vpon Cesar to take therof vengauce,  
Eek upon Tholomee, which bi collusioun  
Slouh ther fadir bi ful fals tresoun.

2775. Sicus H, Sicius R 3, P.  
2783. H inserts the word purpose before contenauce.  
2786. to] thoruh B, H 5.
The Triumph of Julius Caesar

The eldest brothir callid eek Pompeye, 
Beyng in Spaigne with ful gret apparaill, 
Cast hym of newe Cesar to werreye 
And his peele proudlly to assaille.*

And, as I fynde, ther was a gret bataille, 
In which Pompeie, the eldest sone of thre, 
Bi Iulius men constreynd was to fle.

and not know- 

ing what to do, 
hid in a cave 
and was slain.

He fond no socour nor receit hym to sauc, 
Off his lyff, he, stondying in gret dreed, 
Knowyng no reffut, flede into a caue, 
Tescape* away knew no bettir reed, 
Wher he was slayn; to Cesar brouht his hed, 
Sent foorth in scorn anon to Hispalee, 
Which in Spaigne is a ful gret cite.

Finally, all of 
Pompey's kin- 
dred were 
brought to de- 
struction by 
Caesar, whose 
renon in- 
cresed.

Thus bi processe al hooli the kynreede 
Of Pompeius, for short conclusioun, 
Bi Cesar wern & bi his men in deede 
Withoute mercy brouht to destruccioun. 
Thus gan encrec the fame & the renoun 
Of Iulius conquest on se & eek on londe, 
Whos mortal suerd ther myht[e] non withstonde.

His power had 
been proved in 
Lybia, Spain, 
Italy, Germany, 
Lombardy 
and France.

First in Libie, Spaigne and eek Itaille* 
Theexperience of his roial puissaunce, 
In Germanye bi many strong bataille, 
His poweer preved, in Lumbardie & in Fraunce. 
Brouhte alle thes kyngdames vndir thobeissaunce 
Of [the] Romeyns: peised al this thyng & seyn 
Touchyng his guerdoun, his labour was in veyn. 

Toward Roome makyng his repair, 
Of hym appesed cyuyl discencious, 
Of throne imperial clymbisyng on the stair; 
For the conquest of threttene regiouns, 
Of the tryumphe requered the guerdouns, 
Which to recure his force [he] hath applied, 
Al-be the Senat his request hath denied.

2804. tassaille B. 2811. To scape B. 
2822. in Itaille B. 
ful often tyme J, ful oft times P. 
2827. al] as H. 2832. xiijg B. 
2834. recure] replye H. 
2835. request] conquest H.
And his name mor to magnefie,
To shewe the glorie* of his hih noblesse,
To the Capitoile faste he gan hym hie,
As emperour his doomys ther to dresse.
That day began with ioe & gret gladnesse;
The eue nothyng accordyng* with the morwe:
The entre glad; the eende trouble & sorwe.

Calipurnia, which that was his wifF,
Hadde a drem the same niht afforn,
Toknis shewed of the funeral striff,
How that hir lord was likli to be lorn
Be conspiracy compassed & Isworn,
Yiff he that day, withoute auisement,
In the Capitoile sat in iugement.

She drempte, alas, as she lay & sleep[te], [p. 332]
That hir lord, thoruh girt with many a wounde,
Lay in hir lappe, & she the bodi kepte
Of womanheed, lik as she was bounde.
But, o alas, to soth hir drem was founde!
The nexte morwe, no lenger maad delay,
Of his parodie was the fatal day.

A poore man calHd Tongilius,
Which secreli the tresoun dede espie,
Leet write a lettre, took it Iulius,
The caas declaryng of the conspiracie,
Which to reede Cesar list nat applie.
But, o alas! ambicious necligence
Caused his mordre bi vnwar violence.

Cesar sittynge myd the consistorie,
In his esat[e] most imperiall,
Aftir many conquest & victorie,
Fortune awaityng to yuuen hym a fall,
With boidekenys, percyng as an all,
He moordred was, with many mortal wounde.
Loo, how fals trust in worldli pompe is founde!

2836 and, hastening to the Capitol, issued his de-
crees as em-
peror. That
day began with
joy but ended
in sorrow.

2840 One night
Calpurnia
dreamt that
her lord would
die if he went
to the Capitol
the next day.

2844 She dreamt
that her
lord, pierced
with many
wounds, lay in
her lap. Alas,
her dream came
ture!

2852 Of womanheed, lik as she was bounde.

2856 A poor man,
named Tongilius
knew the
treason, but
Cesar
neglected his
warning.

2862 and, sitting in
the midst of
the consistory,
was murdered
with bodkins.

2864 Cesar sittynge myd the consistorie,

2868 He moordred was, with many mortal wounde.

2866 In his esat[e] most imperiall,

2869 Loo, how fals trust in worldli pompe is founde!
THORUH al this book[e] rad ech tragedie,
Afforn rehersid & put in remembrance, 2872
Is non mor woful to my fantasie,
Than is the fall of Cesar in substaunce,
Which in his hiest imperial puissaunce
Was, whil he wende haue be most glorious, 2876
Moordred at Roome of Brutus Cassius.

He brought all countries to
subjection, and
yet he was murdered at Rome by
Brutus Cassius.

This marcial prince ridyng thoruh Lumbardie,
Ech contre yolde & brouht to obeissaunce;
Passyng the Alpies rood thoruh Germanye, 2880
To subieccioun brouht the rewrm of Fraunce,
Gat Brutis Albioun bi long contynuaunce:
To lustris passed, this manli Iulius
Moordred at Roome bi Brutus Cassius. 2884

The conspiracy
was hatched by
the Senators,
in spite of
whom he had
celebrated his
triumph.

Among the Senat was the conspiracye
Alle of assent & of oon accordaunce, —
Whos tryumpe thei proudli gan denye;
But maugre them was kept thoberuaunce,
His chaar of gold with steedis of plesaunce
Conveied thoruh Roome, this prince [most] pompous,
The moordre folwyng bi Brutus Cassius.

Reckon up his
conquests and
his chivalry,
and compare
them with
worldly varia-
ance!

Rekke his conquest, rekne up his cheualrie 2892
With a countirpeis of worldli variaunce:
Fortunys chaungis for his purpartie; —
Weie al to-gidre, cast hem in ballaunce,
Set to of Cesar the myscheeuable chaunce,
With his parodie sodeyn & envious, —
Moordred at Roome bi Brutus Cassius.

Mars and
Jupiter united
to enhance his
noblesse, yet
he was mur-
dered at Rome
by Brutus
Cassius.

Bookis alle and cronicles specefe,
Bi influence of heuenli purueiaunce, 2900
Mars and Jubiter ther fauour did applie
With glade aspectis his noblesse to enhaunce;*
Mars gaf hym kniifthod, Iubiter gounernaunce,
Among princis hold oon the moste famous, — 2904
Moordred at Roome bi Brutus Cassius.

2896. myschevous H.
2902. tenhaunce B, J, R 3.
Behold of Alisaundre the grete monarchie,
Which al the world had vndir obeissauce,
Prowesse of Ector medlid with gentrie,
Of Achilles malencolik vengaunce, —
Rekne of echon the quaercyng assuraunce,
Among remembring the fyn of Iulius,
Moordred at Roome bi Brutus Cassius.

Princis considreth, in marcial policie
Is nouther trust[e], feith nor assuraunce:
Al stant in chaung with twynclyng of an eye.
Vp toward heuene set your attendaunce,
The world vneur & al worldli plesaunce;
Lordship abit nat, record on Iulius
Moordred at Roome bi Brutus Cassius.

[How Octavian / succeeded next and how the mordres of Iulius / deied at mischeff.] 1

AFFTIR the moordre of his manli man,
This noble prince, this famous* emperour,
His worthi nevew callid Octouyan
To regne in Roome was next his successour.
Which dide his deveer bi dilligent labour
To punshe all tho, of nature as he ouhte,
Bi rihtful doom, that the moordre wrouhte.

Cheeff conspiratoMr was Brutus Cassius,
Which of this moordre made [al] the ordynaunce. 2928
Anothir Brut, surnamyd Decius,
Was oon also conspiryng the vengaunce
Wrouht on Cesar; he aftir slayn in Fraunce. 2931
Heer men may seen, what coostis that men weende,
How moordre alwey requereth an euel ende.

Withyne the space almost of thre yeer
Destroyed wern al the conspiratours
Be sodeyn deth; & summe stood in daungeer
To be bannehd or exiled as tretours.
And as it is cronicled bi auctours,
Space of thre yeer, reknid oon bi oon,
Deide at myscheeff the moorderis euerichon.

1 MS. J. leaf 136 recto.
It is a sad thing to murder a prince. God will take vengeance. Yet there is but little security in high estate.

To moordre a prince, it is a pitous thyng. God of his rihte wil take therof vengance; Namli an emperour, so famous in eache thing, Which al the world[e] hadde in gouernance. Rekke his conquest digne off remembrance, Al peised in oon, Bochas ber[eth] witnesse, In hih estat is litil sekirnesse.

[How Tullius was too tymes exiled and atte last/ slayn by Pompelyus.] 1

MYN auctour heer writ no long processe, Of Iulius deth compleynyng but a while; To write of Tullie in hast he gan hym dresse, Compendiously his liff for to compile, Compleynyng first, seith his bareyn stile Is insufficient to write, as men may seen, Of so notable a rhetoricien.

Lampe and lanterne of Romeyn oratours, Among hem callid prince of eloquence, On Pernaso he gadred up the flowers, This rhetoricien most of excellency. Whos meritis treuli to recomence, The Muses nyne, me thouhte, as I took heed, A crowne of laureer set upon his hed.

Bochas hung his head and thought he had so little skill and language, that if he laboured all his life he could not properly desribe Tulluy's merits.

But he rememberd that all though sometimes the wind drives a cloud across the sun, it does not lessen its light, and that his dull writing would not eclipse the brightness of Tullius.

Bochas astoned, gan of hymself conclude, His look abasshed, dul of his corage, Thouhte his termys & resouns wer to rude, That he lakked kunnyng & langage, Whereby he sholde to his auauytage, Thou he laboured wyntyng al his lyue, Of Tullius the meritis to descryue.

Wherof supprised, he kauhte a fantasie, Withynne hymself remembryng anon riht, Thou it so falle sumtyme a cloudi skie Be chacid wynd affor the sunne briht, Yit in effect it lasseth nat his liht; So Bochas dempte that his dul wyntyng Eclipsed nat of Tullius the shynyng.

It comforted him to think that all manner of things can be told in unadorned language, and that colours shew best by contrast.

Nevertheless he said, “I feel my hand tremble when I write about him.”

Bochas fears he may not do Tully Justice

With rud language a man may weel reporte
The laude off tryumphes & conquestis merueilous,
Which thyng remembrance gretli gan conforte
The herete of Bochas; & to hymself spak thus:
“Too colours seyn that be contrarious,
As whiht and blak; it may bee non othir,
Ech in his kynde sheweth mor for othir.

In Phebus presence sterris lese her liht;
Cleer at mydday appereth nat Lucyne;
The fame of Tullye whilom shon so bryht,
Prince of fair speche, fadir of that doctrine,
Whos bryhte bemys into this hour doth shyne:
Sothli,” quod Bochas, “of whom wha?z I endite
Myn hand I feele quakyng whan I write.

But for to yие folk occasioun,
Which in rethorik haue mor* experience
Than haue I, & mor inspeccioun
In the colours and craft[t] of eloquence,—
Them texcite to do ther dilligence,
Onto my writyng whan thei may attende,
Of compassioun my rudnesse to amende.”

Vnto hymself haung this langage,
Bochas to write gan his penne dresse,
Vndir support afforced his corage
To remembre thexcellent noblesse
Of his dites, abrod as thei haue shyned,
Hath al this world most cleerli enlumyned.

This Tullius, this singuler famous* man,
First to remembre of his natyyte,
Born at Aprinas, a cite of Tuscan,
Of blood roial descendid, who list see.
Grekissh bookis of old antique,
Maad of rethorik and in ther vulgar songe,
He translatid into Latyn tunge.

In tendre youte thes contre he forsook
And fro Tuscan his passage he gan dresse;
Toward Roome the rihte weie he took,
Entryng pe cite, the renommed noblesse

Tullius was born at Aprinum in Tuscany. He was of royal descent, and at first translated old Greek books into Latin.

In his youth he went to Rome; and his fame spread abroad like a sun.
Hid in his persone shewed the brihtnesse
Of dyuers vertues, tyme whil he abood,
That lik a sonne his fame spradde abrod.

For his vertues made a citeseyn,
The goode report of hym shon so cleer,
Lik as he hadde be born a Romeyn,
In ther fauour his name was so entieer.
Among hem chose for a consuleer,—
Ageyn the cite, tyme of his consulat,
Whan Catalyne was with hem at debat.

Bi the prudence of this Tullius
And his manhod, reknid bothe Ifeere,—
Catelyna, most cruel and Irous,
Froward of port & froward of his cheere,
Besi euere to fynde out the maneere,
How he myhte be any tokne or signe
Ageyn the cite couertli maligne.

Sixe hundrid yeer, fourscore told & nyne,
Reknid of Roome fro the fundacioun,
This cruel tiraunt, this proude Catalyne,
Made with othir aconiuracioun
Ageyn franchises & fredam of the toun.
First discurid, as bookis telle can,
In the parties & boundes of Tuscan.

The purpos hooly of this Catalyne,
Imagyned on fals[e] couetise,
Was to brynge Roome vnto ruyne.
And therupon in many sondri wise
Fond out weies, menys gan deuise,
To his entent bi dilligent labour
In the cite gan ge te hym gret fauour.

But synali his coniuracioun
Discured was bi oon Quintius,
Which was afforn[e] fals vnto the toun.
Tolde al the caa vnto Tullius,
Bi whos prudence & werkyng mervelous,
Bi help of Antoyne, that was his felawe,
The coniuracioun was broken & withdrawe.

Tullius and the Conspiracy of Catiline

He was made a citizen for his virtues and chosen consul in the time of Catiline.

Catiline, cruel and full of wrath, was always busy to injure Rome;
and 689 years after the foundation of the city he conspired with others against its franchises and freedoms, purposing to bring Rome to ruin.

Tully was told about the conspiracy, and by his prudence and the help of Antony it was broken and withdrawn.
Bi witt of Tullie al the coniuratours
Espied wern and brought onto myschaunce,
Ther namys rad tofor the senatours,
Of ther falsheed told al the gouernaunce,
Manli ordeyned thoruh his purueiaunce,
With al his peele, as maad is mencioun,
Catilyna departid fro the toun.

With Antonye* the said[e] Catalyne
Beside Pistoie hadde a gret bataile.
Slayn in the feeld; he myht[e] nat declyne,
For he abood whan the feeld gan faille.
Poweer of oon litil may auaille,
Namli whan falsheed, of malis & of pride
Ageyn[es] triouthe dar the bront abide.

Ther was another callid Lentulus
Of his felawes, that namyd was Fabyne;
The thridde of hem eek callid Cetegus,—
Alle assentid & sworn to Catallyne,
Stranglid in prisoun, at myscheef dide fyne.
Cause Tullius dide execucioun,
Tullyane was callid the prisoun.

Thus koude he punshe trecous of the toun,
Outraie ther enmyes, of manhod & prudence;
Callid of ther cite gouernour & patron,
Sent from aboue to been ther diffence,
Ther champioum, most digne of reuerence,
Chose of ther goddis ther cite for to guie
Bi too prerogatyues: knihtli & polycie.*

Lik a sunne he dide hem enlumyne
Bi hih provesse of knihtli excellencie;
And thoruh the world his bemyd dede shyne
Of his retorik & his eloquence,
In which he hadde so gret experience.
Bi circumstaunces that nothyng dede lakke,
He transcendid Polityus & Grakke.

Of oratours it is put in memorie,
This Tullius, thoruh his hib renoun,
Of all eckon the honour & the glorie
Was youe to hym, as maad is mencioun:

Through his ability all the conspirators were punished. Catiline left Rome
And was slain in a battle near Pistoia.
Three of his companions were strangled in prison; and the prison was afterwards called Tullian, after Tully, who had defeated the plot.
Thus he punished traitors to Rome. He was called patron and governor of the city.

He illumined the Romans like a sun; and the beams of his rhetoric and eloquence shone through the world.

He surpassed all orators and won the golden triumph of the House of Fame.
Tullius compared by the Greeks to Plato

Surmountid all; & in conclusion,
The goldene trumfpe of the Hous of Fame
Thoruh al the world[e] blew abrod his name.

He knew the secrets of philosophie,
Cam to Athenys* to scoole for doctryne,
Wher he profited so gretli in clergie
In al sciences heuenli and dyuyne,
That he was callid, as auctours determinye,
Among Romeyns, of verray dieu[e] riht,
Of eloquence the lanterne & the liht.

It is remembred among oratours,
How Tullius pleted causes tweyne
In the Romeyn court affor the senatoirs,
The cause defendyng be langage souereyne
Of too accusid geyn hem that dede pleyne
On ther defautis, them sauyng fro myscheef,
The court escapyng fro daunger & repreef.

Thes causes tweyne he pleted in Latyn,
With so excellent flouryng fair langage,
With suich resouns concluded at the fyn,
That he be wisdom kauhte the auauantage
In his mateeres with al the surplasage
That myhte auaille onto his partie:
What he saide ther koude no man denye.

Among Grekis [at] Athenys the cite
He was so gret of reputacioun,
So famous holde of auctorit[e],
To be comparid bi ther oppynyoun
To the philosphre that callid was Platoun,
To whos cradel bees dede abraide
And hony soote thei on his lippes laide.

A pronostik[e], lik as bookis tell,
Plato sholde bi famous excellence,
Of rethorik be verray sour[e]s & well,
For his langage, merour off eloquence.
Yit the Grekis recorden in sentence,
How Tullius in parti and in all
Was onto Plato in rethorik egall.

Thorugh his langage this saide Tullius
Reconsilede bi his soote orisouns
To the lordshipe & grace of Iulius,
Princes, kynge of dyuers regiouns,
That suspect stood bi accusaciouns,
Because thei dide Iulius disobeite,
Wer enclyned with Romeyns to Pompeie.

He coude appese bi his prudent langage
Folkis that stoode at discencioun;
Bi crafft he hadde a special auauwtage,
Fauour synguleer in pronunciacioun,
In his demenyng gret prudence & resoun:
For the pronouncyng of maters in substaunce,
His thank rescuyeth bi cheer & contenaunce.

To a glad mateer longeth a glad cheer,
Men trete of wisdam with woordes of sadnesse,
Pleyntes requeere, aftir the mateer,
Greuous or mortal, a cheer of heuynesse,
Lik as the cause outher the processe
Yiueth occasioun to hyndren or to speede,—
The doctryne in Tullius men may reede.

The name of Tulie was kouth in many place;
His eloquence in eueri lond was ryff;
His langage made hym stonde in grace
And be preferrid duryng al his lyff:
Maried he was, and hadde a riht fair wiff,
Childre manye, seruauntis yonge & old;
And, as I fynde, he heeld a good houshold.

De Officijs he wrot bookeis thre,
De Amicitia, I fynde how he wrot oon,
Of Age another, notable for to see;
Of moral vertu thei tredete euerichon.
[And] as Vincent wrot ful yore agon
In his Merour callid Historiall,
Noumbre of his bookis be ther remembrig all.

3150. in] of H.
3151. Tullyus H.
3154. be] he H.
the Dream of Scipio, two books of divination, on agriculture, "Vain Glory," & "Republica," twelve books of orations and many moral sayings.

But in spite of all, he was banished from Rome to Campania; and there, at the house of a friend, he had a wonderful dream of how he met Gaius Marius in a desert. Marius inquired the cause of his trouble, and on learning what it was assigned a sergeant to convey him in all haste to his sepulture, where Tullius should receive tidings of his recall to Rome.

He wrot also the Drem of Scipio,
Of Rethoriques compiled bookis tweyne,
And tweyne he wrot of dyuynacioun;
Of tilthe of lond to write he dede his payne,
A large book of glorie that is veyne,
De Re publica; & as he seith hymselue,
Of his Orisons he wrot bookis tuelue.

And of his dictes that callid be morall
Is remembred notabli in deede
In the said Merour Historiall.
And yit this saide Tullius, as I reede,
Mid his worshepes stood alwey in dreede
Of Fortunce; for in conclusion,
He be envie was ban[ished] Roome towe.

Beyng in exil, this famous Tullius,
In Campanya at Atyne the cite
Resceyued he was of oon Plancius,
A man that tyme of grete auctorite.
And whil that he abood in that contre,
Slepyng aniiht, the book mak[ed] mencionu,
How that he hadde a wonder visioun.

He thouhte thus, as he lay slepyng:
In a desert and a grete wildirnesse
Fyndyng no path, but to & fro erryng,
How he mette, clad in grete richesse,
Gaius Marrius, a prince of hih* noblesse,
Axyng Tulli with sad contenauue,
What was cheef ground & cause of his greuaunce.

Whan Tullius hadde hym the cause told
Of his disese & his mortal wo,
Marrius with his hand set on hym hold,
To a sergant assigned hym riht tho,
And in al haste bad he sholde go,
To conveie hym doon his besi cure
In al haste possible to his sepulture,
Wher he sholde haue tidyngis of plesaunce
Of his repeir into Roome toun,
Been aleggid off his old greuaunce.
This was the eende of his aiseoun.
The nexte morwe, as maad is mencion,
Ther was holde, to Tullius gret auail,
Tofor Iubiter in Roome a gret counsail

Withyne the temple bilt bi Marrius:
The senatours accorded wer certyn
To reconcile this prudent Tullius,
Out of his exil to calle hym hom ageyw.
Aftir rescuyed as lord & souereyn
Of eloquence, bassent of the Senat,
Fulli restored vnto his first estat.

This was done whan that in Roome toun
The striff was grettest tween Cesar & Pompeie;
And for Tullius drouh hym to Catoun,
With Pompeius Cesar to werreie
And of Iulius the parti disobeie,
Out of Roome Tullius dide hym hie,
Fledde with Pompeie into Thesalie.

Cesar aftir of his fre mocioun,
Whan that he stood hiest in his glorie,
Hym reconciled ageyn to Roome toun,
Vpon Pompeie accomplisshed the victorie.
But Iulius slayn in the consistorie
Bi sexti senatours beyng of assent,
Tullius ageyn was into exil sent.

And in a cite callid Faryman
Tullius his exil dide endure;
For Antonyus was to hym enmy than,
Because that he, parcas of aventure,
Compiled hadde an invectiff scripture
Ageyn Antoyne, rehersyng al the cas
Of his defaultis & of Cleopatras.

Thus of envie and [of] mortal hatreede,
His deth compassed bi Antonyus,
And aftirward execut in deede
Bi procuryng of oon Pompillius; —

3200. into] vn to H.
3223. to] into B. 2224, 25 are transposed, but corrected H.
3232. invectiff] Inuentive H, Inuentif J.
The Death of Tullius

Gat a comyssiooun, the stori tellith thus,
Of fals malice, & foorth anon wente he
Into Gayete of Campaigne* a cite.

And bi the vertu of his comyssiooun,
Takyng of Antoyne licence & liberte,
Cheeff retoricien that euer was in the toun,
Among Romeyns to worship the cite,
Was slayn, alas, of hate and enmyte
Bi Pompilius, roote of al falsheed,—
Proffryng hymsilff to Smyten of his hed.

Tullius afforn[e] hadde been his diffence
Fro the galwes, & his deth eek let,
Which hadde disserued for his gret offence
To haue been hangid upon an hih gibet.

Who saueh a theef whan the rop is knet
Aboute his nekke, as olde clerkis write,
With sum fals toourn the bribour wil hym quite.

Loo, heer the vice of ingratitude,
Bexperience brouht fulli to a preeff,
Who in his herte tresoun doth include,
Cast for good wil to do a man repreeff.
What is the guerdoun for to saue a theeff?

Whan he is scapid, looke, ye shal fynde
Of his nature euere to be vnkynde.

This Popilius, tretour most odible,
To shew hymsilff fals, cruel and vengable,
Toward Tullie dide a thyng horrible:
Whan he was ded, this bribour most coupable,
Smet of his riht hand, to heere abhomynable,
With which[e] hond, he lyuyng, on hym took
To write of vertues many [a] famous book.

The hand, the hed of noble Tullius,—[p. 337]
Which euer man ouht of riht compleyne,—
Wer take and brouht[e] bi Poppilius,
Vpon a stake set up bothe tweyne,
Ther tabide, wher it dide shyne or reyne,
With wynd & wedir, til thei wer deffiid,
In tokne al favour was to hym denied.

[3239. a] om. H.
3255. bribour] labour H.
3270. R begins again with this line.
A chapter ageyn [Iangelers and] \(^1\) diffamers of Rethorique.

Bochas compleynyng in his studie alone
The death of Tullie and the woful fall,
Gruchching in herte made a pitous mone,
The folk rebukynge in especial,
Which of nature be boistous & rurall,
And hardi been (for thei no kunwyng haue)
Craft of rethorik to hyndren and depraue.

Clerkis olde dide gretli magnefie
This noble science, that wer expert & wis,
Callid it part of philosophie,
And saide also in ther prudent ayus,
Ther be thre partes, as tresours of gret pris,
Compiled in bookis & of old prouided,
Into which philosophie is deuyded.

The firste of hem callid is morall,
Which directeth a man to goode thoues;
And the secounde, callid naturall,
Tellith the kynde of goode men & shrewes;
And the thridde, rac[i]ounal, well shewes
What men shal woide & what thing vndirfonge,
And to that parti rethorik doth longe.

Bi Tullius, as auctowrs determyne,
Of his persone rehersyg in substaunce,
Translatid was fro Greek into Latyne
Craft of rethorik; and for the habundaunce
Of eloquence stuffed with plesaunce,
All oratours remembrid, hym to-fore
Was ther non lik, nor aftir hym yit bore.

Bochas also seith in his writings
And preueth weel be resoun in sentence,
To an oratour longeth foure thingis:
First naturel wit, practik with science,
Vertuous lyff, cheef ground of eloquence,
Of port and maner that he be tretable;
Thes menys had, myn auctour halt hym able.

\(^{3280}\) Bochas, complaining the death of Tully, rebuked those people who are rude and tumultuous by nature and bold (for they have no skill themselves) to decry the art of rhetoric.

\(^{3284}\) In the old days scholars called it a branch of philosophy.

\(^{3288}\) There are three branches of philosophy:

\(^{3292}\) moral, natural and rational, and to rational rhetoric belongs.

\(^{3300}\) The art of rhetoric was transferred from Greece to Rome by Tullius. No orator like him was ever born.

\(^{3304}\) Bochas says that an orator must have natural wit, broad knowledge, a virtuous life and affability.

\(^{3308}\) Supplyed from MS. J. leaf 139 recto.
Bochas also demonstrates that every notable rhetorician must have five armours, which he calls the five banners of eloquence.

In his writynge and in his scriptures

Bochas weel preueth, if mut needis been,

How that of riht ther longe fyue armures

To eueri notable rethoricien,

Set heer in orde, who that list hem seen,

Which he callith, rehersyng in sentence,

The fyue baneeres longyng to eloquence.

The first is Invention,

The firste off hem callid Invencioun,

Bi which a man doth in his herte fynde

A sikir grounde foundid on resoun,

With circumstaunes, that nouht be left behynde,

Fro poynth to poynth enprentid in his mynde

Touchyng the mateer, the substauence & he grete,

Of which he caste notable tentrete.

Another armure, in orde the secounde,

Of riht is callid Disposioun,

As of a mateer whan the ground is founde,

That eueri thyng bi iust dyuysioun

Be void of al foreyn digressiouw,

So disposid touchyng tyme & space,

Fro superfluite keepe his dewe place.

The thridde armure namyd in sentence

Is Elocciuion, with woordes many or fewe,

Materes conceyued bi iust convenyence,

Disposid in orde couenably* to shewe, —

Lik a keruer that first doth tymbir hewe,

Squier* & compas cast fetures & visage,

With keruyng tool makth [up] a fair image.

The fourth is Pronuunciacioun is the fourth armure,

Necessarie to eueri oratour,

In such caas whan craft onto nature

Ioyned is bi dillligent labour

With execucioun, and that ther be fauour

In declaryng, with eueri circumstaunce,

Folwyng the mateer in cheer & contenaunce.

An heuy mateer requereoth an heuy cheer; [p. 338]

To a glad mateer longeth weel gladnesse;

Men in pronuncyng mut folwe the mateer, —

Old oratours kan bern herof witnesse, —

3312. covenable B, R 3.
3316. Squiers B.
3320. * added R.
3324. toolis H.
A furious compleynt vttrid in distresse:
This was the maner, as poetis do descriye, 3352
In his tragedies whan Senec was alyue.
The sifete armure callid Remembrance,
With quik memorie* be prudence to see,
So ausili to grose up in substauence 3356
Hooli his mateeris, that nouht forgottyn be,
Liste foryetilnesse dirke nat the libert e
Of clee report, ech thing hadde in mynde,
That in pronouncyng nothing be left behynde. 3360

Afforn prouided, so that foryetilnesse
Be non hyndrere to inuencioun,
And in proceedyng no forewyn reklesnesse
Trouble nat the ordre of disposicioun. 3364
And for tacomplisshe al up with resoun,
That pronouncyng be clee[e] remembrance
Be weel fauoured with cheer & contenaunce.

Theses said[e] thynges be inli necessarie
To euery prudent notable orator,
Nat to hasti nor ouer long to tarie,
But to conveie his processe be mesour;
In cheer accordyng stant al the fauour: 3372
For in pronouncyng, who lakketh cheer or* face,
Of Tullius scoole stant ferr out of grace.

Al erthli beestis be muet of nature,
Sauf onli man, which haueth auauwtage
Bi a prerogatiff aboue ech creature
To vttre his conceit onli be langage.
The soule be grace repressith al outrage,
Namli whan resoun hath the souereynte
To bridle passiouuns of sensualite.

Kynde onto man hath youen eloquence,
A thyng coudenable in especiall
Whan that it is conveied bi prudence,
To talke of mateeris that be natural
And secrees hid aboue celestial, —
Doth entrete of sunne, moone & sterris
Thynfluent poweer doun sent of pes & werris. 3388

3352. maner] mateer H.
3355. memoi̊re B. 3366. be] with H.
3373. For] & H — or] & B. 3374. ferr] full H.
3376. haueth] hath H. 3386. secretis H.
3388. Thynfluence R.

* the fifth is Memory, that nothing may be forgotten;
* for forgetfulness should not hinder invention or trouble the order of disposition.
* These things are necessary to every able orator.
God of al this hath graunted knowleching
Onli to man bi wisdam and resoun,
And thoruh langage youe to hym shewyng,
Outward to make declaracioun
Of the heuenli cours & sondri mocioun,
Diuers chaunge, &, pleynti to diffyne,
The revolucioun of the speeiris nyne.

Men bi langage shewe out ther ententis,
The naturall meeuyng & mutaciouns,
Accord & discord of the foure elementis,
Kyndli variaciuoe of foure complecciouns,
The generacioun & the corupciouns
Of erthli thynges, contrarie ech to other,
Corrupcioun of oon engendryng to another.

This the poweer & the prccellence
Youe vnto man, which is resonable,
That bi langage, and bi eloquence
A man is tauht in vertu to be stable,—
Of soule eternal, of bodi corumpable,
Tauht with his tunge whil he is alyue
Of his defaultis how he shal hym shryue.

Bochas eek tellith, touchyng rethorik,
Ther been too maneres: oon is of nature,
Lernyd in youthe, which doth oon spek[e] lik
As he heereth & lerneth bi scripture;—
Crafft of rethorik youe to no creature
Sauff to man, which bi gret dilligence
Be studie kometh to crafft of eloquence.

Crafft of langage and of prudent speche
Causeth prechours bi spiritual doctryne
Vertuosli the peeples for to teche,
How thei shal lyue bi moral disciplyne.
Langage techeth men to plaunte vyne,
Enfourmeth folk to worshepe hooli cherche,
The artificeer treuli for to werche.

Yit ther be summe that pleynti preche, 3424
Haue of langage this oppynyoun:
God ha[th] nat most reward onto speche,
But to the herte & to thaffecciuo;

1. generaciouns B.
2. 3413. &] or R. 3416. to] bi R.
Best can guerdone the inward entencioun
Of euery man, nat after the visage,
But lik the menyng of ther inward corage.

To vttre langage is gret dyuersite
Whan that men shewe the effect of ther menyng,
Be it of ioye or off aduersite,
Cheer for taccord therwith* in vtt[e]ryng,
Now debonaire, sumwhile rebukyng,
And in rehersyng, lik cheer alwei tapplie,
Be it of rudnesse, be it of curteisie.

Of discreciouw sette a difference
In his pronounycyng to perce or vndirmyne,
To drawe the iuge vnto his sentence
Or to his purpos to make hym to enclyne,

Peised al this thyng, the rethoricien,
With other thynges which appertene of riht
To crafft of speche, he mut conueye & seen
Mateeris of substaunce & mateeris that be liht,
Dispose hymself tentretyn euery wiht
Lik to purpos & fyn of his mateere,
As for the tyme rethorik doth requeere.

As bexaumple, myn auctour* doth record,
Men sette at werre, in herte ferr* assonder,
The rethoricien to make hem for taccord
Mut seeke weies & menys heer & yonder,
Of old rancour tappese the boistous thonder,
Be wise exaumplis & prouerbis pertynent
Tenduce the parties to been of oon assent.

A man also that stant in heuynesse,
Disespeired and disconsolat,
The rethoricien mut doon his besynesse,
The ground considred & felt of his estat,
The cause serchid whi he stant desolat,
Which to reffourme be dilligent labour

Is the trewe offis of euery oratour.

3428
There is great variety in our means of expression, depending upon our feelings
3432
and according with our intentions, as, for example, when we try to win over a judge.
3436
Thus the rhetorician must prepare himself to treat all manner of subjects and in many different ways.
3440
He must bring warring men to concord and allay the thunder of old rancour,
3444
and he must also aid and comfort those who are despaired and disconsolate.

3434. for taccord therwith] of accord therof B.
3443. vnclosid] enclosid B. 3444. that] om. H.
3445. the] bi R, J. 3446. apperteneth R.
3449. tentretyn] tentren H, tentrete J, P.
3452. As] A H — myn auctour] Rethorik B.
3453. werre] a werre R — ferr] be ferr B.
Of rethoricians whilom that wer old
The sugrid langage & vertuous daliaunce
Be goode exaumples & prouerbes that thei tolde, 3468
Wordes pesible enbelished with plesaunce,
Appesid of tirauntes the rigorous vengaunce,
Sette aside ther furious sentence
Bi vertu onli of prudent eloquence.

And in contrarie,* pleyndi to conclude,
Men seen alday bi cleer experience
Folk vnaised, & hasti foolis rude,
And braynles peele, of wilful necligence,
Because thei wern barcen of eloquence,
Vtringe* ther speche as nakid folk & bare,
For lak of rethorik ther mateer to declare.

Bi cleer exaumple, as purpl, who takpl heede, 3480
Longeth to kynges, in stori men may fynde,
With clothes of gold & riche velwet weede
Fret with rubies and othirstonis Ynde,
Saphirs, emeraudis, perlis of ther kynde,— 3484
As alle thes thynges aproprid been of riht,
Plesaunt objectis to a manmys siht,

So the langage of rethoricians
Is a glad obiect to manys audience,
With song mellodious of musiciens,*
Which doth gret counfort to eueri hih presence.
Bexaumple as* Amphioun, with song & eloquence
Bilt the wallis of Thebes the cite,
He hadde of rethorik so gret subtilite.

Amphion built
the walls of
Thebes with
his eloquence
and song, for
men were so
attracted that
all the country
came to help
him.

In his langage ther was so gret plesaunce,
Fynding therbi so inli gret proffit,
That al the contre kam to his obeissauce,
To heere hym speke thei hadde so gret delit;
The peele enviroun hadde such an appetite
In his persone, in pes & in bataille:
Heer men may seen what rethorik doth auaille! 3500

As] om. H.
Musiciens B.
as] of B.
[How Sextus werreide Tryumvir, and of the deth of grete Antoyne and Cleopatras.] 1

FOLWYNG the orde Boch’s of his book, 
With penne in hond[e], castyng up his eye, 
Tofor hym cam pale of cheer & look
A myhti prince, sone onto Pompeye, 
Callid Sextus, which as bookis seye, 
Delited hym, with a grete naue
Lik a pirat to robben on the se.

To his fadir contrarie in such caas,—
For eueri pirat of custum he dede hate,
Vpon the se whos vsage alwey was
Ageyn[es] hem proudli to debate,
Pursued hem erli and eek late,—
Wher this Sextus, to his gret repreeff,
Was of* the se a robbour and a theeff.

The sclaundre of hym* gan to spreede ferre, [p. 340] 
Reportid was to many ferr contre;
With Tryumvir* this Sextus gan a werre,—
Which is an offis and a dignite
Bi the Romeyns commyttid onto thre
Notable estatis, chose for* cheualrie,
Thempire al hool to gouverne & to guie.

The firste of hem namyd Lepidus,
And the secounde callid Octouyan,
The thridde in noumbre was Antonyus,
Ageyn[es] which thre Sextus, this proude man,
Of surquedie a newe werre gan,
Afforn bi Iulius for his rebellioun
Banished for euere out of Roome toun.

Triumvir of politik gouernauce,
Weel auised afforn in ther resouns,
Tretyng for pes bi notable purveyauce
With proude Sextus vndir condiciouws
Write & enact in ther convenciouns,—
But anon afftir, list no while tarie,
He to his promys was froward & contrarie.

1 MS. J. leaf 139 recto.
The End of Sextus Pompey

and broke his agreement. Bocchas, disgusted with his lack of virtue, did not care to magnify his name by writing about him.

He associated with fugitives and men of evil life, and made one Moena captain of 40 of his ships.

This churl allied himself with Octavian and came down against his lord:

but as soon as the battle began, Octavius' ships were sunk by a storm, and Sextus fled in disaster.

He then went to Greece to fight Antony, but was taken and slain.

One of the Triumvirs was Lepidus, who reconciled Antony with Octavian;

For his convict outraious falsnesse, And on the se for his robberye, Bocchas of hym writ no long processe, Hauyng disdeyn his name to magnifie; For he to vertu list nothing applie, — The difference cause which [is] in thestat Atwixe knithod & liff of a pirat.

With fugityues, theuyys and robbourys And men exiled out of Roome toun, Banished people, fals conspiratours, With othir convict of moordre & tresoun, — He took al such vndir protccioun; And oon Moena, a cherl of his certeyn, Of fourti shippes he made hym a capteyn.

The said[e] cherl vnwarli tho began Folwe the nature of his condicioun, Allied hymself[e] with Octauyan Ageyn his lord[e], bi ful fals tresoun; With al his naue and shippes he cam doun, Spared nat to meete of verray pride With Menecrates, that was on Sextus side.

But also soone as the bataile gan And the parties togidre sholde gon, Alle the vessellis of Octauyan With sodeyn tempest wer drownid euerichon Beside a castell bilt of lym & ston Callid Nauletum, wher yit to gret repreeff Sextus fledde & was brouht to myscheeff.

Wente into Grece to make hym stronge ageyn To holde a bataile with Antonyus, Take in his komyng bi strengle of a capteyn Longyng to Antoyne, callid Furnyus, Whilom neuew to Cesar Iulius: And or duk Sextus myhte ferber weende, He slay[e]n was & made ther an eende.

Of Tryumvir in thempire, as I tolde, Ther was a capteyn callid Lepidus, Which bi his offis lik as he was holde, Riht besi was, the book rehersith thus,
To reconcile the proude Antonyus
To the grace of gret Octouyan,
Ech thyng forgete wherof the werre gan.

And to conclude shortli, who list see,
Fortune a while was to hym gracious,
Thempire al hool gourernid bi thies thre:
Lordship of Affrik hadde Lepidus,
Bi which he wex proud & contrarious,
To hym assigned vndir commissiouns
Fulli the noumbre of tuenti legiouns.

Wherof in herte he kauhte such a pride,
Causyng be processe his destrucciouw.
Surquedie a while was his guide,
From his estat til he was falle dow;
Namli whan he, of fals presumcioun,
Took upon hym of malis to werreye
The said Octouyan, & gan hym disobeie.

Whan Octouyan his malis dide see,
That he gan wexe sodeni contrarie,
He threw hym dow from his dignite,
Cast hym in exil, list no lenger tarie.
Loo, how Fortune sodeynli caw
To maken hym that hadde gournaunce
Off al Affrik to comen to myschaunce!

Another prince, Cesar Lucyus,
Exiled was fro Roome the cite
Bi his vuncle, the saide Antonyus,
Of wilfulness & hasti cruelte;
For in that tyme, as men may reede & see,
Contreued causes wer founde up* of malis
Texile princi notable holde & wis.

Sumwe because they heeld[e] with Cesar,
Other for Pompeie that heeld on that partie,
Summe for ther good, afforn or thei wer war,
Summe for suspecioun, summe for envie,
Summe for thei koude nat flatre nouther lie,
Summe for vertues, which was gret[e] routhe,
Because thei wern so stable in ther trouthe.

3576. gret] om. R.  3579. gracious] contrarvys H.
3600. from R.  3603. For in] fro H.  3604. up] out B.
3610. nouther] nor H, J.
Paulus Lucius was exiled for malice after the death of Antony and Cleopatra.

In this trouble dreadfull & odious, As is rehearsed in ordre ye may reede, The noble kniht, Paulus Lucius, Exilid was of malis & hatreede, Folwyng upon the grete horrible deede, The pitous deth & the hatful caas Of gret Antonye and Cleopatras.

The tragedie of these ilke twyne For me as now shal be set aside, Cause Chaucer, cheef poete of Bretayne, Seyng ther hertis koude nat deuyde, In his book, the Legende of Cupide, Remembryng ther, as oon thei did endure, So wer thei buryed in oon sepulture.

Thyng onys said be labour of Chaucer Wer presumptioun me to make* ageyn, Whos makynge was so notable & enteer, Riht compendious and notable in certeyn. Which to reherse the labour wer but veyn, * Bochas remembryng how Cleopatras Caused Antonye* that he destroied was.

As Bochas says, Cleopatra caused Antony's destruction. He fell in love with her, and as she desired to be empress, he made war on Octavian.

Hir avarice was so importable, He suprised with hir gret fairnesse, Folwyng ther lustis foul & abhominable, She desirynge to haue be emperesse; And he, alas, of froward wilfulnesse, To plesen hire, vnhappily began To werreye the grete Octouyan.

Froward ambiacion sette his herte affire To clymben up to the imperial see, To haue poccissioun of the hool empire, Took upon hym, yff it wolde haue be, To regne allone in Roome the cite, Cleopatras to fostren in hir pride, Title of Octauyan for to sette aside.

With multitude of many legiouns, As I haue told, ageyn Octauyan, To hym acrochid of dyuers regiouns Gret multitude of many manli man;
First on the se to werreye he began,
Wher he was first, maugre al his miht,
To his confusioun vnwarli put to fliht.

Disespeired, fledde hom to his contre,
Knowyng no* helpe nor mene to recure,
But to encres of his aduersite,
What that he sauh this woful aventure,
Geyn Octouyan he myhte nat endure,
With a sharp suerd his daungeer to dyuerte
Hymsilff he rooff vnwarli to the herte.

Of whos deth the queen Cleopatras
Took a sorwe verray impor tale;
Because ther was no recure in the caas,
Thouhte of his wo she wolde be partable,
Whos fatal eende pitous & lamentable:
Slouh eek hirsil[e], loue so did hir raue;
Afftir thei bothe buryed in o graue.

BOOK VII

[Off Antonye son and heire to grete Antonye, and of Cesarius, Iulia, Agrippa, Cassius, and Galbus.] ¹

This story, the last of the sixth book, [p. 343] ended, Bochas leaned on a chest and fell asleep. But just as he began to take his rest, a great number of people appeared to him, of whom Antony, son of great Antony, was the first. Octavian had caused him to be slain in the temple.

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First of that felashipe cam the sone & heir Of Antonye, with blood spreynz al his weede, Callid eek Antonye,* falle in gret dispeir Cause Octoyuan bar to hym hatreede, Whos suerde he fledde, quakyng in his dreede, To an old temple socour for to haue, Trustyng fro deth the* place sholde hym saue.

Next in ordre cam Cesarius, Of whom ther fill a wonder pitous caas, Whilom begte of Cesar Iulius Vpon the yonge faire Cleopatras, Slayn in his youthe, thus writeth Bochas, As Octouyan dide hymsliff assigne, For he geyn Romeyns sholde nat maligne.

1. vjte B.  4. in] on H — a] his R, P.
2. to haue] tue B — to haue take his] for to take a H.
5. that B.  23. pitous] om. H.
6. geyn Romeyns sholde] ageyn Romayns did H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 140 recto.
775
Julia, Octavian’s daughter, began, howling and crying, to tell Bochas her grievous complaint; for she was exiled by her father in punishment of her lechery, and she died in poverty.

Her son Agrippa, who spent his time in slumber and idleness, was allowed to die in mischief by Octavian.

After Agrippa came Cassius of Parma, a manly knight, a poet and friend of Mark Antony.

He was accused to Octavian for having assented to the death of Caesar.

for which Octavian had him taken and offered up in sacrifice to Julius’ image.

Julia, Octavian’s daughter, began
Hir greuous compleynt to Bochas specifie,
Whilom douhtir to grete Octouyan,
With weepyng eyen gan to houle & cri,
Which bi hir fadir to punshe hir lecherie
Exilid was out of hir contre,
For lak of socour deide in pouerte.

Hir sone Agrippa, yong & tendre of age,
Born off hih blood, Bochas doth expresse,
Cam next in ordre, pale of his visage,
Which spent his tyme in slombre & idilnesse,
Froward to vertu; & for his wrechidnesse Octovyan, which was gre[e] routhe,
Suffrid hym deie at myscheeff for his slouthe.

Aftir Agrippa cam forth anon riht
Cassius of Parma, a famous gret contre,
Which in Itaille was holde a manli knyht,
With Marc Antonye* weel cherisshed & secre,
Bood in his court, & therwithal parde
Gretli allowed, first for his cheualrie,
And for his notable famous poisye.

And therwithal he hadde in existence
A riht gret name & stood in gret fauour
For his kniuthod & for his hih prudence.
Aftir accusid vnto the emperou
Octouyan for a coniuratour,
He sholde haue bee of froward fals entent
To Iulius deth fulli of* assent.

For which be biddyng of Octouyan
Take he was, beyng but yong of age;
And as myn auctour weel remembre* can,
Brouht tofor Iulius hih upon a stage,
Ther offrid up onto his ymage
Be cruel deth, the stori tellith thus,
For the fals moordre of Cesar Iulius.
After the death of said Cassius,
Another came of Roome the cite,
Which, as I reede, callid was Galbus,
Of a pretour haungyng the dignite;
And for suspecious slay[e]n eek was he,
His eyen first out of his hed wer rent,
For Iulius deth than into exile sent.
Toward his exile his brigaunt he was slayn.
And after that, within a hile while,
Of his labour nether glad nor fayn,
Bochas began to direct his stile
to greater Herodes, brefli to compile
His greuous fall & hooli the manere
To sette in ordre heer next, as ye shal heere.

[How the tirant herodes slouh wiff and children
and deied atte mischeff.] 1

REMEMBRYNG first in Iurie he was kyng,
Antipater his fadir, who list see,
In Arabia myhtili regnyng
Ouir the prouynce callid Ydumee.
This same Herodes, gard[e]yn of Gallile,
Ordeyned was, [first] for his hih prudence,
And for his notable knihtli excellency.
Famous in manwhod, famous of* his lyne, [p. 344]
Famous also bi procreacioun,
I reede also he hadde wyues nyne;
And among alle, as maad is mencion
To his plesaunce and his oppynyou
Maister of stories rehersest ther was oon
Mariannes, fairest of euerichon.
Bi whom she hadde worthi sones tweyne,
Alisaundre and Aristobolus.
But for his sustir* ride at hir disdeyne,
Callid Saloma, the stori tellith thus,
He vnto hir wex suspician,
Because she was accusid of envie
Bi Saloma touchyng auoutrie.

64. saide] the sayde R.
66. reede] tolde H. 74. began] gan H. 82. garden H.
85. of] in B, H. 88. among] mong R.
94. his sustir] hir stustir B.

1 MS. J. leaf 140 verso.
The Story of King Herod

Afterwards he greatly regretted her death.

Ageyn[e]s hire of rancour sodenli
He gan of herte greuousli disdeyne;
With rigerous suerd he slouh hir furiousli.
But as the stori doth vs acerteyne,
He for hir deth felt afterward gret peyne,
Euere whan it cam to his remembrance,
Hir port, hir cheer, hir womanli plesaunce.

That is what follows when a prince is hasty to believe every tale he hears.

For sorrow Herodes fell into melancholia
Loo, what it is a prince to be hasti,
To eueri tale of rancour to assente,
And, counsailles, proceede wilfulli
To execuciuon, of froward fals entente;
For Herodes so sore dede hym* repente
That he for thought[e] fill into anoye
Of hertli sorwe & malencolie.

and, troubled with fits of fury and bad dreams, was lunatic once a month.

Reste hadde he non novther day nor niht,
Troublid with fureye that he wex frentik,
With dremys vexid & many an vnkouth siht;
Of cheer nor colour to no man he was lik,
And eueri moneth onys lunatik.
A gre[e] while he hadde this woful lyff
For sorwe onli he hadde slayn his wiff.

But he was made king of Judaea by Antony and Octavian.

And as the stori well reherse can,
In the Capitoile mid Roome the cite,
Bi Antonye and bi Octouyan
He crownid was & maad kyng of Iude,
Bi the Senat maad theron a decre,
And registred that he and his kynreede
Sholde in that lond lynealli procede.

although a foreigner and a usurper.
This was at the time of the birth of Christ Jesus.

In Roome was maad the* confirmacioun
To this Herodes, bookis specifie,
Beyng a foreyn the translacioun
Was maad of Iuda & of Iuerye,
Sceptre, crowne, with al the regalie
Bi hym vsurpid, as ye haue herd tosorn,
Vpon the tyme whan Crist Iesus was born.

103. afterward] om. R.
109. entente] om. R.
110. so sore dede hym] dede hym so sore B — dede hym] he did R, J, he dyd P.
119. he] bat he H.
127. the] a B. 133. Crist] cast R.
This same Herodes bi procuracioun
Of Antonye did also occupie,
Bi Augustus plener conmyssion
The grete estat[e] callid Tetrarchie
In too kyngdames, with al the regalie:
Of Traconytides, Iturye eek also,
Bi the Romeyns maad lord of bothe too.

Maister of stories r^herseth of hym thus:
For comendacioun in especiall
In Ascalon he bilt a statli hous
Of riht gret cost, a paleis ful roiall,
Was non so riche, for to rekny all.
Aftir which, myn auctour doth so write.
He callid was Herode Ascolonyte.

This same Herodes, cruel of nature,
Of cheer & port passyng ambitious,
Ay to be uengid dide his besi cure
On al that wern to hym contrarious.
His wyues brothir Aristobolus,
In Iherusalem cheefF bisshop, as I redee,
Falsli he slouh of malis & hatreede.
Vniustli regnid, born heuy thorough his reum,
His herte fret & kankrid with envie.
Another bisshop in Iherusalem,
Callid Hircanvs, myn auctour list nat lie,
This same Herodes in his malencolie
Slouh hym vnwarli be rancour ful vengable,
Sittyng at dyneer at his owne table.

Ther was no man of corage mor cruel
Nor mor desirous to be magnefied;
To make his name also perpetuell
Foure statli cites he hath edified,
Of which the names been heer specified:
Cesaria, Sebasten, cites souereyne,
Antipadra, Cipre, the othir twyne.

He hadde also a fals condicioun:
He truste[d] non that was of his kynreede,
His sonis twyne hadde in suspeciou,
Ther purpos was to slen hym of hatreede,
Whan he wer ded[e] hopyng to succeede.

He built a stately palace in Ascalon, which Bochas thought was to his credit.
But he was cruel and am-bitious, and slew his wife's brother Aristobolus, Bishop of Jerusalem, out of hatred.
He reigned unjustly and killed another bishop named Hyrcanus as he sat at dinner at his own table.
No man was ever more desirous of fame. To perpetuate his name he built four stately cities.
He also had the evil habit of not trusting his own family, and suspecting his two sons made them to be slain without cause.

149. port & cheer R. 156. kankrid] cancrik H.
158. Hircamvs H. 168. Antipatra and Cipre P.
And causeles, as fadir most vnkynde,  
Made hem be slayn, in stori thus I fynde.

He was deceitful and a tyrant; and when the three magi came to Jerusalem to worship Jesus, whom they called king, he imagined that a child had been born to deprive him of his realm, and, falling into a rage, slew all the infants of Bethlehem.

One of his owne children, out at nurse, was slain by his knights with the others, probably out of vengeance.

Altogether 144,000 children were put to death for Christ's sake.

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Fro that day forth, as maad is mencioun, 212
He fill in many vnkouth malladie;
His flesh gan turne to corrucpioun, 216
Fret with wermys upon ech partie,
Which hym assailed bi gret tormentrie:
His leggis suell[e], corbid blak gan shyne;
Wher vengaunce werkith, a-dieu al medecyne.

Of his seeknesse the stench was so horrible,
Tawaite on hym no man myhte abide;
Vn to hymsi[ff] his careyn wex odible,
So sore he was troublid on ech side.
Lechis for hym did a bath prouyde,
But al for nouht; in such myscheeff he stood,
Of greuous constreynte he sodenli wex wood.

In tokne he was weri of his liff,
So importable was his mortal peyne,
To pare an appil he axed a sharp knyff,—
His malladie did hym so constreyne,— 228
Fulli in purpos to kutte his herte in twayne.
The knyff he rauhte, leiser whan he fond;—
Oon stood beside,* bakward drouh his hond.

For peyne vnette the his wynd he myhte drawe,
Gaff al his frendis in comaunderment 232
Bi a decre & a furious lawe,
That al the worthi of parties adiacent,
Which that wer fayn or glad in ther entent 236
Of his deth, he, void of al pite,
The same day thei sholde slay[e]n bee.

This cursid wretch, this odious caitiff,
I reede of non stood ferther out of grace,
In sorwe & myscheeff eendid hath his liff. 240
Ech man was glad[e] whan he shold[e] pace.
And for his stori doth this book difface
With woful clauses of hym whan I write,
Therfor I caste no mor of hym* tendite.

From that day Herod fell into a strange ill-
ness; his flesh corrupted and was tormented
with worms; his legs swelled and bent and
turned black.

His odour was so awful that no man could
wait on him, and a bath prepared by his
physicians did him no good.

Unable to stand it any longer, he went
road, and asking for a knife
to pare an apple tried to
kill himself.

He could hardly draw in
his breath for pain, and in his
fury ordered all the worthies
of the country, who were glad
of his sickness, to be slain
on the day of his death.

Finally this cursed wretch
came to an end. No one ever stood
farther out of grace. His
story disfigures this book.

225. was] vex H. 226. importable R. 229. 2nd in] on H.
231. beside] behynde B.
245. no mor of hym] of hym no mor B.
OFF Herodes the vnwar cursid fall, [p. 346]

The lyff vngracious of hym & his kincreede,
Eure vengable in his estat roiall,
His wif, his childre slough of old hatreede;
Innocentis he made in Bethlem bleede,
Regnyng in Iuda, born of a foreyn lyne,
The firste tiraunt (ye may the Bible reede)
Which ageyn Crist gan frowardli maligne.

His sword of vengeance was always ready whet to shed innocent blood.

He would have no one his equal to succeed him, and as he was but an alien, he especially dreaded Jesus, who was of the line of Jesse.

Noble Princes, do not oppress your people; remember the end of Herod, who maligned against Christ.

Herod Antipas exilid bi Octavian and of Achelaus son of herodes the secounde.] 1

COMPENDIOUSLI as ye haue herd he fall
Of Herodes remembrid be Bochas,
How bi his testament set in especiall
To succeede was Herode Antipas;
In hast exilid, of hym this was the caas,
Bi Octovian to Vyenne, as I reede,
Archelaus ordeyned to succeede,
and set aside, together with his brother, in favour of Archelaus,
Sone of Herodes callid the secounde,
Which in effect took pocessiou[n,
In Iherusalem regned, as it is founde,
Of whom myn auctour, for short conclusiou[n, 288
Maketh in his book but smal menciou[n:
Hym and his brothir set sodenli aside; —
Of them to write no lenger list abide.
Sauff that he writ how forseid Antipas
At Vyenne, a myhti gret cite,
In [his] exil soone aftir slay[e]n was.
Archelaus, succeedyng in Iudee,
With Herodias, the stori who list see,
Bi Agrippa to Tiberie accusid,
Of certeyn crymes koude nat been excusid.
A certeyn tyme comaundid to prisoun,
Of themperour koude neuer gete grace;
Ban[y]shed hym [ferr] from his regeou[n
Into Spayne for a certeyn space.
And his worshepe breeffli to difface,
Fortune causid to his fynal repreff,
He deide ther in pouert & myscheeff.
The fatal eende rehersid of thses twayne,
In what distresse that thei dide fyne,
Myn auctour aftir gan his penne ordeyne
To write the caas be many a woful lyne,
Vpon the striff atween[e] Messalyne
And othir twayne stondyng bi hir side,
Tofor Iohn Bochas how thei dide chide.
Tofor Bochas thei cam al thre to pleyn,
Messalyne, wiff onto Claudius,
Ageyn[e]s whom ther wer othir twayne,
Calligula and Tiberius,
In whos tyme was slay[e]n Crist Ihesus.
Touchyng debat that was among thses thre,
Suende the processe, heer folwyng ye shal see.

287. regned] regnyng H — it is founde] I reede H, R 3, R, J,
H 5, I rede P.
296. who list the story R, J.
Tiberius and Caligula stood angrily before Bochas, with Messalina between them.

Caligula first spoke, and he said to Messalina, without respect or shame.

"You defamed, adulterous woman, what are you doing here in your mourning garments? I suppose you have come to visit the five most infamous women who ever lived.

"As a token, one of them, Amylia, was taken in adultery and divorced by her husband.

"It is well known that you murdered Drusus; nor are you any better than Claudia, who also was thrown out by her lord for adultery.

"You defamed, adulterous woman, what are you doing here in your mourning garments? I suppose you have come to visit the five most infamous women who ever lived.

"As a token, one of them, Amylia, was taken in adultery and divorced by her husband.

"It is well known that you murdered Drusus; nor are you any better than Claudia, who also was thrown out by her lord for adultery.

"Thou sclaundrid woman, noised in lecherie Thoruh al the world, as folk thi name atwite, And reportid for thyn auoutrie, What dost thou heer in thi murnyng habite? I trowe thou komest of purpos to visite In this place thunhappi women fyve, Touchyng disclaundre that euer wern alyue. The firste of hem callid Amylia, And Lepida was named* the secounde, Lyuia, Plaucia, & the fifte Elia, Diffamed echon in deede, as it was founde. In tokne wheroff the lecherye to confounde Off Emylia, in auoutry take, Was bi the lawe of hir lord forsake. Bi the whilom was knowe that Drusus Istranglid was and moordred be poisoun; Lik to Claudia, douhtir of Claudius, Which bi hir lord, the book makth mencioun, Was thrown out, to hir confusioun, For hir defautis founde in auoutrie Sclaundrid for euere; ther was no remedie.
Thou koudest whilom mak thi lord to slepe,  
With certeyn drynkis to cast hym in a reage,  
Bi which he was maad his bed to keepe,  
To gete leiseer in thi flouryng age,  
For to mysuse of fals lust thyn outrage,  
Anihter tyme took upon a weede,  
At the bordel dist amys for meede.

Thyn appetit was verry vnstaunchable;  
It is a shame to write it or expresse.  
Thyn hatful lyff was so abhominable, —  
Tiberi and I can bern heerof witnesse.”  
And with that woord anon she gan hir dresse,  
Whan she had herd[e] al ther fel langage,  
Gaff hem this ansuere with a sad visage:

“Certis,” quod she, “I koude neuer keepe  
To saue my-silff, a woful creature, —  
I haue gret causse to compleyne & wepe  
My sclauudrous lyff, which I may nat recure.  
But I suppose I hadde it of nature  
To be such oon; for be daies olde  
An astronomyen so my fadir tolde,

At my berthe takyng the ascendent,  
Tolde longe afferm of my mys gouernaunce:  
The sunne, the moone toward thorient  
Wer in the signe that bereth the ballaunce; —  
And saide also, mor for assuredance,  
The same signe hadde be descripcioun  
His* foot in Virgyne, armys in the Scorpiou.

Amyd the heuene was Venus exaltat,  
With Mars conioyne, he book makth menciou;  
And Jubiter was also infortunat  
To my saide disposicioun,  
Witbyrne the Fissh heeld tho his manzioun:  
Thus be the lordship pleylni of Venvs  
I was disposed for to be lecherous.”

In hir excus the saide Messalyne  
Gan alegge hir constelacioun;  
But prudent clerkis pleylni determyne,  
Of the heuensely cours the disposicioun

365. Tiberius P.  382. His] The B.
In this manner Messalina pleaded her constellation in excuse; but clerks say that no well-behaved person is constrained to do wrong by force. Nor is there any necessity for living a vicious life. There is no sin that is not voluntary.

Yet Messalina would not leave off excusing herself. "Hercules once bore up the heavens, yet for all his chivalry he never could overcome the vice of lechery."

"And as for you, Caligula and Tiberius, I shall not heed what either of you say. You, Gaius Caligula, are yourself besmirched, and should know better than rebuke others."

"Your scanda-lous behaviour is reported through all the world: you seduced your three sisters, and may well blush for shame. Don't blame me again as long as you live!"

"It is not fitting that a thief should sit in judgment on thef, nor should one profligate chastise others.

Is obeissaut & soget to resoun, That eueri man which well gouernid is, Is nat constreyned of force to doon amys, — 396

Nor bynt no man of necessite Vicious lustis frowardli to sue. A vertuous man stant at libertae Fals inclynaciouns be prudence to remewe; 400

Every man be grace may eschewe All thyng to vertu that founde is contrarie: For ther is no synne but it be voluntarie.

Yit for al this, the saide Messalyne In hire excus[e] wolde nat been in pes:

"The heuene," quod she, "as poetis determyne, Was born up whilom be myhti Hercules, Yit coude he neuere of nature ha[ue] reles, For al his kniht hod & his* cheualrie, To overcome the vice of lecherie.

But thou Calligula and thou Tiberius, [p. 348] What-euer ye seyn I take therof non heede; 412
For thou Calligula, callid eek Gayus, Thi-silff diffoulid with lecherie in deede, To rebuke othir thou sholdest stonde in dreede, But thi rebukis in parti for to quyte; 416
Who is diffoulid non othir sholde atwite.

Bi Fames trumpet thi sclaunder is out blowe, Thoruh al the world reportid shamfullie, Thi thre sustren fleshli thou dest hem knowe, — 420
Wex red for shame; and for thi partie, For the vice of hatful lecherie Duryn thi liff put me no mor in blame, Which art thi-silff diffoulid in the same. 424

It sittith nat in no maner wise A theef for theffte to sitte in iugement; A lecherous man a lecher to chastise, Nor he that hath al his lyff Ipspent 428
In wast & riot, forfetid & myswent, To been a iuge othre to redresse, Nor leprous lechis to cure men of seeknesse.

BK. VII] The Words between Messalina, Caligula, & Tiberius 787

I wolde ha suffrid and take [in] pacience
Yiff of Affrik the chast[e] Scipion
Hadde me rebukid for* my gret offence:
I wolde haue suffrid his yerde of iust resoun.
Or yif the famous prudent old Catoun
Hadde ageyn me in swich cas maad abraid,
I wolde haue suffrid what-euere he hadde said.

Or yif Lucrese for my correccioun
Hadde seid to me, for vertuous doctrine,
Alle my surfetis myd of Roome toum,
I wolde haue bowed [bothe] bak & chyne,
To have obied onto hir disciplyne.
Shame for* a crepil, to stonde that hath no miht,
To rebuke othir for thei go nat vpriht!

Ageyn[e}s the also I may replie,
Many another fals conspiracioun
Touchyng mateeres of nigromanie,
And many another conteued fals poisoun
Founde in too bookis, Bochas makth mencion,
Oon callid Pugio, most supersticious,
And the secounde Inamyd Gladius,
Hable al this world tenvenyme & encloie;
Ageyn thre statis duellyng in Roome toum,
Ther namys write of them thou cast destroie,
Which to remembre is gret abusioun.
A chest also fulfilled of poisoun,
Aftir thi deth cast in the se, I reede,
Bi which an hundred thousand fisshes wer dede” . . .

(On this mateer is tedious for tabide,
Namli to princis* born of hih estat;
It sittith nat gentil blood to chide,
Bi furious rancour to stonde at debat.
And for thes mateeres been infortunat,
I wil passe ouer & no mor of hem write,
Sauff of ther eende compendiousli tendite.)

446. I may also R.
453. this] be H.
461. princis] princis princessis B, H, R 3, R, J, P, R 2, H 3,
        H 4, Sl, Add, H 5.
"To the Tiberye I haue sumwhat to seyn:
Knowe and reportid be many a creature,
How in Chaumpayne folk hadde of the disdeyn
For thi most hatful lecherous ordure,
In thilke vice which is ageyn nature,
Which taecomplissh, void of al hap & grace,
Thyn abidyng was in suspicios place.

To swich fals lustis duryng al thi lyff,
List nat forber[en] in thi latter age,
Thou vsist many riche restoratif
In suiche vnthrift tencrece thi corage,
Of ribaudi thou fill in such dotage,—
How maist thou thanne rebuke me? For shame!
Which in such caas art blottid with* diffame.

I dide amys, but it was in my youthe,
Horrible thynges, which Gayus heer hath told,
But thyng outrage, the* report is yit kouthe,
Thou dist hem vse bothe yong & old.
And for tafforce your vices manyfold,
Thou & Calligula, in al swich ribaudie,
Dide grettest surfet in froward glotonie.

Also Tiberye, thou beynge emperour,
Cruel causeles, & most malicious,
Dist moordre in Roome the famous oratour
Callid in his tyme prudent Asynyus,
Which thoruh thempire, Romeyns tolde thus,
Was liht & lanterne founde at al asaies,
Of rethorik[e] callid in his daies.

Thou wer eek cause that worthy* Nonomus, [p. 349]
Kyng of Parthois, thoruh thi cruelte
Exilid was, thou wer so coueitous
To haue poecessiou of his tresour, parde,—
Deide in myscheeff and in pouerte.
Be sham[e]fast any wiht taccuse,
Which in such caas thi-silf canst nat excuse!

"You let Arrippina starve to death,
although she ran to the image of Octavian in the temple for aid.

480. with[ ] for B. 483. outrage the[ ] outrages be B.
495. worthy[ ] werri B, werrey H, werry R, R 3, H 5, H 4, werrei R 2, wery H 3, werrie Add, verrv S1, wourthy H 2.
Which halp hir nat þat she list thidir weende:
Put out be force; for hunger made an eende.

Thyn owyn brothir callid Germanicus,
Which in his tyme was so good a kniht, —
q Thi brothir also named eek* Drusus, —
Bothe wer poisowned & slayn ageyn[es] rih:
Bi fals consyring of thyn imperial* myht.
Texcuse the moordre, thi-siluen at the leste
Wer clad in blak, at ther funeral feeste.

I haue no kunnyng, speche nor langage
To reherse nor make menciouun
Specialli of the gret outrage
And sacrificle thou dist in Roome toun,
Be violence whan thou drou[h]e doun
The image of Ianus, & aftir in al hast
Into Tibre madest hym to be cast.

And thou Calligula, among thi vices all,
Of surqueid and fals presumpcioun
Welst that men a god the sholde call,
Tuen Pollux Castor to haue thi mansioun.
Fro whicke place* thou art now throwe doun,
Which heeld thi-silff among the goddis seuene
Egal with Iubiter for to sitte in heuene.

Ansuere to me, heer beynge in presence,
Which of thes foure, Mars, Janus, Mynerue,
Or Mercurie, god of eloquence,
Hath rent the doun, as thou dist disserue,
Fro Iubiter in myscheef for to sterue?
That thou heer-affir, wher-so thou lauh or frowne,
Shalt haue no fauvour mor with hym to rowne.

With these defautis & many another
Affor[n] rehsed in hyndryng of thi name —
How thou ordeynest first to slen thi brothir
With men of armes, which was to the gret shame;
q To Tholome thou dist also the same,
Sone & heir to kyng Iubatoun;
And many a senatour thon slouh in Roome toun.

511. also named eek] also callid B, eke namyd also H.
513. imperial] owen B.  521. al] al þe H.
526. Castor] & Castor H, P.
527. Fro whiche place] For which B.
"You shut up the granaries and starved the people of Rome, so that, dreadful to say, they ate their own members.

"I don't suppose that Jupiter or Juno told you to do this; very likely it was Venus, who wanted to flatter you, or Mars. Soon afterwards you yourself were murdered by your own servants.

"I am astonished that neither of you is ashamed to blame me for a small mote like lechery, and cannot see the beam in your own eye.

Shettist up myd Roome the cite Ther gerneris, which neuer afforn was* seyn; Wherbi enfamynd was the comunte, — Pite to heere; this [is] plat & pleyn, — Of necessitie constreynd in certeyn (Shame to rehearse or put [it] in scripture) Eet ther membris, a thyng ageyn nature.

Iubiter nor Iuno the goddesse Gaff no such counsail, I suppose, onto the; But it was Venus, to flatre thyn hihnesse, And furious Mars, bi froward cruelte To slen senatours gretest of that cite; Thi-silff soone aftir, wherof the toune was fayn, Bi thi seruauntes moordrid were & slayn.

And for tabate thyn outrage & [thi] pride, Which[e] thou hast vsid al thi liff, Leff up thyn hed, looke on thi lefft[e] side, Thou fyndere up of moordre & of striff! Slouh thou nat Cesonia thi wiff? — Thi douhtir aftir, that callid was Drusill, Of cursid entent thi malis to fulfill?

I haue merueile how any of you tweyne, Thou Calligula or thou Tiberius, Be nat ashamed any thyng to seyne Ageyn[e]s me, with visage despitous Me for tatwite that I was lecherous! Of a smal mote ye can abrade me, But in your eye a beem ye cannat see.

Wher haue your soules take her herberage, That been contrarie with me for to stryue? I trowe that Caron hath maad your passage Vp at the stronde in helle for taryue, Ther ye abide, thus I [can] descryue, Wher dreadful Stix, callid be infernal flood, Of custum renneth with furious wawes wood.
Radamantus, oon of the iuges tweyne,
With kyng Mynos hath youe a iugement,
Perpetueh ye shal abide in peyne;
And Eacus hath ordeyned your torment:
In Flegeton,* the flood most violent,
Ye shal be drowned & an eende make,
Euere for tabide among the streymes blake.
I may you calle of emperors the refus,
Ye sholde be shamfast to shewe out your visages,
Verray astoned, dreedful and confus
To haue to me so vncurteis langage!

Thus Messalyne dauwted ther courage
With hir femynyn crabbid eloquence.
Thei durste no longer abide in hir presence.

[Off the most vicious tiraunt Nero that slouh Petir
and Paule and atte laste himself.] 1

THIS hatful stori with many a woful lyne
Of Calligula and Tiberius,
Touching pe strif tueen* hem & Messalyne,
Shamful rebukis, froward & odious,
Bi them rehersed with cheer most furious,
As ye haue herd, heer eendeth ther chidyng;
Nero the tirant kometh next onto pe ryng.

Oon most cursid in comparisoun
That euer was, of hih or loug degre,
Most disnaturel of condicioun
Bi gret outrages of cursid cruelte,
That euere regned in Roome the cite.
His fadir callid, bookis determyne,
Domycius, his moodir Agripyne.

This Agripyna bi hir subtilite, —
And blynde Fortune beyng fauourable,
That set up tirauntes of froward volunte
(Be ther demeritis thoue thei be nat hable)

590. corages R 3.
595. atueen B.
599. onto] on H. 600. Oon] This Nero H.
607. hir] his H.

1 MS. J. leaf 143 verso.
792
To estat imperial, famous & notable.
What thing mor dredful, who cau vnderstonde,
Than cruel tiraunter with bloodi suerd on honde!

When Nero was twelve
years old and
had learned
his grammar
and the seven
liberal arts, he
was put in the
hands of Seneca,
who kept him
from all vices,
knowing that
his natural in-
clination was
towards evil.

When he was
twenty-one
years of age he
married Octa-
via, daughter
of Claudius
and Messalina.

All this while
Seneca kept
him on the
path of virtue;
and when he
was first
crowned em-
peror he won
the favour of
the Senate.

He wrote very
well in both
prose and
verse, and made
a notable book
of poetry called
Lusce.

The saide Senec made hym to desire
To pursue kunnyng bi dilligent labour;
At entryng in first of his empire,
I meene whan he was crownid emperowr,
Of alle the Senat hadde gret fauour;
And be report, as clerkis of hym write,
In prose and metre he koude riht weel endite.

The Story of the vicious Tyrant Nero

When this Nero of age was twelue yeer
He was ordeyned in especiall,
Afftir he hadde lernid his grameer
And the seuene artis callid liberall,
Vnto a maister in al vertu morall,
Callid moral Senec, which did al his peye
From all vices his youthe to restreyne.

He kepte hym euere, this Senec, as I reede,
Maugre his fatal disposicioun,
Bi a constreynt & a maner dreede
From al outrage and dissolucioun.
Conseyued wel his inclynacion
To be vicious as of his nature,
Which to restreyne he dede his besi cure.

At oon & tuenti wyntir of his age,
Cronicleers rehersen of hym thus:
How he that tyme took in mariage
Octovia, douhtir off Claudius, —
Al this while beyng vertuous,
Whil Senec hadde hym vndir disciplyne, —
His moodir-in-lawe callid Messalyne.

The saidc Senec made hym to desire
To pursue kunnyng bi dilligent labour;
At entryng in first of his empire,
I meene whan he was crownid emperowr,
Of alle the Senat hadde gret fauour;
And be report, as clerkis of hym write,
In prose and metre he koude riht weel endite.

614. twelue] xij B.
The Story of the vicious Tyrant Nero

Exelled in musik & in armonye,
Crownid with laureer for the beste harpour
That was that tyme; & he did edefie
In Roome a paleis, with many a riche tour,
Which in beeldyng coste gret tresour,
The circuit beyng thre thousand pas;
And Transitorie that paleis callid was.

For this cause, as put is in memorie,
The said[e] paleis afterward was brent,
Therfor it was callid Transitorie;—
But aftir that, Nero in his entent
Leet beelde an hous, bi gret auisement,
To recompence the tothir that was old,
And callid it the riche hous of gold.

In al this world[e] was non to it liche, [p. 351]
Wher that euer men did ride or gon,
Tables of iuor fret with perre riche,
Pileres of cristal garnished with many a ston,
Saphirs, rubies & topazion,
Crisolitis & emeraudis greene,
With plate of gold tiled that shon ful sheene.

To bodili lust* and delectacioun
This said[e] Nero set al his desires;
Gardyns, conduitis for recreacioun
He dide ordeyne tendure many yeeris.
With nettis of gold fisshed in his ryueeris,
His garnementis of golde & Ynde stonis,
And neuer he wolde haue hem on but onys.

In his begynnynge, the stori doth devise,
Lord & emperour in Roome the cite,
To senatours he gaf ful gret fraunchise,
Graunted comouns many gret liberte;
But in his most imperial dignite,
Of froward wil lefft al good policie,
And al attonis gaf hym to ribaudie.

670. lust] lustis B.
672. conductes R, J.
674. is misplaced at end of stanza, but correction indicated R.
678. in] in the R.
679. To] he H.
At first virtuous and liberal, he suddenly turned to ribaldry, left the company of old senators, and harped and sang among vagabonds and openly danced with common women at the brothel.

In the course of time he fell into gluttony and incontinence, for one vice leads to another; but idleness was the cause of all.

At Ostia he ordained tents for debauchery, housing cooks and taverners at great expense. Ladies who took part in these revels were not well spoken of afterwards. It is also said that this same Nero violated the priestesses of Vesta, who were vowed to chastity.

One of them, Rubria, being dragged out of the temple and put in a bordel-house in spite of her being a nun.

Men shall never read any writing of mine about his foul and outrageous deeds with Sporus and Ompharus,

Of Greece and Egypt with durers in glours, And among vileyns hymself[e] disporting,* Left the presence of olde senators And among ribaudis he wold harp & synge, Made comedies dishonestli sownyng, At the bordel dide hymself auaunce With comoun women openli to daunce.

Thus be processe, to al vertu contrarie, Be gret excesse he fill in glotonye, And aftir that list no longer tarye, — As every vice to othir doth apple, — Surfet & riot brouht in lecherie; And ground of al, as cheef[e] porteresse, Texile vertu was froward idilnesse.

Aboute the cite callid Hostienice, Beside Tibre & othir fresh ruyers Dide ordeyne bexcessiff expence Tenstis for riot, kookis, tauerneers, And al the niht reuel aboute the feeris. Ladies komen, that wer afforn weel namyde, Bi sуч fals riot wer afterward diffamed. The same Nero be fals abusioun, It is reportid, his* stori who list see, Bi violence from ther religioun, Suich as hadde auowed chastite And wer professid to virgynyte In the temple of Vesta the godesse, — Of froward lust he die hem oppresse.

Amongis which Rubria was oon: Maugre hir wil, she durste [it] nat denye, From the temple bilt of lym & ston Sacrid to Vesta, myn auctour list nat lie, He rente hir out to vse his lecherie; Natwithstandyng she was religious, Made hir tabide at the bordel-hous.

Be my wirtyng men shal neuer reede, The mateer is so foul & outragous To be rehearsed, & the horrible deede Which Nero vsid whilom on Sporus And on another callid Ompharus:

684. Ioglers P. 685. disparting B, dispartyng R.
723. Ompharus] Doriphorus P.
Bothe male childre, as bookis telle can, 724
Them to transfoorme to liknesse of [wo]man.

Somme bookis of hym determyne,
Lik a ribaude horrible & detestable,
He mysusid his moodir Agripyne,
And lik a tiraunt cruel & vengable,—
Which to remembre it is abhominable,—
He made hir wombe be korue upon a day
To seen the place nyne monethes wher he lay.

Of disnaturel hatful cruelte,
To God nor vertu hauyng no reward,
And of the vice of prodigalite
He was accusid, in knithod a coward,
And to al vertu contrarie & froward,—
Of whos woodnesse good heed whan I took,
I was ashamed to sette hym in this book.

He hated alle that wer vertuous
And to hem hadde specialli envie;
His brethre, his wiff, this tiraunt despitous,
He falsi slouh in his malencolie;
His maister Senec, auctours speciefe,
Ay whan he sauh hym, hauyng a maner dreede,
In an hot bath to deth he made hym bleede.

Cristis feith[e] first he gan werreye, 740
Of emperours, in his froward entent;
Petir & Poule in Roome he made deie
Vpon a day; ther legende doth assente.
Half the cite of Roome, I fynde, he brente;
And senatour[e]s wol nih euerychon
This Nero slouh; spared almost neueroon.

To Polifagus, a wood man most sauage,*
Which that fedde hym most with flessh of man,
Nero took men, olde & yong of age,
To fynde hym vitaille in streetis wher he cam.
Cursid at his eende, cursid whan he gan,
When he did offre innocentes blood
To be deoured of hym that ran so wood.

725. woman] man H, R, R 3, H 5, a man J, woman P.
749. in] & H.
752. vol nih] volneth R.
753. neueroon] noon H, R 3, none P.
754. This stanza is transposed with the next in P and MSS. except H.
760. ran] was H.
The Death of Nero the Tyrant

Made his mules be shod with siluer shoone
Of surquedie, whan he shold[e] ride;
The cite brent. Romeyns after soone
Pursued hym upon eueri side;
And from a submarke wher he dide abide,
Tween Salaria & Numentana riht,
Ther stant a path whidir he took his fltlt.
Bi a deep maris as* Nero took his fltlt,
Whan he sauh he myht[e] nat asterte, —
He was [so] pursued bi a Romeyn kniht
To fynde socour he myht[e] nat dyuerte, —
Rooff hymsilff anon [un]to the herte
With a sharp dagger, a cursid eende, loo!
Of the fals tiraunt that callid was Nero.

Lenvoye.¹

OFF this Nero to write[n] a Lenvoye,
Nor of his deedis to make menciuon,
To reede be processe no prince shold haue ioye,
For al conclueth on moordre and on tresoun,
On auoutrye, excesse & poisoun,
Riot, glotonye, lecherie, vengaunce,
Slauhtr[e] of hymsilff[e]; eendid with myschaunce.
Yif that I myhte, I wolde race* his name
Out of this book, that no man sholde reede
His vicious lyf, cheef merour of diffame.
Set hym aside; let no wiht take[n] heede
For to remembre so many a cruell deede,
Sauf onli this, to thynken* in substaunce,
How euery tiraunt eendith with mischaunce.
Of hym I caste to write now* no more,
And what I seie is* seid but in repreeff
Of the vices that he wrouht of yore
Duryng his empire, concludyng for a theeff.
Al tirannye shal eende with myscheeff,
Record on Nero, which for mysgouernaunce,
As ye haue herd[e], eendid with myschaunce.

¹ "In steed off a Lenuoie," R.
[How Eleazerus a Jewe born / for extorcioun and robbery / was brouht in prisoun and there ended.] 1

AFFTIR Nero cam Eleazarus, 796
A Jewe of berthe, a prince of robberie,
An extursioneer cruel & despitous;
For his outrages doon in that partie,
To redresse his hatful tirannya,
A myhti pretour sent fro Roome doun,
Callid Phelix, into that regeoun.

Be force of Phelix take he was & bounde,
Maugre his myht[e], unto Roome sent,
Strongli fetrid with massif cheynis rounde,
Suffred in prisoun many gret torment.
At the laste, this was his iugement,
Ther tabide because he was a theeff;
For euermore eendid in myscheeff.

[How the hede of Galba was smyten of filled full of gold / and offred atte the Sepulcre of Nero.] 2

جي For Bochas next cam Galba doun,
Which in Spayne did many knihtli deede.
Affir the deth rehersed of Neroun
He stode in hope, this Galba, as I reede,
In thempire iustli to succeede,
Parcel for knihtthod, he hath hym so weil born,
And* for gret mariage which he had had beform. 816

I fynde in Bochas rehersed in sentence,
He was disclauirdrid of hatful vices thre;
He was cruel, contrarye to clemence,
Streith in keepyng, geyn liberalite,
Vengable of herte, geyn mercy & pite, —
A thyng nat sittyng onto cheualrie, —
Of custom youe to slouthe & slogardie.

798. extorsioner R, R 3, extorcioner H, H 5, P.
802. 3. Felix R, H, J, R 3, H 5, P.
809. For euermore.] For euer for euermore R.
816. And] As B, H.

1 MS. J. leaf 144 verso. 2 MS. J. leaf 144 verso.
He claimed title to the empire by his adopted son, but not long afterwards his head was smitten off by Otho.

And filled with gold by Patrabolus and offered up to the gods of the lower regions at the sepulchre of Nero.

This said Galba, myn auctour writeth thus, [p. 353]

From his empire vnwarli pullid doun,

Hadd an emny callid Patrabolus,

The hed of Galba took in possessiou, Filde it with golde, made an oblaciouw At the sepulchre of Nero therwithal To alle the goddis & goddessis infernal.

[How Ottho and Vitellius / for glotomy lechery ribaudrie and cruelte / ended in mischeef.] 1

And after that this offryng was ful do,

As ye haue herd[e], to Iohn Bochas than To make his compleynyt in orde cam Piso, 840

Affor surnamyd iustli Licynyan, Sone adoptifF, to telle as I began, Of saide Galba, cleymyn to succeede, Slayn anon aftir bi Ottho, as I reede. 844

Than was themp[i]re partid into thre: Ottho took Roome vnto his partye; And Vitellius to regne in the contre, Ouer the boundis of al Germanye; 848

And Vespasian regned in Surrye. But first this Ottho, surnamyd Siluyus, Cam to compleyne, cruel and despitous.

Of al thempire this same* Siluyus Be slauhtre, rauyne & extorsioun, Bi moordre, deth & deedis outraious With myhti hond took ther possessiou. 856

And ther began a gret deysioun,

829. The name Ottho is spelted variously with c’s and t’s in the MSS.; it is probable however that the c’s are usually meant for t’s (Occho R, R 3, Octho J, Ochcho B, H, Ottho P).
836. sepulture H. 841. lyacyvian H. 845. into] in R.
852. this same] surnamyd B.

1 MS. J. leaf 144 verso.
Which was occasioun of gret sorwe & wo, Atween Vitellius and this seid Ottho.

It is rehearsed, that in Germanye
In sondri placis thei hadde batailes thre,
In the which Ottho with his partie
Venquisshed the feeld & maad his soon to flee.
But thoru Suffris mutabilite,
The fourte tyme, pleynly this the caas,
Maugre his myht discounfited per he was.

Tofor Bedrye, a myhti strong cite
Of Germanye was this disconfiture.
Aftir which of froward cruelte
The said[e] Ottho, seeyng his auenture.
With wo supprised miht[e] nat endure
Of his constreynt thymportable Peyne;
Took a sharp suerd & roof his herte on tweyne.

Vitelliay hauyng the victorye,
With his powere, as maad is mencioun,
Of surquedie & fals[e] veynglorie,
Cam with his host[e] into Roome toun.
But Bochas heer maketh a descriptioun,
Rehersyng shortli his berthe & eek his lyne,
And how that he of blood was Saturnyne.

This to seyne, Saturnyus, kyng of Crete,
Chacid bi Iubiter out of his regioun, —
And Ianus hadde in Itaille take his seete
Vpon a mount callid Ianiculun,
Wher now of Roome is bilt the large toun, —
Ianus rescuyung of liberalite
Whan Saturn fledde, into his cite.

Toforn the komyng of Saturn, this no faille,
Rud & boistous, & bestial of resoun
Was al the peple abidyng in Itaille;
Lond was non sowe nor turnid up-so-doun,
Nor marchaudise vsid in no toun
Til Saturn tauhte the maner of lyuyng,
Of tilthe & labour to Ianus that was kyng.

869. The] This R.
886. Saturnus P.
The Ancestry of Vitellius

Afforn whoes comynge, tofor as I you told,
Craft was non vsid be no creature,
Nor no beeldlyng of housis newe [n]or old,
But lyued as beestis the[r] lyflode to recure,
Lik as thei wern Ilernid of Nature.
Thei koude tho daies make no cloth nor shape,
Off* frosti wedris the greuous cold tescape.
Thei wer nat besi be costful apparaile
Of sondry metis and confeccionys,
Off dyuers drynkes & manyfold vitaille
To be corious to ther refeccionys.
Marketis wer none in cites nor in touns;
No man with othir bouhte nouther solde
Til Saturn cam & them the maner tolde.

But after
Saturn had
taught them
how to be
civilized, these
simple folk
worshipped
him as the
mightiest of
their gods.

Latinus was a
descendant of
Saturn and so
was Lavinia,
his daughter,
ancestress of
Vitellius.

The first
knight of the
lineage was
Vitellius Pub-
lius; and his
descendant,
Vitellius Lucius,
was father of
the emperor.

And when he hadde tauhte them be maneere
And set an orde of ther gouernauce,
The symple peele, as bookys doth vs lere,
Lich as to God dide ther attendauce,
With certeyyn rih tes to doon her obersuaunce,
Worseped hym, & aftir dide hym calle
Saturn, most myhti of ther goddis all.

[Aftyr this Saturne was made a pe-degre,
To sett an orde conveyed from his lyne
Descendying douw, the maneere who list see,
To oon Latynus and so foorth to Lavyne,
Which was his douhtir, as poetis determyne.
Thus bi discent from* Saturne and Funus,
Born off ther bloode cam Vitellius,]

The firste kniht bor[e]n of that lynage.  [p. 354]
Because he was manli & riht famous,
Hadde in armys prowesse & gret corage,
He callid was Vitill[i]us Publius;
And of hym cam Vitell[i]us Lucius,
Fadir to hym, myn auctour doth expresse,
Of whom that I haue gunne this processe.
DYUERS stories remembre & pleyndi tell, Dvrnyng his youthe & stood at liberte, How his forseid, that callid was Vitell, Was the most vicious that owher myhte be, Youe to ribaudie & al dishoneste, Because of which chaungid was his name, Callid Spyntoire, a name of gret diffame.

I fynde that he was an hazardour, In al his werkis passyng riotous, For his surfetis gret with the emperour That whilom was callid Claudius. And for his deedis & maneeres outraious, For his gret wast and prodigalite Of gret dispence he fill in pouerte. Among his riotis [&] surfetis mo than oon Which he dide in contres heer & ther, I fynde that he for neede solde a ston Which his mooder bar whilom* at hir ere. For be old tyme was vsid, who list lere, Women that wern that tyme of hih degr<

Bar at ther eris stonis & perre. And bi the selyng of that riche ston, For which that he rescyued gret tresour, Be sotil werkyng & sleithis mo than oon He gat hym freendis & was maad emperour. And therwithal he dide eek his labour To rescyue another dignite, To be chief bishopp in* Roome the cite. And in short tyne this Vitellius Of thempire took on hym al thestat, The suerd resseyued of Cesar Iulius, Vsed a garmenent that was purpurat, Dempete of hymsilff he was most fortunat, Natwithstonding mor boldli ſat tyme atte leste* Of Aliensois holden was the feeste.

It is said that this Vitell was one of the most vicious youths that ever lived, given to all dishonesty and called Spintor, an infamous name.

He was a gambler and a prodigal, and fell into poverty because of his excesses.

Finally he sold a stone his mother had worn at her ear (for in olden times women of high station wore jewelry in their ears), and through the proceeds and his cunning he got himself friends and was made emperor. He also wanted to be chief bishop.

He received the sword of Julius Caesar, wore purple, and considered himself most fortunate.

941. and] of H.
946. his] is R — whilom bar B, bare sometyme H, bar some tym R 3.
956. in] of B.
958. al] om. R.
962. mor boldli ſat tyme atte leste] ſat tyme mor boldli at the leste B — ſat tyme] om. H.
The feast of Aliençois was a solemnite
Among[es] Romeyns kept be daies olde,
In Frensh myn auctour recordeth thus, parde,—
And in that tyme of custum no man sholde,
Nor be statut bounde was nor holde
To do no maner occupacioun
That touched vertu or religioun.

Duryng this feeste he sholde haue his axyng,
Bi a custum vsid in that cite.
And Vitellius, as emperour & kyng,
Axed that tyme another dignite,
To be cheef bishop & haue auctorite
Of that estat, with poweer hool & pleyyn;
No man so hardi to replie ther ageyn.

From al vertu Vitelli dide varye,
Set at nouht al wisdom & science,
Thouhte onto hym was nat necessarie
Kunnyng, knithod, manhod nor prouidence;
Gaf hym onli to slouhte & neeligence,
To glotonye, folwying his desir[es],
Wach al niht with drynk & reresoper[es].

Beyng a bishop of ther paynym lawe,
Lik Romeyn rihtis doyng her seruise
Tofor the goddes; he wolde hymself withdrowe
And cast aside censer and sacrefise
And calle a boy in ful vngoodli wise,
A kichen boy, tofor the hih aulteer,
And hym comaundid to brynge hym his dyneer!

Beyng arrayed in his pontificall,
For the maner void of deuocioun,
Lik a ribaude, or lik a wood menstral
Euer dronclew, & out of al sesoun,
Gorge upon gorshe, this excessif glotoun,
Moste idropik, drank ofte ageyn[es] lust:
The mor he drank the mor he was a-thrust.

970. vertu or] vnvo R, onto J.
978. Vitell J, P.
979. at nouht] anouht R.
994. mynstrall H, R.
996. upon] vp R.
This was a bishop sacred for* Sathan,  
And an emperour crownid with myschauunce:  
Mor lik in poorte a beeste than a man.  
Vsed al his poweer in slauhtr & in vengauence;  
To sheede blood was set al his plesaunce,  
Takyng non heed nouther of wrong nor riht;  
And thus he wex hastful to eueri wiht.

His soudiours forsook hym nih echon, [p. 355]  
In al parties bi hym wher thei wer sent;  
Thoruh al the contres of Septemptrion  
And in al Surrye toward thorient,  
Of oon accord & alle of oon assent  
Echon forsook hym; with hym bood* nat a man,  
And becam seruauntes to Vespasian.

Vitellius sauh it wolde be non othir,  
And he for-feeble [of] dronknesse & outrage, —  
And sauh the poweer gan faillen of his brothir,  
Whan he had sett* and signed the viage  
Ageyn Vespasian to holden his passage:  
But al for nouht, bakward wente his partie,  
Stood disespeired of euery remedie.

Thus Vitellius vnhappy to the werris,  
Lik a fordrone vnhappy grete glotoun,*  
Whos booste afforn[e] rauht up to the sterris,  
Now al his pride in myscheef is come doun,  
Fayn for taccorde to this convencioun:  
For litil tresour, which men sholde hym assigne,  
To Vespasian thempire to resigne.

This was his promys, but he heeld it nouht:  
What he saide, his woord was neuer stable;  
Certeyn flatereres chaungid hadde his thouht,  
And certeyn comouns, that euer be chaungable,  
Gaff hym counsail, saide hymsilf was hable  
To gouerne thestat imperial,  
And non so hable for to reknen al.

999. for] of B.  
1011. boode nat witb hym H — abood B.  
1019. dispeired R.  
1021. lik afforn dronke vnhappi stronge glotoun B.  
1024. this] his R.  
1027. his] my H.  
1030. that] be H.
First of Almayne he sent out soudiours,  
And of presumcioun a newe werre he gan.  
Thouhte that he was among othir werreyours  
Hable to* shte ageyn Vespasian.  
And of auenture it behif so than,  
In thes werris Vespasyanis brothir*  
I-slay[e]n was; it wolde be non othir.  
This froward man callid Vitellius,  
Vngracious euere founde in his entente,  
Smet of the hed of seide Fabius,  
Brothir of Vespasian, & it to Roome sente,  
And aftir that the Capitoile [he] brente.  
But suyng on, withynne a litil space  
Among Romeyns he loste bothe hap & grace.  
Of his riot what sholde I mor entrete? —  
For except riot of hym nothyng I reede.  
His cook, his pastleer, folk that wer most meete  
To serue his lust & appetites to feede,  
Forsook hym nat, but went with hym in deede  
Toward Champayne riht as any lyne  
Vp to an hill[e] callid Auyntyne.  
Stondyng in hope, but that was but in veyn,  
Of Vespasian the fauour to recure,  
Euene to Roome retournid is ageyn,  
The paleis entrid; & ther hymsilff tassure,  
Hauyng with hym non othir creature,  
The gatis shet, which was to hym gret shame;  
Take at the laste, forsook his owne name.  
Halff naked he was & haluendel Iclad,  
Al allone lik as he was founde.  
So in the cite affor the peeple lad;  
Bothe his hondis behynde his bak wer bounde  
With myhti cheynys & with ropis rounde.  
Lik a wood man of look & of visage,  
The peeple to hym hauyng this langage:

1035. he] om. H.  
1036. werreyours] Soudiours H.  
1037. to] for to B, R, P, H 5, R 3, H.  
1039, 40. The second halves of these lines are transposed B.  
1043. the said R.  
1044. of] ynto R.  
1051. lustis H.
The shameful End of Vitellius

"O thou olde lecherous soul glotoun,  
A verray coward, to al vertu contrarie,  
Cruel, vengable of thi condicioun,  
To eueri goodman cruel adversarye,  
To all cursid benigne & debonaire,  
Roote of al surfetis, hauyng ay delit  
To sewe & folwe thi lecherous appetit!"

With such rebukis & castyng of ordure,  
With donge & clay was blottid his visage.  
In the presence of many a creature,  
With cordes drawen he was be gret outrage  
Vnto a place callid in ther langage,  
Ther most cheeff rakkes or galwes of le toun,  
Wher is of custum doon execucioun.

Summe remembre he slay[e]n was in haste,  
With sharp[e] suerdis dismembred on pe ground,  
His careyn aftir into Tibre cast  
With a large hook of iren, sharp & round,—  
No mor reuerencid than was a stynkyng hound.  
Remembryste heer myn auctowr seith also  
Of this Vitellius, Galba & Ottho,

Affermyng thus, as for ther partie,  
Thei be namyd among the emperours,  
For a tyme thestat did occupie;  
And first this Galba, be record of auctours,  
Deide at mysheef, void of al socours,  
Eihte monethes regned as lord & sire,  
And aftir that cast out of his empire.  
The thridde moneth, as maad is mencioun,  
Ottho deide, proude & ambigious.  
And, as I fynde, the domynaciouw  
Laste eihte monethes of Vitellius.  
And for thei wern proud ribaudes* lecherous,  
Cruel, vengable, born of cursid lyne,  
In wrechchidnesse echon thei dide fyne.

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1074. ay] evir H.  
1078. a] om. R, H.  
1087. a] om. H.  
1089. Galba] of Galba R.  
Bochas dampnyth þe Vice of Glotonye. 1

Heer John Bochas seyng the gret offense
Of this frownd companye,
Took his penne of enteer dilligence,
And in his studie gan hymself applie
To dampne the vice of hatful glotonye,
Fro which[e] synne, record[e] of Adam,
Al our myscheeuys & sorowis cam.

Be the outraige of disobeissauce,
Our said[e] fadir beyng in paradis,
Tweyn hym and vertu ther roos a gret distaunce,
Cleeerli conceyued, he that was so wis,
Aboue creatures be resoun bar the pris,
Til [he] of foli wrongli gaff assent
To be gouernid bi a fals serpent.

His innat vertues did hym anon forsake
For his assentyng, & did in hast retourne
Ageyn to heuene, whan the infernal snake
In sted of vertu did with man soiourne.
For which we han gret mateer for to mourne,
Sith that we been diffouremyd in certeyn,
Be vicious lyuyng of vertu maad bareyn.

And thus cam in the domynacioun
Of vices alle, & heeld a gret bataile,
The retenv sent from thyfernal dounge,
Vs woful wrecchis in erthe for tassaille,
Streichchyng ther poweer, & prouldi gan pruaille
Thoruh al the world[e] & pсосessiou took,
For our demerites whan vertues vs forsook.

Thes said[e] vertues comprised in the noumbre
Of foure reknd: Prudence, Attemperaunce,
Of* vicious lyff tadawed vs fro the slombre,
Rihtwisnesse taue holde the ballaunce,
And Fortitudo of ther alliaunce;
Whan thei forsake mankynde to gourene,
Than of al vertu was clipsed the lanterne.

1 The heading is as follows in MS. J. leaf 146 recto: “Here Bochas ageyne Glotonye compleyneth seing as it folowith.”
Thus thorugh dirknesse vices wer made bold,
The multitude almost innumerable.
Amonges all reknid of newe or old,
Ther be foure perilous & reprouvable:
Slouthe, Lecherye, & most abhominable,
Fals Auarice bi a gredi desir,
With Glotonye, chief kyndeler of ther fyr.

Nature in soth with litil is content;
And as myn auctowr abidith heer a while,
And to remembre was sumwhat dilligent
To write, whan Saturn regned in be ile 
Callid Crete, the prophetesse Cibile,
In hir tyme, bi gret auctorite,
The world deuyded prudentli in thre.

[A Chapitle descriuyng the golden worlde, that is 
to say whan attemperaunce had hooly the 
gouernaunce.] ¹

The olde world, whan Saturn was first kyng, 
Regnyng in Crete in his roial estat, 
Noe, Abraham be vertuous lyuyng
Caused erthli folk to be most fortunat,
The world tho daies callid Aureat; 
For sobirnesse and attemperaunce
Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.

Ther was that tyme no wrong nor violence, 
Envie exiled from eueri creature, 
Dissolucioun & dronken insolence, 
Ribaudie & al swich foul* ordure, 
Froward surfetis, contrarye to nature, 
Ibanysshid wern, because attemperaunce
Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.

Youthe was bridled vndir disciplyne, 
Vertuous studie floured in myddil age, 
Dreed heeld the yerde of norture* & doctrine,
Riot restreyned from surquedous outrage, 
Hatful detraccioun repressid his langage,

¹ MS. J. leaf 146 verso. *There is no initial in B.
Kouth was charite, because attemperaunce
Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.

Fortitudo stood tho in his myht, Diffendid widwes & cherisshed chastite, [Knythod in prowesse gaff out so cleer a liht,]
Girt with his suerd of trouthe & equyte, Heeld up the cherch in spiritual dignite, Punshed heretics, because attemperaunce Had in that world hooli the gouernaunce.

Rihtwisnesse chastised al robbours Be egal ballaunce of execusioun, Fraude, fals meede put bakward fro iorours, Trewe promys holde made no dilacioun, Forsuerying shamyd, durste entre in no toun, Nor lesyngmongers, because attemperaunce Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.

That golden world coude loue God & dreede, Alle the seuene deeds of mercy for to vse; The riche was redi to do almesseede:
Who asked herborwe, men dide hym nat refuse. No man of malis wolde othir tho accuse, Diffame his neibbour, because attemperaunce Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.

The trewe marchaunt be mesour bouhte & solde, Deceit was non in the artificeer,
Makyng no balkis, the plouh was treuli holde, Abak stood idilnesse ferr from* laboreer, Discrecioun marchall at dyneer &* sopeer, Content with mesour, because attemperaunce Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.

Of wast in clothynge was that tyme non excesse, Men myhte the lord from his soget knowe, A difference maad tween pouert & richesse,
Tween a princesse & othir statis lowe, Of hornyd beestis no boost was than Iblowe, Nor countirfet feynyng, because attemperaunce Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.

— a] om. R.
1188. That] The H.
1198. from] from the B, H. 1199. &] & at B.
1201.] Was set asyde and lost hir gouernaunce R.
1206. was then no boste R.
This goldene world long while did endure, 
Was non allay in that metal scene,
Til Saturn cesid, be record of scripture;
Iubiter regned, put out his fadir cleene,
Chaunged Obrison into siluer sheene,
Al up-so-doun, because attemperance
Was set aside and lost hir gouernaunce.

Of Martis myneral the metal is so strong,
Inflexible and nat malliable,
Be sturdynesse to do the peele wrong
With rigerous suerd, fureous & vengable,
The mercyful gold [of] Phebus nat plicable
To haue compassion, because attemp[e]raunce
Was set aside & lost hir gouernaunce.

Leed, of philisophres, is callid gold leprous,
Tyn of Iubiter, crasshyng & dul of sour,
Fals and fugitif is mercurivs, —
The moone is mutable of hir condiciou[n].
The goldene world is turnid up-so-doun
In ech estat, sith[en] attemperance
Was set aside and lost hir gouernaunce.

Be Cibilis exposicioun,
Tak of this metal the moralite:
The goldene world was governd be resoun,
The world of iren was furious cruelte;
The moone is mutable, ful of duplicite,
Lik to this world, because attemp[e]raunce
Is* set aside and hath no* gouernaunce.

Venus, of loueres emperesse & queene,
Of viscious lustis lady and maystresse,
Hir metal coper, that wil ternyssh grene,
A chaungable colour, contrarye to sadnesse,
A notabil figur of worldli brotilnesse,
Lik gery Venus, because attemp[e]raunce
Was set aside & lost hir gouernaunce.

1222. hir] his H, R 3.
1223. Leed] Bed H.
1224. craisshyng R, J.
1227. This] This R. 1228. sith H, R.
1236. Is] Was B — hath no] lost hir B.
1243. hir] his H.
The Temperance of John the Baptist

Myn auctour Bochas gan pitoulsy compleyne 1244
On the disordynat comorous glotonye
Of Vitellius & his felawes tweyne,
Alle thre dffou лид with horrible lecherye,
Diffamed he sclaudre, noised for ther ribaudie,* 1248
Contrarious enmyes echon tattemperaunce,
Banshed fro ther court[es], myhte haue no gouern-
aunce.

Gluttony and
drunkenness
cause fevers,
podagra,
gout
and horrible
gangrenous
tores.

Prudence was
banished from
their court;
soberness,
truth and
righteousness
stood aside.

John the Bap-
tist lived in
the desert
and ate mel
Sylvester
and locusts.
His cook was
temperance.

His clothes
were woven of
camel’s hair,
and he lived
on honey-
suckles and
drank spring
water.

Of glotonie & riotous excesse,
Wach & reuel & drynkyng al the niht 1252
Kometh vnkouп feuere & many gret accesse,
Membres potagre mak[th] men thei go nat riht,
Goutes, mormalles horrible to the siht,
Many infirmytes, because atte\temperaunce
Was nat of counsail toward ther gou\rnaunce.

Out of ther court ban[y]shed was prudence,
Fortitudo had non interesse
Geyn vicious lyuyng to make resistance,
Cried woluis hed was vertexuous sobirnesse;
Trouthe durst nat medle, abak stood rihtwisnesse,
Put out of houshold was atte\temperaunce,
With these thre emperowrs koude haue no gouernaunce.

If Sone of the prophete callid Zacharie,
The patriark, the holi man Seynt Iohn,
Victorious champioun of gredi glotonye,
Lyued in desert, deyntes hadde he non,
Et mel siluestre, lay on the colde ston,
Locustas gadred; his cook was temp[e]raunce
And of his houshold had al the gouernaunce.

Of kamel heris was wouen his clothyng,
Record the Gospell that kan the trouthe tell,
Honysokeles his moderat feedyng,
Mong wilde beestis whan he dide duell;
To staunce his thrust drank watir of je well,
This blissid Baptist, roote of atte\tempraunce,
Set for cheeff merour of al good gouernaunce.

1245. comorous H.
1248. be] with H—for ther ribaudie] be her lecherye B—
for ther] with H.
1254. podagre R, R 3, P. 1261. Cryed woluyssh was H 5.
1264. Emperour H. 1266. holij] manly H.
1269. Et mel siluestre] Did eat wild honey P.
1270. Locustes P. 1275. Mong] Among H.
Of his diete catoure was scarsete,
His costful foode was vertuous abstetence,
Rootis of desert his delicat plente,
His riche pymetis, [his] ipocras of dispense
Heeng nat in costretis nor botelis in þe spence, —
Nat excessiff, because attemperaunce
Hadde of his houshold hooli þe gouernaunce.

Thus Baptist Iohn bi his moderat foode
The cheef tryumphe of abstynence hath begunne,
This patriarch[el] rekned oon the goode,
Content with litil, al suffisaunce hath wonne,
As Diogenes in his litil tonne
Heeld hym appaied, because attemperaunce
Hadde of his houshold al the gouernaunce.

His tonne to hym was receit & houshold;
And yif I sholde booste of his celeer,
Ther wer no cuppis of siluer nor of gold;
His costful vyncage cam fro the ryueer:
Weel tymed mesour was for his mouth botleer,
And his tastour was attemperaunce,
Which of his houshold had al þe gouernaunce.

His conquest was mor souerayn of degre
Than Alisaundris, for al his hih renoun;
For he conquered his sensualite,
Made hym soget & seruaunt to resoun,
Daunted of prudence ech foreyn passioun,
His clerk of kechene callid attempraunce,
Which of his diete had al þe gouernaunce.

Of superfluite, of slouthe & of sleepe
This Diogenes stood euer among in dreede;
Of worldli fauour he took no maner keepe;
Strauh was his liteer, a symple russet weede:
Turnid his tonne ageyn the wynd in deede,
Tween hot and cold[e], that attemperaunce
In somer & wyntir had hool the gouernaunce.
Noble Princes, The Golden World is turned to lead. Pray God to send down his grace, that temperance may govern your households.

Chiefly for love, but also for fear, attend diligently to his precepts; for those who of old ruled by temperance prospered.

While temperance and her three sisters held sway, Rome defied its enemies.

Noble Princes, of prudence takith heed This litil chapitle brecfli to comprehende: The goldene world is turnid into led; Praieth to God his grace down to sende Of his hih mercy, that it may soone amende, And that this princesse callid attemperaunce May of your householdis han the gouernaunce.

Cheefli for loue, parcel eek for dreed, In your estat whan ye be most shynende, For your encres & your most gracious speed, To his presepts doth dilligentli attende, For olde emperour[e]s reedeth the legende: Whil thei wer reuled be attemperaunce In long prosperite stood ther gouernaunce.

Of worldli kyngdames Roome is callid hed, Whos roial boundis ferthest out extende In marcial actis, bothe in lengthe & breed, Rem Publicam bi prowesse to diffende, No foreyn enmy hardi to offende Ther hih noblesse, whil attemp[e]raunce With hir thre sustren hadde* ther gouernaunce.

[How the kynrede of Iacob was destroied / Crist born and deied / Jerusalem destroied, & xif: M slayn bi suerde, hunger, fire & pestilence.] 1

The stoori eendid of Vitellyus, Of his too feeris Galba & Ottho, How his careyn horrible & hidous, Drownid in Tibre, was possid to & fro. Afftir the[r] stori [a]complished was & do, Cam gret noumbr to Bochas, as I reede, Echon descendid of Iacobis hih kynrede.

In tokne of compleynt & of heuynesse, Lik folk dismaiad, clad in moornyng weede, For the constreynt of ther wredchidnesse.

1 MS. J. leaf 147 verso.
Bespreynt with teres, quakyng in her dreede,
Cunnyng no recour in so streit a neede,
Resembylyng folk be toknis ful mortall
That wer toward sum* feeste funerall. 1348

Ther ougli cheeris pitous to beholde,
As thei gan aprochen the presence
Of John Bochas to telle ther sorwes olde,
Ther woundis bleedyng, be marcial violence, 1352
Oppressid with hunger, thrust, sodeyn pestilence,
Be foreyn suerd ther lyuys manacyng,
Vpon the deth as beestis abidyng,
That wer enclosed narwe in a folde, 1356
Disesperid socour to recure,
To passe ther boundis for dred thei wer nat bold,
Withynne enfamyne[d], bareyn of al pasture; —
This woful stori remembred in* scripture, 1360
How that of Iacob the generacioun
Was vengabli brought to dest[rucciou«.
This patriarch callid whilom Israel,
Most rennommed among al naciouns 1364
And most famous, the Bible can wel tell,
Ther lyne out reknid thourhout al regionus,
Be goddis beheste took ther pocessiouns,
Maugre Egipeciens & Pharaohes pride,
Whan duk Moises be God was maad her guide.

With dreye feet thei passed the Rede Se,
Conueyed be Moises & also, be Aaron,
Ther lawe was write, the Bible who list see,
Vpon Syna in tables of hard ston.
And thoruh desert as thei dide gon,
With angeliis mete callid manna, as I reede,
Fourti wyntir ther he did hem feede. 1376

Afftir Moises, lad be Iosue
Into the lond[e] of promyssioun,
The tuelue lynages of Iacob ther, parde,
He leet make a distribuicioun, 1380
And to ech lyne he gaff his porcioun,
Bi promys maad afforn to Habraham,
To Isaaak, Iacob, whan thei thidir cam.

Their ugly faces were pitous to look upon of their wounds bleeding; oppressed with hunger, thirst, pestilence and the sword of foreigners,

They were once the most renowned of nations, as the Bible can tell; and in spite of the pride of Pharaoh,

They crossed the Red Sea dry shod, and received the law at Sinai, written on tablets of hard stone.

They lived for 40 years on angel's food; and after Moses' death Joshua led them into the Promised Land.

1348.] Toward that wer sum feeste funerall R — sum] the B.
1360. in] be B.
1367. pocessioun H. 1382. Abraham H, R, J.


Ruled by mighty dukes and judges, they prospered; and at last, when in their pride they wanted a king, Saul was chosen.

Finally David became king, and of his line Jesus was born, who became incarnate for our salvation and suffered martyrdom under Herod.

This blessed Lord was born at the end of December in Bethlehem, and shewn to three kings by a starbeam; and the same Jesus was afterwards condemned by Pilate to die on Calvary. Thus the Jews were unkind to him; and for that they were nearly all destroyed.

Bi patriarches &[.] prophetis that wer sad, Maugte ther ennymes & their mortal soon, Be mihti dukes & ictures thei wer lad, Gat al the regionus wher thei dide gon, Til at the laste, of pride thei echon Lik othir naciosus wolden haue a kyng. Saul was chose; God grauntid her askyng. Thus be patriarches & be ther allies, From Abraham the gen[e]alogie, Tolde be prophetis & be ther prophesies, Conueied to Dauid, which in his regalie Heeld of Iewes al hool the monarchie, Of whos kynrecde bi processe, thus it stood, Was Crist Iesu born of that roial blood. Sent from his fader, as prophetis* determyne, Took flessh & blood for our sauacioun, Be the HooI Goost born of a peur virgyne, Hadde among Iewes gret tribulacioun, Vndir Herodes suffrid passioun, And as the Gospel treuli doth descryue, The thridde day [he] roos fro deth to luye. This blissid Lord, this Lord of most vertu, Eende of Decembre born [sothly] in Bethlem, And be the aungel namyd was Iesu, Shewed to thre kynges bi a sterre bem,— This same Ihesus in Iherusalem Bi conspiracioun of Iewes thorth envie, Be Pilat dempt to die on Caluarie. Thus onto Ihesu Iewes wer vnkynde, For which thei wern destroied nih echon. Crist prophecied, the Gospel maketh mynde, How of ther cite ther shold nat leue a ston Vpon another; for ther mortal soon Shold hem besiege, he told hem so certeyn, And make Iherusalem with the soil al pleyn. With weepyng eyen Crist told hem so beforne* [p. 360] Of ther ruyne and destruccioun; Synne was cause sothli that thei wer lorn: For thei nat* knew, to ther confusion,
The Jews divided amongst themselves

The Jews divided amongst themselves, and there were so many murders that no man dared abide in the city.

The Romans sent down Vespasian to restore order.

And to chastise tho moordreris & robbours, Brente ther contre as he rood up & doun, So contynued with his soudiours Til onto tyme the contres enviroun Of Iherusalem entred be the toun With ther oblaciouns in many sondri wise, As Pask requered, to do ther sacrefise.

Jerusalem was then called the princess of realms, rich in treasure, double walled, and almost impregnable.

The Romans were willing to fight hard to win the city, which was divided against itself.

Among Romeyns was many a manli man Willyng echon of oon affeccioun, Thoruh the knith tod of Vesperian, Echon to laboure to the destruccioun Of Iherusalem; for gret dyuysioun Among hem-silff was gunne in the cite Bi certeyn capteyns wer in noumbre thre.
The tyrants
Simon, John and Eleazar
were enemies; and there was
war both without and within.

Vespasian, John and Eleazarus,
Horrible tirauntes oppressyng þe poraille,
Of gouernaunce froward and outraious,
Falsli deuided ech othir dide assaille,
Among hem-silf had many gret* bataille:
Werre withoute & werre was withynne;
Thus of vengaunce myscheef dide gynne.

Vespasian tried
Vespasian nat heyng rek[c]les,
For his partie lik a prudent kniht
Be notable menys excityd hem to pes;
But al for nouht; blente ther owne siht;
To-cheese the beste thei koude nat seen ariht.
And in this while, this noble werreyour
Vespasian was chosen emperour.

he appointed
Bi Alisandre to Roome he went ageyn,*
Resceyued ther thymperial dignite.

Jerusalem was besieged
Jerusalem was
Starved.

and starved.

One woman is
stopped her
famyned hem for lakkyng of victaille.

said to have
rasted her
child for lack of victuals,
which was too horrible a deed!

Ther myhty wallis with gunnes wer cast doun,
Too stronge tou[r]e[s] take of ther cite,
Resistence gan faillen in the toun,
Thei stood of hunger in swich perplexite.
Titus of knithod and maganymyte,
Thorughout the tour callid Antonyan
Is entrid in lik a knihtli man.

1464. ech] echon H.
1465. gret] strong B.
1469. prudent] manly H.
1472. seen] chese H.
1473. noble] notable H.
1475. went ageyn] was sent B. 1483. lak H.
1485. vitaillis R.
The people lay dead for hunger in the streets: their story can be read in Josephus.

The temple, which had stood for 1200 years, was burnt together with its rich gates covered with plates of gold, and its silver images.

Jews were slain by the sword, starvation, fire, and pestilence; and the stink of corpses caused many more deaths.

Titus commanded the survivors to be sold to the Saracens at thirty for a penny, as Jesus had once been sold by Judas for thirty pence.

An old priest shewed Titus the treasures of the temple in token of its departed glory;
That ther tresour shold be weel be scene
Of the temple & shewed to Titus
In tokne it was whilom so glorious.

To shewe eek ther he dide his besi cure,
Silk synamome, franc-ensens withal,
For sacrifce the purpurat vesture,
With Thymyame, the riche pectoral,
Which ordeyned wern in especial
For the solempne place of placis all,
Sancta sanctorum, & so men dide it call.

Of the cite a prince callid John
To Titus cam & shewed his presence,
Pale for hunger; ther cam also Symon,
Brouht be a duk that namyd was Terence,
Clad in purpil, brouht be violence,
Resceyued of Titus whan this noble toun,
Castellis, tours & wallis wer smet don.

Into a castell callid Mazadan
Eleazarus hadde take his fliht.
Besegid of Scilla or he the castel wan,
This Eleazar lik a furious kniht
Withynne the castell the silue same niht
Sterid eueri man, fadir, child & brothir,
With sharp[e] suerdis ech man to slen othir.

Thus was this* cite, most statli of beeldyng,
That whilom was of this world cheef toun,
Wher Melchisedek regned, preest & kyng,
Be daies olde, as maad is menciouyn,
Restorid be Davyd, bilt newe of Salamoun,
Princesse of prouynes, was nowher* such another; 1564
Now is it* abiect and refus of al othir.

Vnto the Jewes Crist Jesus gaf respiht,
Full thretti yeer[e] or he took vengaunce,
In tokne the Lord hath ioise & gret delite,
Whan that synueres dispose hem to penauce
Be contricioyn and herti repentauence.
This blissid Lord, this Lord most merciable
Lengest abideth or he list be vengeable.

1536. 80] om. R.  1540. the] of H.
1544. R misplaces here: "Which ordeyned wer in especiall."
1551. Castell R.
1559. this] the B. 1562, 63 are transposed in H.
1564. nowher] neuer B.
1565. is it] it is B — it] om. R.  1571. 2nd Lord] kyng R.
He was to them so gracious & benigne,
Bood that thei sholde to hym convuerte soone,
Shewed onto hem many an vnkouth signe:
Duryng tuelue daies eclipsed was the moone; 1576
The peeple astoned, knew nat what was to doone,
But indurat in ther froward entent,
Lik folk abasshed wist nat what it mente.

Affor the siege, or Titus gan the werre, 1580
Ouer the cite, wherof thei wex afferd,
Ther appeered a comeete & a sterre.
The sterre was shape lich a large suerd;
Touchyng the comeete, ther was neu^r herd 1584
Of swich another, so fyri, briht and cleer,
Which endured the space of al a yeer.

Ther festyual day halwid in April, [p. 362]
Ther preestis besi to make oblacioun,
So gret a liht the temple dide fill,
That al the peeple stondywg enviroun
Thouhte it so briht in ther inspeccioun,
Passyng the sunwe, as it dide seeme;
But what it mente no man koude deeme.

As the preestis dide ther besi cure
To ofre a calff, anon or thei took heede,
The same calff — a thyng ageyn nature —
Brouht foorth a lamb, the same tyme I reede;
An ougli tokne, which put* hem in gret dreede,
A contrarie* pronosticacioun,
Shewed onto them of ther subuersioun, 1600

With othir toknis froward & contrarye
The* same tyme wer shewed euer among;
The brasen dores of the inward seyntuarye,
With ieren barres shet, that wer most strong,
Brood of entaille, round and wonder long,
That myht nat meue with thretti mennys miht,
Opned by hymsilff twies on o niht.

and although he was gracious to them and shewed them strange signs of what was to come, the people remained obdurate.

Before the siege a fiery comet appeared over the city, which was shaped like a large sword;

and on their festival day in April a light shone brighter than the sun in the temple.

As the priests offered up a calf it brought forth a lamb, which was an evil omen.

There were other froward signs: the heavy brazen doors of the sanctuary opened of themselves thrice on one night.
Tokens of the Fall of Jerusalem

Chariots were seen in the air and men-at-arms with gleaming swords and shining armour, who made a feast to assault the city;

... ther wer seyn also charis in the hair, 1608
Men of armes with brijht suerdes cleere, 1608
Of plate and maile [ther] armure was so fair, 1612
Brijht as Phebus wher thei dide appeere.

And as the stori also doth vs lere,
With ther sheltroun & ther apparaill,
A profvre mad Iherusailem for tassaill.

and one night the priests heard a dreadfull sound in the temple, which ended in the awful words, "Let each of us arise and go hence."

To the Iewes it dide signifie
A pronostik of ther destruccioun.

Preestis to the temple as thei dide hem hie
Vpon a nhit to doon oblacioniun,
Amyd the temple was herd a dreadfull soun;
Of which[e] noise this was the feerful eende:
"Rys up echon, & let vs hen[ne]s weende."

Four years before the siege one Ananias, the dull son of a peasant, ran through the city in a frenzy, shouting,

And ful foure year tofor the siege gan
Oon Ananyas, yong & tendre of age,
Of his berthe sone of a rud[e] man,
Be disposicioun dul of his corage,
Lich as he hadde fallen in a rage
Ran in the cite bamaner frenesie,
Spared nat with open mouth to crie.

"A voice out of the east, the south, the north, the west,
a voice from the four winds cries out against Jerusalem,

against the temple, against the people, husbands and wives: woe to Jerusalem with a treble woe!"

Vois geyn* the temple, ageyn the peele also, 1636
Vois ageyn husbandis, vois ageyn her wyues: 1636
Wo to Iherusailem with a treble wo!
Of hunger, thirst & leesyng of her lyues, —
Of suerd & fyr, and many sodeyn stryes!"

This was the wrecchid lamentacioun
Which Anany cried thorouhout the toun.

1608. seyn] slayn R.
1624. f aute] fro the R — blowe] blew R.
1635. geyn] ageyn B. 1636. geyn] ageyn B.
1637. 2nd ageyn] geyn R. 1638. 1st Wo] Who R.
1642. thorouh] thoruh H, R, R 3, thurh J, H 5, through P.
Bete he was for his* affray ful ofte,  
Whippid, scoorgid eendlong & uprhiht,  
Al-wer-it so he felte [it] ful vnsofte,  
Was bi betyng maad feynt & feele of myht,  
He stynnte nat to crie so day & niht,  
A pronostik shewyng to the cite,  
How that riht soone it sholde destroied be.

Be rehersaile also of Carnotence,  
With that cite for synne it stood so tho,  
That yif Romeyns be marcial violence  
Hadde nat komen & doon hem al this wo,  
The erthe sholde han opnid & ondo,  
Deoured the peele, void of al refuge,  
Or drowned the toun be sum sodeyn deluge.

Breefli to passe, this vengauwce most terrible  
Doon upon Iewes for ther transgressiouw,  
For ther demerites the punshyng most horrible,  
Of Iherusalem fynal subuersiouw,  
Of the temple, tabernacle & toun,  
In Iosephus, who list seen al the deede, —  
De bello Iudaico, the surplus he may* reede.

Explicit liber Septimus.
Bochas makth heer an exclamacioun: [p. 363]

Ageyn the Iewes gret vnkyndenesse
Rouht be the Romeyns, per cite & her toun,
Lich as the stori did heer-toform expresse,—
Thei disparpiled to lyue in wrechchidnesse,
Bi Goddes hand punished for ther outrage,
For euere [to] lyue in tribut & seruage.

Folwyng myn auctour, I caste for to touche
So as I can, rehersyng the maneere
How Iohn Bochas liggyng on his couche
Spak to hymself & saide as ye shal heere,
"Whi artow now so dul of look & cheere,
Lik a man, thi face berth witnesse,
That hym disposeth to lyue* in idilnesse?"

"Certis," quod Iohn, "I tak[e] riht good keep,
Of myche trauaile that the outrage
Hath be long slombre cast me in a sleep,
My lymys feeble, crokid & feynt for age,
Cast in a dred, for dulnesse of corage,
For to presume vp on me to take
Of the eihte book an eende for to make."

"Thow wenist parauntir in thy n oppynyoun
Bi this labour to gete the a name,
For to reherse the sodeyn fallyng doun,
And be sum newe processe for to attame,
Of princes* sittyngh in the Hous of Fame,
In dyuers bookis, wher thou maist hem fynde,
Perpetuellu to putte thi name in mynde."

3. *her (both)] he R. 4. the] their H.
7. to] om. R.
12. now] om. R, J.
14. lyuen B, R.
17. Hath] hast H.
26. princes] Princessis B, J, P.
Thi daies shorte putte the in gret[e] deed
Of swich a labour to take the passage,
The mor feeble the slowere is thi speed,
Thi* sitha dirkid; & thou art falle in age;
Among remembryng, thynk on this langage:
Whan men be buried lowe in the erthe doun,
Sauf of good lyuynge, farweel al guerdoun.

Worldly goodis shal passe, & that riht soone,
Tresour, kun[n]yng and al shal out of mynde;
Frenshep chaugeth as doth the cloudi moone;
At a streiht neede fewe frendis men do fynde.
But a good name whan it is left behynye
Passeth al richesse, yif it be weel disserued,
And al gold in coffre lokkid & conseryyd.

Of thi labour, the same shal wexe derk;
Bewar Bochas, & heerof tak good heed."
"Slouthe spak to me, and bad me leue werk:
For a smal reward thou shalt haue for þi meede,
As be exaemple thou maist othir reede."
This was the langage, I hadde therof routhe,
Atween John Bochas and this ladi Slouthe.

Bochas astoned, gan doun his hed enclyne,
Vpon his pilwe lay hangyng in a traunce,
Stooed in gret doute, koude nat determyne,
Lik a man hangyng in ballaunce,
To what parti he sholde his penye auance
To proceege as he vndirtook,
Or leue the labour of his eihte book.

Atwix[e] tweyne abidyng thus a while,
What was to doone in doute he gan fleete,
Half withynne & half ouer the stile,
Koude nat discerne to hym what was most meete,
Til Fraunceis Petrak, the laureat poete,
Crownid with laurer, grace was his gide,
Cam and set hym doun bi his beddis side.

33. this] thi R.
40. name] Fame H. 49. this] þe H.
50. inclyne R, declyne H. 52. in] in a R.
53. in abalauce R, in a ballaunce H 5.
65. bed side H.
And as Bochas out of his slombre abraide
And gan adawen sumwhat of his cheere,
And sauh Petrak, lowli to hym he saide:
"Wolkmere maister, crownid with laureer,
Which han Itaille lik a sunne cler
With poetrie, pleylni to descryue,
Most souerayni enlumyned bi your* lyue, —

I haue desired, as it is weel kouth,
Of riht hoo* herte be humble attendaunce,
To doon you worship fro* my tendre youth,
And so shal euere, void of al variaunce,
Duryng my lyff; for treuli in substauunce
Ye haue* been lanterne, liht and direccioun
Ay to supporte myn ocupacioun,
As in writyng bookis to compile,
Cheeff exauemplaire to my gret auauntage,
To reforme the rudnesse of my stile
With aureat colours of your fressh langage.
But now fordullid be impotence of age,
Of decrepitus markid with many a signe,
My labour up of writyng I resigne.
I cast[e] me nat ferther* to procede,
Stonde at abay fordryue with* werynesse."
Quod Franseis Petrak, "leese nat thus thi meede:
Yif men no cause to reporte nor expresse,
In thi laste age thou hast fouende a maistresse
Which hath the bridled in sooth (& pat is routhe)
And halt thi rene, and she is callid Slouthe.
An euident tokne of froward slogardie,
Vpon thi bed thi lymes so to dresse.
Ris up! for shame! for I can weel espie,
Folk that can grone & feelie no seeknesse,
Ther chaumbrileyn is callid Idilnesse,
Which leith thi pilwe at euen & at morwe,—
Void hir fro the, and let hir go with sorwe!

825

64 At this Bochas started up and said, "Welc
65 come, Master, who, like a bright sun, illumn
66 ed Italy with poetry.
72 From my tender youth I have done you wor
73 ship. You have been my guide and example,
80 But now I am grown old
86 reformat the rudeness of my style with your fresh
language.
92 Get up: I know people who groan when they feel no ill
97 ness. Your hand-servant is idle-

68. han\] shan R. 70. you\] hir B.
72. riht hoo] rihtful B, R.
73. fro] for B. 76. han B.
85. ferther] foorth B, R, P, forth J.
86. with] for B, R, J.
90. &\] in R, om. H. 92. froward] rowarde H.
97. thi\] be H.
Petrarch's Advice to John Bochas

To al vertu most froward & contraruye
Is Idilnesse heer in this present lyff;
Which hath the drawe awayi fro thi librarie,
Wil the nat suffer to be contemplantiff;
For hir condicioun is to holde striff
With every vertuous occupacioun,
Which men sholde voide of wisdam & resoun.

"Arouse yourself
and open your
eyes!
"Remember the
Book of the
Life Solitary,
which teaches
virtue, and,
as I said
before, look up
and get out of
bed. Are you
going to stop
at the Seventh
Book?

In this matteer what sholde I longe tarye? —
Leff thi slombre and up thyn eyen dresse!
The book I-maad of lyff[e] solitayre,
Remembre theron, the which in sekirnesse
Techeth the weie of vertuous besynesse,
Bi and bi, who list reede eueri lyne,
Of contemplacioun moral and dyuyne.

As I seide erst, yit leff[e] up thi look,
Forsak thi bed, rys up anon, for shame!
Woldestow reste now on thyn seuent book,
And leue the eihte? in sooth thou art to blame!
Procede forth and gete thi-silf a name.
And with o thyng do thi-silf conforte:
As thou disseruest, men aftir shall reporte.

"Compare light
to darkness,
cowardice to
high renown,
virtuous in-
dustry to sloth.

Maak a comparisou[n] tween dirknesse & liht,
Twen Idilnesse and Occupacioun,
Twen faire daies and the claudi niht,
Twen a coward prowesse and hih renoun,
Twen vertuous spech and fals detraccioun;
And to conclude, all vices to represse,
Contrarye to slouthe is vertuous besynesse.

Vertuous besynesse, O Bochas, tak good heed,
Renewith alle thynges off old antiquite,
Maketh men to lyuen aftir thei be ded,
Remembreth the noblesse of many gret cite;
And ne wer writers, al wer goon, parde.
Wherfor, Bochas, sith thou art nih the lond,
Suffre nat thi ship to stumble on no sond.

Petrarch's Advice to John Bochas

I meene as thus: the shipp of thi travaile,
Which hath passid the se of bookis seuene.
Cast nat anker til thou ha good ryuaile!
Lat no tempest of thundir, reyn nor leuene,
Nor no wyndis of the cloudi heuene,
Nor no falsianglyng of demeres that wil blyue
Depraue thi labour, let thi shipp taryue.

Haste on thi way, lat Grace crosse thi sail,
Fall on no sond of wilful necligence,
Lat good[e] will be chief of thi counsaille,
To guye thi* rother set enteer dilligence,
Yif vitaille faille & wyn to thi dispense,
Yit at the laste, thynk, for thi socoz.
Sum roial prince shal quyte thi labour.

Thynk, be writyng auctours did per peyne
To yiu princis ther komendaciouns,
To Remus, Romulus callid foundours tweyne
Of Rome toun; & of too Scipiouns
Thei wrot the knihthod, prudence of too Catouns,
Of Iulius, Pompeye & Hanybal eek also,
Bexaumple of whom looke that thou so do.

Of prophetis thei wrot the prophecies
And the noblesse of olde Moises,
Of poetis the laureat poesies,
The force of Samson, the strengthe of Hercules;
Of two Grekis, Pirrus and Achilles,
Bi ther writyng — bookis sey the same —
Into this day endureth yit the name.

And he that can and ceseth for to write
Notable exaumples of our predecessours,
Of envie men wil hym atwite,
That he in gardyns leet pershe pe holsum flours
In sondry caas that myhte do gret socours.
Laboure for othir, & spare nat thi travaile;
For vertuous labour geyn slouthe mai most auaille.

"The ship of your labour has passed the sea of seven books; do not cast anchor until you have come to port.

"Hasten on your way, let Grace set your sail and Good-will be chief of your counsel; and at the last, some royal prince will reward your labour.

"Writers have done their pain to commend princes

"And he who can and does not write the notable deeds of our predecessors will be censured by men.

135. passid] om. H.
144. thi] the B, R, J. 145. expence H. 151. &] om. R.
152. the] om. R — & prudence H.
153. eek also] too H.
154. whom] them H. 162. and] om. R.
166. gret] om. H.
"A fair portrait of a prince or person, who is dead, quickens the heart of his friend; and in the same manner forgotten merits may be put in mind by writing. The end of our labour is devoted to Christ Jesu."

After Petrarch had done speaking, Bochas arose and sharpened his pen. Will had overcome the feebleness of age.

And I, John Lydgate, following after, unskilled and more than three score years old; youth and the bright colours of rhetoric faded:

I was born in Lydgate, where but little of Bacchus' liquor flows. Fordulled by age, I shall proceed in my labour.

A thyng remembrid of antiquite, Is whan ther is set a fair image Of a prince of hih or louh dege; Or of a persone a preent of his visage Gladeth his freend, quyketh his corage; And semblabli bexaumple men may fynde Thynges forgetyn be writyng come to mynde.

And for to make our names perdurable, And our merites to putten in memorie, Vices tescweue, in vertu to be stable, That laboure may of slouthe haue the victorie, To cleyme a see in the heuenli consistorie — Despiht of idilnesse & foorthryng of vertu — Fyn of our labour be youe to Crist Iesu."

¶ Whan Petrak hadde rehersid this lessoun In rebuyn of vicious idilnesse, Bochas supprised and meued of resoun, Roos from his couche, gan his penne dresse. Will ouercam thympotent feeblesse Of crokid age, that Bochas vndirtook For tacomplisshe up his eihte book.

I folwyng aftir, fordullid with rudnesse, Mor than thre score yeeris set my date, Lust of youthe passid [with] his freshnesse; Colours of rethorik to helpe me translate Wer fadid away: I was born in Lidgate, Wher Bachus licour doth ful scarsli fleete, My drie soule for to dewe & weete.

Thouh pallid age hath fordullid me, Tremblyng ioyntes let myn hand to write, And fro me take al the subtilite Of corious makyng in Inglissh to endite, — Yit in this labour treuI me taquite I shal procede, as it is to me dewe, In thes too bookis Bochas for to sewe.

¶ Explicit prologus libri Octaui.

Domitian, a bad Emperor

Incipit liber octauus.

[How the proude tiraunt Domtyyan Emperour of Rome, and many other Emperours & nobles for ther outrages & wrecchidnesse mischeuesly ended.] ¹

BROTHER to* Titus, sone of Vespasian, [p.367]

The proude ambicious callid Domygian,
And was in Roome crownid emperour; —
An extorsioneer and a fals pillour,
Proudli comaundid, in his estat up stallid,
Of al the world he sholde a god be callid.

Thoruhih presumpcioun, of hym it is eek told,
Nouther of tymber koruen nor of ston,
Set up images of siluer and of gold,
In tokne ther was no god but he allon.
Into Pathmos he exiled eek Seynt Ihon,
And ageyn Cristene the seconde next Neroun,
That began first the perseucuioun.

This same tiraunt, regnyng in his estat,
To alle the cite was passyng odious;
Best & most worthi he slouh of the Senat,
And onto all that wer[e] vertuous
Mortal enmy, and most malicious.
And for slaughtre of senatours in the town
Axed the tryumphe, as maad is mencioun.

Made among Iewes be ful gret outrage,
Wher-as he hadde grettest suspicioun,
To slen all tho that wer of the lynage
Off David kynreede or kynng Salamoun,
List he wer put out off domynacioun
Among[es] Iewes; this was his meenyng, —
Slouh all tho that wer born to be kynng.

¹ MS. J. leaf 150 verso.
Amyd his* paleis, as God wolde of riht
Punshe a tiraunt & quiten hym his meede,
This Domycian was slayn vpon a niht,
His kareyn aftir vnburied, as I reed.
¶ And Comodus doth aftir hym succeede,
Which was al yowhe be flesshli appetit
To leue al vertu & folwe his fals delit.

Theatre pleyes of custome he did vse,
As was the custome ther & the vsage;
His liff in vices he falsli did abuse,
In lecherous lustis dispente al his young age,
To the Romeyns did ful gret damage:
For of the Senat that wer most vertuous,
Wer falsli slay[e]n bi this Comodus.

In his tyme be strook of thundirdent
And fry lihtnyng that cam doun from heuene,
The comoun librareye was of the cite bren,
With roial bookis of al the craftis seuene,
Bookis of poetis mo than I can neuene.
And Comodus, breefl to termyne,
Was slayn and stranglid bi his concubyne.
¶ Helmus Pertynax cam next on the ryng,
Ordeyned aftir emperour of that toun,
Old & vnweildi, slayn in his gynnyng.
Affrir whom, the book makth mencion,
Be no title of successioun,
¶ But an intrusour, oon callid Iulian,
The stat vsurpyng to regne ther began.

But of the noble lynage Affrican,
Born in Tripolis, a myhti gret cite,
Oon Seerus, that was a knihtli man,
Gadred of Romeyns a wonder gret meyne.
Bothe maad strong, Iulian mette & he
At Pount Melyn, a cite of Itaille,
And ther was Iulian slay[e]n in bataille.
¶ Seerus aftir entrid the empire
And took upon hym the domynacioun,
Vpon Cristene, of malis sette affire,
Began ageyn hem a persecucioun

Of tyrannye and fals amicioun;
But oon of Egipt callid Poscennysus
Ageyn Seuerus began to werke thus:
Gadred meyne Seuerus for tassaile,
In purpos fulli, & theron dide his peyne,
First with hym to haue a gret bataille,
Next of thempire the crowne for tatteyne.
But ye shal heere what fill of thes twayne:
On Poscennysus fill the disconfiture,
And Seuerus thempire doth recure.
In his purpos or he myht auaille,
With oon Albynus, that was a manli kniht,
He hadde [in] Gaule a ful gret bataille;
Ful gret[e] blood shad in that mortal fiht,
Albynus slayn of verray force & myht.
Seuervs aftir entrid in Breteyne,
Kauht[e] seeknesse & deide of the peyne.

Aftir Seuerus next cam Antonyne, [p. 368]
Of whom the froward disposicioun,
As alle auctours of hym determyne,
—
His besynesse and occupaciouw
Set hool in flesshli delectaciouw,
So fals a lust his corage did assaille,
—

Macrinvs aftir tofor Bochas cam doun,
Whilom a prefect in Roome the cite,
Of the Pretoire, and be invacioun
Cam to the imperial famous dignite,
Ocupied a yeer, sat in his roial see,
Til Fortune list hym to disgrace,
Among his knihtis slayn at Archelade.

Next cam Aurelius surnamyd Antonyne,
A gret ribaud & passyng lecherous,
Yit was he bishopp, as auctours determyne,
In the temple of Aliogobolus.
And in his tyme was oon Sabellius,
A fals heretik, of whom* gan the names
Of a sect callid Sebellianes.

272. Pescennius P. 273. to] he H. 281. his] this H.
286. Briteyn H.
307. whon B.
This said Aurelius, ageyn[e]s al norture,*
Of fals presumpcioun, in bookis it is told,
Wolde nat purgee his womb bi nature,
But in vessellis that wer maad of gold;
And in despiht[e], whan that he wex old,
Slayn off his knihtis, & nat aftir longe
His careyn was thrown in a gonge.

Aftir this proude forseid Antonyne,
Into thempire he iust eleccioun
Of senatours, as bookis determyne,
Cam Aurelivs, & for his hih renoun
Surnamyd Alisaundre, as maad is menciou[n.]
Fauht with Persiens lik a manli kniht,
And ther kyng Xerses he put vnto pe fliht.

This Aurelius, this prudent knihtli man,
Whan he sat iuge in the consistorie,
Ther sat oon with hym callid Vlpian,
A gret cyuylien notable of memorie,
Of whom it is to his encres of glorie
Reported thus, be gret auctorite
He of Digestis made bookis thre.

Ful pitousli this emperowr lost his lyff,
Casueli, as maad is menciou[n,
Among his knihtes bi a sodeyn stryff,
Wher he was slayn in that discencioun.
Aftir whos eende, for short conclusioun,
Tofor Bochas, the book weel telle can,
Cam Maxymynus* & with hym Gordian.

Maxymynus*, the cronicle doth expresse,
Chose of his knihtis & his soudioirs
For his victorious marcial hih prowesse
Doon in Almaine, & among emperours
Set up in Roome, maugre the senatours.
Aftir strong enmy, as myn auctour seith,
With al his poweer onto Cristes feith.

309. norture] nature B, R, J.
312. gold] pure golde H.
325. Wljian R. 329. He of] Off the R.
331. is made H.
336. 37. Maxymynus] Maxynymus B, J, Maximymus R, Max-
ymyns H, R 3.
343. With] Was R.
He was [eek] enmy, his lyff who list to seen, 344. and especially of old Origen;  
To cristen clerkis of gret auctorite,  
And specialli to olde Origen. 348. and at the height of his cruelty he was slain by a  
But in his moste furious cruelte,  
In Aquileia, a myhti strong conte,  
Of a prefect callid Puppien he was slayn;  
Of whos deth [al] Cristen men wer fayn.  

Next bi the Senat chose was Gordian.  
First ageyn Parthois he cast hym to werreie;  
Of Ianyv temple whan the werre gan  
He made the gatis been opnid with the keye,  
Which was a tokne, as olde bookis seye, —  
Tho gatis opnyd, to folkis nih & ferre,  
That with ther foon the Romeyns wolde haue werre.  

With Parthois first this saide Gordian  
To holde werre faste he gan hym speede;  
And upon hem alwey the feeld he wan. 360. Always victorious, he was finally slain at the Euphrates by treason.  
Afftir he spedde hym into Perse & Meede,  
Alwey victorious in bataille, as I reede;  
Vpon Eufrates slay[e]n, as I fynde,  
Be fals tresoun, the cronicle maketh mynde. 364.  

Next in ordre cam Phelipp be his name,  
His sone eek Phelipp cam with hym also,  
Myn auctour Bochas reherseth eek the same,  
The fadir, the sone baptised bothe too,  
Riht sad & wis in what thei hadde to doo,  
And wer the firste Cristene of echon  
Emperours reknid; for ther toforn was non.  

Be Poncivs the martir, as I reede,  
In Nicea, a famous gret cite,  
Thei wer baptised, and aftir that in deede  
Slayn in bataille, for thei list nat flee. 376.  
Tofor ther deth, both of assent, parde,  
Ther tresours hool, that wer imperiall,  
To Cristis cherch, I fynde, thei gaff it all.  

344. eek] om. R, J.  
357. soone] sonne R.  
360. the feeld he] he this werre H.  
J, P — to doo] a doo H.
The bishop Sixtus took possession, 380
Vertuously assigned it to Laurence
Therof* to make distribution
To poor folk in their indigence;
For which[...] deede be cruel violence
The tyrant Decius ageyn hym* took a striff, 384
Made hooli Laurence be bren[...] lese his lyf.

This same Decius, cursed & cruel,
Caused the slaughtre of thes Philippis tweyne;
And for he was sol]t, fals & fell,
Be sleighte and falsheed be dide his besi payne
To thempire be force for to atteyne,
The seuent[...] tiraunt be persecutioun. 392
Which ageyn Cristene took first occasioun.

In punishment of Decius' cursedness, 400
God sent a terrible pestilence to Italy.
Vpon Decius for his cursidnesse,
Ageyn Cristene which gaf so hard sentence,
Thourh Roome and Itaille, myn auctour berp
witness,
In eueri cite was so gret pestilence,
That be the sodeyn dedli violence,
The hertis of men, dependyng in a traunce,
To saue ther lyues coude no cheuisaunce.

Of this mateer write no mor I can;
To this emperowr I nil* resorte ageyn. 408

Speke of Gallus and Volusian,
That besi wern, ther labour was in veyn,
Ther tyme but short, as summe boekis seyn;
For Martyn writ, an old[e] cronicleer,
In thempire thei regned but two yeer.

381. therof] Ther for B — a destruiciou[n] H.
384. hym] hem, B, J, R.
385. brennyng] brothling P.
387. thes] be H.
413. too] on R.
Bothe wer slay[en] bi the procurung
And bi the purchase of oon Emylian,
A Romeyn kniht, [the] which be shih werkyng
To occupie thempire tho began.
Be tirannye the lordshiphe ther he wan,
Whos lordship, for lak of happ & grace,
No lenger laste than too monethes space.
This litil chapitle, as toforn is seene,
Rehersid hath & toold in woordis pleyn
Of emperour[s] almost full fourteene;
And of alle wer good[e] non but tweyne.
Which to reherse I haue do my peyne,
And to proccede ferther, as I gan,
I mvt now write of oon Valerian.

HIS sone and he, callid Gallien,
To al Cristene bar gret enmyte,*
Slouh all tho, ther legende men may seen,
That seruede Crist in trouthe & equite.
Whos persecucion & hatful cruelte
Abatid was, as I can weel reherse,
Bi oon Sapor that was kyng of Perse.
Bi force of armys Sapor, this myhti kyng,
Gan in Asia, & with his host cam doun
Be Tigre, Eufrates, &, knihtli so ridying
Toward the parties of Septemptriouw,
To Kaukasus nat ferr, fro Babiloun;
And al Surrye he proudli did assaille,
And Capadoce he wan eek be bataille.
Whom for to meete cam doun Valerian
To Mesopotayn with many legiouns.
The werre was strong; but this knihtli man,
This hardi Sapor, with his champiouns
The feeld hath wonne with al the regiouns
Assor rehersid; & thorugh Perse he ladde
Valerian bounde with che[y]nys round & sadde.
He was be Sapor, maugre his visage,
This Valerian, so streithli brouth to wrak,
Lik a prisoneer bounde to this servage
Be obeissaunce, that founde wer no lak,

420. moneth H. 429. ennyte B. 430. legendis H, R 3.
451. this] his H, R.
Valerian humbled by Sapor

Valerian to kneel four times & to profane his bak.
Vnto Sapor when hym list to ride,
Therby to mounte, for al his gret[e] pride.

This was thoffise of Valerian,
Be seruytute duryng many [a] yeer;
Wherfor he was callid of many man
Thassendyng stok into the sadil neer,
Which is in Frensch callid a mountweer.
This was his offis, to bowe doune his corps
Whan that kyng Sapor sholde worpel upon his hors.

This is the guerdoun & fauour of Fortune,
Hir olde manerre to princis & to kyngis,
Hir double custum vsid in comune
Be sodeyn chaung[c]e of al worldli thynges.
Aftir tryumphes and ther uprisings,
What folwith aftir, hir wheel [weel] telle can,
I take record of Valeryan:

This ladi Fortune, þe blynde fell goddesse,
To Valerian shewed hirsilf vnstable,
Tauhte hym a lessouw of hir doubilnesse;
To kyng Sapor she was fauourable.
But yit he was to cruelli vengable,
With his feet, deuoid of al fauour,
To soile the bak of an emperour.

Of olde it hath be songe & cried loude, —
Record on Cirus & many othir mo, —
Kynes of Perse of custum ha[ue] be proude,
Aftir punshid an[d] chastised eek also.
Princis of merci sholde tak heed herto,
Aftir victorie in ther estat notable
To ther prisoneres for to be merciable.

Myn auctour Bochas in this mateer weel* can
Rebuke tirauntes, that wer be daies olde;
Turneth his stilte, speketh to Valerian:
“Wher be the rubies & saphirs set in golde,
The riche perle & rynges manyfolde

460. mounte H, mountwe R 3.
463. fauour & guerdon R.
468. weel] om. R — here wele telle I can J.
478. on] of H, R 3. 481. herto] eek hereto R.
484. weel] weel tell B, R, J — only the n in can is written R.
That thou were wont to be upon thyndondis?
Now as a wench art bounde in foreyn bondis.

Wher thou were wont of furious cruelte,
Clad in purple withynne Roome toun,
To Crist contrayre in thynd imperial see,
Yaff doom on martirs to suffre passioune,—
Now listow bounde [&] fetrid in prisoun,
To kyng Sapor constreyneyd to enclyne,
Whan he list ride, bowe nek & chyne.

Thus artow falle from thynd imperial stage!
Think on Fortune and haue hir in memorie:
She hath the cast in thralldam & servage
And eclipsed al thyndolde* glorie.
Wher thou sat whilom in the consistorie
As an emperour & a myhti iuge,
List bounde in cheynys and knowest no* refuge.

It is ful ferr fall out of thi mynde
The knihtli deede of worthi Publius,
Of Roome a capteyn, ordeyned, as I fynde,
To sting ageyn[es] Aristomochus,
Kyng of Asie; of fortune it fill thus:
Whan the Romeyns dide the feeld forsake,
This Publius among his foon was take.

This noble prince stondyng in dreadful caas,
His lyf, his worship dependyng atwen tweyne,
In his hond holdyng a sturdi maas,
Smet out oon of his eyen tweyne
Of hym that ladde hym; the tothir for he Peyne
That he felte and the gret[e] smerte
Took a dagger, rooff Publius to the herte.

Which loued more his worship than his lyff,
Ches rather deie than lyuen in servage;
This conceit hadde in his imagynatyff,
And considred, sith he was in age,
To saue his honour it was moor auuantage
So to be slayn, his worship to conserve,
Than lich a beeste in prisoun for to sterue.

"You, who were clad in purple and gave judgment on the martyrs in Rome, can now bend your back to King Sapor when he wishes to ride.

"Thus you are fallen; think on Fortune, who has cast you into thralldom without remedy.

"You have forgotten the example of worthy Publius, who, taken by his enemies in Asia,

and, preferring death to servitude, smote out an eye of the soldier who led him, and he, mad with pain, struck Publius to the heart with a dagger.

"Publius loved his honour more than his life and did not care to die like an animal in captivity.
Fortunis chapitel of hym ne\* was nat rad;
Of which Valerijus maketh mencion,
Aftir whos conceit, no man in vertu sad
Sholde nat longe langwisshe in prisoun,
But rather cheese, lik his oppynyoun,
Of manli force & knihtli excellence
The deth endure of long abstynence,

As whilom dide the princesse Aggripyne,
Whan she in prisoun lay fetrid and Ibounde;
Of hir fre chois she felte so gret pyne
Of hungrir, thrust, in stori it is founde,
That she lay pale & gruff upon the grounde,
Maugre Tiberye, & leet hir gost so weende
Out of hir bodi; this was hir fatal eende.

Thou stood ferr of of al such fantasie,
I spoke to the, o thou Valeryan!
Thi cruel herte of fals malencolie
Made whilom deie many Cristen man;
And [many] martir, sith Cristis feith began,
Which for mankynde starrf upon the rood, —
Thei for taquite hym list to sheede her blood.

Ageyn his lawe thou wer impacient
And importune be persecciuon;
Thou dist faoure & suffre in thyn entent
That Egipcians dide ther oblacioun,
Ther sacrefises & rihtes up-so-doun
Vnto Isis, of froward wilfulnesse,
That was of Egipt callid cheef godesse.

Favourable thou wer in thi desir
To suffre Iewes ther Sabat to obserue:
And Caldeis to worshepe[n] the fyr,
And folk of Crete Saturn for to serue.
And Cristene men thou madist falsli sterue,
Of whos lawe for thou dist nat recheche,
Thou dei[d]est in prisoun at myscheef lik* a wrech-
che.”

526. ne\* it B, R, J, P,
528. gost] breth H. 529. 1st hir] be H.
542. of\] and R, H, R 3, H 5. 546. to] forto R.
547. his\] this H — impacient R. 549. & suffre\] suffrid H.
556. to] for to H, R 3.
[How Gallien sone of valerian was slayn] 1

Next in ordre to Bochas tho cam doun
Sone of Valerian, oon callid Gallien.
But for the grete horrible effusion
Of Cristen blood[e], that men myhte seen
Shadde be Valerian, God wolde it sholde been
Shewed openli to Romeyns be vengaunce
Of many a contre sodeyn disobeissauce.

Thei of Almeyne the Alpies dide passe
Vnto Rauenwe, a cite of Itaille;
Gothis also, proud of cheer & face,
Hadde ageyn Grekis many gret bataille;
And thei of Hungry, armyd in plate & maille,
With them of Denmark, furious & cruell,
Ageyn Romeyns wex of assent rebell.

To whos damage in this mene while
Among Romeyns it is befallen thus:
Woful werris which called been civile
Gan in the cite, cruel and despitous.
First whan thei mette was slay[e]n Gemyvs,
Which first took on hym, in bookis as I reede,
Of hih corage to were purpl weede.

Oon Postumyvs, a myhti strong Romeyn,
Kept al Gaule vndir subieccioun;
To ther auail vnwarli aftir slayn
Among his knihtes, for al his hih renoun,
Be a sodeyn vnkouth discencioun.
Next Victoryn, hauyng the gouernaunce
Of al Gaule, was aftir slayn in Fraunce.

But Gallien, of whom I spak toforn,
Sone and heir to Valerian,
His domynacioun off purpos he hath lorn,
In Republica [anoon] whan he began,
Lich a contrarious & a froward man
Wex lecherous and vicious of lyuyng,
At myscheiff slay[e]n; this was his eendyng.

The reign of Gallienus was disturbed by rebellions, in punishment for the effusion of Christian blood shed by his father Valerian.
The Germans came to Ravenna, and the Goths and Danes revolted.
In Rome there were cruel civil wars;
and Gallien, who lost his authority by evil living, died at mischief.

564. myhte] may H.
576. it is befallen] it befall H. 577. The wofull H.
1 MS. J. leaf 152 verso.
[How Quyntylyus was moordred by women.] ¹

Quintilius, brother of Claudius, was murdered by women. I do not know why.

Next Gallien cam oon Quyntilius,
A man remembred of gret attempr[e]raunce,
Brother of berthe to gret[e] Claudius,
Wis & discreet in all his gouernauce.
Who may of Fortune eschewe the[sodeyn] chaunce?—
To write his eende shortly in a clause,
Of women moordred; I cannat seyn the cause.

[Off Aurelian in Denmark born.] ²

Aurelian, born in Denmark,
what a great war against
the Goths.
His labour was for the profit
of Rome.

He recovered
all the North
and asked for
the triumph;
but one thing,
his enmity to
Christ, eclipsed his glory.

Tacitus and
Florianus
followed. I
can find nothing
noteworthy
about either of
them.

Of whom Bochas list no mor now write,
But in his book goth forth as he began,
Of oon remembryng hat callid was Tacite,
Which was successour to Aurelyan;
And aftir hym succeeded Floryan,
Of which[e] twayne no remembraunce I fynde
That is notable to be put in mynde.

[How Probus disconfited Romayns and aftir was slayn.] ³

Probus aftir regned ful seuene yeer  [p. 372] 624
And foure moneth, which thoruh his hih renoun
Geyn Saturnynvs, with a [ful] knihtli cheer,

611. victorite B.
614. o thing] athing B.  619. was callid H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 152 verso.  ² MS. J. leaf 152 verso.  ³ MS. J. leaf 152 verso.
And brouht hym proudli to subieccioun;
Natwithstondyng that he in Roome toun
Took upon hym of wilful tirancye
Hooli thempire he for to reule & guie.

Beside the cite callid Agripyne
This see[c] Probus geyn many proud Romeyn
A bataille hadde, list[e] nat declyne,
Mette Proculus, a myhti strong capteyn,
With oon Bonosus; & bothe ther wer slayn,
And al ther meyne of verray force & myht
Slayn in the feeld; the remnaunt put to fliht.

Aftir this bataille & this disconfiture
Probus was loggid in Smyrme, a gret cite,
And ther vnwarli of sodeyn auenture
Slayn in a tour that callid was Ferre.
But a smal sesoun last his prosperite:
Swich is Fortune; lat no man in hir truste;
Al wordli thynges she chaungeth as she liste!

[How Clarus and his ij. sones were myscheuyd.] ¹

G Tofor Bochas Clarus next cam doun
With his too sonys, Numerian & Caryne.
And, as I fynde, he was born in Narbon
And descendid of a noble lyne.
But whan that he most cleerli dide shyne
In his empire, he gat cites tweyne,
Chose & Thelifouwt, in Partois with gret peyne.

Beside Tigre, a famous swift ryueer,
He pihte his tentis, & cast hym þer tabide.
A sodeyn lihtnyng his face cam so neer,
Smet al to poudre, for al his gret[e] pride;
And Numerian that stood be his side
Hadd a mark[e] that was sent from heuene:
Loste bothe his eyen with the fyry leu[en]e.

¹ MS. J. leaf 152 verso.
His other son Carynus, a good knight, 660
In Dalmacia had he the government;
But* for that he governed not aright,
He was cast down & lost all his puissance;
Vicious lyff kometh alway to myschaunce.
Sepcivs chose Dalmacia for to guye,
Among his knihtis moordrid of envie.

[How the hardy quene Zenobia faust with Aurelian and was take.]¹

MYN auctour heer no lenger list s[o]jiourne
Of these emperours the fallis for to write,
But in al haste he doth his stile tourne 668
To Zenobia hir stori for to endite.
But for Chauceer dide hym so weil aquite
In his tragedies hir pitous fall tentrete,
I will passe ouer, hershyng but the grete. 672

In his book of Cauntitbury Talis
This souereyn poete of Brutis Albioun,
Thoruh pilgrymys told be hillis & be valis,
Wher of Zenobia is maad mencioun, 676
Of hir noblesse and of hir hih renoun,
In a tragedie compendiousli told all,
Hir marcial prowesse & hir pitous fall.

He describes her life in his Book of Can-
terbury Tales.

She was born of the stock of worthy Ptolemy
Myn auctour first affermeth how that she 680
Descendid was, to telle of hir lynage,
Born of the stok of worthi Tholome
Kyng of Egipt, ful notable in that age.
And this Zenobia, expert in al langage, 684
Wis of counsail & of gret prouidence,
Passed al othir in fame of eloquence.

and married Odenathus, 688
Odenathus, 688
King of Palm-
myra,

of plate & maille,

Callid Odenatus, prudent in bataille
She was also, be record of writyng,
Hardi, strong, hir lordship defendyng,

661. But] And B, J, P.
670. so wele did hym quyte H, R 3. 679. prowessis H.
688. Palmerenoys B, Palmerencys J, Palmyrences P, Palmy-
nerois R, H.

MS. J. leaf 153 recto.
Maugre all tho, with hir cheualrie, Ageyn[e]'s hire that wrongli took partie.

Be Odenatus she hadde sonis twyne, Heremans callid was the ton, And Thymolaus, of beute souereyne. Aftir whos berthe their fadir gan anon To occupie the prouynces euerichon Of Perse and Mede; bi processe made hem fleen, Of Zenobia, the hardi wise queen.

Whil Odenatus wex most glorious In his conquest thorughout Perse & Meede, Slayn he was be onn Meonyus, Which to the kyng was cosyn, as I reede; But for because of this horrible deede And for the moordre of kyng Odenate, Deide at myscheef & passed into fate.

And for his lordis & knihtis she hath sent, Maugre the Romeyns proudli gan hire speede, Al the parties of the orient* To occupie & hir host to leede. Of themperour she stood nothing in dreede, Callid Aurelian, mette hym in bataille, With hir meyne hym proudli did assaille.

On outher side that day gret blood was shad; The strook of Fortune withstant no creature: The queen Zenobia was taken & forth lad; Fauht first as longe as she myht endure; With riche stonis frett was hir armvre, Witb whom themperour, so entryng Roome toun, Of tryumphethe requeryng the guerdoun.

He dempte it was coudenable & sittyng, This emperour, this proude Aurelian,

The Fate of Zenobia. Dioctetian

and led in his triumph.

Taxe the tryumphe; it was so gret a thyng
To take Zenobia [that] such a werre gan
Ageyn* Romeyns, this marcial woman.
For I suppose of no woman born
Was neuer queen so hardi seyn afforn.

She was brought to Rome in golden fetters,
plunged down from her high estate into poverty.

This hardi princesse, for al hir roialte,*
Whos hih renoun thoruh al the world was knowe,
With stokkis of gold was brouht to the cite,
From hih estat in pouert plongid lowe.
A wynde contrarye of Fortune hath so blowe,
That she, alas, hath pitousli made fall
Hir that in provesse passed women all.

Dioctetian, who next appeared,
was a gardener in his youth.

The triumphe youe [un]to Aurelian
For he conquest he hadde upon his queen

Callid Zenobia, can M Dioclesian,*
Born in Dalmacia, his stori who list seen.
Out of his contre first he dide fleen,
Of garlec lekis, as seith the cronycleer,
Because that he was but a gardener.

Other mencioun is non of his lynage.
Of his berthe forsook the regioun,
Left his crafft of deluyng and cortilage,
Gaff hym to armys, & be eleccioun
Chose to been emperour & regne in Roome toun.
First into Gaule he sente a gret poweer,
And Maxymyan he made ther his vikeer.

His viker ther hadde many gret bataille
Vpon swich peopel that be rebellioun
Gan frowardli contrarye & assaille
Tobeye his lordship withynne that regioun,
Til Caransynus be commyssioun,
An hardi kniht vn/dir Maxymyan,
Them to chastise took on hym lik a man.

But be processe, the stori doth deuise,
His lordship ther dide gret damage
To comoun profft; for he be couetise

735. before R. 736. roialte] cruelte B, J.
739. ploungyng R. 742. that] state R.
745. Dioclesian B. 748. cronyculeer R.
761. Carasius P. 766. To] to the R.
The contre robbed be ful gret outrage,  
And to hymself he took al the pillage,  
And of presumcioun wered the colour  
Of riche purpl lik an emperour.

This Karansynvs of Breteynys tweyne,  
Proudl vi usurped to be ther gouernour,  
Lik a rebel geyn Roome dide his peyne  
And besied hym be marcial labour,  
With many a straunge foreyn soudiour;  
Hauyng no title nor commyssioun,  
Contynued longe in his rebelliou.

Wherof astonyd was Dioclesian;  
Seyng this myscheef dreadful & pereilous,  
Ordeyned in haste that Maxymyan  
Was surnamyd & callid Herculius;  
Made hym emperour, namyd [hym] Augustus,  
Which hadde afforn[e] no mor gouernaunce  
But of Gaule, which now is callid France.

Also mor-ouer this Dioclesian  
Made in this while gouernour[e]s tweyne,  
Constancius & oon Maxymyan  
Surnamyd Galerius. Constancius in certeyne,  
In this while to wedde dide his peyne  
Douhtir of Maxymyan callid Herculius,  
Named Theodora, myn auctowr writeth thus.

Be Theodora this Constancius  
Hadde sexe childre in trewe mariage,  
Brethre to Constantyn, the story* tellith | us,  
Which aftirward, whan he cam to age,  
For his manhod and marcial corage,  
Was chose & maad[e] lord & gouernour  
Of al the world, and crownid emperour.

Caransynvs, which hadde ful seuene yeer,  
Lich as I tolde, rebellid in Breteyne  
Ageyn the Romeyns, a gret extorsioneer, —
A knight Alletus that dede at hym disdeyne
Moordrid hym, & aftir ded his peyne
Be force onli and extort tirannye
Fulli thre yeer his place to occupie.

Til Asclepio was sent fro Roome doun,
Slouh this Alletus, maugre al his myght,
Brouht al Breteyne to subieccioun
Of the Romeyns, lik as it was riht.
And in this while, lik a maulli kniht—
For Italliens gan Romeyns disobeye—
Constancius gan proudli hem werrie.

He firste with hem had a strong bataille,
His meyne slayn & he put to the fliht.
Trustyng on Fortune, he gan hem eft assaille,
And sexti thousand wer slaye[n] in hat fliht;
The feeld was his thorunh Fortunis myght,
As she that koude dissymule for a while,
And afterward falsli hym begile.

I will passe ouer as breeffli as I can,
Set aside al foreyn incidentis,
Resorte ageyn to Dioclesian,
Which at Alisaundre proudli pihte his tente
The captyen slouh, gaff in comaundementes
To his knihtis to do ther auuantage
Witbyynne the cite to robbynge & pillage.

Gan ageyn Cristene gret perseucioun,
Vsed his tirannye in the orient,*
Bi his biddynge Maxymyan cam doun
Toward the parties of the occident.
Bothe these tirauntis wurthe be assent,
Vndir whos swerd many [a] martire deies,
Slayn in Octodorun the legeoun of Thebeies.

At Verolame, a famous old cite,
Seynt Albon slayn; his legende doth so telle.
And in Roome be furious cruelte
The pope slayn, which callid was Marcelle.
Be ther statutis & be ther doomys felle

832. in] at H — Octodorn H, R — legeoun] region P, Religion R.
835. Albon] abboun R — his] be H.
Cherches wer brenret, & tounes* & citees
Loste ther franchise & al ther libertees.

Froward enmy he was to Cristis lawe,
Made many a martir deie for his sake,
Wex feeble & old & gan hym [to] withdrawe
From occupacion, his reste for to take;

His atturne Maxymyan he doth make.
In his laste age, it is rehersid thus,
Stood in gret dreed[e] of Constancivs,—
The dreed[e] of hym sat so nih his herte—
And therupon took swich a fantasie,
Imagynyng he myht[e] nat asterte,
Be fraude of hym but that he sholde deie.
Almost for feer fill in a frenesie,
And of swich dreed, the book makth mewciouw,
He slouh hymsilff be drywkyng of poisoun.

As I told erst, in the occident
Maxymyan, callid Herculius,
Regned as emperour; & euere in his entent
To pursue martirs he did ay his labours.
Of whos berthe Bochas fond non auctowrs;
This to seyne, he coude neuer reede
Wher he was bor[e]n, nor of what kywreede.

He fynt no mor of this Maxymyan,
Of his uprisyng in especiall,
But that he was bi Dioclesian
Set in dignite callid imperial,
Famous in armys, prudent & marciall,
Daunted all tho that dide ageyn hym stryue,
Slouh Geneyans callid, in noumbre fyue.

Rood in Affrik lik a conquerour,
Brouht to subieccioun thre sturdi naciouns —
Fortune that tyme did hym such fauour —
Gat Sarmatois with othir regiouns,
Many cites & many riche touns
Bi his conquest of newe that he hath wonne;
Thoruh the world his name shon lik a sunne.

When Diocletian grew old and feeble he abdicated in favour of Maximian.
During his last days he stood in such dread of Constantius that he fell into a frenzy and slew himself by poison.
Maximian reigned in the west and continued to martyr Christians;
and Bochas knows no more about him than that he was a great soldier and that Diocletian made him emperor.
He conquered Africa, Sarmatia, and many other regions, and his name shone throughout the world like a sun.
Yet Dioclesian advised him to resign his dignity, and finally he did; but afterwards repenting sought to recover his throne.

In this he was opposed by Galerius, for his son Maxentius had already been declared emperor, and when he found that he could not succeed in his design, and his daughter Fausta had betrayed his intentions, he fled to Gaul and was finally slain by Constantius at Marseilles.

The End of Maximian. Galerius [bk. viii]

He was cherish'd in armys from his youthe, [p. 375] 876
Dide gret emprises for* Roome the cite;
Yit Dioclesian, as it is weel kouthe,
Counsailed hym resigne his dignite.
But he was loth to forsake his see, 880
Sith he was lord & governed all,
For to renounce his stat imperiall.

But be assent of Dioclesian,
As he hymself had left al gouernaunce, 884
So euene lik this Maxymyan
Dischargd hymsilf of his roial puissaunce.
But afterward he fyl in repentance
And besi was, as dyuers bookis seyn, 888
The stat of emperour to recure ageyn,
Which for to acheue he dide his dilligence.
He was distourbid be Galerius,
For his sone, that callid was Maxence, 892
Put in pocession, myn auctour writeth 'pus;
To which[e] thyng he gan wax enzymous
And gan ordeyne menys in his thouht
To trouble hym; but it auailed nouht. 896

Whan his purpos myhte take non auail
Ageyn Maxence, as Bochas doth descruye,
His douhtir Fausta, pat knew al his counsail,
Discurid his purpos; for which he fled[de] blyue 900
Into Gaule & durste no lenger stryue;
And bi Co[n]stancius in Marcile the cite
Slayn sodeynli, lost al his dignite.

[How Galeryus oppressid martirs & cristys feith
and mischeuesly ended.] 1

NEXt tofor Bochas cam Galerivs, 904
A man disposid to riot & outrage,
Euele entechchid, froward, vicouis.
Ther is no stori speketh of his lynage,
Yit was he set ful hih upon the stage 908
Of worldli dignite, roos up to hih estat;
Yit in his gyn[n]lyng he was nat fortunat.

He was sent out by Dioclesian,
And maad emperour by his auctorite,
Ageyn Narseus, the proude knihtli man,
Regnyng in Perse lord of that contre,
Which heeld[e] werre with Roome the cite, —
For which Galerius took on hym this emprise,
With mihti hand his pride to chastise.

Galerius entred into Perse-lond;
Kyng Narseus mette hyw of auenture;
Hadde a strong bataille, faught per hond of* hond; 920
On Galerius fill the discomfiture,
His fortune suich he myht[e] nat endure.
Clad in purpre, as maad is mencioun,
Of Dioclesian rescueyd this guerdoun:

At ther meetynge, anon or he was war,
Dioclesian made hym for tabide,
To his confusion, sittynge in his char,
To walke on foote be the charis side,
With many rebuk abatid was his pride,
That Galerius for the grete shame
Gan seeke a mene ageyn to gete his name.

Gan for tassemble his olde soudiours,
Made his ordenaunce be dilligent werking,
Ches out the beste preeuid werreyours;
With a gret host to Perse he cam ridyng
And efft ageyn faught ther with the kyng,
That the Persiens, maugre al ther myht,
Wer be Galerius that day put to flght.

The feeld was his, gat ther grete richesse,
Robbed ther tentis, wan ther grete pillage.
In his resort rescueyd in sothnesse
With* grete noblesse, because of that viage —
Thus can Fortune chaungyn hir visage! —
Of Dioclesian, wher he stood in disdeyn,
With newe triumpe resortid is ageyn.

This cloudi queen stant euer in noun certeyn,
Whos double wheel quauereith euer in doute,
Of whos fauour no man hath be certeyn:

912. Diocletian made him emperor and sent him out against Nareses, king of Persia.
916. who defeated him.
920. When he next met Diocletian Diocletian rebuked him, and sitting in his chariot compelled him to walk on foot alongside, the shame of which impelled
924. When he next met Diocletian Diocletian rebuked him, and sitting in his chariot compelled him to walk on foot alongside, the shame of which impelled
932. him to set out again to Persia to recover his reputation. He fought Narse a second time, and defeating him won great plunder.
936. Thus Fortune can change her moods. She "stands in uncertainty,"
940. Thus Fortune can change her moods. She "stands in uncertainty,"
944. Thus Fortune can change her moods. She "stands in uncertainty,"
948. Thus Fortune can change her moods. She "stands in uncertainty,"
her wheel poised ever ready to turn.

Ther* oon hath grace, another is put oute.
Latt everyman as it cometh aboute
Take his tourn & neuere in hir assure;
Faillyng in armys is but an aventure!

Afterwards Galerius governed Africa and Italy, but in his old age he persecuted Christ's faith.

Thus Galerius after his bataill
On Persiens gan waxen glorious,
Gouernid Affrik & lordshipp of Itaille,
Thoruh al* thorient wax victorious,
Til he for age gan waxen tedious,
His laste daies maligned, as men seith,
Of fals hatreede ageyn[es] Cristis feith.

He set two vickers, Severus and Maxentius, in his empire to help him put down the law of Christ.

And hym to helpen in thes fals mateeris, [p. 376]
It is remembred to his confusioun,
In his empire he sette too vikeris,
The lawe of Crist toppresse & put down.*
Gaff hem power in euery regioun
To punshe martirs & putte hem to be dep;
And in this while ful many on he sleth.

Bi this saide cruel Galerivs,
Which of thempre had al the gouernaunce,
Of cursid herte & corage despitous,
Be his usurpied imperial puissaunce
Gaf auctorite for to do vengaunce
Vnto tweyne, Seuerus & Maxencce,
On al Cristen bi mortal violence.

and chose Maxentiuss emperor, who subsequently quarrelled with Severus.

Severus died of the plague at Ravenna.

A certeyn space, bothe of oon accord,
Thesstat of emperour chose was Maxence,
Til Seuerus & he fill at discord.
Anon aftir bi vengable pestilence,
Witbynne a cite of notable premynence
Callid Rauenne, Seuerus ther was slayn,
Of which Galerius, God wot, was nothyng fayn.

Galerius next chose Licinius, a Danish knight, to be emperor in opposition to Maxentius.

For which in haste this Galerivs;
Hym to supporte & stonde in his defense,
Ches out of Denmark a kniht Licinius
To been emperour, thoruh knihti excellence
For to withstonde & fihte ageyn Maxence.

949. Ther] Thei B, Thouh J, though P — is] may be H.
952. an] om. R.
956. al] at B.
963, 64 are transposed in B, J.
965. punysh H.
979. Rauenna R.
The Death of Galerius

But Maxence, of Romeyn knihtis all, Was chose empereur & set up in his stall.
With which eleccioun Gallerius wex wood, Fill in a maner froward frenesie, His entraill[e] brent[e], corupt wex his blood, And of his froward vengable malladie In every membre gan rote & putrefie, That al the hair aboute hym envirou To all that felte it was venym & poisoun.
Lik a lazeer, coorbid bak & chyne, In this while on Cristen most vengable, To hym auailed no maner medechyne. But ther was oon in Cristes feith ful stable That spak to* hym with langage ful notable, In* woordes fewe concludyng in swbstaunce, "The grete Iub[i]ter hath take on the vengaunce." And ouermor, for short conclusioun, With a bolde spirit to hym began abraide: "It is nat Iubiter worsheped in this toun, In the Capitoile set," sothli as he saide, — "But Iubiter that was born of a maide, Which wil nat suffre, of that thou dost endure, That ony medicyne sholde the recure.
Lik a tiraunt be vengaunce furious, At myscheef deith, as olde bookis telle, Perpetueli with cruel Cerberus Vpon the wheel of Ixion to duell." — For his demerites with Tantalus in hell, Ther to rescuyue his fynal last guerdoun Which coude on martirs haue no compassioun.
It was his ioye for to sheede her blood, Sent out [his] lettres to dyuers regiuws, Lik a slih wofl, rauynous & wood, To slain martirs be dyuers passiouns. Lik his desert rescuyed his guerdouns; Horrible deth first dide hym heer confounde, With Furies infernal lith now in hell[e] bounde.

990. wex] was H, J, P. 999. to] onto B, R, J.
1003. to hym began] hym he gan R.
1022. Furies] furious R.
The End of Maxentius. Licinius

[How maxence the Emperour enmy to cristys feith myscheuesly ended.] 1

A FFTIR Galerius cruel violence
Geyn Cristene blood, as Bochas heer hap told, 1024
With pitous cheer themperour Maxence
Cam tofor Bochas, of age nat ful old,
Famous in armys, sturdi, fressh & bold,
Al-be he entrid nat as enhertour, 1028
Took upon hym to regne as emperour.*

To Cristes feith he was also enmy;
Aftir soone he loste his gouernaunce,
Of infortunye slay[en]n sodenly,— 1032
God on tirauntes vn-warly takith vengaunce.
Of whos buryynge was maad non ordenaunce,*
For he was nat rescuyed of the ground,
But caste in Tibre lik a rotten hounde. 1036

[How Lucynyus enmy to cristes feith was slayne.] 2

Lycynyvs, the Dane, who
became em-peror, had an
enemy, Maximin, who was slain in Tarsus.

And Licinius
persecuted the Christians
and suddenly went mad. He allowed no
Christian to abide in his house and began a war against Con-
stantine, and, twice defeated,

Of whos deth Lycynyvs was glad, 1044
Gan ageyn Cristene gret persecucioun,
In his procedyng sodenli wex mad.
Which comaundid of fals presumcioun
Whan he began doon execucioun,
That no Cristene nowher hym beside
Bi no condicioun shoide in his hous abide.
This Lycynyvs, which falsli dide erre
Ageyn our feith Cristen men tassaille,
Geyn Constantyn of newe he gan a werre;

1029. emperour] gouverour B, J.
1034. ordenaunce] menciou[n] B.
1038. riht good of lyne R.
1043. Tarce] Trace B, J, R 3, R.
1052. Cristen] & Cristen H, R 3. 1053. began H.
1 MS. J. leaf 154 verso. 2 MS. J. leaf 154 verso.
But of his purpos in sooth he dede faille:
For he was twies discounfited in bataille
Be Constantyn; onys in Hungrye,
Next in Grece, beside Ebalie.

Thus Constantyn thoruh his hih renoun
Gat nih al Grece & eueri gret cite,*
Al-be Lycynyvs stood in rebelliuon
Geyn Constantyn, both on lond & se.
But whan he sauh it wolde non oher be,
He myht[e] nat escapen in no place,
Put hool hymsilf in Constantynes grace.

But Constantyn, for his rebelliuon,
Gaff jugement in haste that he be ded,
Lest in the cite wer maad dyuisioun
Be Lycynyvs, wherof he stood in dread.
This same while, as Bochas took [good] heed,
Ther cam toforn hym, with cheeris ful pitous,
Brethre twyne, Constantyn & Crispus.

[Off Constantyne and Crispus & how Dalmacyus was slayn.] ¹

To Constantyn, of whom I spak toforn,
Thei wer sonys, Constantyn & Crispus.
The same twayne, of o mooder born,
Cam tofor Bochar; his book reherseth thus.
With hem cam eek oon Lycynyvs,
Sone to* Licynyus which in Roome toun
Afforn was slayn for his rebelliuon.

Constantyn his werris to gouerne
Made hem vikeres, the sileue same thre.
ECHON RIHT WIS, & KOUDE WEL DISCERNE
What myhte auaille most to ther cite,
TENCREE THE PROFIT OF THE COMOUNTE.
Ther namys tolde, Constantyn & Crispus,
TOFOR REMEMBRID, WITH HEM LICYNYS.
Whil these thre vikeris vndir themperour
GOUERNID ROOME, AS KNIHTIS RIHT* FAMOUS,
In Alisaundre roos up a gret errour

1077. to'] of B. 1087. riht'] most B.

¹ MS. J. leaf 155 recto.
Arius and his Heresy. Delmatius

Bi a fals preest Icallid Arrayus,
To our beleue a thyng contraryous.
And for he dide ageyn our feith so wercbe,
Bi a decr he was put out of cherche.

Bi a scen at Bithynye ful notable,
In Nicea, a famous gret cite,
This error was preuid ful damnable:
Thre hundred* bisishopis wer present ther, parde, 1096
And eithene, the cronicle who list see.
And alle thes clerkis of o sentence ilk
Preeuyd Arrayvs a fals[e] heretik.

During this time Constantine slew his three generals, in favour of his cousin Delmatius,

who was shortly afterwards killed by his own soldiers.

Both Constans and Constantius, young brothers of Constantine, wanted to be emperor, and so they fought one another.

Constans had nine battles with Sapor and finally overcame him.

During this time Constantine slew his three generals, in favour of his cousin Delmatius,

This same tyme, bookis specifie
How Constantyn of hasti crueltie,
The saide vikeres, nih of his allie,
Feyned a cause to sler hem all[e] thre.
No cause rehersid nor told of equite,
Saf onli this, in which he gan procede,
To make his cosyn Dalmacivs to succeede.

But his faupwr was nat fortunat
Toward Dalmacius, nor gracious in sentence,
Among whos knihtes fill a sodeyn debat,
Constantyn ther beyng in presence.
Dalmacius, withoute reuerence,
With sharpe suerdis, to speke in woordesfewe,
Vnto the deth was woundid & Ihewe.

[Off the brethre Constance & Constancyus & how Magnencyus & decayus moordred hem self.]

Then cam Constans and Constancius,
Yonge brethre, thus writ myn auctour,
To Constantyn in tyme of Arryvs.

And ech of hem be ful gret labour
Dide his peyne to regne as emperour,
Til at the laste, brefli for to seie,
Euerich of hem gan othir to werreye.

This saide Constans is entrid Perse-lond;
Nyne tymes he faught ageyn Sapore,
The same kyng, as ye shal vndirstond,
That with Romeyns hadde fouht affore.
But fynalli Constans hath hym so bore,
To holde the feeld he myhte nat endure;
For upon hym fill the disconfiture.

His fortune gan to chaungen anon riht, [p. 378]
Whan that he lefte to be vertuous;
He was in Spaigne slaye[n] be a kniht,
In Castel Tunge, callid Magnencius.
Than was non lefft but Constancivs;
The Romeyn kni[h]tis, destitut echon,
Ches hem an emperour calld Vetramon.

This Vetramon was ferr [ijronne in age,
Bareyn of witt, koude non lettrure,
Nor in knihtod had no gret corage,
Nor lik an emperour no while to endure;
For Constancius, of whom I spak now late,
With this Vetremon cast hym to debate.

This Vetremon hath lefft his estat,
List nat werreye ageyn Constancius,
Forsook the feeld[e], loued no debat.
But of Spaigne, myn auctour writeth bus,
As I wroght late, how that Magnencius
Geyn Constancivs with suerd[e], spere & sheeld
Presumed proudli for to holde a feeld.

To gret damage & hyndryng of the toun,
For many Romeyn thilke day was ded,
Beside a cite which callid was Leoun;
Til at the laste, of verray coward dreed,
Magnencivs, which capteyn was & hed
Ageyn Constancius, hath the feeld forsake.
Loo, how Fortune can hir chaunges make!

Magnencivs for verray sorwe & shame
Bood no lenger, but gat hym a sharp kniff,
Sool hymsilff, wherof he was to blame,
Roof thoruh his herte & loste [so] his lyff.
His brothir Dencivs, partable of the stryff,

But when he ceased to be virtuous, his fortune
dered; and he was slain in Spain
by Magnentius
and succeeded by Vetrano,

who was old
and illiterate
and a great soldier;
and
when Constans made war
on him he abdicated.

Magnentius, however, resisted Constans,
but
finally he fled out of cowardice.

and pierced
his heart
with a knife.
His brother
Decius
hanged
himself.
Aboute his necke cast a myhti corde
And heeng hymself[e], bookis so recorde.

Constantius ches after hym Gallus,
His vnclcs brothir, to gouerne Fraunce;
Was a fals tiraunt, cruel [and] outraious,
Soone after slayn for his mysgounrnaunce.

Another viker for his disobediance,
Callid Siluanvs, be iugement was slayn;
For which in France ful many a man was sayn.

I shall now make a digression to Constantine, because Bochas says little about this notable man.

Born in Britain, son of St. Helena, and chosen emperor, he was grievously attacked by leprosy

and advised to bathe in a piscina filled with the innocent blood of children.

The strange noise and hideous crying of their tender mothers was so dreadful to hear,

[How Constantyne baptized bi Siluester was cured of his lepre.] 1

OFF this mateer stynte I wil awhile
And folwe myn owne strange oppynyoun,
Fro Constancius turne away my stile,
To his fadir make a digressioun,
Cause Bochas maketh but short mencioun
Of Constantyn, which be record of clerkis,
Was so notable founde in al his werkis.

This myhti prince was born in Breteyne,
So as the Brut pleyndi doth vs lere;
His hooli moodir callid was Heleyne,
He in his daies most knihtli & enteere.
Of marcial actis he knew al the maneere,
Chosen emperour for his hih noblesse,
Fill to [be] lepre, cronicles expresse.

His soor so greuus that no medecyne
Myte auaile his seeknesse to recure;
He [was] counsailed to make a gret piscyne,
With innocent blood of childre that wer pure
Make hym cleene of that he did endure.

Thoruh al Itaill childre anon wer souht,
And to his* paleis be ther moodris brouht.

It was gret routhe to beholde & see,
Of tendre moodres to heere the sobbyng,
Be furious constreyn of ther aduersite,

1 MS. J. leaf 155 verso.
Hir clothes to-rent, bedewed with weepyng.
The straunge noise of ther hidous cryng
Ascend up, that ther pitous clamour
Kam to the eris of themperour,
Of which[e] noise themperour was agrised.
What that he knew ground & occasiou
Of this mateer, afforn told & deuysed,
This noble prince gan haue compassiou
And for to stynte the lamentacioun
Of all the women ther beyng in presence,
Of merciful pith hath chaungid his sentence.

This glorious, this gracious emperour
Is clomb of mercy so hih vpow the staire.
Spared nouther vitaille* nor his tresour,
Nor his langour that dide hym so appaire.
With ful glad cheer[e] maad hem to repaire;
Where thei cam sori to Roome the cite,
Thei hom returned glad to ther contre.

Roialcompassiou dide in his herte myne;
Ches to be sik rather than blood to sheede,
His brest enlumyned with grace which is dyuyne,
Which fro the heuene dide vpon hym spreede.
He wolde nat suffre innocentis bleede,
Preferryng pithe merci mor than riht;
He was visitid vpon the next[e] niht.

Petir and Poule to hym dede appere,
Sent fro the Lord as heuenli massagers,
Bad Constantyn been of riht good cheere,
"For he that sit aboue the nyne speiris,
The Lord of Lordis, Lord of lengest yeeris,
Wil that thou wete, — haue it weil in mynde, —
In mount Serapti thou shalt thi leche fynde.

God of his grace list the to visite,
To sheede blood because that thou dost spare;
He hath vs sent thi labour for to quyte;
Tidyngis brouht of helthe & thi weelfare
Pope Siluester to the shal declare,
As we haue told[e], be riht weel assured,
Of thi seeknesse how thou shalt be recurid,
To mont Serpiti in al hast that thou seende,
Suffre Siluester come to thi presence.”
Souht & founde, breeshi to make an cende,
Resceyued aftir with deu reverence,
Dide his deuer of enteer dilligence,
Lik as the lyff of Siluester hath deuised,
Be grace maad hool, whan he was baptised.

His flessh was suddenly maad* whiht
Be thries waschyng in the fresch piscyne
Of holi baptem, welle of most deuhl,
Wher the Hooli Gost did[e] hym enlumyne.
Enfourmyd aftir be teching & doctryne
Of Siluester, lik as myn auctour seith,
Of alle articles that longe onto our feith.

The font was maad[e] of porfirie stoon,
Which was aftir be cost of Constantyn
With a round bie, that dide aboute gon,
Of gold & perl & stonis that wer fyng;
Myd of the font, riht up as a lyn,
Vpon a piler of gold a laumpe briht,
Ful of fyng bawme, that brente day &* niht.

A lamb of gold he did also prouyde,
Set on this font vpon a smal pilere,
Which lik a conduit vpon euery side
Shad out water as eny cristal cleer,
On whos riht side an ymage most enteer
Was richeli forgid of our Saviour,
Al of pure gold, that coste gret tresour.

And of this lamb vpon the tothir side,
An image set longe to endure
Of Baptist Iohn, with lettres for tabide
Graue coriousli, & this was the scripture:
“Ecce Agnus Dei, that did for man endure,
On goode Friday offrid up his blood,
To saue mankynde starf upon the rood.”

1232. recurid] cured R. 1233. that] om. R.
1240. His flessh his senewes maad sodenli whiht B; J & R and
H 5 omits 2nd his.
1241. puisyne H. 1246. longeth to R.
1253. day &] al the B, J. 1255. this] his R.
1256. conduct R. 1264. was] om. R.
He leet also make a gret censer of gold, fret with perles fyne,  
Which be nyhte* as Phebus in his speer  
Thoruh al the chercb most fresshli did[e] shyne;  
Ther wer fourti stonis iacynctyne.

Appollos temple, myn auctour writ the same,  
Was halwid newe in Seynt Petris name.  
The Romeyn templis, that wer bilt of old,  
He hath fordoon with al ther maumetrie;  
Ther false goddis of siluer & of gold  
He hath tobroke vpon ech partie.

This goodli prince, of goostli policie,  
Set of newe statutis of greut vertu  
To been obseruid in name of Crist Iesu.

The firste lawe, as I reherse caw,  
In ordre set with ful greut reuerence,  
That Crist Iesu was sothfast god & man,  
Lord of Lordis, Lord of most excellence,  
"Which hath this day, of his benyuolence.

Cured my lepre, as ye haue herd deuysed,  
Be blissid Siluester whan I was baptised.

This gracious Lord, my souereyn Lord Ihesu,  
From hen[ne]s-foorth, for short conclusiou[n,  
I wil that he, as Lord of most vertu,  
Of feithful herte & hool afFecciouw  
Be worsheped in euery regioun; —  
No man so hardi my biddeng to disdeyne,  
List he incurre of deth the greuous peyne."

The second punished blasphemy of the name of Christ by death.

The third provided for the confiscation of one half of the wealth.

1268. Also a great censer of gold and pearls that shone like the sun, and 40 jacinths. He turned the temple of Apollo into St. Peter’s.
1272. He turned the temple of Apollo into St. Peter’s.
1276. He turned the temple of Apollo into St. Peter’s.
1280. He turned the temple of Apollo into St. Peter’s.
1284. He turned the temple of Apollo into St. Peter’s.
1288. He turned the temple of Apollo into St. Peter’s.
1292. He turned the temple of Apollo into St. Peter’s.
1295. He turned the temple of Apollo into St. Peter’s.
Constantine's virtuous Decrees

of any man who oppressed or wronged a Christian.

The fourth gave to the pope the prerogative of ruling the priests as the king rules his temporal lords.

The fifth granted freedom to the church and the right of asylum to fugitives.

The sixth forbade men to build churches without a licence from the bishop.

The seventh decreed that the tenth part of all the royal possessions should be appropriated annually for building churches.

On the eighth day Constantine took off his royal garments, and kneeling down before St. Peter,

- Be oppression or [be] collateral wrong,
- It should[ez] nat be taried ouer long,
- Who wer convict or gilt shal nat chese
- Be lawe ordeyned halff his good to lese.

- The fourthe day, among[es] Romeyns all
- This pryuylege pronounced in the toun,
- Yowe to the pope sittynge in Petris stall,
- As sourecyn hed in everey regioun
- To haue the reule and iurediccioun
- Of preestis alle, allone in alle thyng,
- Of temporal lordis lich as hath the kyng.

- To the cherche he granted gret franchise
- The fithe day & special liberte:
  Yif a feloun in any maner wise
  To fynde socour thidir dide flea,
  Wythynne the boundis fro daunger to go fre,
  To been assurid & haue ther ful refuge
  From excuciuon of any temporal iuge.

- No man presume withynne no cite, —
- The sixte day, he gaff this sentence, —
- No man so hardi, of hih nor louh degre,
- To beelde no cherche, but he haue licence,
- Of the bishopp beyng in presence;
- This to seyne, that he in his estat
  Bi the pope afforn be approbat.

- The seuenthe* day, this lawe he did eek make:
  Of all poccessiouns which that be roiall,
  The tenth part [y]eerli shal be take
  Be iugis handis, in parti & in all,
  Which[e] tresour thei delyuere shall,
  As the statut doth pleylni speecsiue,
  Hool & enteer cherchis to edefie.

- The eihte day meekli he ded hym quite,
- With gret reuerence & humble affecciuon,
- Whan he did of al his clothes white
- And cam hymsilf on pilgrymage doun
- Tofor Seynt Petir of gret deuocioun;
- Natwithstondyng his roial excellence,
- Made his confessioun in open audience.

1308. fourthe] fourty R.
1312. and alle] on H.
1316. Whiche] with H.
His crowne take of, knelyng thus he saide.
With weepyng eyen & voys most lamentable,
And for sobbyng as he myght abraide:
"O blissid Iesu, o Lord most merciable,
Lat my teres to the be acceptable;
Resseuye my prayer; my request nat refuse,
As man most synful, I may me nat excuse.

I occupied thestat of the emperour;
Of thi martirs I shedde the hooli blood,
Spared no seyntes in my cruel errore,
The to pursue fell, furious & wood.
Now blissid Iesu, most gracious & most good,
Peised & considered myn importable offense,
I am nat worthi to come in thi presence,

Nor for to entre into this hooli place,
Vpon this ground vnhand for to duell,
To opnen myn eyen or to left up my face;
But of thi merci so thou me nat repell,
As man most synful, I come vnto thi well,
Thi welle of grace and mercifull pite
For to be washe of myn inquitie."

This exaumple in open he hath shewed,
His staht imperial of meeknesse leid aside,
His purpil garnemement with teres al bedewed;
Suerd nor sceptre nor hors upon to ride
Ther was non seyn, nor baners splaied wide;
Of marcial tryumphes ther was no tokne founde,
But criyng merci, theemperour lay plat to grounde.

The peeplis gladnesse was medlid with wepyng,
And ther wepyng was medlid with gladnesse,
To seen an emperour and so notable a kyng
Of his free chois shewe so gret meeknesse.
Thus entirmedlid was ioie & heuynesse:
Heuynesse for passid old vengaunce,
With newe reioisshyng of gostli repentaunce.

This ioie was lik a feeste funerall, [p. 381]
In folk of custum that doon ther besi cure
To brynge a corps, which of custum shall

removed his crown and confessed, weeping and with a sorrowful voice, that he was a sinful man.

that he had shed the blood of saints and martyrs.
"I am not worthy, blessed Jesus, to appear in thy presence;"

but I come to thee to be washed clean of my iniquity."

This example he gave in public, bedewing his garments with tears and laying aside his royal insignia.

The people wept for joy to see so notable an emperor and king shew such meekness.

It was like a funeral where the corpse comes to life,
Haue al the rihtis of his sepulture,
And in this tyme, of sodeyn aventure 1384
To lyf ageyn restored be his bonys,
Causyng his frendis to lauhe & weep e attonis,

Thus the people rejoiced and wept by turns to see their emperor asking mercy for his sins.

Semblabli dependyng atween tweyne,
The peopple wepte, & therwith reoisshyng 1388
To seen ther emperour so pitouls compleyne,
For his trespacis merci requeryng:
Of joie and sorwe a gracious medlyng.
That day was sey[e]ng gladnesse meyn with moone, 1392
With weepyng lauhtre, & al in o persone.

Aftir al this he digged up hymselue
Stones twelue, wher he lay knelyng, 1396
[And] putte hem in cofynes tuelue,
On the tuelue postlis deoultli remembring,
Compassed a ground large for beeldying,
Beside his paleys caste theron to werche
In Cristes name to sette up ther a cherche. 1400

The place of olde callid Lateranence,
Bilt and edefied in thapostlis name.
Constantynvs bar al the dispense,
Ordeyned a lawe, myn auctour seith the same, 1404
Yif any poore, nakid, halt or lame
Resceyue wolde the feith of Crist Iesu,
He sholde be statut be take to this issu:

In his promys yif he wer founde trewe, 1408
That he wer nat be feynyng no faityour,
He sholde first be spoiled & clad newe
Be the costage off the emperouer,
Tuenti shillyng rescuyue to his socour,
Of which resseit nothyng was withdrawe,
Be statut kept & holde as for a lawe.

It wer to longe to putte [al] in memorie,
His hih prowesse & his notable deedis,
And to rehearse[n] euery grety victorie
Which that he hadde with hostis that he ledis;
And to rememble al his gracious speedis,
The surplusage, who list [to] comprehende, Lat hym of Siluestre reede the legende.

And among othir, touchyng his visioun, Which that he hadde, in cronicles men may lere,

Whan that he slepte in his roial dongoun, How Crist to hym did graciosuli* appeere,
Shewed hym a cros, & seide as ye shal heere: “Be nat afferd upon thi soon to falle,
For in this signe thou shalt overcome hem alle.”

Be which auyseouw he was maad glad & liht Thoruh Goddis grace & heuenli influence.

First in his baneer, that shon so cleer & briht, The cros was bete, cheef tokne of his diffence.

Slouh the tirauwt that callid was Maxence, Aftir whos deth[e], thoru hih renoun
Of al thempire he took pocessiouw.

In which estat he meyntened trouthe & riht, Vpon al poore hauyng compassiouw,

Duryng his* tyme holde the beste kniht That owher was in any regioun,
Of Cristes feith thymperial champioun,
Thoru hih noble knihtli magnificence To alle Cristene protectour & diffence.

Aftir his name, which neuer shal appall, Chaunged in Grece the name of Bizante;

Constantynople he did it aftir call, And on a steede of bras, as men may see,
Manacyng of Turkis the contre, He sit armyd, a gret suerd in his bond
Them to chastise that rebelle in that lond.

Reioisshe ye folksi that born been in Breteyne, Callid othirwise Brutis Albioun,
That hadde a prince so notabli souereyne Brouht forth & fostrid in your regioun,
That whilom hadde the domynacioun,
As cheef monarche, prince & president, Ouer al the world, from est til occident.

1420. did graciosuli] graciously did B.
1426. ye] om. R.
1429. glad] om. R.
1432. bete] bore H.
1438. his] this B.
1450. ye] the R. 1455. monarchye H.
Julian the Apostate, a cursed Man

When he died the sun was not seen for a month, and there was a great comet in the south that drew towards his palace in Nicomedia.

Tyme of his deth, that moneth of ye yeer
Phebus nat seyn, withdrouh his fervent heete;
And longe afforn[e] large, brod & cleer,
Toward Affrik shewed a gret comete,
Alway encresyng, drouh toward the sete
Of Nichomedie, shon erli & eek late,
Wher in his paleis he passed into fate.

[How Iulian Apostata enmy to cristys bi fals Illusions was chose Emperour and after slayn.]

A FTIR the deth of this marcial man,—[p.382]1464
I meene this noble worthi Constantyn, —
Kometh Thapostata, cursid Iulian,
Which be descant to Constantyn was cosyn.
His gynynge cursid, hadde a cursid fyn,
Entred religiou, as bookis specife,
Vnder a colour of fals ipocrisie.

It hath be scid[e] of antiquite,
Wher that ther is dissymuled hoolynesse,
It is icallid double iniquite,—
Fih on al suich feyned parfitnesse!
For symulacioun curid withb doubilnesse
And fals[e] semblaunt with a sobre face,
Of alle [fals] sectes stonde ferthest out of grace.

For a time he devoted himself to religion, and then, wearying of his order, forsook it and gave himself up to necromancy.

A certeyn space, as maad is mencioun,
To al perfeccioun he did hymself applie,
Til he waxe weri of his profession,
Forsook his ordre bi apostacie.
And first he gaff hym to nigromancye,
Double Apostata, as myn auctour seith,
First to his ordre & aftir to our feith.

Bi ordynaunce of Constanctivs,
This said Iulian, roote of ipocresie,
Of gouernaunce froward & vicious,
Was sent to Gaule with gret cheualrie
As viker chose the contre for to guye.

1 MS. J. leaf 157 recto — How] So J.
Gat hym faavour & falsli gan conspire
To haue poccisioun of al the hool empire.
And for he was nat likli to atteyne
To that estat, he did his hert applie
Another mene pleyzli to ordeyne,
Wikked spiritis to make of his allie,
Becam a prenty to lerne sorcerye,
To haue experience be invocaciouns
To calle spirites with his coniurisouns.*

Be fals illusion in the peeplis sihte,
Of wikked spiritis had so gret faavour,—
A crowne of lauier upon his hed aliht,—
Made folk to deeme, bi ful fals errour,
It cam be myracle, to chese hym emperour.
Which of trouthe as in existence
Was but collusioun* & feyned apparence.
With hem he hadde his conversacioun,
Spared nat to doon hem sacrifise
With cerimonyes & fals oblacioun,
And to thempire he roos up in this wise:—
Thestat resceyuyd, first he gan deuyse
Ageyn Grekis, out of his contre ferre,
To make hym strong with hem to haue a werre. 1512

The Feend a while was to hym faavourable,
Gaf hym entre and poccisioun,
And made hym promys for tabide stable
In his lordship and domynacioun;
To haue this world vndir subieccioun;
Of which beheste he stood in pereilous cas,
Folwyng thoppynyoun of Pigtagogas.

Pigtagogas hadde this oppinyoun:
Whan men deide, anon aftir than
Ther was maad[e] a translacioun
Of his speryt in-tanothir man,
A maner liknesse; the Bible telle can,
The double speryt of grace & prophecie
To Heliseus was grantid be Helye.

* and at first not succeeding, allied himself with wicked spirits and became an appre- 1492
prentice to sorcery,

and made the people believe that a crown of laurel alighted on his head by miracle, whereas it was set there by the spirits to whom he sacrificed. 1500

In this manner he was chosen emperor.

He made war on Greece; and for a while the devil favoured him. 1496

Following the opinion of Pythagoras, 1504

who believed in the trans- 1520
migration of souls,

To haue off all R — al] om. R.
Becam] he becam H, J; R 3.
coniurisouns] coniuraciouns B. 1502. to] om. H.
coniurisouns H. 1508. oblaciouus H.
Ageyn] geyn H. 1512. haue a] ha H.
Julian, an Enemy of Christ’s Law

Hecon concludeyn, lik his oppynyoun,

As Pictagoras affermed in sentence,

He that hadde ful pocessioun

Of suich a speryt, in verray existence

Sholde haue the same wisdam & science,

The disposicioun aftir hym as blyue, —

Which hadde that speryt whil he was heer alyue, —

Of gouernaunce and also of nature

Resemblyn hym, of maneres & lyuyng.

And thus be fraude Pluto did his cure

To make Iulian to truste in eueri thyng,

He hadde be berth the sperit of the kyng

Callid Alisaundre, be which he sholde wynne

This world be conquest, whan-eyer hym list beginne.

Thus gan he fonde & falle in fantasie

To truste on Pluto & goddis infernal,

Thei sholde enhauence hym bi his cheualrie

For to posseede and reioysshe al, —

Suerd, sceptre, crowne and staat imperial,

Passe Alisaundre in honour & in glorie

And hym excelle in tryumphal victorie.

So he trusted in Pluto and

the infernal gods.

He also trusted Satan, and

became a mortal enemy
to Christ’s law and broke,
crosses and crucifixes.

Jesus he called ‘Gallilee’ and

sometimes ‘the Nazarene’ in

scorn.

He slew many martyrs and

was an idolater and renegade.

And he fought many wars

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1528. in] this H. 1529. He that] hat he H.
1550. 1st that] om. H. 1552. callith H.
1558. &] an H. 1561. Sapor kyng] kyn Sapore H.
To the Iewes of newe* he gaf licence
To beelde the temple with gret dilligence,
In despiht, of purpos to do shame
To Cristene cheris, bilt newe in Cristes name. 1568

In this while he kauht a gret corage,
In a theatre maad brood in that toun,
Too wilde beestis cruel and sausage
Of seyntis blood to make obliacioun, 1572
Thei to deoure men of religioun.
And alle Cristene of purpos to destroye,
His lust was set & al his worldly ioie.

Bi an heraud that dide his host conveye, 1576
Of verray purpos to brynge hym in treyne,
Bi straunge desertis foude out a froward weye.
The heete importable did hym so constreyne,
Brente thoruh the harneys, felte so gret peyne; — 1580
The drye sondis, the heir infect with heete
Made many a man ther lyff in hast to lete.

This froward tiraunt, knowyng no remedie,
Of cursid herte gan Crist Iesu blasfemme, 1584
And of malicious hatred & envie,
Wood & furious, as it dide seeme,
Gan curse the Lord, that al this world shal deeme,
Crist Iesus, which of long paciencé 1588
List nat be vengaunce his* malis recompençe.

A mor cruel was ther neuer non,
Nor mor vengable: nat Cerbervs in hell,
Mortal enmy to goode men euerichon, 1592
Whos blasfemyes and rebusiks fell,
Be rehersaile yif I sholde hem tell,—
I am afferd the venymous violence
Sholde infecte the heir with pestilence. 1596

He cast out dartis mor bittir than is gall
Of blasfemye & infernal langage;
And in this while among his princis all
A kniht vnknowe, angelik of visage,
Fresshly armyd, to punish his outragé,

1565. or newe] anon B, J, anone P — of newe he gaf] of newe
With a sharp spere, thoruh euery synwe & veyne,
Of this tiraunt roof the herte on twyne.

Bathid in his blood, this tiraunt fill doun lowe, 1604
To God & man froward & odious.

Thouh for that tyme the kniht ne was nat knowe,
Yit summe men seyn it was Mercurius,
Which bi the praiere of Basilius 1608
This tiraunt slouh, as chronicles don* us lere,
Bi a myracle of Cristes mooder deere.

This Mercurius, as bookes determyne,
In Cesaria, a myhti strong cite,

Withynne the contre callid Palestyne,
Buried afforn, roos up at this iourne
Out of his graue, a straunge thyng to see;
An hors brouht to hym, arraied in his armure,
Which heeng toforne beside his sepulture.

The same armvre was nat seyn that niht
Nor on the morwe at his graue founde
Til myyday hour, that Phebus shon ful briht,
What Mercúry* gaf hym his fatal wounde,
His blasfemye for euer* to confounde.
Which thyng accomplisshed, this myracle for to preue,
He and his armure wer ther ageyn at eue. 1616

Of his blasfemye this was the sodeyn wrak
Which the tiraunt resceyuid for his mede.
The laste woord I fynde that he spak:
"Thou Gallíle hast overcome in deede!" 1628

Took the blood[e] that he did[e] bleede,
This deuelish man, deying in despeir,
Despiht of Iesu cast up in the heir.

His bodi flaye[n] & his skyn was take, [p. 384] 1632
Tawed aftir be presett and biddying
Soupole and tendre as thei coude it make,—
Sapor bad so, that was of Perse kyng,
That men myht haue therof knowelechyn 1636

Erli on morwe & at eue late,
He did it naille upon his paleis gate.

1604. his] om. R, his own H. 1605. To God &] To goode a R.
1606. ne] om. H. 1607. seyn] seynt R.
1630 is misplaced before 1628 in H, correction indicated.
1631. in] in to H.
And to a cite that was callid Kaire,
As chronicles make rehersaille,
This Apostata wolde ofte a-day repaire
To a woman, which hadde in hir entraille
Spiritis closid, to make his dyuynaille.
In whos wombe, bareyn & out of grace,
Of wikkid feendis* was the restyng* place.

This said[e] woman was a creature,
The which afforn be cursid Iulian,
Be his lyue his purpos to recure,
In sacrificse was offrid to Sathan.
And so as he with cursidnesse began,
Swich was his eende, as all bookis tell,
Whos soule with Pluto is buried deepe in hell.

With this tiraunt Bochas gan wex[e] wroth
For his most odious [hatful] fel outrage,
And to reherse in parti he was loth
The blasfemyes of his fell langage;
For nouther furye nor infernal rage
May be comparid, with poisoun fret withynne,
To the fals venym of this horrible synne.

It is contrarie to alle goode thewes,
And tofor God most abhominable;
Hatful to alle sauff to cursid shrewes:
For of alle vices verray incomparable,
Most contagious & most detestable,
The mouth infect of suich infernal houndis
Which eueri day sle Crist withb newe woundis.

Folk obstynat of purpos for the nonys,
Of disposicioun furious & wood,
Nat afferd to suere [by] Goddis bonys,
With horrible othes of bodi, flessh & blood,
The Lord disembrong, most gracious, most good,
His feet, his handis, armys, face & hed,
Reende hym of newe, as thei wolde haue hym ded.

The blissid Lord, which is inmortal,
Thou be thi be dedli, thei wolde hym sle ageyn.
Thei be erthli; he is celestiall;

1640. During his lifetime this Apostate used to consult a woman in Cairo whose belly was the resting place of evil spirits, and whom he afterwards offered up in sacrifice to Satan.
1644. Blasphemy is contrary to Virtue
1652. Bochas began to grow angry with this tyrant for his outrages and blasphemies.
1660. It is contrary to all virtue and abominable to God.
1664. Obstinate folk of evil disposition swear horrible oaths by God's bones his body and blood, dismembering him of new, as if they would again have him dead.

B, J, P — restyng] duellyng B. 1648. his] hir H.
Blasphemy comes from Pride. Valens

In froward wise thei be ouerseyn;
Discrecioun faileth; ther resoun is in veyn:
Al suich bla[sh]eme, for short conclusioun,
Proceedith of pride & fals ambiicioun.

It seemeth to me, thei haue foule failed
Of kynd[e]nesse to doon hym reverence,
Which for ther loue upon a cros was nailed
To paiie the* raunsoun for mannys gret offence, 1684
Suffred deth with humble pacience,
Fals rebukynge, spittynge in his visage,
To brynge mankynde onto his heritage.

It all comes from pride; and Satan is the original cause.
Julian was most unfortune Reigning under him.

What was the end of this tiraunt horrible,
This cruel feloun, hatful to eueri wiht? 1696
Be sodeyn myracle to al his host visible,
 Ther did appeere a varray heuenli kniht,
Most fresshli armyd & angelik of siht.
With a sharp spere, sittyng on his steeede,
Made the tiraunt his herte blood to bleede.

His false gods could not help him nor all his sorcery and invocations.

[How the Emperour Valence / slouh heremytes shad cristen blood destroied chirches & after was brent.] 1

Bochas next turns to Valens, and first tells us about the perfect holiness

1684. the] ther B, R, J.  1685. he deth H.
1700. sharp] om. H.
1 MS. J. leaf 158 recto.
Of hermytis, that dide ther dilligence 1712
To lyuе in penaunce & in abstynence;
Forsook the world[e], & for Cristes sake
Into desert thei haue the weye take.

In this world heer thei list no lenger tarye, [p. 385] 1716
Dyuer & double, of trust noun certeyn;
Ferr in Egypt to lyue solitarye,
Deepe in desertis, of folk nat to be seyn.
The soil was drye; of vitaille ful bareyn;
The frutles treen up sered to the roote:
For Cristes loue thei thouhte that lyff most soote.

This said Valence, of malis frowardli
To thes hermytes, that lyued in gret penaunce, 1724
Causeles [to hem] was gret enmy,
Troubled hem & did hem gret greuaunce.
Lik a tiraunt set al on vengaunce,
Destroyed cherchis with peeple that he ladde;
And wher he rood Cristen blood he shadde.

This mene while be robbyng & rauyne
In Mauritayne, which is a gret contre,
Ther was a prince that callid was Fyryne;
And in Cesarea, a famous gret cite,
For his extorsioun & his cruelte
He took upon hym, proudli ther regnyng,
Maugre [the] Romeyns to be crownd kyng. 1736

Theodore the Firste, a manli man,
Was sent out his malys to withstonde
Be the biddynge of Valentynyan,
Which that tyme thempire hadde on honde,
Bothe attonys; but ye shal vndirstonde,
Theodosi was sent out to assaile
The saide Fryn, and slough hym in bataille.

Of which Fyrn, be ful cruel hate,
In that contre presumptuousli regnyng,
Smet of his hed & set [it] on the gate
Of Cesaria; this was his eendyng,
Which be intrusioun afforn was crownd king 1748

1716. lenger] lenger no R.
1722. thei] the R — most] so H.
1725. enmy] enyve H. 1728. peeplis H.
1734. is erased H — 2nd his] gret H.
1735. ther] the R. 1737. man] knyht R.
1746. it] om. R. 1747] of Cesaria a Cite of gret bildyng H.
In Maurityayne, oppressing them be dread,
As ye haue herd, for which he loste his hed.

In this mater Bochas doth nat soiourne
Be non attendance nor no long dilligence,
But of purpos doth ageyn retourne
To themperour that callid was Valence,
Which, as I tolde, dide so gret offence
To hooli cherch of froward cursidnesse,
Slouh al hermytes that bood in wildirnesse.

God wold nat suffre he sholde long endure,
Graunteth no tiraunt to haue heer no long lyff;
For be sum mysheef or sodeyn auenture
Thei deien be moordre, with dagger, suerd or kniff.
The Gothois whilom ageyn hym* gan a stryff, —
For his outrage & gret oppressiou[n]
Thei ageyn Romeyns fill in rebellion.

A prince off his callid Maxymvs
Distressed hem bi so gret tiranye,
Was vpon hem so contrarious,
That thei gadred al ther cheualrie
And wex so strong vpon ther partie,
That bi ther manhod, it fill of auenture,
Thei on Valence made a disconfiture.

Spared nat bi robbynge and pillage,
Slouh & brente many statli place,
Cities, towns & many smal village,
That wer famous withynne the lond of Trace.
But al this while Valence gan enchace,
And causeles, of malis voluntarie,
Pursued hermytes that lyued solitariye.

And of newe this Valence gan ageyn
Gret multitude of Romeyns to purchase,
And with his host[e] prouldi be disdeyn
But furiousli thei mette hym in the face,
Wher lik a coward he turned his visage,
To saue his lyff lay hid in a cotage.
Thus fynalli this emperour Valence,
As ye haue herd, failel of his entent.
The Gothes folwed be cruel violence,
As Wilde woluys*, alle of oon assent,
The hous & hym to asshis thei haue brennt.
Loo, heer the fyn, ye pryncis taketh heede,
Of tirauntis that* seyntes blood do* sheede! 1792

[Off kyng Amaricyus / and how Gracyan and
Theodosie destroied temples of fals goddis / &
how gracyan was put to flight.] 1

After Valens, Hermanric appeared before
Bochas; once

Hermanric, Grabtian, Theodosius
ruled Rome.

After Valens,

Hermanric appeared before
Bochas; once

king of the

Goths, he grew
old and
dropeical and
finally slew
himself.

Woluys* beestes
B, J, beastes
P.

1787] In all his werkes most frowarde of entent H.
1789. woluys] beestes B, J, beastes P.
1792. that] the B — do] to B.
1798. bollen H.
1800. to Bochas] doune B — brother] nephew P.
1802, 3 are transposed H, R. 1810. mawmentrye H.
1811. deoue R. 1813. Maxymyan H.
1 MS. J. leaf 158 verso.
But into Gaule of hert & hool entent
Geyn Gracian he sodenli is went.
And as it fill, set be ther bothe ayus,
Thei hadde a bataille nat ferr out of Parys.

This Gracian was ther put to fligh
Bi the prowesse of a proud capteyn
Callid Merobandus, was an hardi kniht,
Which with his poweer hath so ouerleyn,
That Gracian was constreynd in certeyn,
Whan his poweer myhte nat availe
Geyn Maxymvs, to fleen out of Itaille.

This Maxymvs of pride gan desire
In his herte be fals ambicioun
To regne allone, & of the hool empire
In his handis to haue poecessioum.
But in what wise Fortune threw hym down
With suich othir, that be in nou[m]bre fyue,
In this chapitle Bochas doth descryue.

With Maxymvs to holde up his partie
Was Andragracion, a ful notable kniht,
Which was maad prince of his cheualrie,
That took upon hym of verray force & myht
To keepe the mounteyns, that no maner wifth
With Theodose, armyd in plate & maile, —
No man sholde ouer the Alpies of Itaille.

Theodore maad a gret arme,
Be grace of God and marcial corage
Leide a seege to Aigle, a gret cite,
And wan the toum, maugre his visage;
Took the tiraunt, and for his gret outrage

1830. the hool empire] al thempire H. 1832. what] that R.
1838. tavenge H — in hast a werre R — gan H.
1841. from] out of H.
1843. Andragnathius P. 1851. Aquile P — a gret] be H.
Berafft hym first his roial garnement
And sloh hym aftir be rihtful iugement.

When Andragracian knew that Maximus,
That was his lord, was slay[e]n in swich wise,
Anon for sorwe, the stori tellith thus,
He drowned hymself, as Bochas doth deuise.
Thus can Fortune make folk arise
To thestat of emperours atteyne,
With vnwar strok yiue hym a fal sodeyne.

This Maximvs, of whom I spak tofor,
Tofore his deth[e] made an ordynaunce,
That his sone, which callid was Victor,*
Sholde aftir hym gouerne Gaule & Fraunce,
Whom Arbogastes hadde in gouifrnaunce —
A gret constable with Valentynyan —
Slouh this Victor* to regne whan he began.

[A good processe how Theodosie with praiere and
smal noumbre got the victory.] 1

THAN Valentynyan with gret apparaile
Bi Arbogastes took pocessioun
Of Lumbardie & of al Itaile,
Brouht al that lond to subieccioun.
Than with his powere he cam to Gaule doun,
Ther rescuyyd with gret solempnite
At Vyenne, a famous old cite.

Arbogastes, of whom I spak now late,
His cheef constable, as ye haue herd deuise,
Of his lord[e] be ful cruel hate
The deth conspired of fals couetise,
Therbi supposyng that he shold arise
Vnto thestat to be chose emperour,
Whan he wer ded[e], lik a fals tretour.

Vp in a tour he heeng hym traitourli,  [p. 387] and hung him
[And] to mor sclauudre & hyndryng of his name,
Reportid outward and seide cursidi,
This Arbogaste, to hide his owne shame, —
His souereyn lord to putte in mor diffame, —

1856. Andragathius P. 1862. hym] hem R.
1 MS. J. leaf 159 recto.
Stefli affermed, a thyng that was ful fals,
How he hymself[e] heng up bi the hals.

Thus lik a moordrer and a fals tretour,
And of condiciouns fuld and odious,
Laboured sore to be maad emperour,
That he allone with Eugenius

Mihte exclude Theodosyus,
First to lette hym, he sholde on no partie

Passe thoruh Itaille nor thoruh Lumbardie.

Sette espies to brynge hym in a treyne,
Which that tyme, as thei vnvirstood,
Lik a iust prynce did his besy payne,
As he that thouhte nothyng but on good,
In the hilles of Lumbardie abood,
Whom Arbogast, of furious corage,
Cast hym to trouble & stoppen his passage,

He and Eugenius beyng of assent
Theodosie mortalli tassaile.

Which whan he knew ther meenyng* fraudulent,
Al-be that he had but scars vitaille,
On eueri cost besette with a bataille,
And of his knihtis forsaken in maneere,
He lefte all thyng & took hym to praiere.

With hym was left[e] but a smal meyne,
Trew & faithful in ther affecioun.

And first of alle he fill doun on his kne
And to Ierus gan make his orisoun:
“O Lord,” quod he, “thy eres enclyne doun,

And of thi merciful gracious [hie] goodnesse
Delyuere me out of my mortal distresse.

Considre & see how that I am thi kniht,
Which ofte sithe thoruh my fragilite,

With flesshli lustis bleendid in my sht,
A thousand tymes haue trespasid onto the;

But, gracious Ierus, of merci & pite

To my requestis benigneli tak heed
Me to socoure in this gret[e] need.

1903. Whom] Whilome H.
1909. besette] sett H.
1920. ofte] of R. 1925. in] now in H.
The Prayer of Theodosius

My trust is hool, pleynli to conclude,
Thou shalt foorthre & fortune my viage,
With litil folk ageyn gret multitude
To make me haue gracious passage,
Affir the prouerbe of newe & old langage,
How that thou maist & kanst thi poweer shewe
Geyn multitude victorie with a fewe.

And as thou sauedest whilom Israel
Geyn Phar[al]os myhti strong puissaunce,
And fro the leouns delyueredest Danyel,
And saueddest Susanne in hir mortal greuance
Saue me this day fro sorwe & myschaunce,
In this myschef to grante me this issu,
Tescape fro daunger be grace of the, Iesu!

Thi* blissid name be interpretacioun
Is to seyne most myhti Saueowr;
Ther is no dreed nor dubitacioun
That Iesus is in al worldli labour
To al that trust hym victorious protectour.

Now, blissid Iesu, pauys of my difFence,
Make me escape myn enmyes violence!

Lat myn enmyes, that so gret bost do blowe,
Thouh ther powerre be dreadful & terrible,
That thei may bexperience knowe
Ther is to the nothyng impossible, —
Thou too and thre & oon indiysible,
Thouh I with me haue but fewe men,
Saue me, Iesu, this day fro deth; Amen.”

The day gan cleere, the sunne gan shewe briht,
Whan Theodosie deuoutli lay knelyng,
And be grace adawen gan his siht
Fro cloudi waves of long pitous weeping,
His souereyn hope set in the heuenli kying,
Iesus his capteyn, in whos hooli name
That day escapid fro myscheef & shame.

The hooli crosse bete in his armure,
Born as cheef standard toforn in his bataile;
God made hym strong[e] in the feeld tendure,
Theodosius defeats Arbogastes

Hardi as leoun* his emy to assaile;
Jesus his champioun, his plate & eek his mail, —
Jesus allone, set fix in his memorie,
Be whom that day he hadde the* victorie.

Ther was a kniht, prince of the cheualrie [p. 388] 1968
Of Arbogast and [of] Eugenivs,
Which gouerned al hool[i] ther partie,
Ambio callid, manli and vertuous,
Which goodli cam to Theodosius,
Did hym reuerence, & with riht glad cheer
Saued hym that day fro myscheef & daungeer.

Whan Theodosie upon his soon gan sette,
Lik a kniht nat turnyng his visage,
And bothe batailes togidre whan thei mette,
Of Theodosie texplete the passage
Fill a myrracle to his auauntage:
Be sodeyn tempest of wyndis, hail & reyn
Troubled all tho that seeged the mounteyn.

Vulcan bent his guns of thunders
And lightning, and Eolus
took captive and beheaded;
Arbogastes slew himself.

The enemy
were scattered, their spears
broken, their shields riven
asunder.
Eugenius was*
beheaded; Arbogastes slew
himself.

1988. Arbogastes P.
1989. ther] yonder] ther R.
Thus can the Lord of his eternal myht
Chastise tirauntis & ther malis represse;
Saued Theodose, his owne chose kniht:
Who trustith hym of parfit stabilnesse,
Goth free fro daungeer, escapeth fro distresse.

Thus can the Lord of his eternal myht
Chastise tyrants and save those who trust in him.

Bookis recorde how Theodosius
Was in his tyme callid Catholicus.

This myracle God list for hym werche,
Made hym victor for his gret meeknesse.

God worked this miracle
and made Theodosius victorious for his great meekness;
and once when he was revengeful he afterwards devoutly submitted himself to the church.

The caas was this, as I rehearse can:
In Thesalonica, a famous old cite,
Beyng bishopp Seynt Ambrose in Melan,
Certeyn iuges* for to doon equite
And sitte in doom hauyng auctorite,
Natwithstondyng ther commyssioun
Wer slayn be comouns entryng in the* toun.

Certain judges in Thessalonica
were slain by the commons;
and the emperor in his anger
ordered his knights to enter the city
and massacre the people.

Wherof* themperour was nothyng* glad nor fayn,
But comaundd of hasti wilfulnesse,
Whan he knew his iuges wer so slayn,
That his knihtis sholde hem thidir dresse,
Entre* the cite be cruel sturdynesse,
With suerd & pollex & daggeres sharpe whette,
Indifferentli slen al tho þat thei mette.

Five thousand were mur-dered, in-cluding many innocent.

Bi whos biddying the cite to encoumbre,
That day was slayn many an innocent:
Fyue thousand ded remembrid in that noumbre,
Moordrid in hast withoute iugement
Bi them that wer nerto* the cite sent.
But whan Ambrose herde of this cruel deede,
Lik a iust prelat thus he gan proceede:

St. Ambrose heard of this cruel deed,
and afterwards when he met
Theodosius on the porch of

As ye haue herd[e] how this vengaunce gan,
Be Theodosie to chastise the cite,

The same emperour cam aftir to Melan,
The cathedral church at Milan, he forbad him to enter.

saying, "I advise you to go away; you are a cruel homicide and shall not enter this church in spite of your power. You can remain outside for a while.

"Go home to your palace and don't let yourself be seen for eight months. God has disdained for all such murderers.

"During these eight months do not presume to enter the church, and take good heed of what I have said; for you'll get no more of me this time, and don't kill any more innocent people."

It would have pierced a heart of steel to see the emperor's humility; for bursting into tears and sobbing he went home to his penance.

Wolde have entr'd at a solemn note
The cathedral church in his most rialte;
Bishopp Ambrose at the porche hym mette,
And of purpos manli hym withsette.

Quod the bishopp, "I counsell the withdrawe,
Into this church thou shalt have nor entre.
Thou hast offendid God and eek his lawe.
Be nat so hardi nor bold, I charge thee,
To sette thi foot nor entre in no degree;
Because thou art a cruel homycide,
Maugre thi myght thou shalt a while abide.

Vnto thi paleis hom ageyn retourne,
This eihte monethes looke thou be nat seyn;
Passe nat thi boundis, doo meekli ther soiourne:
For, trust me weel and be riht weel certeyne,
Al suich moordrers God hath hem in disdeyne.
Blood falsli shad, haue this in remembrance,
Callith day and niht to hym to do vengaunce.

Ageyn[e]s the, for this gret offence [p. 389]
Of innocent blood shad ageyn[e]s riht,
Be just auctorite I yuie this sentence:
This eihte monethes acountid day & niht
To entre the cheregh thou shalt nat come in siht, 2056
Resoun shal holde so iustli the ballaunce
Til thou haue fulli accomplisshid thi penaunce.

What I haue seid[e] tak [t]heerof good heede,
For this tyme thou gest no mor of me.
Withdrawe thy hand innocent blood to sheede
For any rancour or hasti cruelte."
That to behold the gret humylite
Of themperour, considred euerideel,
It wolde haue perced an herte maad of steel.

With hed enclyned he spak no woord* ageyn,
Brast on weepyng with sobbyng vnestauchable,
His purpli weede bedewed as with reyn,
Returnyng hom with cheer most lamentable,
So contynued in his purpos stable,
With al the toknyss of feithful repentaunce
In lowli wise accomplisshed his penaunce.

2039. shal H.
2059. I haue] have I R. 2066. no woord he spak B.
2068. as] all R. 2071. the toknyss] om. H.
Virtuous Princes obey the Church

Gaf exaumple to princis euerichon
In caas semblable, that werke of wilfulnesse
To execucioun for to procede anon,
Meynteene ther error & froward cursidnesse,
Diffende ther trespass, meynteene ther woodnesse,
Ferr out of ioynt, yif it shal be declarid,
To Theodosie for to be comparid.

To the cherche he meekli did obeye,
[Lik] Goddis kniht did lowli his penauwce,
Wher ther be sumwe that wrongH it werreye,
Holde therageyw be froward meyntenaunce.

As men disserue, — lat every wiht tak heede —
He that seeth al quiteth hem ther meede.

Theodosivs list nothyng abregge
To shorte the yerde of his correccioun;
Forsook the platte, of rigOMr took the egge,
Bi meek confessiouw knowywg his trespace,

He knew[e] that God was his soureyn Lord,
To hooli cherch how gretli he was bounde,
Gruchched neuer in thouht, will nor woord,
Hooli on Crist his empire for to founde.

Wher vertu regneth, vertu wil ay rebounde;
And for this prince obeied tal vertu,
Hath now his guerdoun aboue with Crist Iesu.

2078. Ferr] for H, For R 3 — it] all H.
2081. Lik] om. R, J.
2082. ic] om. H.
2087. nothyng] no while H.
2099. his] this H.
2105. ay wil R.
2106. tal] to al H, callid R.
2107. his] om. H.
All peoples are descended from Noah and his three sons, as the Bible says. From Japhet came seven nations:

Gaul, Galatia, the Goths, Italians, Tyre, Scythia and Thrace.

In Thrace the Goths and Scythians had two governors, Alaric, chosen by the gentry, and Radagaisus, chosen by the commons.

The emperor Honorius granted Alaric Gaul, Spain and France, but Stilicho was sent down against him afterwards, and Alaric put him to flight.

Be granted of whom, al the hool contre Youe to Alarik, of Gaule, Spaigne & France, Ther for tabide & holde ther his see, Gothes, Spay[n]olffs vndir his obeissauce, Takyng on hym al the gouernaunce, Til Stillicon out of the occident To meete with them was down fro Roome sent, That tyme Honorius beyng emperour. [p. 390]

The people first of Gaule & Galathe, Of Magoth Gothes & folkis of Itaile, Tire, Sithia, with many gret contre Stondying in Asia, as be rehersaile; But in Europe stand Trace, it is no faile. Gothes, Sithiens of purpos did ordeyne Among hemisilfe[e] gouernour[e]s tweyne:

Knights, gentilmen chose* Alericus To be ther prince and haue the souereynte, Wher the comouns chose Radagasisus. The Gothes first, for grettest surete, With kyng Alerik been entred pe cite, Into Roome to fynde ther socour, That tyme Honorius beyng emperour.

...
The Death of Radagaisus

But Allerik stood so in the grace
Of Fortune, that be verry myht
Stilicon he putte vnto the fliht.

Radagaisus and Aleric of assent
Haue concludid and ful accordid be
Thoruh Itaille for to make her went
Toward Roome, and entre that cite,
Maugre Romeyns to haue the souereynste.
Tofor ther entring gan the toun manace,
The name of Rome to chaungen & difface.

For euermor the toun to doon a shame
Ther purpos was, as ye haue herd deuise;
First of alle to chaung the touns name,
Dempt themslff hable to that emprise.
But Fortune thouhte al othirwise,
Lik hir maneeres to do most damage,
Whan she so to men sheweth fresshest hir visage.

Hir condiciou oun be nat alwey oon;
Stoundemeel of custum she can varie;
For she was first froward to Stillicon,
And to Radagasus eft ageyn contrarie:
In o poyn, she list[e] neuer tarie,
To Radagasus hir fauour did faille,
Be Stillicon he venquisshid in bataille.

Al his pride myht nat make hym speede;
Fortune list[e] so for hym ordeyne,
That he was fayn, at so streiht a neede,
To flee for socour to an hih mounteyne,
Of al vitaille nakid & bareyne,
Whef for hunger he felte so gret greef,
Nih al his peeple deide at* mysheeff.

Of al socour destitut and bareyn,
Sauh no remedie, took hym to he fliht;
Be the Romeyns he was so ouerley
Take at mysheef, & maugre al his myht
In cheynis bounde & dampned anon riht
For to be ded; his peeple, as it is told,
Many on slayn, summe take & summe wer sold.

2146. that] he H.
2149. chaung] daunger R.
2161-63 are transposed in H, but correction indicated.
2170. at] for B.
Ther was no[n] proudere nor mor surquedous
In thilke dayes, pleynli to descriyue,
Than was this said[e] kyng Radagaus,
Which took on hym with Romeyns for to stryue.
His power short, was ouertournd bliue;
For Fortune of malys hadde a lust
To slen this tiraunt with hunger & with thrust. 2184
Among[es] othir proud[e] princis alle
Reioysshed hymsilf bamaner [of] veynglorie,
Because that men in contres ded hym calle
Kynge of Gothes; short is the memorie
Of hym reheresd or writyn in historie,
—
To yiue exaumple, in deede men may fynde
The name of tirauntes is soone put out of mynde.

[How Ruffyne chamberleyn with Theodosie vsurped to be Emperour and therfore by honoryus dampned & his heed smet of.] 1

IH clymbyng vp haþ ofte an vnwar fall
And specialli whan it is sodeyne,
Fro lovh degre testat imperiall,
Whan fals ambiocious the ladder doth ordeyne,
Be vsurpacion presumptuousli tatteyne
Aboue the skies with his hed to perse;
Of hym whens he cam wer shame to rehearse.

And this is especially true
Of those men whose beginnings are often
A shame to rehearse—men who do not wish to know themselves, like Ruffyn,

Once an officer
Of Theodosius, who tried to become emperor by intrusion.

The which Ruffyn was whilom chaumbirleyne
With Theodosie, and holde a manli kniht;
Yit in o thyng he was foul ouersey,

2189. historie] memorye H. 2194. testat] to thestate H.
2199. as] om. H. 2202. worldli] clowdy H.
2203. names B, J—aboue H.
2206. whilome was H. 2207. and] was R.

1 MS. J. leaf 160 verso.
Be couetise bleendid in his siht
To spedde his labour, & hadde no ground of riht.
Be themprowr Honorius he was sent
For to gourne al the orient.

Bi processe Ruffyn was maad vikeer,
Callid aftir vikeer Imperial,
Took upon hym hooli and enteer
Be auctorite, [as] cheef and princepal,
Hymself allone to gourne al,
As most hable; thus he dede deeme,
Beforn all othir to were a diadeeme;
Of hymself so moche he ded[e] make,  [p. 391] and made much of him-
in port and cheere [the] most ambicious.
At Constantynople vnwarli he was take,
First bounde in cheynys and aftir servuid thus:
Be trewe iugement of Honorivs,
His hed smet of and his* riht hand in deede;
This was his eende; of hym no mor I reede.

[How Stillicon and othir of lik condicion ended in
myscheff.] 1

A FFTIR whos deth to Bochas ther cam oon,
Swich another lik of condicioun,
Afforn remembird, callid Stellicon,
Whos sone Euterius, as maad is mencioun,
Purposed hym to haue possessioun
Of thempire hool; pleynli thus he thouhte,
And bi what mene the weie his fadir souhte.

Compendiousli to tellyn of thes tueyne,
Fro dyuers contres toward Septemptriou[n]
To gadre peele, thei dide her besi peyne,
Of many dyuers strauwge nacioun.
Ageyn Honorivs thei cam togidre doun,
[And] as thei mette, Fortune made hem faille,
Bothe attonys slay[e]n in bataille.

2209. Be] to H.
2223. aftir] afterward R.
2225. hed] he R — his] in his B.
2230. Eucherius P.
2239. And as] All R, and H, R 3 — made] dyd R.

1 MS. J. leaf 160 verso.
Constans and Constantine

Their evil beginning had an evil end. Constans and his father Constantine also took upon themselves to usurp power in the Empire.

Both of them then oppressed the people, and, joining together with one Gerontius, conquered many cities in Spain. Gerontius traitorously slew Constans, and shortly afterwards he himself was killed by his own soldiers. As a rule men receive their just reward.

Among others who ended in mischief were Attalus and Heraclian.

Ther gynnyng cursid hadde a wengable fyn; Aftir whos deth I reede of othir tweyne:

\[ Of oon Constans, his fadir Constantyn, Which Constantyn took on hym in certeynes To regne in Gaule, and aftir that ordeyne, In that contre to be gouernour, Ther to contynve as lord and emperour. \]

His sone Constans kaute a devocioun Of conscience, and forthwith anon riht Was shaue a monk, & made his professioun. His fadir aftir of verray force & myht Leet take hym out, gaf hym the ordre of kniht; Both of assent gan make hemsiluen strong Toppresse thecontre & do the peele wrong.

This said[e] Constans, as myn auctour seith, Was confederat, of hatful cruelte, With oon Herencivs, assuraunce maad & feith, As brethre soun for mor auctorite. And for to make the noumbre up of thre, Constantyn was sworn with hem also To been al oon in what thei hadde ado.

Thes said[e] thre sworn and Iioyned thus, Conquered in Spaigne many gret cite; But in this while this seid Herencivs, Traiour and fals, ful of duplicite, His fellawe sloh ageyn his oth, parde. Thus was Constans thoruh fals collusioun Of Herencivs moordred be tresoun.

Herencivs aftir lyued but a while; Be his owne knihtis he slay[en] was also. Fraude for fraude; deceit is quit with gile; It folweth euer & gladli cometh therto:

Men rescuyee ther guerdouns as thei doo. Lat men alwey haue this in remembranunce, Moordre of custum wil eende with myschaunce.

Among suich othir, thus eending in myscheef, Cam Attalus and oon Eraclian;

For no prowesse, but to ther gret repreeff

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Remembred heer; ther stori telle can, 2280
Ageyn Romeyns when thei rebelle gan, 2280
Be Honorivs afforn maad officeeres 2280
And of thempire callid cheef vikeres.

First Attalus for his tirannye, 2284
Whan he in Gaule was maad [a] gouernour, 2284
Went into Spaigne with a gret companye, 2284
Did his peyne and fraudulent labour 2284
Be fals sleihte to be maad emperour.
Take and bounde, exilid for falsnesse, 2288
His hand smet of, eendid in wrechidnesse.

OFF Eraclyan the ende was almost lik, 2292
Yit was he promoot to gret prosperite, 2292
Maad gouernour & lord of [al] Affrik, 2292
Of consuleer roos to the dignite, 2292
Rood thoruh Libie and many gret contre, 2292
With thre thousand shippes gan to saille 2292
And with seuene hundrid taryue [vp] in Itaille. 2296
Swich noumbre of shippis neuer afforn was* seyn, 2300
Lik as it is acontid be writyng;
His naue passed the naue in certeyne
Of myhti Xerses, that was of Perse kyng,
Or Alisandre; but yit in his comyng,
Toward Itaille when he sholde aryve,
The se and Fortune gan ageyn hym stryve.

At his arryuaile he hadde a sodeyn dreed, [p. 392] 2304
Cause Honorius had sent doun a capteyn,
Constancivs callid, gouernour and hed
Of al the Romeyns, to meete hym on the pleyn;
For which Eraclyan tournid is ageyn,
As I fynde, gan take his passage
Toward the cite that callid is Cartage.

Thus Fortune list hir power shewe:
Or he cam fulli to that noble toun,
With sharp[e] suerdís he was al to-hewe
Among his knihtis thoruh fals occasioun*
As thei fill at a descencioun.

2292. al] om. R.
2297. was] wer B, were J.
2312. noble] om. R. 2314. occasioun] collusioun B
2315. at] as R — a] om. H.
Of intrusious began first this quarell,
Agyen Romeyns whan that he gan rebell.

Bochas rehersith here be whom Rome cam to nouȝte.\(^1\)

OFF many myscheuys heer afforn rehersid,
Summe drawe along & summe shortli told,
And hou Fortune hath hir wheel reuersid,
Be tragedies remembrid manyfold
Toforn be Bochas, of princis yong & old,
In the eihȝte* book rehersid the processe,
Echon almost eendid in wretchednesse.

Namli all tho that dide most desire
Be wrong title themsilf to magnifie,
To haue lordshiphe & gouerne the empire,
Thestat imperial prouldli to occupie.
Which estat, pleynli to specifie,
As ferr as Pheebus doth in his speere shyne
Among al lordshipes is drawe onto ruyne.

Fro myn auctour me list[e] nat discorde
To telle the ground whi Roome is com* to nouȝt;
Be an example I cast me to recorde
What was cheef cause, yiff it be weel souȝt,*
Be a stori that cam onto the thouht
Of John Bochas, which, as ye shal lere,
Ful notabli is rehersed heer.

Which example and stori rehersyng,
Ceriousli folwyng myn auctour,
Odoacer, whilom a famouȝ kyng,—
A kyng be name & a gret gouernour,
But of his lyuyng a raunyaȝs robeur,
Out of whos court wer merci & pite
Banshed for euere with trouthe & equite.

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\(^1\) The following chapter-heading is in MS. J. leaf 161 recto: "A good processe why Rome was destroied / and for the same or like cause many other Rewmes."
In that regioun wher merci is nat vsid, And trouthe oppressid is with tirannye, And rihtwisnesse be powere is refusid, Fals extorsiou[n] supporteth robberie, And sensualite can haue the maistrie Aboff resoun, be toknes at a preeff; Which many a lond haue brouht onto myscheeff. 2352

Ther is no rewm may stond in surete, Ferme nor stable in verray existence, Nor contune in long prosperite, But yf the throne of kyngli excellence Be supportid with iustise and clemence In hym that shal as egal iuge stonde Tween riche & poore, with sceptre & suerd* in honde.

A cleer exaumple, this mateer for to grounde, — 2360
So as a fadir that is naturall, Or lik a moodir which kynd[elli] is bounde To fostre ther childre in epsecial, Riht so a kyng in his estat roiall 2364
Sholde of his offis dilligenti entende His trewe leeges to cherisshe [hem] & diffende.

Be good exaumple his sogettis tenlumyne; For temporal rewmys sholde, as in figure, 2368
Resemble the kyngdam which [that] is dyuyne, Be lawe of God & lawe eek of nature, That res publica long tyme may endure, Void of discord and fals duplicate, 2372
As* o bodi in long prosperite.

Nouther ther regne nor domynacioun Haue of themsilff non other assuraunce; Thestat of kynges gan be permyssioun 2376
Of Goddis grace & of his purveyaunce, Be vertuous lyff and moral gouernauce, Long to contune bothe in pes and werre Lik her desertis, & punshe hem whan thei erre. 2380

Thei sholde be the merour and the liht, Transcende al othir be vertuous excellence, As exaumplaires of equite and riht,

2346. nat] na H. 2348. be] with H.
2359. suerd & sceptre B. 2363. special H.
2373. As] Of B, J. 2374. nor] no H.
On the Conduct of Kings

So be discrecioun of natural prouidence
To tempre ther rigour with merci & clemence;
What shal falle afforn[e] caste al thynge,
As apparteneth to princis & to kynges.

Thynge passed to haue in remembrance,
Conserue wisli thynge in presence,
For thynge to come afforn mak ordenaunce,
Folwe the tracis of vertuous contynence,
Ageyn all vices to make resistence
Be the vertu of magnanymyte,
Which is approprid to imperial mageste,
Brothir to force, auctours seyn echon,
Which consuerueth the roial dignite
In suich a mene stable as eny ston,—
Nat ouer glad for no prosperite,
Nor ouer sad for non aduersite;
For lyf nor deth his* corage nat* renewe
To God and man to yeld hem that is dewe.

Geyn flesshli lustis arme hym in sobirnesse,
Voide al surfetis of froward glotonye,
Gredi appetites be mesure to represse,
Out of his hous auoide al ribaudie,
Rowners, flatereers and such folk as kan lie,
War in his dooms he be nat parciall,
To poore doon almesse, to vertuous liberall.

In his array shewe hym lik a kyng
From other princis bamaner difference,*
So that men preise his vertuous luyng
Mor than his clothing, ferr from his presence;
And let hym thynken in his aduertence,
Truste theron, verraily certeyn,
As he governeth men wil reporte & seyn.

Lat hym also for his gret avail
Haue such aboute hym to be in presence,
Notable princis to be of counsail,
Swich as toforne haue had experience
Tueen good and euel to knowe the difference.

2394. to] to be H. 2400. his] my B — nat] to B.
2410. difference] apparence B, J. 2411. that] om. R.
2414. verraily] verrey H.
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And sixe thynges, hatful of newe & old,  
To banse him out in hast from his houshold.

First them that loue to lyue in idilnesse,  
As such as nouther loue God nor dreede,  
Coueitous peple that pooe folk oppresse,  
And them also that doon al thyng for meede,  
And symulacioun, clad in a double weede,  
And such as can for ther auauntages  
Out of oon hood[e] shewe too visages.

Lat hym also uoid out at his gate  
Riotous peple that loue to wachche al niht,  
And them also that vse to drynke late,  
Ly longe abedde til ther dyner be diht,  
And such as list nat of God to haue a siht,  
And rekles folk that list nat heere masse,  
Tauoide his court, & let hem lihtli passe.

For such defaultis, rehersed heer toforn,  
Nat onli Roome, but many gret contre  
Hath be destroied & many kyndam lorn,  
In olde cronicles as ye may reed & see.  
Fals ambicioun, froward duplicite  
Hath many a rewm & many a lond encloded,  
And been in cause whi thei haue be destroied.

Hhereusalem was whilom transmygrat,  
Ther trewe prophetis for thei hadde in desipiht;  
And Baltazar was eek infortunat,  
For he in Babiloun folwed al his deliht.  
Darye in Perse had but smal respiht,  
Sodenly slayn and moordred be tresoun,  
The same of Alisaundre whan he* drank poisoun.

Discord in Troye groundid on couetise,  
Whan be fals tresoun sold was Palladioun;  
Roome and Cartage in the same wise  
Destroied wern, for short conclusioun,  
Among hemisiff for ther dyuisioun.  
Rekne othir rewmys that been of latter date,  
As of dyuisiouns in France that fill but late.

2424. nounder] nouthis R.  2427. a] om. R.  
2428. 29. auauntage, visage H.  2430. uoid] avoide H.  
2439. many a H.  2442. botb a's om. H, 2nd a om. R.  
2443. been in cause] be the cause R.  
2450. he] that he B, H, R.  2452. sold] slayn H.  
2457. of] in H — in] of H.
The chief fault has been in the ruling princes; and I shall tell as an example the story of Odoacer.

Al thes defaultis rehersid heer breeflili,
Outsouht the roote & weied in balauunce,
Cheeff occasionu, to telle bi and bi,
Hath been in princis that haue had gouernaunce.
And specialli to putte in remembrance,
For an exauemple telle as kometh to mynde
Of Odoacer the stori, as I fynde.

Born in Prevs and hardi of corage,
At his begynyng hymself to magnifie,
Thouh no menciou be maad of [his] lynage,
Hauyng no title of blood nor auncestrie,*
His conquest gan of theffte and robberye,*
Gadred peple of sondri regionus,
Entred Itaille with many naciouns.

With his soudiours first he gan assaille,
With multitude entryng anon riht,
Kyndames of Hungry & contres of Itaille;
Mette in his passage with a Romeyn kniht
Callid Horestes, in steel armyd briht:
The feeld was take and put in iuapartie;
Horestes fleede for socour to Pauye.

Streihtli beseged and the toun Iwonne,
Fond for the tyme non othir cheuisaunce,
The nexte morwe at risyng of the sunne,
Bounde in cheynis teneres of his greuaunce,
Sent to a cite that callid was Plesaunce,
Ageyn[es] whom Odoacer was so fell,
Lect hym be slayn be iugement ful cruel.

Aftir whos deth, be sodeyn violence
Odoacer is passid thoruh Itaille,
Entred Roome, fond no resistence;
For ther was non to yiuue hym bataille.
Zeno themperour durste hym nat assaille,
So that be force and raunynous werkyng
Of al Itaille he was crownid kyng.

2461. Hath] Have H.
2466. his] om. R.
2468. of blood nor auncestrie] but theffte and robberye B, J.
2469. gan of theffte and robberye] gannat of blood nor auncestrie B, gan nought of blood and auncestrie J.
2474. Kyngdam H, R 3, Kyngdom P. 2478. to] in to H.
2482. in] with H.
2490. durste] did H.
2491. raunynour R.
The End of Odoacer

The Emperor Zeno resigned his power to Theodoric the Goth.

Hadde al Roome vndir subieccioun,
Fortune a while list [hym] nat [to] faille,
Zeno therof hadde indignacioun,
Gan werke ageyn hym, in hope it sholde [a]uaile. 2496
And therupon the lordship of Itaille
He gaf of purpos, his powere commityng,
To Theodorik, that was of Gothes kyng.

So that Theodorik in hope to haue victorie, 2500
Ageyn Odoacer gan make resistance;
And his name to putte[n] in memorie,
Toke vpon hym be knihtli excellen
c
For the Romeyns to stonde[n] in difFence. 2504
Mette hym proudli with his cheualrie
Beside a ryueer that callid was Sowcye.

With ther bataillles togidre whan thei mette, 2508
Beside Leglere that stant in Lumbardie,
With round[e] speres & sharp swerdis* whette,
Odoacer, for al his tirannya,
Was put to flght, discountiled his partie.
And Fortune than, [which] can best chaunge & varie,
At vnset hour was to hym contrarie. 2513

Hym & his powere the Romeyns haue defied;
He brente her vynes and tou[n]s enviroun,
Because the entre was to hym denied, 2516
And to Rauenne he is descendid dou[n]
But maugre hym he was take in that* tou[n]
Be Theodorik; lat ech tiraunt tak heed,
Odoacer comaundid to be ded. 2520

Myn auctowr Bochas of entencioun,
For the tyme, as kam to remembran
c
Toward Romeyns maketh a digressiou
To them recordyng the gret[e] variaunce, 2524
The vnwar chaunges, the gery contenau
Of Fortunis fals transmutacioun,
Thes same wordis rehersyng to the tou

2494. hym] om. J — list hym nat to faille] was to hym favour-
able H, R 3 — to] om. R, J.
2504. in] at H. 2508. legle H.
2509. swerdis] speres B. 2512. which] om. R.
2515. toures] tou[n]s R.
2518. that] the B, J.
2519. tiraunt] man H.
2525. guery R, H.
The wordes* of Bochas a-gyne Rome.1

REMEmBRE o Roome & calle ageyn to mynde 2528
The daies passid of thi felicite,
Pi* marcial conquest, hi triumphe left behyne,
Thi grete victories most of auctorite,
Thi famous laudes songe in ech contre,
Which like a sonne* thoru al þe world did shyne,
Now al attonis is turnid to ruyne!

From est to west thi lordship did atteyne,
Aboue al powers most excellent & roiall;
But now fro Roome doue into Almayne
Thes tat translatid which is imperial;
Name of thi senatoris, name in especial,
The golden lettres dirkíd & diffacíd,
And from remembrance almost out araced.

Cite of cites, whilom most glorious,
And most fresshli flouryng in cheualrie,
To which the Alpies & mounteyns most famous
Wer lowli soget of al Lumbardie,
Til that discord, dyuisioun and envie
Among yoursilf hath clipped the brihtnesse,
Bi a fals serpent brought in bi doublinesse.

Kynges, princis wer to the tributarye,
Of al prosperous so fulsum was the flood,
Among yoursilf til ye began to varie,
The world[e] thorughout soget to you stood,
Til ye gan shewe too facis in o hoo:
What folwed aftir, Fortune hath so prouided,
Ye cam to nouht whan ye gan be deuyded.

Vnpurueied of prudent senatoris,
Thi marchaundise turnid to pouerte,
Of knitheyd bareyn, nakid of soudiours,
Disconsolat stant al thi comoute,
Tour[e]s, wallis broke of thi cite,

2530. Pi* Pet B, þe H.
2533. a sonne] be report B, R, H 5 (whiche thurgh all the world by report did shyne J).
2537. into] in R. 2541. out racid R.
2542. most whilom R.
2549. to] om. R. 2553. o] on H.

1 wordes] workis B.
That whilom wer a paradis of deliht, —
Now al the world hath the but in despight.

Cause, to conclude, of al thi wrecchidnesse,—
Fals ambiacion, pride and lecherie,
Dyuysioun, malicious doubilnesse,
Rancour, hatreed, couetise [&] envie,*
Which set aside al good[e] policie;
In brefe rehearsed, for short conclusion,
Haue be cheeff ground of thi destruccioun.

That whilom wer a paradis of deliht, —
Now al the world hath the but in despight.

Cause, to conclude, of al thi wrecchidnesse,—
Fals ambiacion, pride and lecherie,
Dyuysioun, malicious doubilnesse,
Rancour, hatreed, couetise [&] envie,*
Which set aside al good[e] policie;
In brefe rehearsed, for short conclusion,
Haue be cheeff ground of thi destruccioun.

AFTIR thes myscheuys told of Rome toun,
Cam Trasilla kyng of Gepidois
With other tweyne, as maad is mencioun:
Busar that was kyng of Bulgarois,
With Pheletheus, regnyng in Ragois.
Alle thes thre, brefhi for to seyne,*
Cam attonys to Bochas to compleyne,
Ther rewmys stondyng toward Septemtrioun.
And to remembre of the firste tweyne,
Wer brouht attonis to subieccioun
Bi Theodorik, that did his besi peyne
Them to conquere, & proudli did ordeyne
That thei wer neuer hardi to rebell
Ageyn* Romeyns nor take no quarell.
To Theodorik thei wer maad tributarye,
Most wrecchidli bounde[n] in seruage,
Neuer so hardi aftir for to varie
In peyne of deth duryng al ther age.
Of seruitute, loo, heer the surplusage,—
Of all wrecchhis most wrecchid thei be founde,
Thei that to thraldam constreyned been & bounde.

[How the kynges Trabstila and Busarus were brouht to subieccioun and made tributaryes to Theoderyk.] 1

After these calamities told of Rome, Trasilla, king of the Gepidae, Busar, king of the Bulgars, and Phileteus, king of the Rugii, all of whom reigned in the north, came complaining to Bochas.

1 MS. J. leaf 162 verso.
Virtuous freedom is the greatest of treasures, transcending all riches found in earth.

Tresour of tresours, yif it be weel souht, 2592
Is vertuous fredam with large liberte;
With worldli goodis it may nat be bouht, 2596
With roial rubies, gold, stonis nor perre;
For it transcendith and hath the soureynte
Aboue al richessis that been in erthe founde,
A man at large freeli to stonde vnbouride.

[How Philitee lost his kyngdom.] 1

Next thes too kynges, in ordre as ye may see, 2600
To John Bochas gan shewe his presence
The thridde kyng, callid Philete,
Which bi Fortunys sodeyn violence
Loste his kyngdam, and be cruel sentence
Of Odoacer, the tiraunt mericies,
Loste his liff and cam no mor in pres.

Thes sodeyn chaunges to reede whan I gan,
Sauh so ofte the wheel turne up & doun
Of Fortune; ther cam oon Marcian,
Of whom is maad non othir mencioun,
Sauff be a sodeyn coniuraceoun
He moordred was, [he] beyng innocent,
Among his knihtis, which slouh hym of assent.

Ther cam oon that callid was Leoun,
Which kauht a title be no violence,
But made his cleyn be iust successioun
Affir his fadir, and took pocessioun,
Which of a Leoun, myn auctour seith the same,
Beyng emperour, bar the same name.

This yonger Leoun, ageyn al trouthe & riht,
Be tirannie, as maad is mencion,
Thoruh cruel Zeno, that was an hardi kniht,
Wass put out of his pocessioun,
Constreyned to lyue in religioun;
But to what ordre that he did[e] weende,
I fynde nat; but ther he made an eende.

2591. of] o H.
2600. Philitee P. 2604. and] om. H.
2605. begane H. 2606. often H — vp so doun H, J.
2609. a] om. R.

1 MS. J. leaf 162 verso.
Symmachus and his son-in-law Boetius were great favour-ites in Rome; and Boetius was exiled for his upright-

ness.

For comoun proffit he was onto the toun
In mateere that groundid wer on riht
Verray protectour and stedfast champioun
Ageyn too tirauntes, which of force & myht
Hadde in the poraille oppressid many a wiht
Be exaccioun and pillages gunne of newe
Vpon the comouns, ful fals & riht vntrewe.

Whan* Theodorik, of Gothes lord & kyng,
Took upon hym be fals intrusioun
To regne in Roome, the peple oppressyng
Bi his too prouostis, as maad is menciou, —
Did in the cite gret oppressioun,
Confederat as brothir onto brothir:
Conigast, and Trigguilla was the tothir.

Compendiousli this mateer to declare,
To saue the comoun Bois stood in diffence;
For lyff nor deth he list nat for to spare
To withstonde of tirauntes the sentence.
Kyng Theodorik of cruel violence
Banshed hym bi hatful tiraunye,
He and his fadir tabide in Pauye.

Aftirward Theodorik of hatreede,
Lik a fals tiraunt, of malis & envie
Yaf iugement that bothe too wer dede.
Bot touchyng Boys, as bookis specifie,
Wrot dyuers bookis of philosophie,
Of the Trinite mateeres hat wer dyuynye,
Martird for Crist & callid Seueryne.

Symmachus and Boys his son in lawe were banys-

shed and aftir lugged to die.]

AFFTIR thes myscheuys Symak gan [p. 396]

hym drawe
Toward Bochas with a ful pitous face;
Bois cam with hym, that was his sone in lawe,
Which among Romeyns grelle stood in grace.
But in this mateer breefl to pace,
The said[e] Bois, only for his trouthe
Exilid was; alas, it was gret routhe!

He was protector and champion of the city against two tyrants.

But his struggle against them brought him into disfavour with
Theodor, who banished him and his father to Pavia.

Afterwards they were both condemned to death.
WAS ever prince [that] mithte hymself assure Of Fortune the fauour to restreyne? —
Lik his desir hir grace to recure Tabide stable & stonde[n] at certeyne?
Among alle rekne Arthur of Breteyne, Which in his tyme was holde of euery wiht
The wisest prince and the beste kniht.

To whom Bochas gan his stile dresse,
In this chapitle to remembre blyue His grete conquest & his hih noblesse, With synguler deedis that he wrouhte his lyue.
And first he gynneth brefli to descryue The siht of Breteyne & of that contre, Which is enclosed with a large se,

Set ferr westward, as ye shal vndirstond, Hauyng Spaigne set in the opposit,
Of a smal angle callid Ing[el]ond, Fraunce aboute hym, descryuyng thus his siht,— With many a ryueer pleasaunt of deliht, Hote bathes [&] wellis ther be founde,
Dyuers myneres, of metallis ful habounde.

Aboute which renneth the occian, Riht plenteuous of al maner vitaille, The name of which at Brutis first began.
Londene hath shippis be the se to saille, Bachus at Wynchestre gretli doth auaile, Worcetre with frutis haboundeth at the fulle, Herford with beestis, Cotiswold with wolle,
Bathe hote bathes, holsum for medecyne, York mithi tymber for gret auauntage, Cornewale myneres in to myne,
Salisbury beestis ful sauage,
Whete, melk & honi, plente for eueri age,
Kent and Cauntirburi hath gret commodite
Of sondri fishes ther taken in the se.

Bochas reherseth, ther is eek in Breteyne
Found of geet a ful precious stoon,
Blak of colour & vertuous in certeyne
For siknessis many mo than oon,
Poudir of which wil discure anon,
Yif it be dronke (thouh it be secre),
Of maydnehod ther the broke chastite.

Ther been eke* perlis fouwde in muskel shelles;
And thei [be] beste that haue most whitnesse.
And, as the book of Brutus also telles,
How kyng Arthowr, to speke of worthynesse,
Passed al kynges in marcial prowesse;
Touchyng his lyne & his roial kynreede,
Who that list see, in Brutus he may reede.

His fadir callid Vter Pendragouw,
A manli kniht and famous of corage,
Of fals envie moordrid be poisoun;
His sone Arthour, but yong & tendre of age,
Be ful assent of al his baronage
Be successioun crownid anon riht,
Callid of Europe the moste famous kniht.

Curteis, large and manly of dispence,
Merour callid off liberalite,
Hardi, strong and of gret prouidence.
And of his knihtli magnanymyte
He droof Saxones* out of his contre,
Conquered bi prowess of his myhtli hond
Orcadois, Denmark and Houlond,
Hirelond, Norway, Gaule, Scotlond & France.

As Martis sone to the werris meete,
Wrouht bi counsall, and bi the ordynauence
Of prudent Merlyn, callid his prophete.
And, as I fynde, he leet make a seete,
Amon[g] his Bretouns most famous & notable, Thorouh al the world callid the Round[e] Table.

Most worthi knihtis, preueed of ther hond,
Chose out be Arthour this ordre haue begunne;
Ther famous noblesse thoruh euery Cristen lond
Shon be report as doth the mydday sonne;
To Famyys paleis the renoun is vp ronne,
Statutis set be vertuous ordenaunce,
Vndir proffession of marcial gournaunce.

The firste statut in the[r] registre founde,
Fro which thei sholde nat declyne of riht,
Be ful assuurance of oth and custum bounde,
Ay to be armyd in platis forgid briht,
Except a space to reste* hem on the niht,
Seeke auentures, & ther tyme spende
Rihtful quarellis to susteene & diffende.

The feebler parti, yif he hadde riht,
To ther poweir manli to supporte,
Yif that thei wern requered of any wiht
Folk disconsolat to bern vp & conforte,
At alle tymes men may of hem* reporte,
No maner wise thei do no violence
And ageyn tirauntes make knihtli resistance,
That widwes, maidnes suffre no damage
Be fals oppressiou[n] of hatful cruelte,
Restoren childe[r] to ther trewe heritage,
Wrongli exiled folk to ther contre,
And for hooli chirchis liberte
Reedi euere to make hemsilue strong,
Rather to deie than suffre hem [to] haue wrong.

For comoun proffit, as chose champiouns,
Pro republica defendyng ther contre,
Shewe ay themsilff[e] hardi as leouns,
Honoure tencrere, chastise dishoneste,
Releue al them that suffre aduersite,
Religious folk, haue hem in reuerence,
Pilgrymes rescuyue that faille of [per] dispence.

They performed the seven deeds of mercy,
Callicd in armys seuene deedis of mercy,
Burie* soudiours that faile* sepulture,

2742. reste\[resten B. 2744. quarell R.
2749. At alle tymes\] bat al tyme H. 2755. to\] for R.
2767. Burie\] Buried B, J — faile\] failed B, J.
Folk in prisoun delyuere hem graciously,
Swich as be poore, ther rauonsoun to recure.
Woundid peplee that languiissh & endure,
Which pro republica manli spent her blood,—
The statut bond to do suich folkis good.

To putte hemsilf neuer in aventure
But for mateerres that wer iust & trewe,
Afforn prouided that thei stood[e] sure,
The ground weil knowe, wer it of old or newe.

And aftir that the mateer whan thei knewe,
To proceede knihtli & nat feyne,
As riht requereth*, ther quarelis to darreyne.

A clerk ther was to cronicle al ther deedis,
Bi pursyuauntis maad to hym report
Of ther expleit and ther goode speedis,
And aftir that the mateer whan thei knewe,
To proceede knihtli & nat feyne,
As riht requereth*, ther quarelis to darreyne.

One seat was empty, called the See Per-
ilous, and only the most virtuous could place himself there.

Among al kynges renowned & famous,
As a briht sonne set amyd the sterris,
So stood Arthour notable & glorious,
Lik fresh[e] Phebus castyng his liht aferris.
In pes lik Argus; most marcial in þe werris;
As Ector hardi, lik Vlixes tretable,
Callid among Cristene, kyng most honourable.

Arthur was to other kings as a bright sun set amidst the stars; he was Argus, Hector, Ulysses in one.

His roial court he did[e] so ordeyne,
Thoru[h] ech contre so ferr sprad out þe liht,
Who that euer thidir cam to pleyne,

2779. requered B, J — ther] þe H — quarell R.
2781. pusyuauntis R, pusivauntis H, purcevauntys J.
2784. Thes] þe H.
2786. estat] staat R.
2787. void[e] wide B, wilde J.
2788. seyn Greall H, seyn Geral R ʒ, Seyn Greal P, Sank Riall J.
2791. bi] of B, J.
The challenges of strange knights were also accepted.

there was always a knight ready at hand to defend the oppressed.

Be wrong oppressid*, & required of riht, 2804
In his difence he sholde fynde a kniht 2804
To hym assigned, synalli tatende 2804
Be marcial doom his quarel to diffende.

Yif it fill soo that any straunhe kniht 2808
Souht auentures, and thidir cam fro ferre 2808
To doon armys, his request maad of riht, 2808
His chalenge seyn, wer it of pes or werre, 2812
Was accepted, to the court cam nerre, 2812
Lik as he cam with many or allone, 2812
Thei wer dylyuered; forsake was neuer one.

The knights were also bound to tell truthfully to the registrar all that befell during their adventures;

and there was a school of martial doctrine for the young,

Ther was the scoole of marcial doctrine 2816
For yonge knihtes to lernen al the guise, 2816
In tendre age to haue* ful disciplyne 2816
On hors or foote be notable excersise;
Thynge take in youthe doth help in many wise, 2820
And Idilnesse in greene yeeris gone
Of al vertu clipseth the sheene* sonne.

The challenges of strange knights were also accepted.

and there was a school of martial doctrine for the young,

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For yonge knihtes to lernen al the guise, 2816
In tendre age to haue* ful disciplyne 2816
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Thynge take in youthe doth help in many wise, 2820
And Idilnesse in greene yeeris gone
Of al vertu clipseth the sheene* sonne.

and all wronged people, widows and maidens of any nation, were received, and a knight assigned to their defence.

Widwes, maidnes, oppressid folk also,
Of extort wronges vrouht be tiranyye,
In that court, what nacioun cam thertoo,
Resceyuid wer; ther list no man denie.
Of ther compleintis fond reedy remedie,
Maad no delay, but foorth anon[e] riht
Them to diffende asigned was a kniht.

Thyng openli doon or thyng that was secre, 2836
Of auentures as betwixe twyne,
Or any quarel take of volunte
Treuly reporte, and platli nat to feyne,
Them to be sworn, the statut did ordeyne,
No[uh]t conselid of worship nor of shame,
To be registred reporte the silue same.

Eek bi ther ordre thei bounde wer of trouthe,
Be assuraunce & be oth Isworn,
In ther emprise, and lette for no slouthe,
Pleynli to telle how thei haue hem born,
Ther auentures of thynges do beforin,
Riht as it fill, spare in no man erre
To telle ech thyng onto ther registrer.

and their statements were sworn.

No[uh]t conselid of worship nor of shame,
To be registred reporte the silue same.

2804. oppressid] repressid B. 2809. aventure H.
2817. haue] lerne B. 2821. sheene] cleer B, clere J, cleare P.
2825. wer ther] ther thei H. 2841. conselid] conselid H.
And to conclude, the statutis han vs lered, 
Eueri quarel groundid on honeste, 
In that court what kniht was requerid, 
In the difrence of trouthe and equite, 
Falshod excluid and duplicite, 
Shal ay be reedi to susteene that partie, 
His lyff, his bodi to putte in iupartie.

Thus in Breteyne shon the cleer[e] liht 
Of cheualrye and of hh prowesse, 
Which thoruh the world[e] shadde his bemys briht,
Welle of worship, conduit of al noblesse, 
Imperial court al wrongis to redresse,*
Hedspryng of honour, of largesse cheef cisterne, 
Merour of manhod, of noblesse the lanterne. 
Yit was ther neuer seyn so briht a sonne, 
The someres day in the mydday speere 
So fress[h]li shyne, but sum skies donne 
Mihte percas courtyne his bemys cleere; 
Oft it fallith, whan Fortune makth best cheere 
And falsli smylith in hir double weede, 
Folk seyn expert, than is she most to dreede.

Thus whan the name of this worthi kyng 
Was ferthest sprad be report & memorye, 
In eueri rewm his noblesse most shynyng, 
Al his emprises concludyng with victorie, 
This double goddesse envied at his glorie 
And caste menys be sum maner treyne 
Toclipse the liht of kniithod in Breteyne.

Thus whil ArthoMr stood most honourable 
In his estat, flouryng in lusti age, 
Among his knihtis of the round[e] table, 
Hiest of princis on Fortunis stage, 
The Romeyns sente to hym for truage, 
Gan make a cleym froward & outraious, 
Takyng ther title of Cesar Iulivs.

The same tyme, this myhti kyng Arthour
Conquered hadde Gaule & also Fraunce,

Every honest quarrel was defended to the death.

Thus the clear light of chivalry, shone in Britain;

but the sun is never so bright but that sometimes a passing cloud throws it into the shadow; and Fortune often smiles most kindly when she is most to dread.

Thus, while Arthur was flowering in his strength,

the Romans sent to him for tribute, outrageously claiming a title from Julius Caesar.
Outraged Frolle, and lik a conquerour
Brouhte Parys vndir obeissauence,
Took hem to grace, & with his ordenance
Gat al Aungoie, Aungerys* & Gascoyne,
Peitow, Nauerne, Berry & Burgoyne.
2880

Cessed nat, but ded his besi peyne,
Most lik a kniht heeld forth his passage,
Gat al the lond of Peiteres & Towreyne,
Ther cites yolde, to hym thei did homage;
To be rebell thei fond non auautage,
Soitourned in France, as seith the cronicleer,
Heeld poscessiou the space of nyne yeer.

Heeld a feeste ful solempne at Parys,—
Al the contres which he gat in France,
Lik a prince ful prouident & wis,
Which hadde of fredam most* roial suffisaunce,
Of al his conqust the contres in substauence,
For his princis and barouns so prouided,
Lik ther desertis he hath hem deuided.

To his senescall that was callid Kay
Aungoye* & Meyn he gaff al that partie;
To his botleer, was maad[e] no delay,
Callid Bedewar, he gaf Normandie;
To a baroun, nih cosyn of allie,
A manli kniht which namyd was Berell,
Gaff the duchie of Burgoyne euerdeell.

Thus he departid lordships of that lond,
Wher he thouhte was most expedient;
Summe he reserued in his owne hond,
Ageyn to Breteyne retournid of entent,
Sent out writtes, heeld a gret parlement,
Afftir which he made a feeste anon
In the contre Icallid Gloumorgon,

Ten kings were there ready to obey Arthur,
thirteen earls,
many barons,

2894. prouident] prudently H. 2895. most] ful B. J.
2900. Aungoyne B, P.
2902. Bedwar R, Bedwere H.
Present also, as it was weel seene,
Ther wer of erlis reknid ful thretene.

Al the knihtes of the rounte table,
Feste of Pentecost, a feeste princepal,
Many estatis famous & honourable
Of princis, barouns born of the blood roial
Wer ther present*, and in especial
Al tho that wern be oth & promys bounde
To brothirhede* of the table rounte.

And it fill so, whil that kyng Arthur
As appartened sat in his estat,
Ther cam tuelue sent doun be gret labour
Of olde mene chose [out] of the Senat,
Sad of ther port, demvre & temporat,
Richeli clad, of look and off visage,
Greihored [echon], sempte of rih tate.

First cunwyngli, as thei thouht it due.
Cause of ther comyng & pleynli what thei mente,
First of assent the kyng thei gan salue,
Next aftir that thei tolde who them sente,
And ther lettres meekly thei presente,
Concludyng thus, to speke in bref langage,
How the Romeyns axe of hym truage.

Custumyd of old sith go many [a] day,
Whan that Cesar conquered first Breteyne,
The kyng requeryng to make hem no delay.
Arthour abood, list nothyng to seyne;
But al the court gan at hem disdeyne;
The proude Bretonus of cruel hasti blood
Wolde hem haue slay[e]n euene ther thei stood.

"Nay," quod Arthowr to al his officeeres,
"Withynne our court thei shal haue no damage;
Thei entred been and kome as massageris,
And men also gretli falle in age.
Let make hem cheer[e] with a glad visage."

Took his counsail of suich as wer most wise,
With this ansuere seid in curteis wise:

2920 and all the knights of the Round Table.
2924 Then came twelve richly clad old Romans chosen by the Senate to present the claims of Rome.
2928 They saluted the king and meekly presented their credentials, demanding immediate payment of the tribute.
2930 which they said dated back to the time of Cesar's conquest. Arthur was silent, but his court would have slain the Roman envoys.
Arthur's Answer to the Roman Envoys  [BK. VIII

His answer was, "Your lettres rad and pleynli vndirstonde, The teneur hool rehersid in this place, 2956

Touching the charge which ye haue tak on honde,
To yiu answere rehersid in short space,
Be woord & writyng ye gretli me manace,
How ye purpose with many strong bataille
Passe the mounteysn me felli for tassaille.

It nedeth nat such conquest to a-legge [p. 400]
Ageyn[es] Bretouns of non old truage,
Of comyng doun your weie I shal abregge,
With Goddis grace shorte your passage.
Mak no delay, but with my barounage
Passe the se withoute long tarieng
To meete Romeyns at ther dou" komyng." 2968

This was the answere youe to the massagers.
At ther departhyng bar with hem gret richesse,
The kyng bad so vnto his officeeres.
Ageyn to Roome in haste thei gan hem dresse,
Pleynli reportyng the bounteous* largesse
Of worthi Arthour, considred all[e] thynges,
Of Cristendom he passed all othir kynges.

Arthurs court was the souris and well
Of marcial power*, to Lucuys thei tolde,
And how that he all othir did excell
In chualrie, with whom ther wer withholde
The chose knihtis, bothe yong & olde,
In al Europe, who can considre ariht,
Of al noblesse the torchis be ther liht.

He cast hym nat to paien no truage,
Seide of the Romeyns [how] he heeld no lond,
Which to* diffende he wil make his passage,
"Of your cleymys to breke atoo the bond;"
And knihtli preeue [it] with his [owne] hond,
"Ye haue no title, ye nor your cite,
Ageyn the Bretouns, which euer haue stonde free."

2956. tenour R, H.
2972. thai gan in hast H.
2975. othir] om. H.
2977. power] prowess B, J, P.
2987. it and owest are supplied from MS. Harley 1766, om. in B,
2989. haue] hath R.
With al the kyngdames soget to Rome toun,  The Romans came down  
Kynes, princis aboff the hih monteyns,  with Lucius to  
With Lucys thei be descendid doun  meet the  
To meete Bretouns upon the large pleyns.  Britons on the  
Arthur[i]s comyng greth he disdeyns,  Lucius, who  
Because he hadde, pleynli to descryue,  had five times  
In multitude of peeple swich[e] fyue.  the number  
With al the kyngdames soget to Rome toun,  of Arthur's  
Kynges, princis aboff the hih monteyws,  men, was con-  
With Lucyus thei be descendid doun,  temptious.  
To meete Bretouns upon the large pleyns.  
Arthur[i]s comyng greth he disdeyns,  
Because he hadde, pleynli to descryue,  
In multitude of peeple swich[e] fyue.  
Arthur took ship at South-  
At Southhamptoun Arthur took the se ampton, and  
With al his knihtis of the Rounde Table,  left his traitor-  
Behyne he lefte to gouerne the contre  ous cousin  
His cosyn Modred, vntrusti & vnstable,  Mordred as  
And, at a preef, fals & deceuyable,  regent.  
To whom Arthur of trust took al the lond,  
The crowne except, which he kept in his hond.  
Fro Southhamptoun Arthur gan to saile  
With al the worthi lordis of Breteyne,  
At Barbeflu fond good arryuaile;  
He and his princis ther passage did ordeyne  
Thoruh Normandie, France & eek Burgeyne  
Vp to a cite callid Augustence,  
Wher he first fond of Lucyus the presence.  
So large a feeld nor suich a multitude  
Of men of armys assemblid on a pleyn  
Vpon a day, shortli to conclude,  
Togidre assemblid afforn wer* neuer seyn.  
Lucivs hadde on his partie certeyn  
Estward the world[e] al the cheualrie  
Brouht be the monteyns doun toward Germanye.  
Ther wardis sett, in ech a grete bataile,  
With ther capteyns to gouerne hem & guye,  
Arture with Bretouns the Romeins gan* assaile,  
Fond many Sarcsyns vpon that partie.  
The Bretoun Gaufride doth pleyndli specefe,  
As he of Arthure þe provessh doth descryue,  
He slouh that day of Sarcsyns kynges fyue.  

3000. Modred[j] moordred R.  
3003. kept] toke H.  
3005. worthi lordis of] lordis of worthi H.  
3006. Barbeflu] Barflue J, Harflue P.  
3011. suich] so gret R.  3013. day] playn H.  
3014. wer] was B, J.  3017. the] om. R.  
3019. hem] om. H.  
3020. gan] did B, J.
Arthur defeats the Romans. Mordred's Treason [BK. VIII

The gret slaughtre, theffusioun of blood
That was that day vpon outhere side,
Ech ageyn outhere so furious was & wood,
Lik for the feeld as Fortune list prouide,
That yiff I sholde theron longe abide
To write the deth, the slaughtre & the maneere,
Touchyng the feeld wer tedious for to heere.

To conclude & leue the surplusage,
In that bataile ded was many a kniht,
The consul Lucius slay[en] in that rage,
Theouple Romeyns be force put to fliht.
Of gentilesse Arthour anon riht
Leet the bodi of Lucius be caried
Ageyn to Roome; it was no lenger taried.

And, like a king, Arthour saw
that his dead princes and
lords and
knights were buried.
In the meanwhile Mordred
wanted to be
king in Britain,
and persuaded the people to
rebel against
Arthour,

making fair
promises and
granting great
freedoms.

And the
slaughter was
so great that
it were tedious
to describe it.

The worthi princis and lords that wer dede,
And manli knihtis abidyng with Arthour,
Lik a kyng solempneli took heed
That thei wer buried be diligent labour.
And in this while, lik a fals tretour,
His cosyn Modred did his besi peyne
To take fro hym the kyngdam of Breteyne.

So as the stori pleyndi maketh mynde,
Modred falsli, to his auauntage,
Entreted hem that wer left behynde,
Vnder colour of fraudulent langage,
Gaff hem* gret fredam; & hei did hym homage,
That be his fals[e] conspiracioun
Brouht al Breteyne into rebelliuon.

Be faire behestis & many freendli signe
Drouh the peple to hym in sondri wise,
Shewed hym outward goodli & benigne,
Gaf libertes & graunted gret frauwchise
To make Bretouns ther souereyn lord despise.
And purueyaunce he gan ordeyne* blyue
To keepe the portes, he shold[e] nat aruy.

Whan kyng Arthour hadde knouleching
Of this fals tresoun and al the purueiaunce
That Modred made, he, lik a manli kyng,

3026. ther H. 3034. rage] orage (perhaps; the 0 is mutilated and may stand for another incomplete letter) H.
3040. And] a H.—knyht H.
3058. ordeyne] make B, J. 3061. this] his R.
Arthur slays Mordred and is mortally wounded

Lefte Burgoyne & al the lond of France, Cast on Modred for to do vengauce; Took the se, [&] with gret apparaile Cast at Sandwich to make his arrivaile. Modred was reedi with knihtis a gret noumbe, Made a strong feeld to meete hym on the pleyn, In purpos full Arthour to encoumbre, At which aryuaile slay[e]n was Gawayn, Cosyn to Arthour, a noble kniht certayn; Eek Anguisel was slay[e]n on the stronde, Kyng of Scottes, or he myhte* londe.

Maugre Modred Arthour di did ayue, The ground recurid lik a manli kniht (For feer of whom, anon aftir blyue The seid[e] Modred took hym to the fliht), Toward Londene took his weie riht, The gatis shet, & kept was the cite Ageyn Modred; he myhte haue non entre.

In al haste to Cornewaile he flede, The suerd of Arthure he durste nat abide, List he shold[e] ley[n] his lyff to wedde; Yit for hymself[e] thus he gan prouide, With multitude gadrid on his side Put lyf and deth that day in auenture, That day to deie or the feeld recure.

In Fortune ther may be no certayn, Vpon whos wheel al brotilnesse is foundid: Moodred that day in the feeld was slay[n And noble Arthour to the deth was woundid. Be which the feeld of Bretouns was confoundid, Of so gret slaughtre & goode knihtis lorn Vpon oo* day, men haue nat herde* toforn.

Aftir the bataile Arthour for a while To staunce his wounded & hurtis to recure, Bor[n] in a literate cam into an Ille Callid Aualoun; and ther of auenture, As seid Gaufrid recordeth be scripture, How kyng Arthour, flour of cheualrie, Rit with his knihtis & lyueth in Fairye.
Thus of Bretayne translatisid was he suyne
Vp to the riche sterri briht dongoun, — 3104
Astronomeres well rehere kunne, —
Callid Arthuris constellacioun,
Wher he sit crownid in the heuenly mansioun
Aumy the paleis of stonis cristallyne,
Told among Cristen first of he worthi nyne. 3108

Thus errour yit abit amonget Bretouns,*
Which foundid is vp on the prophecie
Of olde Merlyn, lik ther oppynyouns:
He as a kyng is crownid in Fairie,
With sceptre and suerd, & with his regalie
Shal resorte as lord and souereyne
Out of Fairye & regne in Bretyne, 3112

Britons still believe, old Merlin’s proph-
ecy that
Arthur shall come again
some day to reign in Eng-
land.

This errore yit abit among Bretouns,*
Which foundid is vp on the prophecie
Of olde Merlyn, lik ther oppynyouns:
He as a kyng is crownid in Fairie,
With sceptre and suerd, & with his regalie
Shal resorte as lord and souereyne
Out of Fairye & regne in Bretyne,

Britons still believe, old Merlin’s proph-
ecy that
Arthur shall come again
some day to reign in Eng-
land.

At any rate his epitaph
says, “Here lies King Arthur,
who shall reign again.”

Now I will return to Bochas,
but first I’ll write a lenvoy
on Mordred’s treason.

His seete ageyn to Carlioun translate.*
The Parchas sustren sponne so his fate;
His epitaphic recordeth so certeyn:
Heer lith kyng Arthowr, which shal regne ageyn.

And repaire ageyn the Rounde Table;
Be prophecie Merlyn set the date,
Among[es] princis kyng incomparable,
Theron tabide me list no mor soiourne,
But to remembre the gret vnkynd[es]esse,
The conspiracioun, be tresoun, the falsnesse
Doon to kyng Arthour be his cosyn Modrede,
Make a Lenvoye, that al men may it reede.

Now I will return to Bochas,
but first I’ll write a lenvoy
on Mordred’s treason.

This tragedy of Arthour heer folwyng [p.402]
Bit princis all bewar of fals tresoun;
For in al erthe is non mor pereilous thing
Than trust of feith, wher is decepcioun
Hid vndir courtyn of fals collusioun.
For which men sholde — I holde he counsel good —
Bewar afforn euer of vnkynde blood.

This tragedie of Arthour heer folwyng [p.402]
Bit princis all bewar of fals tresoun;
For in al erthe is non mor pereilous thing
Than trust of feith, wher is decepcioun
Hid vndir courtyn of fals collusioun.
For which men sholde — I holde he counsel good —
Bewar afforn euer of vnkynde blood.

[Lenvoy.]

3103. briht] om. H. 3107. the] that R.
3109. Bretouns] Breteyns B.
3119. translate] to translate B, J. 3120. sponne] span H.
3127. 3rd the] & H, R 3. 3129. it] om. R.
The world [is] dyuers, Fortune ay chaungyng,
In euery contre & euery regioun;
At a streight neede fewe frendis abidyng;
Long abscence causeth deuisioun.*
And yif princis be fals ambiicioun,*
Nih of allie, shewe too facis in oon hood,
Lat men bewar euere of vnkynde blood.

Who was mor hardi of princis heer regnyng
Or mor famous of marcial renoun
Than whilom was, his enmyes outraieng,
Arthur, cheef sonne of Brutis Albioun?
But, for al that, the disposicioun
Of Fate and Fortune, most furious & woodyng.
Caused his destrucciou be vwkywde blood.

What mor contrarious to nature in shewing
Than fair pretence, double of entencioun,
Gret aliauwces frowardli werkyng?
Hid vndir flours, a serpent cast poisouw,
Briht siluir scaled, damageth the dragouw;
Ech werm sum parti tarageth of his brood.

And what mor pereilous than vnkynde blood?
Noble Princis, on ArthoMr remembryng,
Deemeth the day of Phebwj gowyng doun:
Al is nat gold that is cleer shynyng,
Afforn provided in your inward resoun,
Fals vndirmynyng & supplantacioun,
Remembryng ay with Arthour how it stood,
Be conspiracioun of vnkynde blood.

---

The world is always changing. At a need we have few steadfast friends. Men must always beware of unkind relations.

Who was more hardy and famous than Arthur? Yet he was destroyed by unkind blood!

What is more evil than fair pretense, like a silver-scaled serpent hidden under flowers? What more perilous than unkind blood?

Noble Princes, remember the story of Arthur, and do not deem the day fair until the sun has set.

---

Bochas here exclaims upon Mordred, who caused the destruction of Arthur, notwithstanding that he trusted him above all men.

AN EXCLAMACION A-GEYN MEN PAT BEEN VNKYNDE TO PEIR KYNNEDIS.

Bochas makth heer an exclamacioun
Upon Modred, which with his ordenaunces
Caused of Arthour fynal destruccioun,
The sunne eclipsyng of Brutis* Albioun,

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The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 165 verso: "An exclamacion of Bochas ageyn kynredys vnkynde."
An Exclamation against unkind Kindred [BK. VIII]

Natwithstondyng, pleyndli to descrive, He trusted hym abof al men on lyue.

It is a merueile & vnkouth to dewise, Be what occasion or be what corage, That a man sholde in any maner wise Be founde vnkynde vnto his lynage. Hatful to God, that in any age Blood ageyn blood born of o kynreede Consipre sholde of malis or hatreede.

In this mateer it wer but veyn to tarie, The stori knowe of Arthour & Modrede, Be blood allied, in werkyng most contrarie, Which made many Bretoni kynight to bleede; For be vsurping, conspirying and falsheede Of seide Modred, most infortunat, Caused al Breteyne to stond[e] desolat.

First desolat be absence of ther kyng, Callid in his tyme of kynges most notable, The desolacioun of knihtis abidyng, Whilom in Breteyne famous & honourable, Brethre echon of the Rounde Table, The which be Moodred, the false forswor kniht, Stod longe eclipsed & dirked of his lyht.

The lithe of noblesse hat shon thoruh al Breteyne Be fals Modred was dirked offf his bemys; The monarchie departid was on tweyne, That stood first oon with his marcial stremys. But afterward the brihtnesse of his lemys Drouh to declyn be fals deuisiou the Which hath destroied ful many a regioun.

Al this processe vpon* duplicite Pleyndli concludeth, & blood that is* vnkynde. A-dieu weelfare and al prosperite, Wher* pes & concorde been lleft behynde: Trees may nat thruye departid fro be rynde, —

3171. on] of R — on lyue] alive H. 3172. a] om. R.
3173. occasion] comparisoun H. 3175. vnto] to R.
3185. to] om. H. 3187. his] this R. 3190. Brethren R.
3201. blood that is] that is blood B, J, H 5, that is blode is R, on blode hat is H.
3203. Wher] Ther B, J.
A pleyn exemple in Arthure & Modrede,  
Who can conceyue, & list ther stori reede.  

[Off Geseyve kyng of venandre and of iij. othre  
kynges / and how they were destroyed.]  

A FFTIR al these vnkouth straunge* thingis,[p.403]  
Tofor John Bochas, as made is mencionoun,  
Ther cam toforn hym fyue myhti kinges  
For to compleyne ther desolacioun.  
First Giseli[n]e, kyng off the regiouw  
Callid Venandre, in werris ful contraire  
Vnto a prince callid Balisaire.  
And to this saide noble Balisaire,  
Ful renomed that tyme in cheualrie,  
The kyng of Gothes was also aduersaire;  
And bothe attonis of hatrede & envie  
Assentid fulli to hoolde chaumpartie  
Geyn Balisaire, which thoruh his hih renouw  
Took hem bothe and cast hem in prisoun.  
Ther is no mor of them in Bochas founde.  
But aftir them, in ordre be writyng,  
Cam Amarales, with many bloodi wouwde,  
Which in his tyme was of Maures kyng.  
Withoute cause or title of any thyng  
Vpon Ian Sanguyn gan werreye agey[n] riht,  
Which thoruh al Affrik was oon the best[e] kniht.  
The saide Ian, armyd in plate and maile,  
Mette Amarales in Affrik on a sond,  
And heeld with hym a myhti strong bataile,  
And lik a kniht slouh hym with his hond,  
Droof al his peeple prouldi fro pat lond.  
And in my book ther is non othir mynde  
To be remembrid of hym that I can fynde.  

Cam Than Syndual, of Brentois lord & kyng,  
Tofor Bochas put hymsilf in pres,  
Gan shewe his myscheef, pitousli pleynyng,  
Among five mighty kings,  
Gelimer, king of the Vandals,  
came first to complain his desolation.  
Together with the king of the Goths he was an enemy of Belisarius,  
who took them both captive and put them in prison.  
Then came Amarales, king of the Moors,  
who fought John the Sanguinary  
without cause  
and that is all  
I can find remembered about him.  
Then Sindbal the Herulian began to  
describe his misfortune,
for he made war on Narses, a Roman knight, who was an eunuch, and captured Sindbal and hanged him.

Soon afterward king Totila the Ostrogoth met Narses with a great army, and he too was defeated and slain.

Whan he heeld were, wilful & rekleses, Ageyn a prince callid Narsates, A Romeyn kniht, fers, hardi & riht strong
In his diffence whan men wold doon hym wrong.

This Narsates, of cas or aventure, Though he in deede was a manli kniht, He failled membres in soth of engendrure. His aduersaires he put echon to fl iht, Took ther kyng, & foortwith anon riht, As the cronicle pleynli doth recorde, On luy[e] galves he heng hym with a corde.

Of Narsetis aftir this victorie, Kyng Totila hadde ful gret diseyn;
With a gret host, most pompous in his glorie, Kam upon hym & mette hym on a pleyn.
With multitude thow he wer ouerleyn,
Kyng Totila, which many man beheeld, Of Narsetes was slay[e]n in the feeld.

[Trusimond kyng of Gepedois.] 1

In ordre nexte Bochas doth [so] write, Of Gepidois how king Trusimonde
Requered hym that he wolde endite
The grete aduersites in which he did habounde, And of his douhtir callid Rosymounde
The vnhappi chaunce to marken & descryue, To whom Fortune was contrarye al hir lyue.

Alboinvs kyng of Lumbardie,
Which many lond heeld in subieccioun, Conquered Beeme, Pragve & Hungrie,
The lond of Gepidois, with many regioun,
Fauht with ther kyng, as maad is mencioune, Slouh in bataille the said[e] Trusimonde,
Weddid aftir his douhtir Rosamounde.

3238. reklesses R.
3239. ycalled Narses P — Narsates] Narsares H.
3242. Narses P, Narsates H.
3263. Albionius or Alboinus B. 3266. regioun] dongoun H.
3268. Eurismonde H, R 3, Trusmond J, Turisounde P.

1 MS. J. leaf 165 verso, in margin.
Myn auctour gretli comendeth hir beute
And writ also she was but yong of age,
Whos stori first, whan I dide see
How vngracious was also hir mariage,
I gan wexe pale in my visage,
Gretli astoned, confus of verryay shame
To write this stori in hyndryng of hir name.
I wil forberrn and brefli passen heere,
The surplusage lihtli ouerpasse;
For bi and bi to telle al the maneere
Of fellonies that did hir herte enbrace,
It sholde blotte this book & eek difface.
For which I caste treuli & nat faille
Touching hir stori to make rehersaille.

[How Albonyus was moordred by his wif / and how she aftir most vicious was moordred also.] 1

KYNG Alboinus, as ye shal vndirstonde,
Aftir many conquest & victorie,
Which he hadde [had] both on se & londe,
To putte his name* & triumphes in memorie,
Leet crie a feeste to his encres of glorie;
At which[e] feeste, solempne & princepall,
So as he sat in his estat roiall,
Parcel for pride, parcel for gladnesse, [p. 404] 3292
The queen present, the said[e] Rosamounde,
Take and supprised he was with dronk[e]nesse,
Of myhti wynes which pat day did habounde,
Sent a goblet of gold, as it is founde,
Vnto the queen, with licour ful plesaunt,
Bad to hir fadir [she] sholde drynke a taunt.

She dempte it was a maner moquerie,
First hir name and worship to confounde,
To bidde hir drynke a taunt for hir partie
To hir fadir, the said[e] Trusymounde,
Slay[e]n afforn with many bloodi wunde

3272. (And when I first read her story and knew how ungracious her marriage was, I grew pale and confused at the thought of writing in detraction of her name.]
3276. So I will forbear and pass over the rest lightly; for it would blot this book to tell the manner of all her sins.)
3280. 

1 MS. J. leaf 166 recto.
Be Albonius, thoruh his vnhappi chaunce, —
Of which rebuk she cast to do vengaunce.
She bar the rancour ful long in hir entent,
Which day be day gan renewe & encrease.
A certeyn squier she made of hir assent,
Which tacomplishe she wolde neuer cese.
And on another squier she gan prese,
Callid Peredeus, accorded al in oon,
This false moordre texecute anon.

The day was set; whil he lay & sleepe
Fill upon hym with sharp suerdis grounde:
Hir lord was slayn, alas, he took no* keepe!
Or he deide of Fortune he hath founde
A speris hed[e] to a tronchoyn bounde,
Hymself defendyng in that mortal striff;
But slayn he was be tresoun of his wiff.

3303. Albonoys R.
3304. to] om. H.
3312. whil] whan H.
3314. he] or he H — no] om. H, non B, R.
3325. kyng Alboyne] Albynus Y, Alboinus P.
3326. wedded to Helmiges P. 3329. o] no H.
3331. manye] om. H — neuer with] with nevir H.
She caste moordre in hir froward ayys
Hir newe husbonde that callid was Melchis.

The hote somer in lusti fressh[e] May,
The same Melchis for heete & weerynesse
Hymsilff to bathe wente a certeyn day,
Kauht a gret thrust of* feyntise in sothnesse.
And Rosamounde, of infernal falsnesse,
Took a goblet, wfit licour gret foisoun,
Gaf hym drynke wyn medlid with poisouw.

He drank up half, & therwithal he gan
Brest and beli to suelle & arise,
Intoxicat, wex dedli pale & wan;
And whan he dide hir tresoun aduertise,
He made hir drynke in the same wise,
Maugre hir wil, she myht it nat restreyne,
— Guerdoun for moordre, — thei deide bothe twyne.

In this chapitle but litil frut I fynde,
Sauf onli this, to putte in remewbrauwce,
That men sholde calle ageyw to mywde,
Moordre affor God requereth ay vengauwce.
This funeral stori weied in ballaunce,
Wrouht be Melchis, compassid first & founde
Be fals tresoun of cursid Rosamounde.

Slouh first hir lord Albonivs, as I seide,
Tuyne of hir squieres did execusioun,
Out of his slepe whan he did abraide.
Lat countirpese what was ther guerdoun:
Ech moordrid othir be drynkyng of poisoun;
Melchis drank first, & next drank Rosamounde;
At them it gan; to them it did rebounde.

Countirpised o moordre for another:
Albonivs slayn be Rosamounde his wiff
Bassent of Melchis, & aftir ech to other
The poisoun partid; ther gan a fatal striff.
Moordre quit for moordre, thei bothe lost her lyff.

Who vseth falsnesse, ful weel afferme I dar,
Shal with falsnesse be quit or he be war.

3339. newe is repeated in H. 3341. Helmiges P
3343. of] on B.
3352. it] hir R. 3359. Helmiges P.
3361, 69. Alboinus P. 3364. ther] hir H.
3366. 2nd drank] om. H.
As men gave, so shall they receive: and as they deserve, such shall be their reward.

As they departed, such part ageyn he took; [p. 405]

As men disserue, such shall be ther meede.

This froward story, eende of the Eihte Book,

Of Rosamounde & Melchis wrought in deede,

For short conclusioun biddith men take heede,

Thei shall rescuyue ageynward * suich mesour

As thei mesure vnto ther neigh[bour].

3376. Helmiges P.
3380. rescuyue ageynward] ageynward rescuyue B, P.

¶ Finis libri octauui.

¶ Incipit IXus liber Bochasii.
BOOK IX.

[How the Emperoure Maurycyus his wif and his childre wer slayne atte Calcedonye.] ¹

O Francisco Petrak as Bochas vndertook,[p.407] In eschewing of slouthe & idilnesse,
As he began taccomplish* up his book,
Assuraunce maad to doon his besynesse;
Which thing remembrid gan his penne dresse,*
The Nyhnte Book, so God wold send hym grace,
It to parfourme yif he had lyff & space.

At the gynnyng sothli of his labour,
In his studie to hym ther did appeere
Mauricivs, the mihti emperowr,
Which gan compleyne, rehersing the maneere
How he bi Phocas, cruel of look & cheere,
Destroied was — wiff, childre & kynreede —
The slauhtre kouth, who list ther stori reede.

The said[e] Maurice, as writ Bochas Iohn,
Was be Phocas brouht to destruccioun,
His wiff, his childre slay[e]n euerichon
At Calcedoyne, as maad is menciou[n,
Aftir whos deth he took pocessioun.

The said[e] Phocas, as put is in memorie, —
Gaf Panteoun onto Seynt Gregorie,
Which was a temple of old fundациou[n,
Ful of idoles upset on hih[e] stages.
Ther thoruh the world of eueri naciou[n
Wer of ther goddis set up gret images,
To eueri kyngdам direct wer ther visages,
As poetis & Fulgence be his lyue
In bookis olde pleylnli doth descryue.

Eueri image hadde in his hand a belle,
As appartened to euery naciou[n,
Which be crafft sum tokne sholde telle

As Bochas had promised
Francis Petrarch to do his best, he now made
ready his pen to finish his Ninth Book.

And as he began, the mighty Emperor Maurice came, complaining how he and his family had been murdered by Phocas

in Chaledon.

The same
Phocas gave Saint Gregory the Pantheon,
an old temple full of the idols of all nations.

Each image had a bell in its hand, that rang when the

³ taccomplish] accomplisshed B, R.
⁵ is misplaced at end of stanza B.
¹⁸ Calcedoyne] Macedoyn H, R ³. ²¹ Pantheon P.
²⁹ his] om. H. ³⁰ appartened] appertenyth H, pertey-
neth J, P — naciou[n] Regioun H.
¹ MS. J. leaf 166 verso.
⁹¹⁹
The Emperor Maurice. Muhammad

When any kyngdam fill in rebellioun
Or gan maligne ageyn[es] Roome toun;
Swich to redresse with strong & mihti hond
Sent a prince to chastise al that lond.

The saide temple bilt of lym & ston,
Pope Boniface*, bookis specifie,
Wher it was first callid Pantheon,
Set up crossis upon ech partie,
Halwid it to martirs & Marie,—
Yeer be yeer[e] gynnyng off Nouembre
The feeste holde, the martiloge doth remembre.

In Asie this emperour Maurice was slayn,
In the cite that callid is Calcidonye,*
Al his houshould and many good Romayn
Bi Phocas and Perciens, as had is in memorie.
And Phocas afftir, for al his veynglorie,
Slayn be Eraclivs, thouh he* was emperour
Foure and twenti* wyntir and cheef gouernour.

[Off Machomet the fals prophete and how he beyng
dronke was deoured among swyn.]¹

A FFTIR the deth of Phocas, as I tolde,
That Eraclius to regne first began,
Cam Machomeet, in his tyme Iholde
A fals prophete and a magicien,
As bookis olde weel reherse can.
Born in Arabia but of low kynreeede,
Al his lyue an idolastre in deede.

And whan that he greuh to gretter age,
Deceyuable in many sondri wise,
With chamelis vsid first cariage:
Wente to Egipte [to] fette marchaundises,*
Fals and double, sotil in his deuises;
To Iewes & Cristene sondry tyme sent,
Lerned the Olde [nd] Neve Testament.

37. Pope] blotted and erased B, J — Bonifas B — bookis] as
bookis J, as bokes P.
44. callid is] is callid H — Calcidonye] Calcidoine B.
48. he] who P — thow he] he than B. 49. xxiiij B.
60. to] om. H, R 3, P, H 5. 60 and 61 are transposed in B.
¹ MS. J. leaf 167 recto.
As bookis olde recorde* in that partie,
This Machomeet, this cursid fals[e] man,
Out of Egipt faste gan hym hie
Toward a contre callid Corozan,
With a ladi that hihte Cardigan, —
Thoruh his solit fals[e] daliaunce
Be crafft he fill into hir aqueyntaunce.

He wrouhte [so] be his enchauntementis
And be fals menis off nigromauncie,
Hir enclynynge toward his ententis;
For bothe he koude riht weel flatre* & lie.
Saide openli that he was Messie,
Iewes abidyng vpon his comyng,
As grettest prophete and ther souereyn kyng.

Thus the peele he brought in gret errour
Bi his teching & his fals doctryne;
He wex among hem a gret gouernour.
The saide ladi he dede also enclyne,
As to a prophete which that was deuyne
Sent from aboue, as she did vndirstonde;
For which she took hym vnto hir husbonde.

His lynage [be]gan at Hismael;
Hadde a siknesse, fil* ofte sithes doun,
In his excus[e] seide that Gabriel
Was sent to hym from the heueni mansioun
Be the Hooli Goost to his instruccion:
For the angel shewed hym* so sheene,
To stonde upriht he myhte nat sustene.

On his shuldre[s] wer ofte tymes seyn,
Whan he to folk[is] shewed his presence,
Milk whit dowes, which that piked greyn
Out of his' eris; affermyng in sentence
Thei cam be grace of goostli influence
Hym to visite, to shewe & speceifie
He was the prophete that callid was Messie.

Newe lawes he did also ordeyne,
Shewed signes be fals apparence;
Lik Moises, hysmslf he did[e] feyne

This cursed man then went to Khorasan
with a lady named Khadija,
who was attracted by his false subtle talk
and fooled by his necromancy; for he was an accomplished flatterer and liar.

He openly said he was Messiah,
and became a great prophet among the people; and for that reason the lady married him.

He was an Ismaelie and an epileptic, and excused his fits by saying, "I must always fall down when the Angel Gabriel comes to instruct me."

Milk-white doves sat on his shoulders, by spiritual influence, he claimed; but it was only to pick grain he had put in his ears.

He made new laws and seigned to be a prophet like Moses; and as
A prophete of most excellence.
And therupon to shewe an evidente,
Smale pottis with milk & hony born,
Of a gret bole wer hangid on ech horn.

Made the peple yuic credulite
To his doctryne and [his] froward teachynge:
Be mylk & hony figurid was plente,
Be the merit* of his gostli working.
And thus he was at his begynnyng
Take of Sarazyns, as thei gan to [hym] drawe,
Which bi fals errour bond hem to his lawe.

A clerk of his, callid Sergius,
Wrot his lawes & thes myracles thre:
First of the dowes, how thei cam to hym thus,
As heer-toforn rehersid was by me,
How milk & hony wer tokne[s] of gret plente,
And of the bole, afforn he crafft maad tame,
Bi fals deceitis to getyn hym a name.

Of Arabiens & Sarazyns, as I reede,
And of Turkis maad prince & gouernour,
With Hismaelites & folk of Perse & Mede
He gadred peple, gan wexe a werreioyr,
Ageyn Heraclius, the mihti emperour,
And vsurped to ride in tho cuntres,
Gat Alisaundre with many mo cites.

Of tho parties desirous to be kyng,
Of that purpos whan he was set aside,
To the peple falsli dissymulyng,
Told he was sent prophetis to prouide
For tho contrees, for to been ther guide.
And for he was lecherous of corage,
He made of Venvs sette up an image.

Made Sarazyns to worship the Friday,
Semblabli his stori doth expresse,
So as Iewes halwe the Satriday,—
Al his werkis concludyng on falsnesse.
Whan he drank wyn [he] fill in dronke[n]esse;
Bad the peple, lik a fals propeheete,
Drynke[e] watir, & good wyn to lete.

109. merit] meriht B.
111. hym] om. R, H 5 — Sarazyns J.
114. thes] his H. 129. dissymulyng] dissemblyng R.
As I seide, the heretik Sergivs,  
With hym of counsail froward & contrarie,  
Foon to our feith, he and Nostorivs,  
From hooli chirch[e] gretli thei gan varie.  
On whos errors Bochas list nat tarie  
Mor to write[n] of this Machomeete,  
A nigromancien & a fals prophete.

Who list to seen his lawes euerichon  
Yowte to Sarsyns, his book can ber witnesse,  
As thei be set in his Alkeroun,  
Echon in ordre groundid on falsnesse.  
Lik a glutoun deied in dronk[e]nesse,  
Bi excesse of mykil drywkyng wyn,  
Fill in a podel, deuoured amowg swyn.

This was the eende of fals[e] Machomeete,  
For al his craftis of nigromancie,  
The funeral fyn of this seudo prophete,  
Dronklew of kynde, callid hymself Messie,  
Whom Sarsyns so grete magnet,  
Mor of his errors to putte in remembranuce.

[How Brounchilȝd / queene of Fraunce slouh hir kyn /  
brought the londe in diuisioun, and aftir was honged / and hewen in pecys smale.]  
SHE cam arraied nothing lik a queen,  
Hir her vntressid; Bochas took good heed,  
In al his book he had afforn nat seen  
A mor woful creature in deede.  
With weeping eyen, toturn[e] was hir weede,  
Rebuking Bochas, he had leeft behynde  
Hir wretchinnesse for to putte in mynde.

Vn to myn auctour she sodenliabraide,  
Lik a woman that wer with wo chekmaat.  
First of alle thus to hym she saide:  
“Sumtyme I was a queen of gret estat  
Crownid in Fraunce; but now al desolat

144. thei] om. H.  
157. pseudo H.  
160. a queen of Fraunce] it did hym grevaunce H.  
162-532 are omitted in H.  
1 MS. J. leaf 167 verso.
Bochas’s Dispute with Brunnilde

I stonde in soth. Brunnechild[e] was my name, Which to rehearse I haue a maner shame.

Thou wer besi to write the woful caa
Withynne thi book off Arsynoe,
Dist seruise to queen Cleopatras,
Of Rosymounde thou writ also parde;
And among alle thou hast forgete me,
Wherbi it seemeth thou dost at me disdeyne,—
List no parcel to writen of my peyne.

“You wrote all about Arsynoe and Cleopatra and Rosamond, and it seems you have forgotten me.”

When Bochas heard this he was em-barrassed, for he knew nothing about her. “No,” he replied, “I never read your story.” “I’ll tell it to you then.”

“You women,” said Bochas, “never tell anything to your own discredit.

“Nature teaches you to hide all your faults and to look most innocent when you have been most wicked.

“And if you now tell me your story, you will shew very little of your vices, and only a fool would believe you.”

Bochas with Brunnechild[e] gan debate anon:
“Sothli,” quod he, “this the condicioun
Of you wommen almost euerichon;
Ye haue this maner, withoute excepcioun,
Of your natural inclynacioun,
Of your declaryng this obseruaunce to kepe:
Nothyng to seyn contrarye to your worshepe.

Nature hath tauht you al that is wrong texcuse, Vndir a courtyn al thyng for to hide; Witb litil greyn your chaff ye can abuse; On your diffautis ye list nat for to bide:
The galle touchid, al that ye set aside; Shewe rosis fresshe; weedis ye leet passe, And fairest cheere[e] when ye most trespase.

And yiff ye shal telle your owne tale, How ye be fall[e] fro Fortunis wheel, Ye will vnclose but a litil male, Shewe of your vices but a smal parcel: Brotil glas sheweth brighter than doth steel; And thouf of vertu ye shewe a fair pretence, He is a fool that yiueth to you credence.”

180. forgotyn R, forgotten J. 188. you] the R.
200. On] Onto R — fortabide R.
203. fairest] faireth R.
Quo[d] Brunnechild, “I do riht weel espie
Thou hast of wommen a fals oppynyoun,
How that thei can flatre weel & lie
And been dyuers of disposicioun; —
Thou myhtest haue maad an excpepcioun
Of hih estatis & them that gentil been,
Namli of me, that was so get a queen.”

“Your hih estat boff Kynde hath no poweer
To chauwge in nature nouther cold nor heete:
But let vs passe and leue this mateer,
Theron tabide or any mor toplete;
Of your compleynt seith to me the grete.
Be weie of seruise to you I shal me quite,
As ye declare take my penwe & write.”

“Tak heed,” quod she, “& with riht good auis
Fro the trouthe bewar that thou nat varie!
Whilom in France regnid kyng Clowis,
Hadde a sone that namyd was Clotarye,
Clothair an heir which callid was Lotarie;
And this Lotarie, namyd the secouwde,
Hadde sonis foure, in stori it is founde.

Be oon assent, as brothir onto brothir,
Weryng her crownis, ech quit hem onto othir.

The same tyme, I, callid Brunnechild, —
Me list nat varie fro the old writyng, —
Hadde a fadir namyd Leuychild,
Of al Spayne souereyn lord and kyng.
My saide fathir, to ful gret hyndryng
Of bothe rewmys (the fame ronne ful* ferre),
Tween Spaigne & Fraunce gan a mortal werre.

The brethre foure, in Fraunce crownid kynges,
Ageyn my fadir made strong difence,
Of marcial pride & fortunat chaungyngis,
When thei mette be mortal violence, 
Of sodeyn slaughtre fill suich pestilence 
On outher parti, the feeld lik a gret flood 
With the terrible effusioun of blood. 

To bothe reumys the werris wer importable, [p. 410] 
Causid of deth[e] passyng gret damage; 
Souhte menys, wex be assent tretable, 
Of blood sheedyng tappese the woful rage. 

Bi oon accord I was youe in mariage 
To Sigibert, regnyng tho in Fraunce, 

Thesay, menys, wex be assent tretable, 
Of blood sheedyng tappese the woful rage. 

Bi oon accord I was youe in mariage 
To Sigibert, regnyng tho in Fraunce, 

"Nay, nay," quod Bochaj, "I deeme it is nat so; 
Tween you & me ther mut begynne a strif. 
Beth auised; taketh good heed herto: 
The first assuraunce of mariage in yowr lyfF, 
Of Chilperik ye were the weddid wifF, 
The chronicles seyn, what-euer ye expresse, 
In this mateer wil bere with me witnesse." 

"Thouh sumwc bookis reherse so & seyn, 
Lik as ye haue maad heer mencion, 
Ther rehersaile stant in noun certeyn; 
For be thassent of outher region, 
Spayne and Fraunce in ther conuenciou 
Ordeyned so in my tendre age, 
To Sigibert I was youe in mariag. 

Ymenivs was nat ther present, 
Whan we took our chaumbre toward niht; 
For Thesiphone, hir sustren of assent, 
Infernall goddessis bar the torchis liht. 
And as the torchis shewid dirk or briht, 
Therbi the peeple present, oon & alle, 
Dempte of the mariag what sholde befalle. 

This custum vsid of antiquite: 
Fro ther templis of goddis & goddessis, 
At mariages of folk of hih degre 
Torchis wer born, of whom men took witnessis, 
As thei wer dirk or shewed ther brihtnessis, 
The difference seyn in ech estat, 
Yif it wer toward or infortunat.

Whan thei mette be mortal violence, 
Of sodeyn slaughtre fill suich pestilence 
On outher parti, the feeld lik a gret flood 
With the terrible effusioun of blood. 

No, no," said Bochas, "that isn't so; we are not going to agree. You were first the wife of Chilperic. The chronicles say so."

Although some books have it as you mention, at any rate I was given when very young to Sigebert. 

It was an unhappy marriage: Hymeneus was not there, and Thesiphone and her sisters bore the torches; 

and of old times, according as the torches burnt dark or bright, the marriage was deemed fortunate or otherwise. 

Whan thei mette be mortal violence, 
Of sodeyn slaughtre fill suich pestilence 
On outher parti, the feeld lik a gret flood 
With the terrible effusioun of blood. 

To bothe reumys the werris wer importable, [p. 410] 
Causid of deth[e] passyng gret damage; 
Souhte menys, wex be assent tretable, 
Of blood sheedyng tappese the woful rage. 

Bi oon accord I was youe in mariage 
To Sigibert, regnyng tho in Fraunce, 

Thesay, menys, wex be assent tretable, 
Of blood sheedyng tappese the woful rage. 

Bi oon accord I was youe in mariage 
To Sigibert, regnyng tho in Fraunce, 

"Nay, nay," quod Bochaj, "I deeme it is nat so; 
Tween you & me ther mut begynne a strif. 
Beth auised; taketh good heed herto: 
The first assuraunce of mariage in yowr lyfF, 
Of Chilperik ye were the weddid wifF, 
The chronicles seyn, what-euer ye expresse, 
In this mateer wil bere with me witnesse." 

"Thouh sumwc bookis reherse so & seyn, 
Lik as ye haue maad heer mencion, 
Ther rehersaile stant in noun certeyn; 
For be thassent of outher region, 
Spayne and Fraunce in ther conuenciou 
Ordeyned so in my tendre age, 
To Sigibert I was youe in mariag. 

Ymenivs was nat ther present, 
Whan we took our chaumbre toward niht; 
For Thesiphone, hir sustren of assent, 
Infernall goddessis bar the torchis liht. 
And as the torchis shewid dirk or briht, 
Therbi the peeple present, oon & alle, 
Dempte of the mariag what sholde befalle. 

This custum vsid of antiquite: 
Fro ther templis of goddis & goddessis, 
At mariages of folk of hih degre 
Torchis wer born, of whom men took witnessis, 
As thei wer dirk or shewed ther brihtnessis, 
The difference seyn in ech estat, 
Yif it wer toward or infortunat.

264. Chilperis R. 274. Himeneus P.
Of this marriage short process for to make, 288
The torchis brente, & yit thei wer nat briht,—
Shewed out komerous smokes blake;
Of consolacioun lost was al the liht.
Thus in dirknesse wastid the firste niht:
Ther vers, ther songis of goddis & goddessis
Wer al togidre of sorwe and heuynessis.

Thes wer the toknis the niht of mariage,
Pronostiques of gret aduersite; 296
Yit of nature I hadde this auauwtage
Of womawheed and excellent beute;
And lik a queen in stonis & perre
I was arraied, clad in purpil red,
With a crowne of gold upon myn hed.

Solempnely crownid queen of Fraunce,
Which for to seen folk faste gan repaire.
Of al weelfare I hadde suffisauwce, 304
Clomb of Fortune ful hih vpon the staire.
A sone I hadde, which callid was Clotaire,
Be Sigibert, be record of writyng,
Thridde of ^at name in Fraunce crownid kyng.

So wolde God the* day whan he was born 308
He hadde be put in his sepulture,
In sauacioun of blood shad heer-toforn:
Caused the deth of many creature,
As dyuers bookis recorden in scripture,
Ground and gynnyng, as maad is mencion,
Withynne this lond of gret deuysioun.

He with his brethre, of whom I tolde late, 316
At hym begonne the first occasion "—
["Nat so," quod Bochar, "ye faillen of your date.
Who was chief cause of [this] discencioun?"]
["Sothli," quod she, "to myn oppynyoun,
Amon[g] hem-silff, I dar weel specifie,
The chief gynnyng was fraternal envie."

["Keep you mor cloos; in this mateer ye faille.
Folwyng the tracis of your condicioun,
Ye halte foule in your rehersaille:
For of your owne imaginacioun
Ye sewe the seed of this discencioun

298. womanhode. 309. the] that B — when] that J, om. P.
311. here befor R.
Brunhilde's Annoyance with Bochas

At this Brunhilde changed her expression and gravely said to Bochas, "A few moments ago you knew very little about my life; now you sit over me as a judge.

"When these brothers were at discord, Chilperic, brother of King Sigebert, was slain,

and also Sigebert, who sought to avenge his death."

"No," said Bochas, "he was murdered because of your deceit and evil life.

"You loved another, and through your outrage and folly the king was slain while hunting in the Forest of Compiègne."

"Alas," she exclaimed, "Bochas, Bochas, you know too much; but how do you know about the slaughter of Sigebert, done by my assent, if you were not there?"

Among these kynes, yif ye taken heed,
Bi which in France many man was ded."

¶ Than Brunnechild[e] gan to change cheere;
To Bochas seide with face ful cruel,
"Nat longe ago thou knew nat the manner
Of my lyuyng but a smal parcel;
Me seemeth now thou knowest eueridceel,
So that ye maywithoute longer striff
Sitte as a iuge, that knowe so weil my lyff.

Whan thes brethr stoden at discord, [p. 411]
Ech ageyn other bi mortal violence,
Vndir colour to tretyn of accord
With a maner feyned dilligence,
Chilperik ther beyng in presence,
Whilom brothir to Sigibert the kyng,
Was slayn among hem be fals conspiryng.

On whos deth auengid for to be,
As Sigibert did[e] hymself auaunce,
Among the pres he slaye[n] was parde . . . ."

¶ "Nat so," quod Bochas, "but of fals gouernaunce,
Of your mysleyung fill this vnhappi chaunce,
That Sigibert was moordred in sothnesse
Oonli be occasioun of your doublinesse.

Folwyng the traces* of newefangilnesse,
Geyn Sigibert ye wrouht[e] ful falsli,
Whan ye loued* of froward doublinesse
Landrik the erl of Chaumpayne & of Bry;
For bi your outrage & your gret foly
The kyng was slaye[n], and ye did assente,
In a forest on huntyng whan he wente,

Which callid was the forest of Compyne."

¶ "Alas!" quod she, brak out in compleynyng,
"Bochas, Bochas, thou dost sore vndermyne
Alle the surfetis doon in my lyuyng!
Thou knowest the slauhtre of Sigibert the king,
Which that was wrouht, alas, be myn assent, —
How knowist thou it, that wer nat ther present? 364

329. many a R.
334. eueril R.
346. the pres] thres R.
351. traces] tras B, trace R, traces J, P.
353. loued] loueden B R.
Of thes debatis and of al this werre,
With rebukis rehersed heer in veyn,
In rehersaille gretli thou dost erre;
For which I caste — be riht weel certeyn —
In my diffence to replie ageyn.
It was nat I; for she that thou dost meene
Was Fredeguwdus, the lusti nyngue queene.

This Fredegunde, thou shalt [weel] vnndirstonde,
Riht womanli and fair of hir visage, —
Chilperik was whilom hir husbonde;
For hir beute took hir in mariague.
Bi hir treynys & hir gret outrage
He was aftir, the stori who list reede,
At myschef slayn; thou shalt so fynde in deede.”

"You are wholly wrong. It was not I, but the lusty young Queen Fredegon whom you mean.

"Chilperic was once her husband, and it was through her wiles and outrages that he was afterwards slain."

"Although you defend yourself well, I’ve lost patience with you for your subtle excuses.

"Clotaire was not your own son nor Sigibert’s, but Childebert was; and he left two sons, Theudebert and Theuderich."

"Bochas, although you turn these stories upside down out of malice, I will go on as I began, in spite of you."

Of thes mateeres, which cause me to muse,
I haue ageyn you lost my pacience,
That so sotilli wolde yoursylf excuse.
Contrariousli your termys ye abuse;
For Clotaire*, I haue so rad, parde,
Was nat engendred of Sigibert nor of the.

I remembre ful weel that I haue rad
That Childepert*, thouh ye therat disdeyne, —
Record of auctours that prudent been & sad, —
How he in trouthe was gendrid of you twyne,
Which in his deyng (me list nat for to feyne*)
Leftt sonis two, the story ye may* reede, —
Theobart & Thederik to succeede.”

"Clotaire was not your own son nor Sigibert’s, but Childebert was; and he left two sons, Theudebert and Theuderich."

"Bochas, although you turn these stories upside down out of malice, I will go on as I began, in spite of you."
"Theuderich was cousin germain to my husband, and he slew his brother Theudebert and all his family. Whatever you say, this is the truth."

Kyth of Burgoyne that tyme, and non other. 400
He of hatreede and indignacioun
Slouh Theobart, which that was his brother,
His wiff, his chylde, for short conclusion,
Which in the myghty famous regioun
Of Autrasie regned as lord & kyng.

What-euer thou seist, this soth & no lesyng."

"No," said Bochas, "it was quite otherwise; I may nat suffre how ye go ther among.
Al this langage of newe that ye devise, Brouht to a preef, concluseth vpon wrong.
What sholde we lenger this mateer drawe along? Yoursilf wer cause, wher ye be lothe* or fayn, Be Theodorik that Theobart was slayn.

The ground heerof gan parcel of envie, Bi your froward brennyng couetisise, Which that ye hadde onli to occupie, To reule the lond aftir your owne guise.
And yif I shal pleynli heer desoise Of thys myscheeuys rehearsed, God do boote, Ye wer your-silff[e] ground, cheef cropp & roote." 420

\[Quod Brunnechild, "I conceyue wel & se, [p. 412] Ye for your part haue lost al reuerence, Your-silff enarmed to shewe your cruelte Ageyn[e]s me, touchyng the violence Of too slauhtris rehearsed in sentence: First how Theodorik his brothir slouh in deede, Callid Theobart, a pitous thynge to reede;

Hymsilff[e] aftir stranglied with poisoun, His wiff, his chylde hewe on pecis smale. . . "
\[As ye," quod Bochas, "mak heer smale . . . Sum part is trewe, but nat al your tale; For I suppose ye sholde wexe pale For shame of thyng which ye canat excuse, Whan Theodorik begynneth you taccuse.

He put on you the crym of fals tresoun; Ye slouh his wiff and his childryn also;
Hymsilff also ye moordred with poisoun:

405. Autrasie] Austriche P. 410. concluyding R.
I wolde wete what ye can seyn herto?"
¶ "Alas," quod she, "alas, what shal I do!
Was neuer woman, in hih nor louh estat,
Al thyng considred, mor infortunat!

Fortune of me set now but litil prys,
Bi hir froward furious violence
Turnyng hir wheel & visage of malys,
Causeth to me that no man yeueth credence,
Had in despiht, void of al reuereunce,
And thoru$h Fortunys mutabilite
Sool [and] abiect and falle in pouerete.

¶ O Bochas Iohn, for short conclusioun,
Thou must ageyns me bi stile now auaunce.
I haue disserued to haue puncion,
And alle the princis & barouns now in France
Crie out on me & axe on me vengaunce;
Refuge is non nor recure in this thing,
Thouh that Clotaire my sone* be crownid kyng.

For my defaultis foul & abhomynable,
Tofor the iuges of al the parlement
I was foriugid & founde also coupable,
Of every crym convict be iugement,
Myn accusours ther beyng present,
Of oon & othir stondyng a gret route,
Markid with fyngris of folk þat stood aboute.

For verray shame I did myn eyen close,
For them that gauere & cast on me þer siht;
But as folk may be tokynys wel suppose,
Myn eris wer nat stoppid half ariht.
Taken be force & lad forth with myht,
Be the hangman drawe ouer hill & vale,
Dismembrid aftir & hewe on pecis smale.

With my blood the pament al bespreynt,
Thanked be Fortune, such* was myn auenture,
The soule partid, my bodi was so feyn.
Who radde euer of any creature
That mor wo or torment did endure!"

"Alas," said she, "what shall I do!
Was there ever a more unfortunate woman!

"Fortune cares little for me now; she allows no man to believe
what I say, or to hold me in respect,—abject and alone and fallen in poverty!

"O Bochas John, I have deserved punishment and there is no refuge for me, though my son be crowned king.

"I was found guilty by the judges of all the parliament; and people pointed me out with their fingers, so that I shut my eyes for very shame.

"Taken out by force, I was drawn by the hangman and cut up into small pieces.

"Who ever read of a woman who endured more torment than I."
Praied Bochas to haue al thyng in mynde,
Write hir lyff & leue nothyng behynde.

Lenvoye.

\[ \text{T HIS tragedie of Brunnehild the queen,} \\
\text{To hir stori who list yiuue attendaunce,} \\
\text{Froward to rece, contagious to seen,} \\
\text{And contrarie to al good gouernaunce,} \]

Born in Spayne, crownid queen of Fraunce,
Double of hir tunge, vpfyndere of tresoun,
Caused al that lond stonde at dyuysioun.

\[ \text{From hir treynys ther koude no man fleene,} \\
\text{Sours & hedspryng of sorwe & myschaunce;} \\
\text{Shad hony first, stang aftir as doon beene,} \\
\text{Hir myrre medlid with sugrid fals plesaunce.} \]

What she saide includid variaunce,
Maistresse of moordre & of discencioun,
Caused al that lond stonde at dyuysioun.

\[ \text{Princis of Gaule myhete nat susteene} \\
\text{Gret outrages nor the gret gouernaunce} \]

Nor the surfetis doon in hir yeeris greene,
Brouth that kyngdam almost to vtrauence;
Alle of assent cried on hir vengaunce.
The fame arooos, how al that regioun
Bi hir falsnesse stood at dyuysioun.

\[ \text{The knife of moordre grounde was so keene} \\
\text{Bi hir malys of long contynuaunce,} \]

Hir corage fret with infernal teene,
Spared nouther kyn nor alliaunce.
Peised hir surfetis & weied in ballaunce,
As Bochas writ, she was thoccasioun
Which made al Fraunce stonde at dyuysioun.

\[ \text{Here Bochas in maner excusith the [p. 413]} \]
\text{vorrching of Brunnehild.}^1

\[ \text{BOCHAS astonid, gan inwardli meruaile,} \\
\text{Fill in a maner of ambugiute} \]
Of Brunnehildis merueilous rehersaile, —

486. doon] om. R. 492. outrages] greuaunces R.

\[ \text{1 The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 169 recto: "Bochas mervelyng of the malice and crueltie of Bronnchilda/writeth thus."} \]
How any woman of resoun sholde be
So ful of malis & fround cruelte,
To slen hir kyn & setten at distaunce
Be dyuysion al the rewme of France.

Bochas dempte it was nat credible
That a woman sholde be so vengable,
In hir malis so venymous or terrible
Of slauhtre or moordre [for] to be coupable.
The stori suspect, heeld it but a fable,
Onli except that she did hym excite
With gret instauunce hir story for to write.

Hir cry on Bochas was verray importune,
To sette in ordre hir felicites
With hir vnhappi chaunges of fortune,
Hir disclaundres and gret aduersites,
With hir diffame reportid in* contres;
No verray grounde founde in bookes olde,
But of confession that she hirsiluen toldel,
That myn auctour with* solemnpe stile
Reherse sholde hir deedis disclauudrous,
Hir flouryng yeeris also to compile,
Medlid with hir daies that wer contrarious,
Hir fatal ende froward & furious,
Wherof encoumbred of verray weerynesse,
Toward Eracylus he gan his penne dresse.

[How Eracylus the Emperour sustened heresye fill
in to dropsy and sikenesse incurabl and so died.] ¹

A FFTIR Phocas, with gret honour & glorie
Crownid emperour of Roome þe cite,
In whos tyme, lik as seith þe storie,
The Romeyns stood in gret perplexite
Bi them of Perse that roos with Cosdroe,
Which took upon hym to be lord and sire,
As a tiraunt to trouble the empire.

508. Bochas marvelled how any woman could be so full of malice and perverse cruelte.
512. He thought it incredible that a woman should be so terrible in her rage as to be guilty of murder.
516. He held her story but a fable, except for her insistence; and it came not from old books but was her own confession.
520. And finally, overcome by very weariness, he turned his pen to the Emperor Heraclius.
524. After Phocas became emperor the Romans were greatly embarrassed by the Persians under Chosroes,
532. H begins again.

¹ MS. J. leaf 169 verso.
Gat many prouynce & many famous rewne
Thoruh al Asie, as the cronicle seith,
Gan approche toward Iherusalem;
Afforn the toun proudli a siege he leith,
As a tiraunt froward to Cristes feyth.
But Eraclius, maugre al his miht,
Smet of his hed & slouh hym lik a knyht.
And bi grace, which that is dyuyne,
This famous prince, this Eraclius
In his begynnynge slouh many proud Sarseyn,
Holde in tho daies notable & glorious,
And in his conquest passyng[ly] famous.
Dyuers reliques & the cros he souhte,
And fro tho cuntres many of hem he brought.

No man was more fitted to rule the empire,
but he became a heretic

and upheld the doctrines of the Monarchianites.
After that he was never fortunate.

Once dreaded
on land and sea, Grace and Fortune left him, and he suffered
with such a dropsey
that his thirst
could never be quenched.

The Fate of the Emperor Heraclius

who conquered many provinces in Asia, and, froward to Christ, besieged Jerusalem, until Heraclius smote off his head.

In his youth Heraclius slew many Saracens, and was a famous knight and a seeker after relics.

No man was more fitted to rule the empire, but he became a heretic

and upheld the doctrines of the Monarchianites. After that he was never fortunate.

Once dreaded on land and sea, Grace and Fortune left him, and he suffered with such a dropsey that his thirst could never be quenched.

He gan susteene & solwe certeyn rihtis,
Of wilfulnesse and froward fantasie,
Of a sect callid Monachelites,
Which is a sect of froward heresie;
And sith that he drouh to that partie,
The stori tellith, for al his hih estat,
This Eraclius was neuer fortunat.

Wher he was first drad on se & lond,
Namli off Sarsyns, for his* cheualrie,
Grace & Fortune from hym withdrouh ther hond;
For whan that he fill into heresie,
He was trauailed with suich a dropesie,
And therwithal he hadde a froward lust
Euere to drynk, & euere he was a-thrust.
In tho daies founde was no leche,
Al-be that thei wer souht on ech partie,
The saide prince that koude wisshe or teche,
Hym to releue of his idropesie,
Maad feynt & feeble with a gret palisie:
Thus in siknesse he hath his daies spent,
Be vengauce slayn with infernal torment.

Of Heraclius this was the woful eende,
As is rehearsed, slay[e]n with seeknesse,
Out of this world[el] whan he sholde weende,
580

Al hool thempire stood in gret distresse,
Force of Sarsyns dide hem so oppresse;
And day be day drouh [vn]to declyn
Be his successour callid Constantyn,
588

[How Constantyne the sone of Eraclyus supportyn
errour and heresye was moordred in a stewe.] 1

Which was his sone, as maad is mencioun.
In whos tyme thoruh his gret folie
Sarsyns dide gret oppressiou
592

And Constantyn, of wilful slogardie,
Wasted his daies til that he hath brouht
Al thempire almost onto nouht.

Geyn Cristes feith in especial
He gan of malys his wittis to applie,
And was therto enmy ful mortal,
596

As* cheeff supportour of fals heresie.
And toward Roome faste he gan hym hie,
Spoilled templis of many riche image,
And be water took aftir his passage.

To Constantynople he hasted hym ful blyue,
Be Cecile the weie was most* meete;
At Siracuse I fynde he did aryue,
And for the sesoun was excessiff of heete,
Which in his labour made hym for to sueete,
And secreli he gan hymself renewe
599

To be bathed in a preue stewe.
603

578. dropesie R, J.  581. torment] Iugement H.  580. No physician was able to relieve him, and he finally died in torment.
583. is] om. R.  595. is misplaced at foot of column R.
607. hym] his H.  608. renewe] renewe H.

1 MS. J. leaf 169 verso.
and there his own knights fell upon him and slew him.

Of enmyte ther he was espied;
His owne knihtes, lik as it is founde,
Be conspiracioun, certeyn of them allied,
Fill upon hym with shalr[pe] swerdiss* grounde.
And merciles, with many mortal wounde,
Thei slough hym ther, on hym thei wer so wood,
Amyd the stewe, nakid as he stood.

They chose their own emperor; but Constantine, the next heir,

Aftir whos deth thei did hemislf auaunce
To chese a kniht bor[e]n in Armenye,
Of thempire to take* the gouernauce
And to supporte falsli ther partie.

But Constantyn, succeedyng of allie,
Beyng next heir, the trouthe for to sue,
To hym that was moordred in the stue,

Callid Constantyn, as his fadir was,
Riht notable in actis marciall,
Mor wisli governed, stood in othir caas:
Lik a prince, be iugement roial,
Of manli herte and corage natural
The conspiratours first of alle he sleth.

To his great renown he caused 289
bishops to assemble for the defence
of Christ's faith against old heresies.

To gret encre of his famous renoun,
Grace of God dide hym enlumyne,
Constantynople, in that roial toun
Olde heresie[s] to cessen and to fyne.

He made assemble, thoruh manli prouidence,*
Of Cristes feith to stonde at diffence.*

He also restored churches and justly punished all heretics, without respect of person or favour.

He was eek besi cherchis to restore,
Al heretikes manli to withstonde,
Ther oppynyouns examyned weel before,
And whan the trouthe was weil vndistonde,
Lik Cristis kniht list for no man wonde
To pun[y]s[hen] hem ius[t]lli be rigour,
Withoute excepcioun of persone or fauour.

Of hym in Bochas litil mor I reede,
Nor of his empire I fynde non oper date, —
Spared non heretik, noother for gold nor meede,

Constantynople he passid into fate; 648 except that he paid tribute to
Whan Bulgarience gan with hym debate, the Bulgars
A froward people, wilful & rekles, for the sake of
Gaff hem a tribut, he for to lyue in pes. died in Con-

[How Gisulph was slayn, and his wif ended
mischeuesly in lecherye.] 1

NEXT cam Gisulphus to Bochas on he ryng, 652
A famous duk & notable in his lyff,
With weeping eyen pitousli pleunynge;
With whom also cam Rymulde his wiff,
Which pat lyueden euere in sorwe & striffe. 656
Yit was she bothe of berthe & of lynage
Rhit excellent, & fair of hir visage.

Sixe childre hadde this famous queen 653
Bi Gisulphus begetyn in marigiane,
Wonder semli and goodli on to seen,
And fortunat be processe of ther age,
Al-be ther farid felte gret damage
Be the werris he hadde in his hyuyn
With Cathanus that was of Narroys kyng.

This Cathanus with many strong bataille
Is descendid, and took the weie riht
Of duk Gisulphus the londis to asaille;
Togidre mette in steel armyd briht;
Gisulph slayn; his peele put to fliht.
And Cathanus with strong & myhti hond
Took pocessioun, conquered al his lond.

Aftir whos deth Romulde the duchesse,
Gretli astoned, pale of hir visage,
To the castel off Foroiulan gan hir dresse
With hir knihtis of strong & fel corage.
Cathanus made aftir his* passage,
Leide a siege, caste hym to iuparte
His lyff, his bodi rather than departe.

653. felte] fell in R. 664. the] ther R.
673. Rymulde H, J, Romilde P.
676. hir] his R. 677. his] hir B.

1 MS. J. leaf 170a.
The soul Story of Romilda

Aboute the castel armyd as he rood,
Lik a prince sat knihtli on his steede,
Upon the wallis as Romuldus stood,
Fresshli beseyn[e] in hir purpil weede,
And of the sege gan to taken heede,
Hir look, vnwarli, as she cast a-side,
And sauh the kyng tofor the castel ride,

So lik a prince and a manli kniht;
She gan on hym looke wondir narwe:
The god of loue persed thoruh hir siht,
Vnto hir herte markid hir with his arwe;
The fry tyndis of his brennyng harwe
Made the soil so pliaunt of hir thouht,
That of hir castel she set almost riht nouht.

And for tacompilishe the hool entencioun
Of hir fals lust in al maner thyng,
She is agreed be composicioun
To yeld the castel in haste onto the kyng,
She for to come withoute mor tarieng,
Lik a duchesse hirisiluen to presente,
Wher-as the kyng sat armyd in his tente.

The peple withynne prisoneeres take,
Hir foure sonis took hem to the fliht;
Loue caused that she hath forsake
Hir blood, hir kyn, wher it wer wrong or riht.
And Romulde the space but of* a niht
With Catbanus hadde al hir deliht,
And euere aftir he hadde hir in desphti.

And bi the kyng whan she was refusid,
Tuclue in noumbre that dulelled in his hous
Most frowardli hir beute haueabusid,
Of hir nature she was so lecherous.
Al to reherse it is contagious,
How she wex afftir so abhomynable
To been aqueynted with gromys of be stable.

It wer but veyn to tarie on this mateere
Or any long processe for to make,
Hir stori is contagious [for] to heere.

682. Rymuldis H — Romuldus stood] Rymuldus abood J, Romilde abode P.
691. fry tyndis] fire teyndis R. 693. nouht] om. R.
698. withoute] with R. 705. but of] of al B, J.
But fynalli at myscheef she was take,  
For a spectacle fichched on a stake, 
Set up alofte, myn auctour tellith so, 
Deide in distresse for constreynt of hir wo.

[Off Justinyan the fals extorcioner exiled by Patry- 

cyan/after bothe nose & eien kut from his hede.] ¹

Thoru long[e] resting leseth his brihtnesse, 
Fret with old rust, gadreth gret ordure, 
Is diffacid of his freshh cleernesse, 
Semblablly the Romeyns hih prowesse 
Gan for tappalle, alas, & that was routhe! — 
Whan thei hem gaff to necligence & slouthe. 
Who in knihthod list haue experience 
Must eschewe riotous idilnesse, 
Be prouident with entere dilligence, 
Large with discricioun, manli with gentilesse, 
To hih emprises his corage dresse, 
And be weel war, upon ech partie, 
Hym to preserue fro rust of slogardie. 
The which[e] vice gretli hath appeired, 
As is remembrid of old antiquite, 
Caused ofte Romeyns be dispeired, 
Be froward lustis hyndred ther cite 
And appallid ther old prosperite; 
For which defautis cam to pleyne blyue 
To John Bochas emperour[e]s fyue. 
As many kynges of the same noumbre, 
Which be slouthe wern afforn oppressid, 
Whom that slouthe whilom did encoumbre, 
Ther names heer bi and bi expressid, 
To myn auctour thei han her cours Idressid 
Lik ther degrees to speke in wordes fewe: 
\[ Justinian 

Nat Justinyan whilom so vertuous, 
And of prudent gouernaunce so notable, 
But Justinyan Temerarivs,

¹ MS. J. leaf 170c.
Double of his deedis, fals & deceyuable, Of his promys dyuers & vnstable, Whilom exild be Patrician
For extorsiouns that he in Roome gan. 756

His nase, his eyen Patrician gaf in charge To be kut of, be furious cruelte.
And of thempire hat was so wide & large,
G Leoncius next gouernid the cite; 760
And thoruh Fortunis mutabilitate
The same Leonce be Tiberie was cast doun,
His eien put out, deied affer in prisoun.

Tiberius, And of thempire )at was so wide & large,
Leoncius next gouernid the cite; 764
His nose kut of, from his see put doun;
For a rebuk and a perpetuel shame,
To a cite that callid was Cersoun,
Without merci, fauour or raunsoun
Exild he was, prisowned as a theeff,
Bi long[e] turment deide at myscheef.

[How Philip the Emperour died at myscheef.] 1

Philippicus was an odious heretic and iconoclast, who knocked down the images of the holy saints,
Pursuied he was bi a manli kniht
Callid Anastaise, and put out of his place;
And in Cicile, of verray force & myht
He did his eyen out of his hed arace,
Be iugement his visage to difface,
Semblabli as he be gret outragues
Of Cristes cherrch diffaced the images;

Deide at myscheeff dirkid with blyndnesse.

759. he was] was he R.
772. Lis an heretik cursid of luyng
And odious to eueri creature,
Beet doun images & many fresh picture
Of hooli seynter, which in ther templis stood,
Wherbi Romeyns dempte that he was wood.

776. Lik an heretik cursid of luyng
And odious to eueri creature,
Beet doun images & many fresh picture
Of hooli seynter, which in ther templis stood,
Wherbi Romeyns dempte that he was wood.

780. Callid Anastaise, and put out of his place;
And in Cicile, of verray force & myht
He did his eyen out of his hed arace,
Be iugement his visage to difface,
Semblabli as he be gret outragues
Of Cristes cherrch diffaced the images;

Deide at myscheeff dirkid with blyndnesse.

784. Callid Anastaise, and put out of his place;
And in Cicile, of verray force & myht
He did his eyen out of his hed arace,
Be iugement his visage to difface,
Semblabli as he be gret outragues
Of Cristes cherrch diffaced the images;

784. Chirchis R.

1 MS. J. leaf 170d.
And chronicles make mencionun,
Of thempire was maad dyuisioum:
That first was oon, partid [was] on tueyne
Wherof myn auctour in maner doth compleyne.

§ Bochas in maner compleynyth of pingis deuidid
in too.¹

As he reherseth in his oppynyoun
And therupon doth a grounde devise,
Cause & rote of ther deuisioun
Took orignyal of fals couetise;
And ceriounsi he tellith heer the guise,
Into the cherch whan richesse brouht in pride,
All perfeccioun anon was set aside.
The poore staf and potent of doctryne,
Whan it wer chaungid & list nat for tabide
In wilful pouert, but gan anon declyne,
On statli palfreys & hih hors to ride,
Sharp heires wer[en] also leid aside,
Tournid to copis of purpil & sangwyn,
Gownis of scarlet furrid with hermyne.
Slendre fare of wyn & water cleer,
With abstinence of bred maad of whete
Chaungid tho daies to many fat dyneer,
With confect drynk of ipocratis* sueete;
And sobirnessse dicke his boundis lete,
Scarsnesse of foode lefftte his olde estat,
With newe excesse gan wexe delicat.
Gostly lyuyng in the cherche appallid,
Caused Greekis withdrawe hem in sentence
From the pope, in Petris place stallid,
And list to hym do non obedience.
Fals auarice caused this offence,
That the Grekis dide hemself deuide
Fro the Romeyns for ther gret[e] pride.

¹ The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 170d: “How Anastace was compellid to leve the Empire to be a preste and lyve in pouerte.”
Thus covetousness and evil ambition brought in division. Take record of Anastasius, who was put out of the empire by Theodosius, and finally took orders and died in poverty.

Thus coucitise and [fals] ambiicioun Did first gret harm among* the spiritual, Brouht in discord and duyeision Among princis in ther estat royal.

Who clymbeth hiest, most perciious is his fall, Record I take of forseid Anastase, Be Theodosie put out of his place.

This Theodosie dide his besi peyne [p. 417]
On Anastase suich werre for to make,
That maugre hym he did hym so constreyne,
That he was fayn thempire to forsake.
For feer and dreed he did upon hym take
The oordre of preest from the imperial see,
Content with litil, lyued in pouertee.

[How the hede of Lupus kyng of Lumbardie was smet of by Grymaldus.] 1

AFFTIR thses chaunges remembribrid be writtingis, Lik as I haue told heer in partie,
Cam to Bochas foure myhti kings Regnyng echon of old in Lumbardie.
Affir the maner and guise of barbarie Thei wern arraied, & in ther passage With her forgrowen bodi and visage.

They wore many-coloured garments, broad baldries, large golden buckles and pendants, breeches embroidered with pearls,

Ther berdis rauhte ouer ther nouele doun; Ther garnementes of colours manystolf, With brode baudrikis enbracid enviroun, Large bokelis & pendauntis of fyngold.

Ther brech enbrowdid aftir the guise of old, Fret with perle, leg stukkid to the kne, Pleynyng to Bochas of ther aduersite.

and shoes laced with gold wire and set with strange stones.

Ther shon wer racid fresshli to the ton, Richeli transursed with gold weer, And theron sette many a strauenge ston, Geyn Phebus liht that shon ful briht & cleer.

Thes Lombard kynges gan tapproche neer, 852

825. of] on H. 835. partie] Lupartye H.
841. rauhte] rauh H — 2nd ther] be H, the R 3, J.
846. stukkid] stokkid H. 848. to] vnto R.
850. strauunge] riche H.

1 MS. J. leaf 171a.
And first of all the proude kyng Lupus 
Vnto Bochas gan his compleynt[e] thus:

¶ "Bochas," quod he, "as for my partie,
For to reherse be short conclusion,
On Grymaldus, a prince of Lumbardie,
Hath me enchaced out of my regiouw.
And cruelli me cheynid in prisouw.
And aftir that he did a sergaunt sende,
Smet of myn hed, and ther I maad an eende."

[How the hede of Alexyus was smet of by Compertoun.] ¹

Aftir this enende rehersed of Lupus,
For to declare his mortal heuynesse,
¶ Next in ordre ther cam Alexius,
A Lombard kyng famous of richesse,
Which took on hym of surquedous prowesse
For to compasse the destruccioun
Of a prince Icallid Compertoun,
Which wered also a crowne in Lumbardie.
Atwixe bothe was were & gret distaunce,
But al the people and lordis of Pauye
With myhty hond and marcial gouernaunce
The saide Alex brouhte to myschaunce;
And Compertoun, escapid from al dreed,
Of mortal vengaunce leet smyten of his hed.

[How Arithbertoun was drowned with his rychesse.] ²

Aftir whos deth pitousli pleyning,
¶ Tofor Iohn Bochas cam Aripertoun,
Of Lumbardie whilom lord & kyng,
Which, lik a fool, of hih presumcioun
Al causeles took occasion
Of volunte, ther is no mor to seye,
Ageyn the duk of Bagorois to werrye.

879. Which] & H — hih] his R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 171b.  ² MS. J. leaf 171b.
Thes prince twyne taken haue the feeld, 884  
Of* Ariperton the parti gan appeire;*  
His aduersaire anon as he beheeld,  
His coward herte gan to disespeire.  
Into Pauye for feer he gan repeire,  
Took his tresour in purpos anon riht, 888  
For verray dreed to take hym to the fliht.  

Took a vessel and entrid is the se,  
Withb sodeyn tempest assailed & dirknesse,  
His barge pershid bi gret aduersite  
And he was drownid with al his gret richesse.  
Loo, heer the fyn of worldli wrecchidnesse,  
Namli of them, to gete gret tresours  
That gyne werre ageyn ther nei[el]bours. 896

[How Dediere by pope Adryan and Charles of Fraunce was put to flight & died at mischef.] 1

Next, Desiderius, king of Lombardy, appeared. Whereas his father Agilulf had offended the pope,

Desiderius sought to make amends by presenting the Holy See with the city of Faenza,

together with great treasure and a mighty castel in Ferrara.

Thes princis twyne taken haue the feeld, 884  
Of* Ariperton the parti gan appeire;*  
His aduersaire anon as he beheeld,  
His coward herte gan to disespeire.  
Into Pauye for feer he gan repeire,  
Took his tresour in purpos anon riht, 888  
For verray dreed to take hym to the fliht.  

Took a vessel and entrid is the se,  
Withb sodeyn tempest assailed & dirknesse,  
His barge pershid bi gret aduersite  
And he was drownid with al his gret richesse.  
Loo, heer the fyn of worldli wrecchidnesse,  
Namli of them, to gete gret tresours  
That gyne werre ageyn ther nei[el]bours. 896

[How Dediere by pope Adryan and Charles of Fraunce was put to flight & died at mischef.] 1

EXT to Bochas, withb heuy look & cheere,  
Kynge of Lumbears shewed his presence,  
Callid in his tyme noble Dedieer,  
Notable in armys & of gret excellence.  
And wher his faddir hadde don offence  
To the pope and ful gret duresse,  
This kyng caste the damages to redresse.

Agistulphe was his fadris name, 904  
Which to the pope did gret aduersite;  
For which his sone to encree his fame,  
Of roial fredam and magnanymyte  
And off benigne liberalite,  
Gaff to the pope withb humble reuerence  
A statlci cite that callid is Fayence.

Therwith he gaff gret tresour & gret good, 912  
As he that list of freedam nat to spare,  
A mihtri castel which on Tibre stood  
Withynne the boundis & lordship of Ferare,  
Which is a cite, pleynli to declare,

1 MS. J. leaf 171 verso.
Of antiquite, myn auctour tellith so,
And stant upon the ryuer of the Po.
This Dedieer regnyng in Lumbardie
Gan wexe famous at his [bgynnyng,
Hadde gret name vpon ech partie;
But in this eerthe is nothing abidyng:
Al stant on chaung; & Fortune in werkyng
Is founde vnstable & double of hir visage,
Which of this kyng chaunged the corage.
Ther he was first large on eueri side,
Liberal founde in many dyuers wise,
His goodliheed was chaungid onto pride
And his largesse onto couetise.
Of doublenesse he gan anon deuise
To cleyme ageyn, as ye shal vndirstonde.
His seide giftis out of the popis honde.
Which Dedieer hadde made alliaunce,
As the cronicle maketh mencion,
With kyng Pepyn regnyng tho in France.
Afftir whos deth, to haue possessioun
And ful lordship of al that regiouw,
He gan of newe fallyn at distauunce
Bothe with the pope & with the king of France.
Of presumcioun thes werris he began
Ageyn his promys, of double variaunce;
Pope in tho daies was hooli Adrian,
Which to stynte this* trouble & gret myschaunce,
Requered helpe of the king of Fraunce.
And grete Charlis, in Bochas as I reede,
Cam to the pope to helwyn in this neede.
Charlis that tyme was trewe* protectour
To hooli cherche, ther pauys and diffence;
Which of hool herte and dilligent labour
With Dedieer be manli violence
He mette in Tuscan, of kingli* excellence;
Hadde a bataile to preeve ther bothe myht:
Charlis victor; Dedier put to fliht.
As I fynde, he fledde into Pavie;
Worthi Charlis leide his* siege afforn,
Constreyned hem upon eech partye,
For lak of vitaille thei wer almost lorn;
Thei wanted[e] licour, greyn and corn.
Be sodeyn constreynt & gret aduersite
To kyng Charlis thei yald up the cite.

Kyng Dedieer was sent into Fraunce,
With myhthi cheynis fetrid in prisoun;
Lik a wretch, in sorwe & in* penaunce,
Deide at myscheef; ther geyned no raunsoun,
Which hadde afforn so gret poccissoun.
Aftir whos day, as be olde writyng,
Among Lumbardis was neuer crownid kyng.

[Off pope Iohn a woman with child and put doun.] 1

A FFTIR thes princis rehersed heer-toforn,
Drownid in teres cam a creature,
Lik a bishopp roundid* & Ishorn;
And as a prest she had a brod tonsure,
Hir apparraille outward & vesture,
Beyng a woman, wherof Bochas took heed,
Lik a prelat shapyn was hir weede.
She was the same that of yore agon
Vnworthily sat in Petris place;
Was affirward callid Pope Iohn,
A berdles prelat, non her seyn on hir face.
Of hir berthe namyd was the place,
Mayence, a cite stondyng in Itaille,
Vpon the Reen, ful famous of vitaille.
In hir youthe and in hir tendre age
Forsook hir kyn, and in especiall
Caste she wolde for hir auauntage

969. roundid] Iroundid B, I rounded J.
972. wherof] theroff R. 973. hir] his R.
975. Vnworthily] vnworthily R.
980. of vitaille] it is no faile H.

1 MS. J. leaf 171 verso.
Arnulph, who was devoured by Lice

Yiue hir to konyng, bodi, herte & all. And [in] the science[s] callid liberall, In alle seuene, bi famous excellence, Bi gret studie she hadde experience, Hir name kouth in many dyuers lond. To shewe hir cuunyng first whan she began, Serchyng prouynces cam to Ing[l]ond, No wiht supposyng but that she was a man; Cam to Roome, hir stori telle can, Tauhte gramer, sophistre [and] logik, Redde in scoolis openli rethorik.

In the tyme of emperour Lotarie, [p. 419] Afttir the deth, as maad is menciouyn, — Fro myn auctour yif I shal nat varie, — That the pope which callid was Leoun, The saide woman be eleccioun Istallid was, supposyng no wiht than Be no tokne but that she was a man. The book of sortis aftir that anon, Of aventure tournid up-so-doun; She was callid & namyd Pope Iohn, Of whos natural disposicioun Fill bi processe into temptacioun: Quik with childe, the hour cam on hir than; Was delyuered at Seynt Ihon Lateran. Afttir put doun for hir gret outrage, I wil on hire spende no more labour, But passe ouer al the surplusage Of hir lyuyng and of hir gret errorr; Tourne my stile to themperour Callid Arnulph, & write his pitous chaunce, Sone to Charlis, the grete kyng of Fraunce.

[How arnold son to Charles of Fraunce was eten with lys and so died.] ¹

To this Charlis, as bookis determyne, He was sone nat born in mariage, But begetyn of a concubyne;

[^] Arnulph, a natural son of Carloman, king of France.

¹ MS. J. leaf 172 recto.
undertook to reign without title as emperor of the Romans.

But he spent all his days in mischief and died eaten up by lice and worms.

Took upon hym of surqueous outrage, Withoute title of berthe or lynage, To suceede be fraude and fals labour Among Romeyns to regne as emperour.

He was vngracious sittyyng in that estat, In mysectheffe spente his daies euerichon, With lees and wermys maad infortunat, Thoruh skyn and flessh fret onto be bon. Craft of medecyne nor socour was ther non, So deepe [he] was fret in his entraille; Deide in distresse; no leche myhte auaille.

Bochas pauses for a while to write angrily of the sins of tyrants, counselling them to remember this proud Arnulph, who was not attacked by wolves or lions or ravenous bears or wild boars or mighty champions, but murdered by worms.

Although of the blood of Charlemagne, he was so tormented by lice and worms that he could not endure the pain.

A good example for princes to consider how

MYN auctour Bochas stynt heer for a while, Sharped his penne of entencion, Gan of ange to transport his stile To write of tirauntis for ther* transgressioun, Moor wood & fell than any scorpion, Them counseillyng, whan thei be most bold, For to remembre on this proude Arnold.

He ne was nat in his pride assailed, Nat with wolues, tigres nor leouns, With raunous beres nor wilde boor* travailed, Nowthir with othir myhti champioues, Which haue conquered many regioues; But with wermys engendrid of his kynde The saide Arnold was moordrid, as I fynde. In such disioynt the sayd[e] Arnold stood, With lees and wermys fret ageyn nature, That was so nih[e] born of Charlis blood, Impotent the peyne to endure. Which was in sooth an vnkouth auentre, That a prince myht nat be socourid Of smale wermys for to be deuorid.

A gret exaemple, who list considre & see, To princis alle for tabate ther pride. Lat hem considre ther fragilite,

1 The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 172 recto: "Bochas councelyeth princys to remembre on Arnold."
To seen an emperour [for] to abide *
Thassaut of womys — & ley ther bost aside,
In this Arnold wisli aduertise
How God hath poweer ther Pompe to chastise.

Deth of Arnold dide my penne encouwbre
For the gret abhomynacioun.

Callid Pope Iohn, as maad is menciouw,
Entryng be fraude and fals eleccioun,
To Goddis lawe froward & contrarie,
Nat lik a pastor but a mercenarie.

[Howe pope Iohn the xij the for lechery & vicious lif was put doun.] 1

Callid afforn he was Octauyan,
Nothing resembleyng Petris gouernaunce.
Fro the tyme in Roome that he began
To sitte as pope, he gaf his attendauwe 1068
To folwe his lust & his flesshli plesauwe, —
In haukyng, huntyng stood his felicite,
And among women counersaunt to bee.

Vnto surfet, riot, glotonye [p. 420] 1072 and gave him-
He gaff hym hooli; took of God non heede;*
Gretli disclaundrid he was of lecherie;
Kepte in his court, withoute shame or dreed,
A noumbre of wommen, in cronicle as I reed. 1076
Too cardinales of purpos did entende
His vicious lyff to correcte & amende.
And of entent thes cardynalis too
The cherch esclaundrid cast hem to redresse; 1080 and sent
Made lettres, sent hem to Otto,
Duk of Saxonye*, that he sholde him* dresse
Toward Roome, and of [his] hih noblesse

1 MS J. leaf 172 recto.
On hooli cherche to haue compassioun,
Make of this myscheef iust reformacioun.

This Pope Iohn, whan he hath parcyued
Of his* cardynales the maner of writynge,
And how the duk the lettres hath* rescyued,
He to do vengaunce made no tarieng;
Bood no lenger, this iugement yiuynge:
Kitt of the nose felli of the ton,
Hond of the tothir; and ech was callid Iohn.

The emperour did[e] his lettres sende
To this pope of hool affeccioun,
Of his defautis he sholde hym amende.
But ther was fou[n]de no correccioun;
For which he was deposid & put doun
Bi cardynalis for his cursidnesse;
Me list no mor write of his wrechidnesse.

Seeing all this mischief, my author prepared
openly to describe the faults of prelates,
their pride
and their presumption;
but remembering a verse in the Psalter, "Do
not touch my prophetis nor
malign against them."
he withdrew his hand
and turned to Duke Charles
of Lorraine.

For this cause, as ye shal vndirstonde,
Touchyng this mateer, pleynli as I reede,
Myn auctour [Bochas] gan withdrawe his honde,
Lefft his purpos, and foorth he gan proceede,—
To whos presence, or that he took heede,
Cam a prince, Duk Charlis of Loreyne;
Hym besouhte to write his greuous payne.
[Off Charles of Loreyn confounded with hunger.] 1

This duk of Loreyne, as ye shal conceyue,
Hadde werre with the kyng of Fraunce
Callid Hewe Capet; and, as I apparcyeue,
An archebishop, the kyng to do plesaunce,
Of hatreede made his ordenauwce
[Algeyn this duk, await upon hym kepte,
That he hym took abedde whil* he slepte.

The said bissop gan falsli vndermyne
This worthi duk, bi ful fals tresoun,
Which, as I fynde, was callid Ancelyne;
And he was bissop that tyme of Leoun.
Which be fraude & fals collusioun
Took this prince that was duk of Loreyne,
And to the kyng he brouht hym bi a treyne.
Bi whom he was delyuered to prisoun,
To Orlyanes, and with cheynis bounde.
What was his eende is maad no mewcioun;
But in a pet horrible & profouwde,
Mischeef with hunger did hym so cowfouwde,
That, I suppose, this duk of Loreyne
Consumyd was for constreynt of his peyne.

[How kyng Salomon whilom kynge of Hungery was put to flight.] 2

AFFTIR to Bochas in noumbre her cam doun
Princis foure; and ech for his partie
Ther greuys tolde; and first king Salamon,
Which that whilom regned in Hungrie,
Bothe fool & coward, bookis speche,
Void of resoun, noised of ignorance,
And, at a poynt, koude no pureiaunce.

Fortune also did at hym disdeyne;
For he was nouther manli nor coraious.
Ageyn[es] whom wer worthi princis tweyne;

1 MS. J. leaf 127c.  2 MS. J. leaf 127d.
Salamon and Pietro of Hungary

Zerta was oon, with Laudisalus,
Famous in armys, notable and vertuous; —
Bothe attonis geyn Salamon cam doun
And made hym flleen out of his regioun.

Thoruh his vnhappi froward cowardise, [p. 421]
Ther was in hym founde no difference;
Fliht was his sheelde, list nat in no wise
Geyn his emnyes make resistance;
Failled herte to come to presence
To saue his lond, he dradde hymself so sore,
Of whom Bochas writ in his book no more.

[How Petro kynge of Hungery was slayn.]  

King Pietro of Hungary was maliciouse and foolish enough
to offend Charles of France, who put out his
eyes and slew him.

[How Diogenes the emperour was take and eiene
put out.]  

Ernest, Duke of Swabia, who opposed the
Emperor Henry,
was banished to dwell with
savages beasts
in a forest,
where he was
slain.

After Constantine of
Greece died,
Diogenes, a
knight, suc-
cceeded him in
Constantinople,
Constantynople holdyng in his hond,
As souereyn prince of al Grekis lond.

Yet ther wer* summe that gruchched berageyn although some men grumbled, among them
And hadde of hym gret indignacioun. Belsech Turco-
The kyng of Perse, Belset Tarquemayn, man, who took
From hym be force took many a regioun; Mesopotamia
Mesopotanye to his poscessioun and nearly all
Took be strong hand, thoruh his cheualrie, Syria away
Maugre Diogenes, & al-most al Surrie.

Belset Tarquemayn made hymself so strong, 
Bi manli force Diogenes tassaile;  
And for Diogenes thouhte he did hym wrong, 
He gan ordeyne gret stuff & apparaile; 
A day assigned, thei mette in bataile,—
Diogenes of froward auenture He and his knihtis brouht to disconfiture.

Take he was and brouht be gret disdeyn, and brought before his conqueror, who after
In whom as tho ther was no resistance, compelling him to lie
to kyng Belset callid Tarquemayn. down on the ground, set
And whan he cam onto his presence, his foot on his thorat
Ageyn[e]s hym was youe this sentence: in despite.
To lyn doun plat, and the kyng Belsette
Sholde take his foot and on his throte it sette.

This was doon for an hih[e] despiht, Diogenes was afterwards
Diogenes brought foorth on a cheyne, exhibited at
Withoute reuereunce, fauour or respiht, festivals and
At gret[e] feestis assigned was his peyne; finally his eyes
And aldirlast put out his eye[n] tweyne. were put out.
The wheel of Fortune tourneth as a ball;
Sodeyn clymbyng axeth a sodeyn fall.

[How Robert duk of Normandie faught with turkes was named to the crowne of Iherusalem & died at mischef.] ¹

A WORTHI prince spoke of in many rewem, ¹²¹² 
Noble Robert, duk of Normandie, Duke Robert of Normandy
Chose to the crowne of Iherusalem; was a worthy

¹¹⁸⁴. wer] was B, H ⁵, P. ¹¹⁸⁶. Belset] belsate H, Belsech
¹¹⁸⁵. P — Tarquemayn] Tarquenayyne J, Tarquyynan H, Turco-
¹¹⁹¹. mane P. 
¹¹⁹¹. Tarquyenynan H, Tarquyenynan J. 
¹²⁰⁰. Belsech Tarcome P — Tarquynyayn H. 
¹²⁰⁴. throte] bak H, bake R ³.

¹ MS. J. leaf 173 recto.
The Story of Robert of Normandy

He refused the crown of Jerusalem, which lost him Fortune's favour.

But for cause he dide it denye,
Fortune ay hadde onto hym enuye.
The same Robert next in order was
That cam to pleyne his fall onto Bochas.

Took with Godfrey de Bouillon he fought the Turks and Saracens,
For Cristis feith this myhti champioun,
This Duk Robert, armyd in plate & maile,
With manli Godfrey, Godfrey Bollioun,
Ageyn[es] Turkis fauht a gret bataille,
For Cristes feith that it sholde auaille
To susteene his lawe in ther entent
To alle the kynes of the occident.

who sought to destroy Christ's faith, and with the aid of the kings of England, Normandy and France defeated them.

Of Turkis, Sarsyns was so gret a noumbre,
Geyn Cristis lawe gazdred a puissaunce,
The feith of Crist falsli to encouwbre:
But ther wer maad[e] hasti ordenaunce
Be kynges of Ingland, Normandie & Frawnce;
First to socoure did his besi peyne
Godfrey Bollioun, that was duk of Loreyne,
1228

Robert was chosen king of Jerusalem;
Which on Sarsyns made a disconfiture,
Maugre Turkis, for al ther cruel myht.
In which bataille Crist made hym to recure
The feeld that day for to supporte his riht,
1236

but he would not accept, because his older brother William had died in England and he was the next heir.

Assentid nat onto the eleccioun, [p. 422]
Because of newe that he did vndirstonde
His elder brothir, for short conclusion,
1240
1callid William was ded in Inglond;
Knowyng hymsiif[e] next heir to that lond,
Forsook Itherusalem, and lik a manli kniht
Cam to Inglond for to cleyme his riht.
1244

He went to England and found his younger brother Henry crowned king, who said he was rightful heir, Robert being king of Jerusalem.

And yit or he cam he hadde knouleching,
His yonger brothir, [that] callid [was] Herry,
Had take upon hym to be crownid kyng;
1248
Told his lordis and princes finalli
He was next heir; entrid rihtfulli
As enheritour to succeede in that rew,
His brother beyng kyng of Itherusalem.
1252

1229. ordenaunce] purveiaunce H. 1238. of] and R.
God wot the cas* stood al in opher wise:
The said[e] Duk Robert of Normandie
Purposed hym be marcial emprise
From his brother to take the regalie.
Took his princis and his cheualrie;
Thouhte he wolde, lik a manli kniht,
Arryue in Ingland and reioysshe his riht.

Bothe in o feeld assemblid on o day,
The brethre twyne, ech with strong partie
To darreyne, and make no delay,
Euerich with othir to holde chaumpartie.
But whan the lordeis this mischeef did espie,
Thei besied hem and wer nat rek[e]les
Atween the brethre to refourme pes.

The said[e] brethre wer fulli condescendid
Vpon this poyn, for short conclusioun,
As in thaccord was iustli comprehendid:
Herry to holde and haue pocessioune
Duryng his lyff of al this regioun,
And Robert sholde haue for his partie
A summe of gold with al Normandie.

Thre thousand pound, put in remembrance,
Ech yeer to Robert sent fro this regioun,
Of which[e] pay to make ful assuredance
Was leid hostages, as maad is mencioun.
But yit of newe fill a discencioun
Atwixe the brethre, of hatreede & envie,
For certeyn castellis that stood in Normandie,

Which castellis] longed of heritage
Vnto the kyngis iurediccioun,
Of which the duk took his auautage,
Maugre the kyng, & heeld pocessioun —
Torned aftir to his confusion.
And whan the kyng did this thing* espie,
With strong[e] hond cam into Normandie,

Wher the duk was leid a siege aboute.
Made ordenaunce to recure his riht;
Gat the castel; took his brother oute;

The Death of Robert. Josselyn

and put him in prison, where he remained 14 years until he died.

Emprisowned hym of verray force & myht; 1292
Lefft hym allone out of mennys siht

Fourteene yeer, the cronicle writ so;
Ther he deide in myscheeff and in wo.

While Bochas was busy with his book, the Emperor Henry IV. came to him to complain of his son's great unkindness;

Josh Whil Bochas was besi in his labour 1296
His book tacomplish with gret dilligence,
To hym appeered the grete emperor
Callid Henry, showyng his presence;
Gan compleyne of the grete offence
Doon to hym, the myscheef and distresse,
Bi his sonys gret vnkynndenesse.

for he bought his father in chains and let him die in prison.

The which[e] sone was callid eek Henry,
Gretli accusid of ingratitude,
Cause he wrouhte so disnaturalli:
Tooke his fadir with force & multitude,
Bounde and cheynid, shortli to conclude;
And afterward, ther geyned no raunsoun,
At gret myscheef deied in prisoun.

[How Jocelyne prince of Rage for pride slouthe & lecherie died in pouert.] 1

EXT in ordre, with trist & ded visage,
Vnto Bochas to shewe his heuynesse
Cam Jocelyn, lord & prince of Rage,
Which is a cite famous of richesse.

And this prince, myn auctour berth witnesse,
Was gretly youe to slouthe & slogardie,
And al his lust he sette in lecherie.

Lefft his lordship out of gouernaunce,
For lak of wisdum & discriciouw;
In flessli lust[es] set al his plesaunce;
And to the contres aboute hym enviroun
He was nat had in reputacioun:
Ceretyn princis, myn auctour doth descryue,
Of his lordship cast hym to deprryve.

Amongis which the prince of Alapie, [p. 423] 1324
Callid Sangwyn, the stori who list see,
To Iosalyng hauyng gret envie,


MS. J. leaf 173 verso.
The Story of Andronicus I. Comnenus

Leide a siege to Rages his* cite,  
He beyng absent ferr fro that contre.  
And thus for slouthe & wilful neglucose,  
Rages was take be myhty violence.

And Iosalyn commaundid to prisoun;  
To hym Fortune was so contrarious:  
Lost his lordship and domynacioun.  
Loo, hear the fnal of folkis vicious;  
Slouh, delicat, proud and lecherous,  
Deide in pouert, in myscheef & in neede;  
Of vicious princis, loo, hear the fnal meede!

[How the Emperour Andronycus slouh all that were  
of the blood Roial cherysshed vicious peple and  
affir was honget.]  

A S verray heir and trewe successour  
Bi eleccioun and also bi lynage,  
Cam Andronicus, as lord & emperour,  
Constantynople, crownid yong of age,  
Next to Bochas, with trist & pale visage,  
Besechyng hym to doon his besi cure  
To remembre his woful aventure.

Among Grekis, be stori and scripture,  
This Andronicus gouernid nat ariht;  
Ageyn[es] lawe & eek ageyn nature,  
Founde with his sustir flesshli on a niht;  
Bothe of assent[e] took hem to the fliht,  
Ageyn[es] hym his cosyn was so fell,  
Lord of that contre callid Emanvell.

For a tyme stood as a man exilid  
For his discenciouns and many vnkouth styrff;  
Bi his princis afftir reconciled,  
Stondyng in hope sholde amende his lyff.  
But in the tyme that he was fugitiff,  
He was maad lord, & stood so for a while  
Regnyng in Pontus, of Asie a gret ile.

In this while Emanuel was ded,  
Fall in gret age, the stori tellith thus,

MS. J. leaf 173d.
The Story of Andronicus I. Comnenus

Manuel died and left a son called Alexius, who had a tutor of the same name.

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<td>958</td>
<td>1364</td>
<td>Hauyng a child, &amp; he, who list take heed, Whil he duelde in his fadris hous Among Grekis callid Alexivy; And the tutour he was assigned too Icallled was Alexivy also.</td>
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<td>958</td>
<td>1368</td>
<td>The same that was assigned his tutour, Took upon hym al the gouernaunce And ful powere as lord &amp; emperor, Hadde al thempire vndir his obeissaunce; Princis, lordis gaff to hym attendaunce; Wher that he was present or absent, Ech thyng was doon at his comaundement.</td>
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<td>958</td>
<td>1372</td>
<td>I meene as thus: he had al in his hond Constantynople, cite of gret substaunce; But for extortionys which he did in the lond On his sogetts, and for mysgouernaunce, Among the lordis it fill in remembraunce, Alle of assent in hert[e] gan desire Calle Andronicus ageyn to his empire.</td>
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<td>958</td>
<td>1380</td>
<td>No sooner was Andronicus in Constantynople than he slew all the royal blood except a prince called Issaac. Bassent restorid and crownid emperor, Constantynople entryng the cite, Besied hym be fraudulent labour Al the blood born of the imperial see For to be slayn, of vengable cruelte, Be iugement of this Andronicus, Except a prince callid Issacivs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>958</td>
<td>1384</td>
<td>He was as evil and revengeful in old age as in his youth, and thus in effect the trouthe was weil seen, He was vengable last in his old age, Riht as he was in his yeeris greene, Felli gouerned, ful off fals outrage, Last of alle, malicious of corage. Took to counsail, in Grece he was thus namyd, Al suich as wern disclaundrid or diffamyd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>958</td>
<td>1388</td>
<td>Associated with defamed men, homicides and ribals, sparing no woman Homyconides he hadde in his houshode, Tirauntis that wrouhte ageyn[es] rihtwisnesse; Cherisshed all that hardi wern and bolde Widwes, wyues &amp; maidenes to oppresse,* Ribaudie was callid gentilesse; Spared nouther, he was so lecherous, Women sworn chast nor folk religious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>958</td>
<td>1392</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Hadde also no maner conscience
To pile his sogettis falsli be raunye;
Took what hym list be iniust violence;
To alle vices his youthe he did enclyne.
And alle that wer[e]n of the roial lyne
Wer slayn echon, except Isacivs,
As I told erst[e], bi Andronicvs.

As I fynde, for hym in haste he sente, [p. 424] He sent for
For this purpos to come to his presence,
To moord[e]ren hym, this was his entente;
And dyuers toknes and many euidence,
And fully knew the fyn of his sentence,
He lik a prince list [to] come no neer;
And afftir that, of manli prouidence,
Mid the cite shewed hym lik a kniht;
Praied lordis to yie hym audience,
Princis, iuges for to doon hym riht,
That he myht declaren in ther siht
Greir injuries, damages outrageous
Wrouht bi themperour callid Andronicus.

“O citeseyns, that knownel al the guise
Of your emperour callid Andronicus;
Nat emperour, so ye list aduertise,
But a tiraunt cruel & furious,
A fals moordrer, vengable, despitous,
Hath of newe, of* frowar[d] fals corage
Slayn of thempire hooli the lynage.
Ther is alyue left non of the blood
Sauf I allone of the roial lyne;
For Andronicus lik a tiraunt wood
Hath slay[e]n echon, breffli to termyne;
His suerd of vengaunce thei myhete nat declyne.
Now purposeth of mortal tiranuye,
Slen me also that am of ther allie.

Requeryng you in this consistorie,
O citesey[n]e[s] that heer present bee,
To remembre and calle to memorie
How this famous imperial cite
Hath ay be redi to doon equite,
repress the wrong of tyrants.

"Philosophers and poets say that the blood of tyrants is a noble sacrifice, and, since you are just, weigh this matter in balance."

The people agreed to put down Andronicus and set up Isaac. The tyrant betook himself to a fortress, but was captured, stripped of his garments, one of his eyes rent out, and compelled to ride backwards on an ass, holding fast to his tail, to the delight of all the people.

After that, he was taken out of the city in a cart and hanged amidst a terrible clamour until he died.

Besi also of ther hih noblesse
Wrong of tirauntes manli to represse.

Philisphres and poetis eek deuise,
In ther sawes prudent and notable,
Blood of tirauntis is noble sacrifice
To God aboue*, whan thei be vengable.
And sith ye bee rihtful, iust & stable,
In your werkis void of variaunce,
Weieth this mateere iustli in ballaunce."

The peele echon, alle of oon assent,
For outrages of this Andronicus
Put hym down be rihtful iugement,
In whos place set up Isacius.
The said tiraunt, froward & furious,
Gan maligne and hymsiluen dresse
In his diffence to take a forteresse.

It halpe hym nat to make resistance,
So as he stood[e] void of al fauour;
Segid he was, and be violence,*
Maugre his myght[e], rent out of that tour;
Spoilled cruelli; fond no bet socour,
Stood al nakid, quakyng in his peyne;
And first rent out oon of his eien tweyne.

And ouermor he hadde this reward,
Withoutyn help[e], socour or respiht,
Rood on an asse, his face set bakward,
The assis tail holdyng for despight.
Whom to beholde the peele hath deliht;
To poore and riche thoruhout the cite
Hym to rebuke was grantid liberte.

Afftir al this, in a carte sette
And vengabl[i] lad out off the toun,
Be doom Ihangid on an hih gibet.
The peele on hym, to his confusiou[n,
Made [a] clamour and terrible sou[n,
Wolde neuer fro the galwes weende
Til in myscheeff bi deth he made an eende.

1445. noble] notable H, R 3. 1446. aboff B.
1459. violence] benivolence B.
1467. for] so of H.
1472. vengabl[i] vengable R.
1475. a] om. R, J, H 5 — and] and a H, R 3, P.
Lenvoye.

IN this tragedie, ageyn Andronicus
Bochas makeath an exclamacioun,
And ageyn alle princis vicious,
Whil thei haue powere and domynacioun
Be tirannye vse extorsioun,
Concludyng thus:* that ther fals lyuyng
Of riht requereth to haue an euel eending.

Bochas manaceth princis outraious,
Which be ther proud hatful ambicioun,
To God & man of wil contrarious,
Hauyng in herte a fals oppynyou,
Al tho that been in ther subieccioun
Thei may deuoure, ther poweer so strechching,
Whichshal nat faille to haue an euel endyng.

Noble princis, ye that be desirous
To perseuere in your domynacioun,
And in al vertu to been victorious,
Cherissheth trouthe, put falsnesse doun,
Beth merciable, mesurid be resoun,
Of Andronicus the surfetes eschewyng,*
That ye bi grace may haue a good eending.

Bochas
exclaims against
all tyrannous,
vicious princes,
and says that
truth requires
them to have
an evil end.

This lecherous
tyrant made
to exception
of wives and
maiden and
nuns.

He shed
innocent blood
and hated all
virtuous men.

Bochas
threatens such
outrageous
princes, proud
and contrary
to God, who
think they can
devour all men
who are subject
to them.

Noble Princes,
if you wish
to keep your
crowns, cherish
down falseness
and be
merciful.

1480. And] om. R. 1483. thus] this B.
1489. widwes] widwes maidenys H, wyfes J.
1500. falsnesse] falsheede J, P.
[Off Isacyus made blynde & taken at mischeff.] 1

A S is rehearsed, whan Isacivs
Had al thempire in pocessioun,
Tauenge the deth[e] of Andronicus,
Constantynople, in that roial toun,
A brother of his be force ther cam doun
With a bacyn, brennyng briht as gleede,
Made hym blynde; of hym no mor I reede, —

Except Isacivs was taken at myscheeff
Of hym that wurhte to his destruccioun;
Liggyng await as doth a preue theef,
Took themperour, put hym in prisoun,
Vengablly did execusioun,
As is remembrid, with a bacyn briht,
Brennyng red hot; and so he loste his siht.

A sone he hadde callid Alexivs,
Tendre of age, cast hym to succeede.
Bi his tutour, fals and contrarious,
Moordred he was at myscheef, as I reede;
The same tutour purposyng in deede
Of thempire, be fals collusioun,
Be fraude & meede to haue pocessioun.

In this chapitle of hym no mor I fynde
Rehersed heer in orde be writyng;
But to myn auctour, he processe maketh mynde, 1536
[9] Ther cam in hast Sangot of Egipt kyng,
And with hym cam pitousli weepyng
Mhihi princiis, soudanys [bothe] tweyne,
Regnyng in Damas, ther fallis to compleyne.

Of Allapie Salech was the ton,
Regnyng in Damas of his deu[e] riht;
Cathabadyn ther beyng eek soudon,
Which in tho daies was holde a maule kniht
And riht notable in eueri manyns siht.
And for the soudon of Babilon a-ferre
Callid Saladyn oppressid was with werre,

1513. whan] than H. 1530. at myscheff he was H.
1537. of Egipt Sangot in hast H — Sangor R, Sauagetys P
(om. in hast). 1540. Damas] Sirie P.
1543. Cathebadyn P — ther] the R. 1546. a-ferre] of ferr R.

1 MS. J. leaf 174 verso.
For socour sente to thes princis tweyne, 1548 Saladin, sultan of Babylon, sent to them for aid in his wars,
To come in haste with al ther cheualrie
Hym to supporte, and doon ther besi peyne
Enforce ther miht to susteene his partie.
Whos request thei list nat [to] denye; 1552
Abood no lenger, but made hemsiluen strong
To stondie with hym, wher it wer riht or wrong.

Of this mateer the substaunce to conclude,
Thes princis cam, Salech & Cadabadyn; 1556
For ther gverdoun thei fond ingratitude
In this forseid soudon Saladyn;
Founde hym vnkynde; pleylni this he fyn,
From ther estat, as it was aftir knowe,
Disgrade hem, brouht hem doun ful lowe.

Of hym in soth thei hadde non ojer meede
For ther labour nor for ther kyndenesse.
What fill aftir, in Bochas I nat reede;
For he foorphuith thei fond processe,
[¶] And vtro Robert doth his stile dresse,
Callid Ferentyn regnyng in Tarence,
Loste his lordshep be sodecyn violence: 1560
This to seyne, he regned but a while;
This saide Robert loste his gouernance.
¶ Next to Bochas cam Guillum of Cicile,
Kyng of that contre, a lord of gret puissaunce; 1564
Loste his kyngdam thorouh Fortunis variaunce,
His eyen tweyne rent out of his hed;
Aftir deide in myscheef & in dreed.

Which Guylliam regnyng in Cecile [p. 426] 1576
Was be discent[e] born nih of allie
To Robert Guiscard, as bookis do compile,
That whilom was duk of Normandie,
Which of his manhoode & gret policye,* 1580
With his brothir, ful notable of renoun,
Brouhte al Naples to ther subieccioun.

His brother name callid was Roggeer,
Which hadde a sone to been enhertour,
Callid Tancret, as seith the cronicleer;

1552. to J, P, R 3. 1556. Cathebadyn P.
Roger had a son called Tancred, who reigned in Sicily.

against whom a war was begun for the sake of Constance, Roger's daughter, who wanted to become a nun.

It had been foretold that her marriage would cause the desolation of the kingdom.

Enemies of Tancred moved Emperor Henry to take Constance out of her convent; and with the dispensation of the pope she was married, and Tancred put from his right.

Tancred, Son of Robert Guiscard

which took on hym to regne as successour.

Thus in Cecile Tancret was gouernour,
Ageyn[e]s whom, be title souht a-ferre

Of alliance began a mortal werre

For a maide that callid was Constaunce,
That douhtir was to this duk* Rogerer,
Which was set of spiritual plesaunce

To be religious, of hool hert & enteer.
And be record off the cronicleer,
This Constaunce hath the world forsake
And to religiou hath hir bodi take.

Of this Constaunce, the silue same yecr
That she was born, as maad is mencioun,
Ther was a clerk, a gret astronomeer,
Tolde of hir birthe be calculacioun,
She sholde cause the desolacioun
Of that kyngdam bi processe of hir age,
Bi the occasioun oonli of mariaghe.

The same that wern to Tancret gret enmy,
Be ther vngoodli excitacioun
Meued themperowr that callid was Herry
To take Constaunce from hir religiou.
And bi the popis dispensacioun
She weddid was; themperowr bi his myht
Bi title of hire put Tancret from his riht.

With a gret noumbre of Italiens
Themperowr entrid into that regioun;
But be fauour off Siciliens,
Tancret long tyme stood in pocessioun:
But thoruh Fortunys transmutacioun,
The same tyme, to conclude in sentence,
The saide Tancret deide of pestilence.

His sone Guilliam, that was but yong in deede,
With Siciliens cast hym nat to faille
To keepe his lond and his riht posseede;
Meete themperowr with statli apparaile,
Made hym reedi with hym to haue bataile.
But themperowr to gretter auauntage

Caste otherwise of fraude in his corage.

Feynyngli duryng this discord,
Themperour caste another wile,
Bi a fals colour to fallen at accord,
And yonge Guilliam vngoodly to beguyle;
Vnder trete taken in Cecile,
Falsli de prvued off his regiozn,
Sent to Itaille and throwe in prisouw,
Be weie of trete, the stori who list see;
Al concluded vndir fals tresoun.
With Guilliam take wer his sustres thre,
He perpetueli damprned to prisouw,*
His eien put out for mor confusion,
Deied in pouert, lost his enheritauce:
Loo, heer the fyn of worldly varyauwce!
Ferther to write as Ihon Bochas began,
Aftir that Guilliam was put from his rewme,
To hym appeered Guyot Lycynyan,
Chose afforn kyng of Iherusalem,—
Whos knihtli fame shon like the sonwe-bem,—
Which bi his noblesse he whilom did atteyne,
Godfrey present, that was duk of Loreyne.
But bi the soudon namyd Saladyn
He was enchacid out of that dignite—
Al worldli pompe draweth to declyn!—
So for the constreynt of his aduersite,
The yeeris passid of his prosperite,
Wente into Cipre as a fugityff;
What fill afftir, I reede nat in his lyff.

To make his compleynt afftir hym cam oon
Which hadde stonde in gret perplexite,
Erl of Bryenne, & was callid Ihon,
Which afterward was kyng of the cite
Callid Iherusalem, and [had] also parde
A fair[e] douhtir, yong & tendre of age,
Ioyned afftir to Frederik in mariage.
Beyng that tyme lord and empereour,
Was desirous aboff al othir thyng
Of Iherusalem to be gouernour

But the emperor, under colour of a treaty, deprived him of his kingdom and threw him into prison.

1628 where his eyes were put out and he died.

After William, Guy de Lusignan, king of Jerusalem, appeared, a knightly man,

1641. Guido Lusignan P.
1651, 52 are transposed in H, but correction indicated.
Henry, Son of the Emperor Frederick II.

Henry, eldest son of the Emperor Frederick II., lame and ill, thin and pale from imprisonment, came complaining to Bochas.

And of Cecile to be crownid kyng;
Which aldirlast, for his solit werkyng
Constreyned was, doun fro that partie,
To be a capteyn for soould in Lombardie.

[Off Henry the eldest sone of Frederyk the secounde myscheued by his Fadir.] ¹

NEXT to Bochas, crokid, halt & sik,
Oon callid Henry cam for to compleyne,
The eldest sone onto Frederik,
Which bi seeknesse hadde felt gret peyne,
Mëgre and paile, contract in eueri veyne,
Of whos langozer the cheef occasioun
Was that he lay so long tyme in prisoun.

Al his disese and gret aduersite
Icausid was, for short conclusion,
Bi his fadris froward cruelte,
As Bochas aftir maketh mencioun.
And this Henry bi generacioun
Sone to Frederik, lik as it is founde, —
I meene Frederik callid the secounde.

This saide Henry be descent of lyne
Of Cicile first was crownid kyng,
And of Iherusalem, whos renoun dide shyne
Thoruh many a lond[e] at his begynnynge;
And Fortune also in hir werkyng
Was to this Henry, passyngli notable
In al his werkis, inly fauourable.

Off his persoene had this auauantage:
To al the peple he was riht acceptable,
Weel comendid in his flouryng age,
Of cheer and face and look riht amiable,
And of his port verray demuer & stable,
Callid in his gynnynge, such fauour he hath wonne,
Of princis alle verray liht & sonne.

But ofte it fallith, that a glad morwenynge,
Whan Phebus sheweth his bemys cleer & briht,
The day sumtyme, therupon folwynge,
He was affable and constant and popular among the people; but
it often happens that a cloudy day follows a bright morning.
With sum dirk skie is clipsid of his liht;
And semblably, though Fortunys myht
This saide prince, bi hir fals variance
Fond in hir wheel ful noious fell greuance.

Who may the furies of Fortune appese,
Hir troublawes to make hem calm & pleyn;
Wher men most truste thei fynde most dise;
Wher double corages stonde in noun certye:
A shynyng day is ofte meyt with reyn:
Thus of Frederik the grete vnstabilnesse
Hath brouht his sone in myscheef & distresse.

This Frederik set up in grete favours
Be the popis dilligent bisynesse,
Vn to thestat left up of emperowr;
But thoruh his hatful froward vnkyndenesse,
Of couetise fill into suich* excesse,
Took upon hym patrymony to guie,
Of Cristes chersh that part to occupie.

Fill in the popis indignacioun,
Counsail nor trete myhte not* availe,
But of malis and [fals] presumcioun
Caste with the pope to haue a gret bataile.
The saide Herry his fadir gan counsaille,
Ageyn the chersh to do no violence
But hym submytte with humble obedience.

This striff enduryng atween thes grete estatis,
Frederick made his sone be accusid
To hym of crym, Illese Magestatis,
Wolde nat suffre he sholde been excusid;
But lik a man maliciousli refusid,
Be his fadris cursid fals tresoun
He was comaundid to deien in prisoun.

Summe bookis sey[e]n he was take & brouht
To his fadir of doom to ha[ue] sentence,
But lik a man passid sorwe & thouht,
Which to his lyff hadde non aduenture,
Furiousli and with gret violence,

1700. prince] princesse H.
1704. most truste] trust most R.
1714. into suich] in suich in B. 1715. part to] party forto R.
1717. not] non B, noon J, R 3, none P.
1720. The] And the R. 1725. Lesæ Maiestatis P.
Other books rehearse that he died in prison after long confinement, and that he tumbled off a bridge and was drowned.

As he was lar, alas, on hors[e]bak, His hors fill doun & so his nekke he brak.

Summe bookis rehearse of hym & seyn, His fadir took geyn hym occasioun; And whan he hadde longe in cheynis leyn, At gret myscheeff he deied in prysoun. And summe sey[e]n [how] that he fill doun Of a bregge, Bochas reherseth heer, And drowndid was in a deep ryueur.

Bochas commends all such as are naturally disposecl to be upright to their kindred.

Bochas makith a comendacion of trewe love a-tween kynrede. ¹

NEXT in ordre myn auctowr did his cure
To make a special comendacio[n] Of swich as been disposid be nature
An[d] bi ther kyndli inclynaciouw, As blood requereth and generaciou[n], Taquite hymsilff in thouht, in will, in deede, Witboute feynynge onto ther kynrede.

Specialli that non vnkynd[e]nesse
Be founde in them for non aduersite; To considre, of naturel gentilesse
To them appropird is merci & pite; And tauoide the fals duplicite
That was in Frederik, which so vnkynd[e]li
Leet slen his sone that callid was Herry.

Pite is appropird to kynrede,
Fader and mooder be disposicioun
To cherisshe ther childre & [eke] feede
Til seuene yeer passe, lawe maketh menciouw,
As thei are bounde of nature and* resoun. That tyme passid, ther tendirnesse tendclyne
Vnto fourtene* to* vertuous disciplyne.

¹ The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 175 verso: "A commen-
dacion of Bochas of suche as be kynde to their kynrede."
Princes who were unkind to their Kindred

Than afterward in ther adolescence, to teach them virtue during their adolescence.
Vertuousli to teche hem & chastise, 1768
Norisssh hem in doctryne & science, 1772
Fostre in vertu vices to despise, Every gentle line and all royal blood should shew filial reverence; 
To be curteis, sad, prudent & wise; but there were six princes who
For whan thei gynne with vertu in that age, wrought the contrary.
Gladli after, thei do non outrage.
As it longeth to euery gentil lyne, 1776
And blood roial, be kyndli influence, Each was cruel to his children. 
To fader, mooder shewe hymself benign, There may be no kindness in cursed blood.
Of humble herte don hem reuerence, 1780
Ay to remembre in ther aduertence
On sexe princis wrouhte the contrarie, There may be no kindness in cursed blood.
For which Fortune was ther aduersarie.

Euerich to other founde was vnkynde; 1784
In cursid blood may be no kyndenesse; These princes were Brutus, Manlius, Philip Manlius,
Of oon tarage sauoureth tre & rynde, Cassius, Herod & Frederick; and
The frut also bert[h] of the tre witnesse; 1788
And semblabli the fadris cursidnesse, These princes were Brutus, Manlius, Philip Manlius, Cassius, Herod & Frederick; and
Withb mortal suerd, in nature repreuable, 1790
Ageyn the child is ofte seyn vengable.

Q Among[es] which Brutus is reknid oon, 1792
Next in ordre folweth Manlius,
Slouh ther childre be record euerichon; this Frederick, who was
Phelipp Manlius & also Cassius, neither gracious
And cruel Heroude, fell and malicious; nor benigne to
Frederik also most vengabli his son, and who maligned
Slouh his sone that callid was Herry. against holy church,
And therageyn[es] frowardli maligne; died accursed,
And lik a man obstynat & vndigne without confession or
Deied a-cursid thoruh mysgounnaunce, repentance.
Withoute confessioune outher repentauce.
Manfred of Naples, Enzio of Sardinia

[How Manfroy kyng of Poyle was slayn.] ¹

¶ Nexte to Bochas of Poille cam be kyng,
Began his fall and compleynt speecie,
Callid Manfroy; and for his fals werking
Put doun & slayn, cause of his tirannye.
Loo, what auailleth sceptre or regalie
To a tyrant; which of violence
List to Godward haue non aduertence!

[How Encys kyng of Sardany died in prisoun.] ²

¶ With look[e] doun-cast, dedli pale of cheere,
Of Sardania Encis next cam doun;
KYng of that lond, to telle the maneer
How he werried ageyn the mihti toun
Callid Bononia, to his confusioun;
Be them venquisshed, & with cheynys rounde,
Deied in prisoun, so long he lay ther bounded.

[a water makith theves blynde & trewe men to see.] ³

¶ Folwyng myn auctour callid Bochas John,
In Sardynia, as he maketh mynde,
Serpent nor wolff in al that lond is* non,
Hauyng a welle, which of veray kynde
Theuys eyen the watir maketh blynde;
To trewe folk, as he doth diffyne,
Water therof is helthe and medecyne.

[An erbe who tastith it shall die lauhyng.] ⁴

Ther groweth also an herbe, as bookis seie, [p. 429]
Which that is so dyuers of nature,
Who tasteth therof lauhnyng he shall deie,
No medecyne may helpe hym* nor recure;
The touch therof stant eek in auenture,

1800. Poille] Naples P.
1802. Maufron H, Manfrede P.
1808. Encius P. 1816. is] was B, H.
1824. hym] hem B.

¹ MS. J. leaf 176 recto. ² MS. J. leaf 176 recto.
³ MS. J. leaf 176 recto. ⁴ MS. J. leaf 176 recto.
Another Frederick, Maumetus of Persia

Yiff it entre his mouth in any side,
He shal alyue for lauhtre nat abide.

[Another Frederyk was slayn bi Iugement of his brothir.] ¹

Ther was anothir froward Frederik,
Sone to Alfonce, that was kyng of Castile,
Of corage wood and [also] fren[e]tik;
His owne brothir falsli to begile,
Began a were lastyng but a while,
Whos purpos was his brother to deceyue
And the crowne of Castile to rescuyue.

This Frederik cam with a gret bataile
Ageyn his brother for the same entent;
Off his purpos yit he dide faille:
God nor Fortune wer nat of assent.
Take in the feeld[e] and be iugement
Of his brothir, for his gret trespace
Slay[e]n openli; gat no bettir grace.

[How Manymettus and Argones died at mischef.] ²

Manymettus, of Perce lord and kyng,
Cam next in pres, distressid with gret peyne,
Vpon Fortune pitousli pleynyng,
His aduersite did hym so constreyne;
For ther was oon which did at hym disdeyne
Callid Argoones, void of title or lyne,

Which Argones for his presumcioun
Take at mischef be sodeyn violence,
His doom was youe to deien in prisoun,
Of noun poweer to make resistance;
But Fortune, that can no difference
In hir* chaunges atwixen freend & foo,
Caused hem to deie at myschef bothe two.

¹ MS. J. leaf 176 recto.
² MS. J. leaf 176 recto.
Noble Charles, king of Jerusalem and Sicily, came with such good cheer and knightly manner to Bochas, that it seemed as if he stood high on Fortune’s wheel, defying her power.

Of royal lineage and famous alliance, he was brother of St. Louis;

and I also read that, as Phoebus outshines all the other spheres, so does France surpass all other lands both in peace and war.

These words were not written by Bochas, but by one Laurence, the translator of this book, to commend France.

As Bochas procedeth* in his stile,
Kam noble Charlis unto his presence,
Kynge of Iherusalem and also of Cicile;
Of whos comyng myn auctour a gret while
Astonid was, to seen his knihtly face
With so good cheere com into the* place.

For bi his port, who that beheld hym well,
Considred first his look & his visage,
It semphe he trad upon Fortunys wheel,
And of his noble marcial corage
Hadde of hir poweer getyn auauntage,
Shewyng hym-silf so fressh on ech partie,
Hir and hir myht did vttirly diffye.

First to comende his roial hih lynage,
And of his vertuous famous allyaunce,
The name of hym specialli taaunce,
Seith he was bor[e]n of the blood of Fraunce;
And to encrece mor souereywli his prys,
Writ he was brother onto Seynt Lowis.

Gaff to France this comendacioun:
So as Phebus passeth ech othir sterre,
Riht so that kyngdam in comparisoun
Passeth eueri lond, bothe nih & ferre,
In policie, be it of pes or werre;
For it transcendith, in pes be prouidence,
And in werre be knihtli excellence.

Thes wordis be nat take out of myn auctour,—
Entitled heer for a remembraunce
Bi oon Laurence, which was a translatur
Of this processe, to comende Fraunce;
To preise that lond set al his plesaunce,

1857. procedeth] reherseth B.
1862. com into the] komen into B, R. 1864. &] om. H.
1867. hir] his H. 1872. with] bi H, of J, P.
1877. this] his R. 1882. in pes be] bi pes of H.
1886. a] om. H. 1887. this] his R.

1 MS. J. leaf 176 recto.
Seith influence of that roial lond
Made Charlis so worthi of his hond.

Of whos noblese Pope Vrban hadde ioie,
Hym to encrece for vertuous lyuyng,
Which that tyme was duk of Anugoie,
After chose of Cicile to be kyng.
Of Pope Vrban requered be writyng,
Toward Rome that he shold hym dresse
Of kyng Manfroy the tirannye toppresse.

Ageyn the pope and hooli cherchis riht
This same Manfroy dide gret extorsioun.
Noble Charlis, as Goddis owne kniht,
Cam with strong hond up to Roome toun;
Which in his komyng gaf pocessioun
To Guyot Maunfort for to haue the garde
In his passage and gouerne the vaunwarde.

Toward Roome with gret ordenaunce
Thei passed ouer the boundis of Itaille;
This manly kniht, this Charlis born in France,
Ladde with hym many strong bataille
The popis enmy manli for tassaille.
But al this while, to stonden at diffence
The said[e] Charlis fond no resistence.

Entryng Roome to be ther protectour,
Ful well rescuyyd at his first entryng,
Chose and preferrid for cheef senator
Bi the pope, most glad of his komyng;
Of Cicile was aftir crownd kyng,
And of Iherusalem, as maad is mencio[un],n,
Graunted to hym fulli pocessioun.

Which in his gynnyng bar hym tho so weel,
Entryng that lond with knihtly apparaile,
Of Cassyne gat first the strong castel,
At Bonnevente hadde a gret bataille
With kyng Manfroy, whos parti did[e] faille.
To reherse shortli his auenture,
Charlis on hym made a disconfiture.
The Fate of Charles of Anjou

In which[\textit{e}] bataile kyng Manfroy was slayn;
And noble Charlis took possessioun,
Wherof Romeyns wer ful glad & fayn.
Yit in Cicile ther was rebellion,
But thei wer brouht onto subieccioun.
Than* Coradyn, record of old writing,
Sone of Conrade cleymed to be kyng.

Gan make hym strong, proudli took his place
At Aligate, a famous old cite.
Noble Charlis \textit{with} knihtli cheer & face
Fill upon hym, made hym for to flee.
And to sette reste in the contre,
Tauoide trouble & make al thing certayn,
Gaff iugement Coradyn to be slayn.

Among kinges notable and glorious,
Charlis was put, as maad is menciou\textit{n},
Lik a prince strong and victorious
In ful pesible and hool possesioun
Of Cicile and al that regioun,
Ageyn[e]s whom was non dissobeissauce,
Yolde of hool herte to his gouernaunce.

Be title also off his alliaunce,
Fortune gretli did hym magnefe;
For as it is Iput in remembraunce,
The noble princesse that callid was Marye,
Douhtir to Steuene regnyng in Hungrye,
Ioyned was and knet in mariage
To Charlis sone, tencres of his lynage.

The same Charlis be auctorite
Of the pope, so as hym list ordeyne,
Was eek maad kyng of the gret cite
Callid Iherusalem, of touns most souereyne;
Be which[\textit{e}] title he bar crownis tweyne.
His brothir Lowis, olde bookis seye,
The same tyme in Egipt gan werreye.

Gat al the contrees abouten enviroun,
Which that Sarsyns did falsli occupie;

\footnotesize{1930. onto] to R.  
1942. 43 are transposed in H, but correction indicated.  
1945. no dissobeissauce R.  1950. princesse] processe R.  
1951. Stephene P.  1952. knet] knet was R.}
Brouht hem ageyn[e] to subiecioun
Of Iherusalem, that lond to magnefe:
Cartage in Affrik, with al ther regalie,
And alle the contreys beynge afforn contrarye,
To kyng Charls becam tributarye.
Thus* while he sat hiest in his glorie,
Lik Phebus shynyng in his mydayd speere,
With many conquest and many gret victorie,
Whan his noblesse shon most brith & cleere,
The same tyme, with a frowynyng cheere,
Fortune gan from Charls turne hir face
And hym beraste his fauour and his grace.
This lady Fortune doth* seelde in oon contune,
She is so gerissh of condicioun,
A sorceresse, a traitour in comune,
Caste a fals mene to his destruccioun,
Oon of his sonys slay[en] with poisoun,
Which did eclipse, myn auctour doth expresse,
A ful gret part of [al] his old gladnesse.
He was disclaundrid of the grete* vice
Which apparteneth onto tiranuye,
I meene the vice of froward auarice,
Which is contrarie gretli to cheualrie;
Diffamed also of fals auoutrie,
Which was susteened thalsh his meyn tenaunce
Withynne that lond[e] be a kniht of Fraunce.  1988
The same kniht abidyng in his hous,
Al Cicile troublid with that deede:
The grete offence was so disclaundrous,
Thoruh al the regioun that it began to spreede; 1992
For thilke woman, pleynli as I reede,
Was wyff to oon which suffred this offence
And to be vengid dye his dilligence.
John Proisithe pleynli was his name,
Which cast hym fulli auengid for to be,
That kyng Charls sholde ber the blame,
Slen al French-men that bood in that contre,
Withoute grace, merci or pite.

1965. ther[ ]be H.  1968. Thus] This B, J.
1982. the grete[ ] at the B, R, J, H 5.  1988. that[ ]be H.
1996. Procida P.
The king of Aragon was called in, and

Charles lost Sicily and Jerusalem, and became so poor that he prayed for death.

He grew sick and languished until he fell into age and finally died. There is no more about him.

And for to doon ful execuciou
Required was the kyng of Arragoun.

Loste of Cicile al hool the region
With the obeissauce of many gret cite,*

And of Iherusalem the possessioun;
Fill be processe in gret aduersite,
And last, constreyned with greuze pouerete,
To God most meekli, with ful heuy cheere,
Soone to be ded[e]; this was his praiere.

Supprised he was with sorwe in his coraee;
Loste his force; fill into malladie;
Languisshed foorth til he gan falle in age,
Ageyn Fortune fond no remedie.
And be thoccasioun of fals auotrie
Fill to myscheeff; and for sorwe & dred
This Charlis deide; no mor of hym I reede.

LYK as Phebus in sum fressh morvenyng
Aftir Aurora pe day doth clarefie,
Fallith ofte that his briht shynyng
Idirkid is with sum claudi skie:
A liknesse shewed in this tragedie,
Expert in Charlis, the stori doth weel preeue,
Youthe & age rekni ech partie,
The faire day men do preise at eve.

The noble fame of his fressh gynnyng, —
To Seyn[t] Lowis he was nih of allie, —
Riht wis, riht manli, riht vertuous of lyuyng,
Callid of kniithod flour of cheualrie,
Til meyn[tenaunce of auout[e]rie
Cam into his court to hurte his name & greue,
His lyff, his deth[e] put in iupartie:
The faire day men do preise at eve.

Lik desertis men haue ther guerdonyng:
Vertuous lyff doth princis magnefie;
The contrarie to them is gret hyndryng, —

2028. morynyg H, J, H 5, morning P. 2004. cite] contre B.
Folk expert the trouthe may nat denye.
Cerche out the reward of cursid lecherye:
Where it is vsed, the houshold may nat preue;
In this mateer to Charlis hath an iye,
The faire day to preise toward eue.

Noble Princis, all vices eschewyng,
Your hih corages lat resoun modefie;
Withdrowe your hand fro riotous wachching;
Fleeth flesshli lustis and vicious companye;
Oppressith no man; doth no tirannye;
Socoure the needi; poore folk doth releue;
Lat men reporte the prudent policie
Of your last age whan it draweth to eue.

[Off Hugolyne erle of Pyse slayn in prisoun.] 1

OFF Charlis story rad þe woful fyn,
As ye haue herd þe maner & the guise,
To Ihon Bochas appeered Hugolyn,
Callid whilom the noble Erl of Pise,
Til the Pisanys gan ageyn hym rise,*
Most vengably, cruel & vnkynde,
Slouh hym in prisoun; no mor of hym I fynde, —

[Athon kynge Ar[m]e[nye / put from his ri[g]ht by
his brothire].] 2

Sauff his childe, of hatreede and envie,
Wer moord[e]rid eek in a deep prisoun.
Next with his compleynt the kynge of Armenye
Cam tofor Bochas, that callid was Achoun,
A Cristene prince ful famous of renoun;
For our feith, from which he list nat erre,
Geyn Tartarynes long tyme he heeld gret werre.

2045. doth] do H.
2050. As] as her H. 2053. rise] hem arise B.
2055. mor of hym I ne fynde H.
2057. is misplaced at end of stanza H — eek] also R.
2058. The paragraph mark is misplaced at the beginning of the
next line in B — Armonye R.
2059. Aiton P.

1 MS. J. leaf 177 recto.
2 MS. J. leaf 177 recto, margin pared by binder.
Pope Boniface, who ate his Hands

This manli kyng, in kniithod ful famous,
It was shewed, his stori who list reede,
Hadde a brother fell and despitous
Callid Sabath, desirous to succeede,
Stede of his brother the kyngdam to posseede;
Be fals[e] tresoun reued hym of his riht,
Kept hym in hold[e] and put out his siht.

This Sabath loste bothe happ & grace,
His other brother, as maad is mencioun,
Be strong hond[e] put hym from his place,
Chacid hym out of that regioun.
Take be force and fetrid in prisoun,
Deide ther; no man list hym visite:
Loo, how God can tresoun and moordre quite!

[How pope Boneface the viij the was take by the Lynage de Columpyns / ete his hondes & died in prisoun.]

About the year 1500, Pope Boniface the Eighth

A MONG thes woful froward princis thre
Which shewed hem so ougli of þer chere,
Pope Boneface be gret aduersite,
Eihte of that name, gan taproche neer.
A thousand thre hundred acountid was þe yeer
Fro Cristes berthe be computacioun,
Whan that he made his lamentaciouw.

This same pope kauhte occasioun,
Which vndir Petir kepte gouernaunce,
To interdicte* al the regioun,
Tyme of kyng Phelipp regnyng þer in France;
Directe bollis don into Constaunce
To Nicholas, maad[e] be Boneface,
Archidekne of the same place.

Off hooli cherche the prelatis nih echon,
Bisshoppis of Fraunce felli haue declarid,
Preuyng be poynsis many mo than oon
In a gret seen[e] pleynli & nat spared,

2063. ful] most H. 2076. moordre & tresoun H — tresoun] reson R.
2077. thre] iii B. 2080. taproche] approche R.
2081. hundred] C B — was] om. R.
2086. interdicte] Interdecte B, Entirdite H.
2088. into] vn to H. 2091. nih] nyth R.
2094. scene] sene R, H, H 5, R 3, synne J, Scene P.

1 MS. J. leaf 177 verso.
The Death of Boniface. The Templars

Be hym the cherche was hurt & nat reparid; 2096
denounced him as an enemy.
Put on hym crymes of gret misgouernance,
Denounced hym emmy to al the lond of France.
Put [up] on hym many gret outrage,
Wrongli how he hadde doon offence
To a cardynal born of the lynage 2100
De Columpnis, a kynreede of reuerence;
For which[e] cause he kept hym in absence
Out of the court, drouh wher he was born;
Be which occasioun the pope his lif hath lorn. 2104
De Columpnis the lynage hath so wrouht:
Took Boniface for his old cruelte;
With gret power & force thei haue hym brouht
Into a castel which stood in the cite, 2108
Callid Sancti Angeli; gaf auctorite
To a cardynal, & be commyssioun
Powere to doon ful execusiouw.
Of thes mateeris hangyng in ballounce 2112
Atween parties, wer it riht or wrong,
Bothe of Romeyns, prelatis eek of France,
The pope ay kept withynne the castel strong,
Of auenture, nat bidyng ther riht long, 2116
Fill in a flux, and afterward for neede,
For hunger eet his hondis, as I reede.
Hour of his deyng, it is maad menciouw, 2120
It is said that
Aboute the castel was meruellous lihtnyng,
Wher the pope lay fetrid in prisoun,—
Non such afforn was seyn in ther lyuyng.
And whil Bochas was besi in writyng,
To write the fall[e] of this Boniface,
The Ordre of Templeris cam toforn his face. 2124

[How the ordre of Templers was founded and
[laques] with other of the ordre brent.] 1

1 Croniclers the trouthe can recorde,
Callyng to mynde the first fundacioun,
And olde auctours therwithal accordere, 2128

2097. Denounced.] Denounct B, R, H 5; J.
2108. the] their H. 2113. it] it be H, R 3.
2121. the] this H, R 3. 2125. afforn R.

MS. J. leaf 177 verso. Iaques is supplied from P.
The Order of Templars was founded at the time when Godfrey de Bouillon won Jerusalem, by certain knights who fought there.

Their guiding principles were poverty, humility and chastity, and they lived in the temple not far from the city.

Pope Honorius gave them license to wear a white habit, to which Eugenius added a red cross.

Their guiding principles were poverty, humility and chastity, and they lived in the temple not far from the city.

Of the temple lik to ther desirs Took that name & callid wer Templeeris.

Of the temple like to ther desirs Took that name & callid wer Templeeris.

So long as they lived in perfection their fame spread;

but as they increased in numbers and wealth they lost their virtue and gave themselves up to luxury and vice.

Of the temple lik to ther desirs Took that name & callid wer Templeeris.

Their guiding principles were poverty, humility and chastity, and they lived in the temple not far from the city.

Pope Honorius gave them license to wear a white habit, to which Eugenius added a red cross.

Their guiding principles were poverty, humility and chastity, and they lived in the temple not far from the city.

Of the temple lik to ther desirs Took that name & callid wer Templeeris.
The Story of the Knights Templar

It wer to longe for to rekne hem alle;
But among other I fynde ther was oon,
A manli kniht, folk* Iaques did hym calle,
Gret of auctorite among hem euerichon,
As chronicles remembre of yore agon.
The which[e] Iaques in the rewrm of France
Was born of blood to gret enheritauwce.

The same Iaques, holde a manli kniht
In his gynwyng, fressh, lusti of corage,
Hadde a brother, be elder title of riht
Occupied al hool the heritage,
Because Iaques yonger was of age,
Which myht[e] nat be no condicioun
Nothyng cleyme of that pocessiouw.

His elder brother occupied al,
Whil this Iaques was but of low degree,
Wonder desirous with hym to been* egal,
Alway put bak be froward pouerte.

And to surmounte, yif it wolde bee,
Fond out a mene lik to his desirs,
Was chose maister of thys Templeeris.

Was promootid be free elecciou
Bi them that sholde chesyn hym of riht;
Wherbi he hadde gret domynaciouw,
Richesse, tresour, gret poweer & myht.
Of his persone was eek a manli kniht, —
The same tyme, put in remembrance,
Phelipp Labele crownid kyng in France.

Which hadde of Iaques gret indignaciouw,
To alle the Templeeris and al ther cheualrie,
Caste weies to ther destrucciou,
Gaf auctorite his lust to fortefie,
Doun fro the pope, bookis specefic,
Clement the Sexte, concludyng yif he may,
Alle the Templeeris destroie hem on a day.

2168. A knight named Jacques de Molay, a Frenchman born to rich inheritance, was of great authority among them,
2172. and as his elder brother kept possession of the heritage,
2176. His elder brother occupied all, and Jacques had always been held back by poverty, he finally got himself appointed grand master,
2180. and Jacques was of great authority,
2184. and Jacques had always been held back by poverty, he finally got himself appointed grand master,
2186. he obtained great power and wealth.
2192. Philip IV. of France, who hated the Templars, determined to destroy them.
2196. Philip IV. of France, who hated the Templars, determined to destroy them.
2199. Philip IV. of France, who hated the Templars, determined to destroy them.
The Destruction of the Knights Templar

The destruction of the Knights Templar

He had them suddenly imprisoned for certain horrible crimes; and their friends advised them to plead guilty and beg for mercy.

Jacques and three others were detained, while the rest, tied to stakes ready for burning, were led to believe that the king would pardon them if they confessed.

They would not confess, but cried piteously that they were innocent until they died.

Jacques was taken to Lyons and there publicly confessed and was burnt to ashes.

For certeyn crymes horrible to heere, Alle attonis wer set in prisoun,
Bi ther frendis touchinge this mateere Counseilled to axe merci & pardoun,
That thei sholde be pleyn confessioun Requere mercy, knelyng on a rowe,
And as it was ther trespass been aknowe.

Jacques was take, and with hym othir thre, Kept in holde and [in]to prisoun sent.
And the remnauant for ther iniquite Ordeyned wern be open iugement To myhti stakes to be teied and brent.
The kyng in maner lik to doon hem grace, So thei wolde confesse ther trespace.

But al for nouht; thei wer so indurat, Alle of accord[e] and of o corage To axe mercy verray obstynat.
The fire reedi, al with o langage, Whan the flawme approached ther visage, Ful pleynli spak [&] cried pitousli, Of ther accus how thei wer nat gilti.

Fro ther purpos list nat to declyne; But with o vois echon[e] an[d] o sown Fulli affermed til thei did[e] fyne, How ther orde and ther religioun Igroundid was upon perfeccioun, And how ther deth, verraili in deede, Compassid was of malis & hatrede.

The saide Jaques, of whom I spak toforn, Brouht to a place which callid was Leoun, Tofor too legatis, or that his lyff was lorn, Al openli made his confessioun: He was worthi, for short conclusioun, For to be ded be rihtful iugement. This was his eende; to asshes he was brent.

2207. That thei] Thei that R.
2208. rowe] trowe R.
2224. to] om. R.
2235. He] And R.
Here Bochas makith a commendacion of three Philosophris for their pacience.1

YIUYNG a pris to philosophres thre,  
Bochas comendith with gret dilligence  2240
How ech of hem was in his contre  
Soureynli be vertuous excellence  
Off old comendid for ther pacience,  
Which may be set and crowned in his stall  
As emperesse among vertues all.  2244

Mong Siciliens first Theodorus,  2248  
For pacience hadde in gret reuerence;  
Among Grekis, the stori tellith vs,  
Anaxerses for his magnificence,  
Bi force of vertu groundid on pacience,  
Because he was [both] vertuous & wis,  
For suffraunce gat hym a soureyyn pris.

Among[es] Romey[n]s put in remembrance,  2252  
S[c]euola, bothe philisophre & kniht,  
For his marcial hardi strong constaunce,  
Whan that he heeld amyd the flawmys liht*  
Hand and fyngres aboue the coles briht,  
Til the ioyntes, fallyng heer & yonder,  
From the wirste departid wer assonder.

First Theodorus, born in the famous ile,  2256  
Be pacience gret peynes enduryng,  
Cheeff philisophre callid of Cicile,  
With cheynys bounde upon the ground liggyng,  
On his bodi leid gaddis red brennyng,  
Suffryng this peyne, list it nat refuse,  
Bi kyngh Therom, the tiraunt Siracuse.

For comoun profitt suffrid al [t]his peyne,  2264  
Long tyme afforn[e] liggyng in prisoun;  
Which bassent of mo than on or tueyne

1 The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 178 b: "Bochas here commendith Theodorus with othir ij philosophres for theri pacience notably."
Was the most chief be conspiracioun
To brynge the tiraunt to his destruccion;
For no peyne that he myghte endure,
The conturacioun he wold nat discure.

Rather he ches in myscheeff for to deie,
Than the name openli declare
Of hym that slouh the tiraunt, soth to seie.
Thouhte of riht no man sholde spare,
For comoun profitt, helthe and weelfare
To slen a tiraunt, deemyng for the beste,
Alle a region for to sette at reste.

For which[c] title, he list to suffre deth,
Al [t]his torment took most pacientli
Theodorus, til he yald up the breth,
Gruchched nat with noise nor loude cry;
Amyd whos herte rootid [so] feithfulli
Was comoun profitt, Bochas writ the same,
Among Siciliens to getyn hym a name.

Anaxarchus, to prevent mortal wars, rebuked the tyrant
Nicocreon of Cyprus, who
in a rage bade men cut out his tongue.
But Anaxarchus said he should have no ad-
vantage of it,

and biting off his tongue chewed it in small pieces which he spat in the tyrant's face.

Spared nat nouther for deth nor dreed
Hym to rebuke bi vertuous langage.
The tiraunt badde kutte [out] of his hed
His tunge in haste; but he with strong corage
Saide he sholde haue non auuantage
Of that membre, which, maugre al his miht,
Hadde tolde hym trouthe in [the] peeplis siht.

Off his manace sette litil tale,
Boot of his tunge, of hardi strong corage,
Chewed it al on pecis smale;
Of manli herte thouhte it no damage;
Spit it out into the visage

2274. the] be B, bi J.
2277. he welfare H, R 3. 2279. at] a R.
2281. this] his R, H.
2302. hardi] harde H. 2305. Spet R.
Of the tiraunt; gat so the victorie,  
To putte his name euermor in memorie.

And Scaevola, egal to thes tweyne, [p. 435]  
For comoun proffit, be iust comparisoun,  
Put hym in pres[e]; did his besi Payne  
To slen Porsenna, enmy to Roome toun.

For tacomplisshe his entencioun  
Took a strong dart, riht passyngli trenchaunt,  
With al his myht[e] cast at the tiraunt.

Of his marke cause he dide faille  
To slen his enmy aftir his entente,  
Which in Tuscan with many strong bataille  
[Algeyn][es] Romeyns with his knihtis wente,  
This Scaevola his owne hande brente,  
Cause that he failled of his art,

To slen Porsenna be casting of his dart.

To declare the force of his manheede  
Vpon hymself auengid for to bee,  
As I haue told, in briht[e] col[es] rede  
His hand he brente for loue of his cite,  
Onli taquite his magnanymyte,  
Of feruent loue his cite for tauaille,

To slen the tiraunt cause he did[e] faille.

Thus for to putte the marcial suffrance  
Of thes notable philosophres thre  
In perpetuel mynde and remembraunce,  
How thei hem quite ech lik his degre  
For ther purparti vnto the comounte,  
Cause al ther ioie and ther inward deliht

Was for avail of the comou proffit.

First Theodorus put hymself in pres  
For Ciciliens to deien in prisoun;  
And for Grekis noble Anaxerses,  
His tunge torn, felt gret[e] passioun;  
And Scaevola for Romeyns & ther toun

Suffred his hand, be short auisement,  
Tokne of trouthe, in colis to be brent.

A martirdam it was, in ther maneuer  
Of ther corage to haue so gret constaunce;

---

2308 Scaevola, who missed the tyrant Porsenna with his dart,
2312 burnt off his hand in bright red coals for love of his city,
2316 deeming that he deserved such punishment.
2320 All the joy of these noble philosophers lay in their being of avail to the common weal.
2324 Theodorus, who died in prison for the Sicilians, Anaxarchus, who tore his tongue, and Scaevola, who burnt off his hand, were
A Comendacion of Patience in stede of a Lenvoy.1

Vertu of vertues, o noble Patience, With laurere crownid for vertuoues constaunce, Laude, honour, prys and reverence Be yeou to the, pryncesse of most plesaunce, Most rennommed be anxien remembranunce; Of whom the myhti marcial armure Geyn al vices lengest may endure. Ground and gynnyng to stonden at diffence Ageyn Sathanis infernal puissaunce;


1 The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 179 recto: “Bochas here commendith humylyte.”
Laureat queen, wher thou art in presence, 2380 the ground
Foreyn outrages haue no gouernaunce; upon which
Conduit, hedspring of plenteuous habundaunce, stand against
Cristal welle, celestial of figure, Satan, which
Geyn alle vices whiche lengest may endure. may longest

Chief founderesse be souereyn excellence [p. 436] endure against
Of goostli beeldygng and spiritual substaunce, all vices.
Emperesse of most magnificence,
With heuenli spiritis next of alliaunce, 2388
With lyff euerlastyng thi tryuwphes to auauwce.
And ioie eternal thi noblesse to assure*
In the aureat Throne perpetueli tendure,
Thre iherarchies ther beyng in presence, 2392 in the heavenly
With whom humylite hath souereyn aqueyntaunce, throne where
Wher osanna with deouht dilligence hosannah is
Is sung of aungelis be long contynuaunce, sung by angels,
Tofor the Throne keepywg ther observaunce
Syng Sanctus Sanctus, record of scripture,
With vois memorial perpetueli tendure,
The brennyng loue of Cherubyn be feruence, Cherubim and
Parfit in charite, dilligent obeissauwce; Seraphim
And Seraphyn with humble obedience, and the Nine
And Ordres Nyne be heuenli concordaunce, Orders.
Domynaciones with vertuous attendauwce,
Affor the Trynyte syng fresshli be mesure, The constancy
With vois memorial perpetueli tendure.

Suffraunce of paynemys hath but an apparence, of pagans is
Doon for veyngloire,* hangyng in ballaunce; but appearance
But Cristis martirs, in verray existence done for
List ageyn tirauntes make repugnaunce; vainglory;
Rather deie than doon God displeauwce, but Christ's
Shewed in no merour liknesse nor picture, martyrs are
Take full pocessioun for eure with Crist tendure. faithful unto
death.

Suffraunce for vertu hath the premynence 2413 Record on
Of them that sette in God ther affiaunce; Stephen,
Record on Steuene, Vincent and Laurence; Vincent, Lau-
Blissid Edmond bi long perseueraunce 2416 rence, blessed
Blissid Edmund who suffered
Suffred for our feith victorious greuaunce,

The Death of Philip the Fair

Kyth, maide and martir, a palme to recure,
In the heuenly court perpetuelli tendure.

And for to sette a maner difference,
In Bochas booke told eueri circumstaunce,
How for our feith be ful gret violence
Dyuers seynitis haue suffrid gret penuance,
Stable of ther cheer, visage and contenaunce,
Neuer to varye for non aventure;
Lik Cristis champiouns perpetuelli tendure.

Whos fundacioun bi notable prouidence,
Groundid on Crist ther souls for tauarne,
Graue in ther hertis & in ther conscience,
Voidyng al trouble of worldli perturbaunce,
Chaungis of Fortune with hir double chaunce;
Loud God & dradde, aboff ech creature,
In hope with hir perpetuelli tendure.

[How Philip la Bele kyng of Fraunce was slayn with
a wilde boor and of his thre sones and theire weddyng.]

W

HAN Bochas hadde write of pacience'
And comendid the vertu of suffraunce,
Phelipp la Bele cam to his presence,
Fifte of that name crownid kyng of France,
Gan compleyne his vnhappy chaunce
And on Fortune, of custum hat kan varie,
Which was to hym cruel aduersarie.

Woundid he was, [&] with a greuous sor
Gan his compleynt to Bochas determyne,
How he was slay[en] of a wilde boor
In a forest which callid is Compigne;
Tolde how he was disclaundrid [&) al his lyne;
Onis in Flandris, with many a worji kniht,
Venquisshed of Flemmynges & felli put to flght.

Proceedyng ferther gan touche of his lynage,
How in his tyme he hadde sonys thre:
Lowis, Phelipp & Charlis yong of age,
The fourte Robert; a douhtir also had he

2445. &] om. R, R 3, H 5. 2446. worji] wery H.
1 MS. J. leaf 179 recto.
Callid Isabell, riht excellent of beute.
Seide Robert, the stori is weel kouth,
Which that deide in his tendre youth.

To this stori who list haue good reward,
The circumstaunce wisli to discerne,
His douhtir Isabell was weddid to Edward
Carnervan, the book so doth vs lerene.
This yonger Phelipp weddid in Nauierne
The kynges douhtir, a statli mariage,
Callid Iane, whil she was tendre of age.

The same Phelipp aftir crownyd kyng
Of Nauierne, his fadir of assent,
Fyue sonis he hadde in his lyuyng;
Of which[f] fyue, as in sentement,
Thre in noufmbre be riht pertynent
To the mateer, who-so list to look,
And the processe of this same book.

The eldest sone callid was Lowis,
To whom his fadir gaf pocessioun
Of Nauierne, because that he was wis
For to gouerne that noble regiouw.
Phelipp his brothir for his hih renoun
Was aftward be iust enheritaunce
And rihtful title crownid kyng of France.

The thridde brothir was be title of riht
Maad Erl of March, and namyd was Charlis.
Euerich of hem in the peeplis siht
Wer famous holde & passyng of gret prys.
And for thei wern riht manli and riht wis
Phelipp and Charlis took in tendre age
The erlis douhtren of Burgoyne in mariage.

But as the stori remembreth in certeyne,
To ther noblesse Fortune had envie;
And bi a maner of malis and disdeyne
Brouht in be processe vpon the partie
Of ther too wyues froward auoutrie,
Causyng the deth of alle thes princis thre,
Whan thei most flourid in ther felicite.

2456. discerne] concerne H. 2459. This] The H.
2483. the] ther R. 2486. in be] into R. 2488. thes] the R.
Aftir thes thre princis glorious,  
Tofor Bochas to shewen his entent,  
A mihlti duk, notable and riht famous,  
Came to compleyne, Charlis of Tharente,  
Which in his tyme to Florence wente  
To make pes in his roial estat  
Tween Guerff and Gemelius stonding at debat.  

The saide Charlis, born of the blood of France,  
A maarni kniht, the stori doth deuise,  
Bi whos vnhappi froward fatal chaunce  
In the werris atween Florence & Pise,  
On hors[ebak sittynge, knihtli wise,  
Hurt with an arwe, fill lowe doun to grounde,  
Wherbi he kauhte his laste fatal wunde.

A man of armys beyng a soudiour  
With the Pisauns, wer it wrong or riht,  
Of fals disdeyn that day did his labour  
To trede on Charlis in the peeplis siht,  
Whan he lay gruff; wherfor he was maad kniht  
Be ther capteyn for a maner pride,  
Which gouerned the Gibelynes side.

AND in his studie with ful heuy cheer  
Whil John Bochas abood still in his seete,  
To hym appeered & gan approche neer  
Daunte of Florence, the laureat poete,  
With his ditees and rethoriques sueete,  
Demure of look, fulfilled with pacience,  
With a visage notable of reuerence.  

Whan Bochas sauh hym, vpon his feet he stood,  
And to meete hym he took his pas ful riht,  
With gret reuerence aualed capp and hood,  
And to hym seide with humble cheer & siht:  
"O clearest sonne, daysterre and souereyn liht*  
Of our cite, which callid is Florence,  
Laude onto the, honour and reuerence!  
Thou hast enlumyned Itaile & Lumbardie  
With laureat dites in thi flouryng daies,

2501. in] on B.  
2505. wher it wer wrong or riht H, R 3.  
Ground and gyner of prudent policie, 2528
Mong Florentynes suffredist gret affraies;
As gold purid, preued at al assaies,
In trouthe madest meekli thi-silue strong
For comoun profhit to suffre peyne & wrong.

O noble poete, touching this mateere,
How Florentynes wer to the vnkynde,
I wil remembre and write with good cheer
Thi pitous exil and put heer in mynde."

"Nay," quod Daunte, "but heer stantoon
behynde,
Duk of Athenis; turne toward hym pystille,
His vnkouth stori breefli to compile.
And yif thou list to do me this plesaunce,
To descriue his knihtli excellence,
I wil thou putte his lyfF in remembrance,
How he oppressid be myhti violence
This famous cite [which] callid [is] Florence;
Be which[e] stori ful pleylnli thou shalt see,
Which wer freendis & foon to that* cite,
And which wer hable for to been excusid,
Yif the trouthe be cleerli apparyued;
And which wer worthi for to be refusid,
Be whom the cite ful falsli was deceyued,
The circumstaunces notabli conceyued,
To rekne in orde upon eueri side,
Which sholde be chacid & which shold abide.” 2552

[How Duk Gaultere of Florence for his tyrannye
Lecherye and couetise ended in mishcfe.] 1

And when Bochas knew al thentencioun [p. 438]
Of seide Daunte, he cast hym anon riht
Tobeie* his maister, as it was resoun;
Took his penne; and as he cast his siht
A lite a-side, he sawh no maner wiht
Sauf Duk Gaulter, of al that longe day;
For Daunt vnwarli vanished was a-way.


1 MS. J. leaf 180 recto.
This said Gaultier was of the blood of France; and his father, lord of Athens, was put down by the Greeks and his head smitten off. Stood but a while in clear possession, Grekis to hym hadde ful gret envie, Caste of assent[e] for to putte hym doun And depryve hym of his famous duchie; To ther entent a leiseer did espie, Took hym at myscheef, & quaking in his deed, Of hih despight in hast smet of his hed.

To avenge his death Gaultier resolved to besiege the city, but was unsuccessful, and at that time two Pisan princes began to lay siege to Lucca.

The Florentines came down to help the Luccans, but were defeated; Florentynes to Luk wer fauourable; And to delyuere the siege fro the toun, With multitude almost innumerable Made ordynaunce; & knihtli thei cam doun, Which turned aftir to ther destruccioun: For it fill so of mortal auenture, On Florentynes fill the disconfiniture.

and at this Gaultier went to Florence from Naples The noise and fame of this gret bataile Gan spreede ferr bi report of langage In Lombardie and thoruh[ou]t al Itaille Mong soudiour[e]s lusti of corage; And among othir, feynyng a pilgrimage, The saide Gaulteer be vnwar violence Cam fro Naplis doun into Florence.

and was chosen governor by a parliament of magnates, The Florentynes heeld first a parlement For the sauacioun and garde of her cite, Be gret prudence and gret auisement

2578. gret[.] strong B, J, P.
2579. Pise] Parise H.
2589. report] recorde H.
Of such as were hiest of degre;
Bi oon assent thei gaff the souereynte
Them to gouerne, hoping to ther encrees,
With statutis made bothe for werre & pes.

The gret estatis, reulers of the toun,
Callid magnates tho daies in sothnesse,
To Gaulter gaff this domynacioun,
Of entent the comouns to oppresse
And marchauntes to spoille of ther richesse,
Streyne men of craft be froward violence
Ageyn the libertes vsid in Florence.

The peeple alway in a-wait liggyng
To be restorid onto ther liberte,
Gan gruchche sore, among hemsilf pleynyng
For gret extorsiouns doon to ther cite;
The grete also, of most auctorite,
Hadde leuere to suffre Gaulteer regne,
Than ther exacciouws to modefie or restreyne.

The saide Gaulteer in ful sotil wise,
Be a fals maner of symulacioun,—
Enmy in herte vnto ther fraunchise;
Al that he wrouhte, for short conclusiouwn,
Was doon oonli to ther destrucciouwn,
With a pretence feyned of freendliehede,
To his promys ay contrarie was the deed,—

Clamb up be processe to ful hih estat
Be feyned speche and sotil flaterie;
In his herte wex pompous & elat,
His werking outward no man koude espie;
Lite and litil drouh to his partie,
That to conclude, shortli for to seie,
Al Florence his lustis did obie.

Gan sotilli plese the comounte,
For to acomplissh falsli his desirs,
Made promys tencrece ther liberte
To suich as were[f]n froward of maneeres;
Made an oth to stroie ther officeeres,
But thei wolde of ther fre volunte
Graunte onto hym larger liberte,
Gretter poweer and domynacioun
tencrece his miht upon euery side.
Gan manace the grettest of the town
And day be day encresen in his pride;
Felli began, felli [he] did abide;
Wherupon,* kept cloos in ther entraille,
The Florentynes gretli gan meruaille.

In this while was ther oon Reynier,*
Of gret auctorite and of gret reverence,
A mihti seruaut and a gret officer,
To whos biddynge obeied al Florence,
Which with Gaulteer acorded in sentence,
With soudiours hadde stuffid ech hostrye
For to susteene of Gaulteer the partie.

And traitourli for to fortefe
Thentent of Gaulteer, fel & ambicious,
To haue thestat onli be tiranuy,
As ther cheeff lord, froward & surquedous,
To regne in Florence; the cas was percilous,
Whan too tirauntis be bothe of oon assent
With multitude tacomplisshe ther entent.

Which thyng considred bi ther gouernours
And magnates callid in the cite,
Whan that thei fond among hem no socours
To remedien ther gret aduersite;
Fill to accord[e] of necessite,
Gaff ther assent withoute variaunce,
That Gaulteer sholde haue al the gouernaunce.

And condescendid thei wer to this issu,
That Gaulteer sholde in al his beste wise
Vpon the bodi be sworn of Crist Iesu,
Them to restore onto ther franchise
Vsid of old, and for no couetise
From ther promys, for lyff nor deth declyne,
As be convencioun [the court] list determyne.

Heerupon was blowen a trompet
For tassemble thestatis of the toun;
A parlement holde, Gaulter first was set;

2642. Therupon B, P.
2644. R omits lines 2644 to 3588 — ther was oon J, P —
Reyneer[Reymeer B. 2648. acorded] accord H.
2671] As the convencioun list to determyne J.
The Story of Duke Gaultier

And to pronounce the convencioun,
With every parcel entitle[d] be resoun,
Lik ther accord declaryng anon riht,
Stood up a vocat in the peepis siht.

With men of armys in steel armid briht
Vnto ther paleis cheef and princepall
The saide Gaulteer conveyed anon riht,
Set in a seete most statli and roiall.
And the peple with vois memoriall
Gan crye loud, concluding this sentence:
Gaulteer for euere, cheef* lord of Florence —
So to perseuere duryng al his lyff.
T ook in the paleis ful pocessiouw;
Ther durste non ageyn it make striff;
Graunted to hym the domynacioun
Of alle the castellis aboute enviroun,—
Tuscan, Areche and castel Florentyn,
With alle lordshipis to Mount Appenyn.

As ye haue herd[e], Gaulteer thus began.
Bi his owne furious dyuynaille,
Saide he was born to be lord of Tuscan,
With a gret parti also of Itaille;
Tolde he was lad, conueied be a quaile,
Saide ouermor[e], wer it riht or wronge,
That was the sentence of the birdis songe.

The same brid first brouht hym* to Florence,
Al the weie afforn hym took his fliht;
With soote syngyng did hym reuerence,
Hih in the hair of corage glad and liht;
Wolde neuer parte out of his siht;
Gaff hym tokens to sette his herte affire,
That of Florence he shold be lord & sire.

The same bird he bar in his deuises
Ful richeli embroudid with perre;
T ook upon hym many gret emprises
As cheef lord of Florence the cite;
Sat in iugement; gouernid thecontre;

2676. this] in J.
2685. cheef[] was cheef B, P, R 3.
2686. al] om. H.
2691. Areche] Areth J, Auretium P.
2700. first brouht hym] brouht hym first B, J.
surrounded himself with people of ill fame.

He was so covetous, lecherous and quarrelsome and lacking in all mercy and grace, that it is abominable to tell about him.

He slew those whom he hated and destroyed franchises and old liberties.

The people desired his death and cried vengeance. They had lacked foresight to see the troubles that would follow.

for which they now complained; and finally they began to conspire his destruction.

One day they armed themselves and cried, “Let us slay this tyrant,” and laid siege to his palace.

Drouh to hym flatrers & folk hat koude lie,
Baudis, ribaudisi wher he myht hem espie.

Of that cite took merueillous truages;
Crocheth to hym richessis of the toun;
Of lecherye vsid gret outrages,
Of maidnes, wyues maad non excepcioun.
Voide of mercy, grace and remyssioun,
Fond quarrelis for to be vengable,
That to reherse it is abhomynable.

Wher he hateth* merciles he sleth;
Brak fraunchises and old libertes.
The peopell pleynd, desiryng sore his deth, Cried vengance aboute in theire citees For tiranye doon in thee contrees, Which was cause of gret discencioun And of theire cite almost subuersioune.

Thus thei wern among hemsilff deuided For ther sodeyn greuous oppressioun;* Lak of forsiht, that thei wer nat prouided To seen myscheeuys that sholde falle in pe toun. This verray soth: wher is dyuyssioun, Be witnesse and record of scripture, May no kyngdam nor cite lon endure.

For which thei gan compleyne oon & all, Bothe the grete and al the comounte; And of accord among themsilff thei fall To reforume the hurt of their cite. And fyndali the[i] condescendid bee Bi a maner fell coniuracioun To proccede to his destruccioun.

Vpon a day, thei armed in steel briht, Magnates first, with comouns of the toun, Alle of assent thei roos up anon riht, Gan to crie & make an hidous soun: “Lat sle this tiraunt! lat vs pulle hym doun!” Leide a siege be myhtsi violence Afforn his paleis, wher he was in Florence.
Swich as wern enclyned to Gaulteer,  
Amyd the paleis, the stori doth vs lerne,  
Teschewe the seege, with ful heuy cheere  
Ordeyned hemsilf to fleen awey ful yerne  
Out of the strengthe bi a smal posterne,  
Whan Florentynes dide ther labour  
To vndermyne round aboute the tour.  

Of which[e] thing whan Gaulteer gan take heed,  
This massage he sente onto the toun,  
Nat of trouthe, but feynyngli for dreed,  
Made promys be fals collusioun  
For to make ful restitucioun  
Of ther fredamys, as thei list deuise;  
Sent hem out [oon] Guyllamyn Dassise,  
Which to the cite was preeuid vttir foo;  
Hadde afforn[e] doon hem gret damage.  
With Guyllamyn to them he sent also  
His sone and heir to stynte al ther rage, —  
Wers than his fadir of wil and of corage.  
Bothe attonis wer hangid anon riht  
Tofor the paleis in Gaulteres siht.  

Another also, that callid was Herry,  
Which hadde afforn[e] yooke instruccioun  
Vnto Gaulteer and was eek gret enmy  
To steren hym ageyn that noble toun,  
Gynner and ground of ther dyuisioun, —  
Which tofor Gaulteer, his iugement to shewe.  

With sharp[e] suerdis he was al to-hewe.  
Theexecucioun doon upon thes thre  
In Tuscan born, the rancour did appese*  
Of Florentynes, to stauchte the[r] cruelte  
Ageyn Gaulteer, and to his lyff gret ese.  
He glad tescape out of his disese,  
Fledde away in ful secre wise,  
The toun restorid ageyn to her franchise.  
Thus he loste be his insolence  
Al his powere and domynacioun  
Bothe of Tuscan and also of Florence;  

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2762. oon] om. J.  
2763. vttir] a gret H, R 3, a great P.  
2764. worse] with his father.  
2772. incited] an enemy of the city, and  
2773. another] another enemy of the town, called Herry, who had  
2780. lesseen] an enemy of the city, called Herry, who had
The Story of Philippa Catanensi

He went to King John of France, and was at the battle of Poitiers when John was taken prisoner. He fled like a coward and, falling into the hands of some Lombard soldiers, was slain by a certain Florentine.

As I fynde he was on that partie
With kyng John, this Gaulteer, lik a kniht;
Which that the kyng with al his cheualrie Was take hymself, his lordis put to flht,
Into Inglond lad aftir anon riht,—
The saide Gaulteer, haunng no reward
To his disworshep,* fledde lik a coward.

Mette in his flht with dyuers soudiowrs
Of Lumbardie abidyng wzt kyng John,
Which that tyme as brigavntis & pillowrs Took this Gaulteer, ledde hym foorth anon,—
His force, his corage, his herte was agon:
Of auenture a certeyn Florentyn
Smet of his hed; this was his fatal fyn.

Next in order, weeping and trembling,
came Philipp Cathenoise.

Although she rose to high estate, she was born of low bed, and Bochas was unwilling to spend much time on her story.

Touchyng hir berthe, dirk was hir lynage,
Of poore bed[de] born on outhur side;
Bochas was loth to spende gret langage
On hir historie, long theron tabide,
Purposed hym nothyng for to hide
Of the substauence, but telle al the grete,
And superfluite of the remnant lete.


1 MS. J. leaf 181 recto.
Which was rehearsed to hym in his youte, 2820
When he was toward Robert of Cicle,
Kyng of Iherusalem, the stori is nat kouth; 2822
Yit in his book he list it to compile
And it rehearse be ful soureyn stile,
Lik in that court as it was [to] hym told 2824
Bi oon Bulgar clad in a slaueyn old.

The saide Bulgar was a maryneer,
With whom also was a Calabrien 2826
Callid Constantyn, which ful many a yer 2828
Trauailed hadde & sondry thynges seen
In dyuers contres ther he hadde been.
Mong other things seyn in ther daies olde,
This was a stori which[e] Bulgar tolde. 2832

Duk of Calabre, Robert be his name,
Bi his fadir Charlis, the myhti kyng,
Hade in comamundement, his stori seith be same,
Geyn Frederik to make a strong ridying; 2836
Which be force prouldi vsurping,
Took upon hym to be lord of that ile,
Which callid was the kyngdam of Cicle.

Drepanne in soth[e] callid was the toun 2840
Wher Duk Robert his pauylouns pihte,
Redi armyd, thoruh his hih renoun
Geyn Frederik for that* lond to fihte
And withstonde hym pleynli yif he myhte. 2844
And so befyll, the morwe tofor prime
The dukis wiff of childying bood hir tyme.

Violaunt men dide that ladi call,
In hir tyme a famous gret duchesse; 2848
Destitut of other women all,
Whan hir child was born in that distresse,
To yuue it souke, the stori doth expresse,
Saue fro* myscheeff Philipot was brout neer, 2852
Of Cathenoise, the dukis chief lauendeer.

Bi a fisshere, which was hir husbonde,
A child she hadde, lyuynge be ther trauaile,

However, he decided to tell it in outline as he had heard it in his youth from one Bulgar, a mariner, when he was at the court of King Robert of Sicily.

With the said Bulgar was a Calabrian called Constantine, who had travelled far. Bulgar’s tale was as follows:

Robert, Duke of Calabria, was commanded by his father to make war on Frederick III. of Aragon, who had usurped the kingdom of Sicily;

Robert, Duke of Calabre, was encamped at Depranum the Duchess Violanta was delivered of a child,

and having no other nurse, she employed Philipot, the Duke’s chief laundress, whose husband was a fisherman.
The Story of Philippa Catanensi

Thus Philippot became nurse to the Duchess, and lived in luxury, Which fro the se onto the court be londe Day be day carried vitaile.

And in this caas, because it myhte auaile, Philippot was brouht, in this gret streightnesse, To be norice onto the duchesse.

When she was cherisshed aftir hir desirs, Ech thyng reedi whan that euer she sente. With the duchesse mong other chaumberers Into Naples I fynde that she wente,

Til Antropos, froward of entente, Made of this child, ther is no mor to seyne, The lyues threed[e] for to breke in tweyne.

One Raymond of Champagne, King Charles' chief cook, had once bought an Ethiopian child from a pirate and

made him a Christian and taught him to be a master cook.

With kyng Charlis, of whom I spak toform, As myn auctour remembrith in his book, Was oon Raymond of Chaumpayne born, Which with the kyng was callid maister cook.

And on a day his iourne he took Toward the se; a pirat, as I fynde, Sold hym a child which was born in Ynde.

Lik Ethiopiens was his colour; For whom this cook Raymond hath deuyed,

Be his notable [&] dilligent labour, Made hym cristene; & so he was baptised; Gaff hym his* name, & hath also practised Hym to promoote, that he vpon hym took

Bi his doctryne to be maister cook;

For he soone aftir took the ordre of kniht. The Ethiopien wax a good officeer, Gat such grace in the kyngis siht,

To be aboute hym [was brought up] mor neer; Be processe he was maad wardropeer; And thoun he was blak of his visage, To Cathenoise was ioyned in mariage.

Wax malapert, and of presumpcioun To be maad kniht the kyng he gan requeere, Which of fredam and gret affeccioun

Is condescendid to graunten his pрайeere. But to declare pleynli the maneere,
In this tyme Violaunt the duchesse,  
Affor remembred, deide of seeknesse.

Aftir whos deth, the book doth certeifie,  
How Duk Robert of Naples the cite  
Weddid a ladi that callid was Sansie,  
To whom Philipot, as fill to hir degre,  
With dilligence and gret humyhte  
To plesen hire did so hir deueer,  
That of hir counsail ther was non so neer.

Euere redi at hir comaunderment,  
Wrouhte atieres plesaunt of dehht,  
With holsum watres that wer redolent  
To make hir skyn bi wasshyng soote & whiht,  
Made confecciouws to serue hir appetiht.

Bi hir husbonde, the stori who list see,  
The same Philipot hadde childre thre.

She was kunwyng & of hir port prudent;  
Chose be fauour for to be maistresse  
To faire Iane, yong and innocent,  
Which douhtir was to the gret duchesse  
Of Calabre; and furthermor texpresse,  
Hir husbonde Thethiopien with-al  
Of Charlis houshold was maad senescall.

"O Lord!" quod Bochas, spak of hih disdeyn,  
"What meueth this Fortune for to make cheere,  
With hir fauour to reise up a foreyn  
Vpon hir wheel, with brihte fethres cleere;  
But of custum it is ay hir maneere  
Fairest tappeere with cheer and contenaunce,  
Whan she wil brynge a man vnto myshaunce.

For he that was a boy the laste day,  
An Ethiopien broun and horrible of siht,  
And afor-tyme in the kechyn lay  
Among the pottis with baudi cote aniht,  
Now [he] of neue hath* take the ordre of kniht,  
With kye Charlis now is he senescall:

Swich sodeyn clambyng axeth a sodeyn fall."

2894. this] his H.  2896. doth] om. H.
2897. Robert] Roger P.
2901. hir] corrected from his to hir B.  2906. wasshyng H.
He and Philipot, his wiff, fro pouerte
Been enhaunsid and rise to gret richesse;
Tweyne of ther sonis statli maried bee;
And for fauour mor than worthynesse
Took ordre of kniht; & in his most hihnesse
Ther fader deide, whos feeste funerall
Was solempnised and holde ful roiall.

Thus Fortune can change.
The eldest son also died,
and the second son left his books to take his father's place.

Thus can Fortune chaunggen as the moone,
Hir brihte face dirked with a skie:
His eldest sone deide aftir soone;
The secounde lefft up his clergie,
To be maad kniht gan hymself applie,
Stede of his fader, pleynli as I reede,
In his offis be fauour to succeede.

Philipot's welfare was in part eclipsed;
but as the sun shines brightest after a rain, the too rose to still greater glory.

Thus be processe fro Philipot anon riht,
Deth of hir husbonde & [of] hir sonis tweyne,
Fortune in parti eclipsed hath the liht
Of hir weelfare & gan at hir disdeyne.

Yit euene lik, as whan that it doth reyne,
Phebus aftir sheweth mor cleerennesse,
So she fro trouble roos to mor noblesse.

I meene as thus, rehersing no vertu
In hir persone that men koude espie,
But onli this, be title of this issu:
Whan Charlis douhtir Iane on that partie
Was to the kyng weddid of Hungrie,
Callid Andree, a man of gret corage,
His saide wiff but riht tendre of age,
The same Iane, nat al withoute vice,
As is rehersed sumwhat be myn auctour,
To whom Philipot whilom was* noircie,
As ye haue herd, and be ful gret labour
Of saide Iane, Robert made gouernour,
Sone of Philipot, for a gret reward,
Made of Scicile & of that lond stiward.

This fauour doon to Philipot Cathenoise
Caused in that lond gret indignacioyn,
Whos douhtres weddyng caused eek gret noise,

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2932. than] ban for H. 2937. holde] kept H.
2945. Phillippe P. 2951. noblesse] gladnesse H.
2957. Andreas P. 2958. His saide] he seid his J.
2959. Stanza repeated H. 2961. was whilom B.
The Story of Philippa Catanensi

Maried to Charlis the gret erl of Marchoun, Which gaff to folk gret occasioune To deeme amys aboute in ech contre, That al that lond was govened be tho thre, 2972

Be queen Iane and Philipot Cathenoise [p. 443] And saide Robert, stiward of Cicile, Sone to Philipot; this was the comoune voise: — The queen and Robert be ther sotil wife Hadde of assent vsed a long[e] while The hatfyl synne of auout[e]rie, — Roos in Cicile & went up to Hungrie. 2976

For queen Iane began no maner thing But Cathenoise assentid wer therto; Theexecucioun and fulli the werkiung Broht to conclusioun, be Robert al was do. And in this title roos a stryf also, A disclaundrous and a froward discord Atween the queen & hym that was hir lord. 2980

Hard to procede upon suspicioun, Sclaundre is swiftt, lihtli taketh his fiilth; For which men sholde eschewe thoccaisioun Of fame and noise, & eueri maner wiht Bi prouidence remembre in his forsiht, Whan the report is thoruh a lond Ironne, Hard is to stynte it whan it is begonne. 2988

Withstonde principles, occasiouns to declyne, List vntwarli ther folwe gret damage; To late kometh the salue and medecyne To festrid soris whan thei be incurable. And in caas verray resemblable, Teschewe sclaundre list nat for to spare, May nat faillen to fallen in the snare. 2992

Thus for a tyme the sclaundre was kept cloos, Al-be-it so it did a while abide, Another mischeef than* pitousli aroos, Which afftirward spradde abrood ful wide: Auoutrye to moordre is a guide, — Set at a preeff, myn auctour doth recorde, The kyng Andree was stranglid with a corde. 3000

Philipot's daughter then married the earl of Marcou, which increased her power.
It was common gossip that Robert and Queen Jane had long been committing adultery.

Hugh, Earl of Avellino, undertook to punish the crime; and out of his chaumbre reised a gret heithe
Bi a coniceted fals conspiracioun,
He was entreted, brouht doun be a sleihte,
Affir stranglid, as maad is mencion.
Whos deth to pun[i]she be commyssioun,
Huxe Erle of Auelyn be a patent large
To be iuge took on hym the charge.
Of this moordre roos up a gret noise,
Be eidencis ful abhomynable,
Philipot [I]callid Cathenoise,
Hir sone, hir douhtir, that thei wer coupable;
Doom was yone be iuges ful notable;
And to conclude shortli ther iugement,
With cheynis bounde to stakis thei wer brent.

[Lenvoye.]

This tragedie afforn rehersed heer
tellith the damages of presumption,
Bexperience declaryng be maner,
Whan beggers rise to domynacioun,
Is non so dreadful execucioun
Of cruelte, yif it be wel souht,
Than of such oon that cam up of nouht.

Record on Philipot, that with humble cheer
Bi sodeyn favour and supportacioun,
Which was tofor a symple smal launedeer
Of no valu nor reputacioun,
Be Fortunys gery mutacioun,
Shad out hir malis, testat whan she was brouht,
List nat considre how she cam up of nouht.

Wher mor disdeyn or wher is mor daungeer,
Or mor froward comunycacioun,
Mor vengable venym doth appeere,
Nor mor sleihti fals supplantacioun,
Nor mor conspired vnwar collusioun,
Nor vndermynynng doon couerlty & wrouht,
Than of such folk that komen up of nouht?

3004. An Envoy on Philippa Catanensi [BK. IX

Philipot, her son and her daughter, were found guilty and burnt at the stake.

This tragedy tells the evils of presumption: no one is more cruel than a beggar who rises to dominiation.

Philipot was at first a simple laundress; but when she came to estate she never considered her birth.

Where is there more scornful pride or seeking of evil company or intriguing than among people who rise out of nothing?

Fortunys chaunge & meeuyenge circuleer,
With hir most stormy transmutacioun,
Now oon set up ful hih in hir chaisier,
Enhaunceth vicious, vertuous she put doun;
Record on Philipot, whos venymous tresoun
Compassid afforn[e] in hir secre thouht,
The deedr brak out, whan she cam up of nouht.

Noble Princis, with your briht eien cleer
Aduertiseth in your discrerioun.
That no flaterer com in your court to neer
Be no fraude of fals decepcioun,
Alwey remembring afforn in your resoun
On this tragedie, and on the tresoun wrouht
Bi fals flaterers that cam up of nouht.

[How kyng Sausys was slayn by his Cosyn whiche was brothir to the kyng of Arrogon.] 1

The tyme kam that of his [gret] traualie [p. 444]
Bochas dempte, holdyng for pe beste,
This noble poete of Florence & Itaile,
To make his penne a while for to reste,
Closed his book &* shette it in his cheste;
But or he mihte spere it with the keie,
Kam thre princis and meekli gan hym preye,
Amongis othre remembrid in his book
Ther greuauces breffl to declare.
Wherwith Bochas gan cast up his look,
And of compassion beheeld her pitous fare,
Thouhte he wolde for no slouthe spare
To ther requestis goodli condescende,
And of his book so to make an eende.
And he gan first reherse be writyng,
And his compleyt ful pitousli he made,
Touchyng the fall[e] of the grete kyng
Icallid Sause, which his soiowr hade.
The place namyd was Astrosiade;

Bochas now thought to rest a while from his labour,
so he shut up his book in a chest; but before he could turn the key,
three kings came and prayed him to remember their grievances.
Of compassion he could not refuse, and with their stories he made an end of the Fall of Princes.
The first was Sancho, who lived in the Balearic Isles.
And, as he writ, a litil ther beside
Was a smal isle callid Gemaside.
Bothe thes isles togidre knet in oon,
Wher Sausis hadde his domynacioun,
Lyuyng in pess; enmy hadde he non;
In long quiete heeld pocessioun.
Whos kyngdam hool, as maad is mencion,
In that vulgar, myn auctowr writ he same,
Of Malliogres pleynli bar he name.

Ther is also another smaller isle*
Callid Maillorge; & of bothe twayne
The seid[§] kyng was lord a gre[§] while,
Keeping his stat notable and souereyne.

until his cousin, brother of the
king of Aragon, became his
enemy.

It is
said that in
these isles
slings for
casting stones
in battle were
first invented.

Finally Sancho's
cousin came
down from
Spain with
an army and
took away his
kingdom and

smote off his
head. Though
they were
nearly related,
no courtesy
was shewn
that day.

Alle thes contres wer callid but o lond,
Wher that Sausis heeld pocessioun,
Til his cosyn with strong & myhti hond
[And] with gret poweer sodenli cam doun;
Brouhte peeple out of Arragoun,
Fill on kyng Sausis, feeble in his diffence,
Gat that kyndam be knihtli violence.

The ballaunce was nat of euene peis
Atween thes cosyns, who that list take heed;
For in his conquest this Arogoneis
Of cruelte bad smyten of the hed
Of kyng Sausis, quakyng in his dreed.
Thouh it stood so thei wer nih.of allie,
Ther was that day shewed no curteisie.

3076. was] with H — Emacide P. 3079. Sautius (through-
3098. was the but] bat tyme was H. 3100. that] om. P. 3108. this] the J — Aragoneise H, Aragenys R 3, Arragoneys J, Arrogoneys P.
A FFTIR this storie told in woordes fewe, And of kyng Sausis slayn be tirannye, Per cam a prince, & gan his face shewe, Callid Lowis lord of Trynacrye, 3116

The same isle [w]as in that partie Callid Cicane, the stori tellith thus, Aftir the name of kyng Siculus. 3120

This saide Lowys, kyng of Iherusalem And of Sicile, the book maketh mentiouw, Which was enchasid & put out of his rewrm Bi another Lowis and put douwn, Eendid in pouert, for short conclusiouw. 3132

Tolde his mischeeff, how he was take in France 3137

Bi Prince Edward, for al his gret puissaunce; And aftir that, with strong & myhti hond, He was fro Peiteres brouht into Inglond. 3140

Afforn destroied his castellis & his towns, [p. 445] And ouerthrown manli in bataile,
His princis slayn, ther baneres nor penouns Nor brode standardis mihte hem nat auailc; The tras out souht, spoilled of plate & maile. Maugre his niht kyng John was prisoner, In Inglond aftir abood ful many a yeer, set aftirward onto ful gret raunsoun; The worthi slay[en] on the Fre[n]ssh partie. The same tymes in Brutis* Albioun Ther floured in soth noblesse of chevalrie, Hihe prowesse* and prudent policie; Mars and Mercurie aboue ech nacioun Gouerned that tymes Brutis* Albioun. Mars for knihtthod, ther patroun in bataille, And Mynerua gaff hem influence, Meynt with the brihtnesse of shyning plate & maile, To flour in clergie and in hir prudence, That Prince Edward be marcial violence, That day on lyue oon the beste kniht, Brouth hom King John, maugre al his miht. Thouh Bochas yaff hym faunur bi langage, His herte enclyned onto that partie, Which onto hym was but smal auautage: Woord is but wynd brouht in be envie. For to hyndre the famous cheualrie Of Inglissh-men, ful narwe he gan hym thinke, Lefft spere and sheeld[e], faught with penne & inke. Thouh seide Bochas flourd in poetrie, His parcial writyn gaf no mortal wounde; Kauht a quarel in his malencolie, Which to his shame did aftirward rebounde, In conclusioun, lik as it was founde, Ageyn King John a quarell gan to make, Cause that he wolde of Inglissh-men be take. Heeld hem but smal of reputacioun In his report, men may his writing see;

His fantasie nor his oppynioun
Stood in that caas of non auctorite:
Ther kyng was take; ther knihtis dide flee;
Wher was Bochas to helpe at such a neede?
Sauff with his penne he made no man to bleede.

Of rihtwisnesse euyery cronicleer
Sholde in his wrytyng make non excepciouw;
Indifferentli conueie his mateere;
Nay be parcial of non affeccioun,
But yuue the thank of marcial guerdoun,
His stile in ordre so egali observered,
To euery parti as thei haue disserued.

Laude of Kyng Iohn was that he abood,
In that he quit hym lik a manli kniht;
His lordes slay[en]; somme awey thei rood;
Most of his meyne took hem to the fliht.
This iourne take for Kyng Edwardis riht;
The feeld I-wonne; hath this in memorie:
Treuthis title hath gladli the victorie.

Of Kyng Iohn what sholde I write more?
Brouht to this lond with othir prisoneeris,
Vpon which the rewme compleyned sore.
Bi reherisaile of old cronicleeris,
Deied in Ingland; withynwe a fewe yeeris
Lad hom ageyn; afftir ther wrytyngis,
Lyþ at Seyn[t] Denys with othir worthi kingis.

O FF Bochas book the laste tragedie
Compendiousli put in remembrance,
How Prince Edward with his cheualrie
Fauht at Peiteres with King Iohn of France;
And thoruh his mihti marcial puissaunce
Grounded his quarel upon his fadres riht,
Took hym prisoneer ful lik a manli kniht.
Bi collusioun King Iohn did occupie,
Set out of ordre the roial alliaunce;
Sceptre, crowne, with al the regalie

And where was Bochas then? Save with his pen he made no man bleed!
Chroniclers should always be impartial. King John deserved praise because he acquitted himself like a manly knight when his lords were slain or fled.
The battle was fought for King Edward's rights, and King Edward won.
Why should I write more of King John? He died afterwards in England and now lies at St. Denis.

John occupied Edward's inheritance.
Was doun descendid to Edward in substauuce,  
Conueied the branchis be lyneal concordaunce,  
For which[e] title groundid upon riht,  
Prince Edward fauft ful lik a manli kniht.

His cleym, his quarel mor to fortefe,  
In tokne that God his quarel wolde auance,  
Disconstiture was maad on that partie,  
Vpon King John be violent vtraunce,  
An heuenli signe be influent purueiaunce  
Sent from aboue to shewe Edwardis riht,  
For which the Prince fauft lik a manli kniht.

Noble Princis, your herti s doth applie  
Iustli to weie this mateer in ballaunce.  
Alle thynges peised, ye may it nat denye,  
Yiff ye considre everye circumstaunce,  
In rihtful iuges may be no variaunce:  
The feeld darreyned, deemeth who hath riht,  
For which Prince Edward fauft lik a manli kniht.

A thyng bassent[e] put in iupartie  
And commytted to Goddis ordenaunce,  
Ther may been afftir no contrausiers  
Atween parties, quarelis nor distaunce,  
Who shal reioisshe; and in this caas stood France:  
Fyn* take at Peiteres, declaryng who hath riht;  
For which Prince Edward fauft lik a manli kniht.

3218. H 5 omits to 3478 (one leaf missing between 180 and 181).  
3234. Contravesye H.  
3238. This line is followed in H by the 14th stanza of the Envoy, after which comes the Chapitile of Fortune.

† Finis libri Bochasij.
A chapitle of Fortune compilid howe she hath hir quytt to al wordly pepill.¹

LAT folk of wisdam considre in her wit,
Gadre up, a-somme* & counte in her resoun, 3240
To all estatis hou Fortune hath hir quit,
To popis, prelatis, gynne first in Roome toun,
To cardynalis most souereyn of renoun, —
When thei sat hiest, koude hem nat diffende 3244
Ageyn Fortune bi no prouisioun;
But with a tourne she made hem to descend.

Aftir in ordre cal to remembrance
Thesstat imperial of famous emperours, 3248
Which as Appollo thoruh ther mihti puissauce
Ther fame up blowe to Iubiteris tours,
And forget nat thes olde conquerours
Aboue Mercurye cast hem to assende, 3252
Til that Fortune with hir froward shours
Most sodenli made hem to descend.

Kynges, princis of dyuers regiouws,
In Asie, Europe, Affrik & Cartage, 3256
Of Ethiopie the marcial champiouns,
Monstres of Ynde, hidous of visage,
Athlas, Hercules, in ther most furious rage,
Ageyn whos myht no man koude hym diffende, —
What folwed aftir? From ther hiest stage 3261
Fortune vnwarli made hem to descend.

Preestis, prelatis and well-fed fat parsownis,
Richeli auaunced, and clerkis of degre, — 3264
Rekne up religious, with al ther brode crownis,
And patriarkes that haue gret souereynyte, —
Bissshoppis, abbottis confermed in ther see,
Seculeer chanouns, with many gret prebende; 3268
Behold of Fortune the mutabilite,
How sodenli she made hem to descende.

³239. considren of wisdam H.
³240. a-somme] a sonne B, a sonne R 3.

¹ "Here Bochas makith a reheresal howe fortune hath made high estates vnwarly to descend." MS. J. leaf 183 verso. This chapter is collated with H, J, R 3 and H 5 (from line 3478).
Chapter on Fortune

Al that is write, is write to our doctrine:
Oon courbith lowe, another goth upriht;
Summe be vicious, summe in vertu shyne;
Phebus now clipsid, somtyme his bemyis briht,
Sumtyme cloudi, sumtyme a sterry niht;
Sum folk appeire, summe doon amende,
Shewe off Fortune the poweer & the myht:
Oon goth upward, another doth descende.

Sum man hooely encreseth in vertu,
A-nother rekles, of froward wilfulness;
Oon is parfit and stable in Crist Iezu,
A-nother braideth upon frowardnesse;
Oon encreseth with tresour & richesse,—
Who list thrue, to labour must entend,—
Maugre the world, Fortunis doubleinesse
Doth oon arise, another to discende.

Oon is besi and set al his labour
Erli tarise his good to multeplie;
Another spendeth, & is a gret wastour;
Sum tre is bareyn, sum doth fructefie;
Oon kan seyn soth, another can weil lie;
Oon kan gadre, another kan dispende,—
Vnto Fortune this mateer doth applie:
She maketh oon rise, a-nother to discende.

Al thes mateeres rehersed here to forne,*
Of which this book maketh menciou,
Voideth the weed, of vertu tak the corn,
As resoun techeth in your discreciou.
And for to sette a short conclusiou,
In a brefF somme this book to comprehende:
Fortunis wheel bi reuoluciou
Doth oon clymbe up, another to discende.

3271. 1st write] written H. 3273. vertu] vertues H.
3290. sum] som frute H.
3295. rehersed here toforne] conbyned into oon B, J.
[§ A lenvoye compyled vpon the book wryten by the translatour specially direct to hym that causyd the translaicioun & secundely to alle othir it shal seen.] 1

Right reverent Prynce, with support of your grace,
By your comauandement as I vndirtook
With dreadful herte, pale of cheer and face,
I haue a-complyshed translaicioun of your book;
In which labour myn hand ful ofte quok,
My penne also troulyd with ygnorauwce
Lyst myn empryse wer nat to your plesaunce.

Off ryght considred, of trouthe and equite,
I nat expert nor stuffyd with language,
Seyn howh that Ynglyssh in ryme hath skarsete,
How I also was ronne ferre in age,
Nat quyk, but rude and dul of my corage,
Of no presumpciouM, but atwix hope and drede
To obeye your byddyng took on* me to procede.

Hope with glad chere gaff me greet counfort,
Off trust I shulde agreeen your noblesse;
But tho cam dreed, contraryous of repoort,
Gan manace and frowardly expresse,
Geyn me alleggyng vnkonnyng and dulnesse,
Seyde for his part, by argumentys stronge,
I was not able for to vndirfonge

This seid empryse to performe & contvne;
The profunde processe was so poetical,
Entirmedlyd with chaunges of fortune
And straunge materys that were hystoryal,
Towchyng estatys that hadde a sodeyn fal;
The Frenssh vnkouth compendiously compyled,
To which language my tounge was nat affyled.

Dreed and vnkonnyng beeyng of assent
Made ageyn me a daugherous obstacle,
For tacomplysshe your comauandement,
Stondyng fer of fro Tullyvs habitacle:

3303. Prynce\] princes R 3.  3316. on\] vpon H 1766.

1 The Envoy, together with the heading, is supplied from MS. Harley 1766, leaf 260 verso, collated with R 3 and P.
Myn eyen mystyd, and dirked my spectacle,
Tyl hope ageyn gan make[n] his reperye;
Me to supporte he putte away dyspeyr.

Yit of Bachus seryd wer the vynes,
Off Mygdas touch the aureate lycur,
And of Juno wellys crystallynes
Wer dryed vp; ther fond I no favour:
A thistlewh accesse cause of my langour,
Noon egal peys, herte hevy and purs lyght,
Which causith poeys syhen at mydnyght.

Trustyng ageynward your liberal largesse,
Off this cotidien shal* relevyn me,
Hope hath brought tydyng to recure myn accesse;
Affir this ebbe of froward skarsete
Shal folwe a spryng flood of gracious plente,
To washe a-way be plentevous influence
Al ground ebbys of constreynd indigence.

With hope also cam humble affecciouun,
Made a promys vn-to my dul corage,
Seyde, ye, my lord, shulde haue compassyoun,
Off royal pite supporte me in myn age;
Wherof I caught a maner avauntage
Thoughte I wolde rather condyscende
To your desir than your byddying offende.

I plucked up my heart to obey your command,
knowing that although skill were wanting,
good will might prevail; for will has more might than force in battle.

And in excuse of my rudeness
I ask mercy for my poor heart's ease,
that this book may please you — to me the best reward.

Yiff ought be wryte or seid to your plesaunce,  
The thank be yvoe to your royal noblesse;  
And wher I faylle, atwyteth ygnoraunce,  
Al the diffautys aret to my rudnesse,  
With this annexyd, requeryng of humblesse,  
That alle thoo which shal this makyng rede,  
For to correcte wher-as they se nede.

So it be doon with supportacioun  
Off ther goodnesse to be favourable,  
Nat to lynche of indignacioun,  
Which wer to me verray importable.  
And ye, my lord, for to be mercyable,  
Off your hygh grace my good wyll to considre,  
An hors with fourfe feet may stoumble among*  
and syldre.

And semblably though I goo nat vp-ryght,  
But stowpe and halte for lak of eloquence,  
Though Omerus hol nat the torche lyght  
To forthre my penne with colours of cadence,  
Nor moral Senek, moost sad of his sentence,  
Gaff me no part of his moralities,  
Therfore I seye, thus knelyng on my knees:

To alle thoo that shal this book be-holde,  
I them be-seke to haue compassyoun,  
And ther-with-al I prey hem that they wolde  
Favoure the metre and do correcyoun;  
Off gold nor asewr I hadde no foysoun,  
Nor othir colours this processe tenlvmynye,  
Sauff whyte and blak; and they but dully shyne.  

I nevir was aqeynted with Virgyle,  
Nor with [the] sugryd dytees of Omer,  
Nor Dares Frygius with his goldene style,  
Nor with Ovyde, in poetrye moost enticier,  
Nor with the soureyyn balladys of Chauceer,*  
Which among alle that euere wer rad or songe,  
Exceellyd al othir in our Englyssh tounge.

I can nat been a iuge in this mateer,  
As I conceive folwyng my fantasye,  
In moral mateer ful notable was Goweer,

3386. among] anoon H 1766, R 3.  
3389. hold] heeld R 3.  
3405. Chauceer H 1766.  
3409. my] in R 3.
An Envoy to Duke Humphrey

And so was Stroode in his philosophye,  
In parfyte lyvyng, which passith poysye,  
Richard Hermyte, contemplatyff of sentence,  
Drowh in Ynglyssh the Prykke of Conscience.

As the gold-tressyd bright[a]e somyr sonne  
Passith othir sterrys with his beemys clere,  
And as Lvcyna chaseth skyes donne,  
The frosty nyghtes whan Esperus doth appere,  
Ryght* so my mayster had[de] nevir pere, —  
I ime Chauceer* — in stoories that he tolde;  
And he also wrot tragedyes olde.

The Fal of Prynces gan pitously compleyne,  
As Petrark did, and also Iohn Bochas;  
Laureat Fraunceys, poetys bothe twyne,  
Toold how prynces for ther greet trespace  
Wer ovirthrowe, rehersyng al the caas,  
As Chauceer* did[e] in the Monkys Tale.  
But I that stonde lowe down in the vale,  
So greet a book in Ynglyssh to translate,  
Did it be constreynt and no presupmioun.  
Born in a vyllage which callyd is Lydgate,  
Be old[e] tym[e] a famous castel toun;  
In Danys tym[e] it was bete doun,  
Tyme whan Seynt Edmond, martir, mayde and kyng,  
Was slayn at Oxne, be recond of wytyng.

I me excuse, now this book is I-doo,  
How I was nevir yit at Cytherou[n,  
Nor on the mounteyn callyd Pernaso,  
Wheer nyne musys haue ther mansyou[n.  
But to* conclude myn entencion,  
I wyl procede forth with whyte and blak;  
And where I faylle let Lydgate ber the lak.  
Off this translacyoun considred the mater[e,  
The processe is in party lamentable;  
Wooful clausys of custom they requere,  
No rethoryques nor flourysshynges delycyteable:  
Lettrys of compleynt requere colour sable,
And tragedyes in especial
Be rad and songe at feestys funeral.

This book remembryng of the sodeyn fallys
Off famous prynces and surquedous pryncessys,
That wer vnwarly cast from ther royal stallys,
Which wer in erthe worshepyd as goddessys,
Ynde stonyes vpon ther goldene tressys,—
What was ther ende? Rede Bochas, ye shal se,
By fatal spynnyng of Parchas sustryn thre.

Off this mater ther be bookys nyne,
Alle of Fortunys transmutaciouns;
This blynde lady, how she made hem declyne
From ther moost famous exaltaciouns:
Somme ploungyd doun to the infernal dongouns,
With cruel Pluto depe doun in helle,
With Proserpyna perpetuelly to dwelle.

For* ther demerytes and lakkyng of vertu,
That they lyst nat ther Souereyn Lord to knowe:
For whoo is rekkelees to serve our Lord Iesu,
Fortvnys wheel shal soone hym ovir-throwe,
Though Famys trompet of gold [a]lowde blowe
His victoryes, his marcial renouns,
Rad and remembryd in dyvers regiouws.

Whoo knoweth nat God is falle fer in slouthe;
Be-war ye Prynces euere of thynges tweyne:
In euery quarrel that your ground be trouthe;
Next in ordre, doth your besy peyne
To love Iesu, your Lord moost sovereyne,
Truste hym of herte, and he shal nat faylle
To be your socour in pees and in bataylle.

For lak of trust twyes I sey, allas,
And make her-oon an exclamacioun:
Alle the myschevys remembryd in Bochas,
Fro tyme of Crystes in-carnacioun,
Haue been for lakkyng of devocioun,
That ye Prynces, of wyful necligence,
Lyst nat to God do dewe reuurence.

The book remembers the sudden falls of famous princes and proud princesses, who were worshipped as goddesses on earth. What was their end? Read Bochas and you shall see.

There are nine books, and all tell of the transmutations of Fortuna.

Beware, Princes, that in every quarrel your ground is truth; and do not fail to love and trust Jesus, who will be your succour.

Princes, you are no gods,
but mortal men, more likely to fall than a beggar; and the most grievous fall is of those who sit highest.

Dysdeyneth nat to haue in remembrance, 
Ye be no goddys, ye be but men mortal; 
Stonde vndir daunger of Fortunys chaunce, 
More lyk to towmble and more neer to* fal, 
Than doth a beggere in this lyff mortall: 
Off vertuous poore the fal is nat vnsoffe; 
Moost grevous fal, of them that sitte aloffe.

Princes, do not stand in such case; for when Death comes you know no better help than the poor, no more than did rich Cyrus or Sardananpalus.

Ye Prynces quake, stond not in suych[e] caas; 
Yit whan deth comyth, ye can no bet socour 
Than can* the pore, record of Iohn Bochas; 
Hath mynde heron and make yow a merour 
Off suych as reynyd in glorye and [gret] honour, 
As ryche Cyrus and Sardanapalle, 
How fro the wheel of Fortune they wer falle.

Set not your trust on false Fortune; all this book tretith of suych mater, 
Gynneth his processe, and so forth doth contyne 
Lamentable and doolful for to here, 
How Adam first, with a ful hevy chere, 
From a place moost souereyn of delys 
Whylym departyd, out of Paradys,

down to King John, who reigned in France, and was taken prisoner at Poitiers 

Cherubyn kepyng* the gate of Paradys 
With brennyng swerd that ther shulde entre noon. 
This book conveyed by ful greet avys, 
Ceryously from Adam to Kyng Iohn, 
Regnyng in Fraunce; of whom nat yoore agoon 
I sawh renymbryd the date of thylk[e] yeerys, 
When he was take prysowneer at Peyteryys,

in 1356, the last of all in this book.

A thousand toold by computacioun, 
Thre hundryd ovr, fyffty and sex yeer, 
Trewly reknyd fro the Incarnacioun, 
Whan seid[e] Iohn was take prysowneer, 
Toold and renymbryd by the cronycleer. 
As Adam was first that did[e] falle, 
So in this book Kyng Iohn was last of alle.

We hadde nevir stondyn in daunggeer 
Off worldly stryff nor perellys ful mortal,

Nor deeed of deth, nat in a thousand yeer,
Nor of Fortune that tournyeth as a bal,
Yiff Adam hadde in Paradys had no* fal; 3524
Touch of an appyl and inobedyence, —
Cause that Fortune is had in sych reuerence.

But for to telle and speke in wordys pleyn,
How Fortune kaught first an interesse
To be callyd, nat trewly but in veyn,
Off worldly peple a fals froward goddesse, —
This errour gan of bestial rudnesse,
Demyng them-syllf they worm assuryd wel,
When they sat hyh on hire vntrustly wheel.

Rekne vp alle thooh that* haue doon hire seruice
And folwyd on in ther oppynyoun,
Lyk as this book in orde doth devyse;
Peyse in ballaunce: what was ther guerdoun?
A sodeyn reys, an vnwar toumblyng doun;
Yt, for al this, thorugh hire flaterye,
Al worldly peple doth hire magneffye! 3540

[¶ The laste lenvoye direct vn to my lord.] 1

O Noble Prynce, remembreth al this thynges,
Peyseth* of resoun, leff vp your eye and se,
As your lyne conveyed is fro kynges,
How vertu longeth vn-to dignyte.* 3544
[What folwith affyr? grace & prosperite.]
Hath this in mynde and theron doth attende,
Mawgre Fortvnys mutabilite,*
Ye shal to-Godward encresyn and ascende. 3548

Off humble entent, with herte & hand quakyng,
Directe this book vn-to your mageste;
In which ye may, at good leyseer redyng,
Seen dyvers chaunges of worldly vanyte, — 3552
Prynces cast doun from ther imperyal se,

of death nor of Fortune had it not been for Adam's fall in Paradise;
and for that reason Fortune first came to be called a false goddess by worldly people, an error that began of brutish ignorance.
Reckon up all who did her service — what was their reward? A sudden rise, an unexpected tumbling down. Yet all worldly people worship her.

1 The heading and following six stanzas are supplied from MS. Harley 1766, leaf 264 verso, collated with R3, H5 and P.
For they wer froward, lust nat condescende
Vertu to sewe and vices [for] to fle,
So to-Godward tencresen and ascende.

Fal of othir thorough vicious lyvyng,
Somme dysgrasyd vn-to ful lowe degree,
Off providence lat ther chastysyng
For lak of grace, to yow a merour be.

Wher vertu regnyth, ther is felicity
In sych as lust ther froward lyff tamende;
Whoov lovit that Lord which hath the souereynte
Shal ay be grace encresyn and ascendee.

Though your estat lyk Phœbus wer shynyng,
Yit, for al that, ye haue no sewerte,
How long[e] tyme is here your abydyng;
Age, with hire cosyn callyd Infirmyte,
Wyl clyme hire right of verrry dewete;
Deth takith no medi; afforn he wyl not sende.
Provide your-sylff whyl ye haue libertee,
Dayly in vertu tencressyn and ascendee.

As men dysserve, be record of wrytyng,
An expert thynge by old auctoryte,
Ye shal receythe your medi or your punysshyng,
By egall peys of trouthe and equite.
Beth war afforn, folk haue ther tounges fre,
Lyk your dyscert shal rede your legende;
This verray soth, voyde of duplycette,
Yevith hem cause to preye ye may ascendee.

Offf hyh prudence asorn ymagynyng,
Yiff vertu guye your magnanymyte,
Than good[e] repoort afftir your partyng
Shal floure and shyne in euery comoute.
Almesse partyd to folk in poverthe,
And compassyon the poraylle to amende,
Is beest[e] mene toward the hevenly se
By vertuous lyff tencressyn and ascende.

3558. dysgrated H 5. 3563. that] ye P.
3571. your-sylff] your lyfe P.
With lettre* & leuys go litil book trembling,
Pray to be Prince to haue on the pite,
Voide of picture & enlumynyn[ng],
Which hast of Cithero no corious dite,
Nor of his gardyn no flour[es] of beute;
God graunt[e] grace thi reudnesse not offende
The hih noblesse, the magnanymyte
Of his presence, when thou shalt up ascende.

And, for my part, of oon hert abidyng,
Void of chaung and mutabilite,
I do presente this book with hand shaking,
Of hool affeccioun knelyng on my kne,
Praying the Lord, the Lord oon, too & thre,
Whos magnificence no clerk can comprehende,
To sende you miht, grace and prosperite
Euer in vertu tencresen & ascende.

Go kiss the steppis of them that wer forthring,
Laureat poëtes, which hadde souereynte
Of eloquence to supporte thy makyng,
And pray all tho that shal this processe see,
In thyn excus[e], that thei list to bee
Fauourable to lakke or to comende;
Set thi ground upon humylyte,
Vnto ther grace that thou maist up ascende.

In a short clause thi content rehersing,
As oon up clymbeth to gret prosperite,
So another, bi expert knowleching,
Fro gret richesse is brouht to pouerte.
Alas, O book, what shal I seyn of the?
Thi tragedies thoru al the world to sende,
Go forth, I pray; excuse thi-silf & me;  
Who loueth most vertu hiest shal ascende.  

Blak be thi weede of compleynt & moornyng,  
Callid Fall of Princis from ther felicite,  
Lik chaunteplure, now singyng now weeping,  
Wo afftir merthe, next ioie aduersite,  
So entermelid ther is no seurete,  
Lik as this book doth preise and reprehende, —  
Now on the wheel, now set in louh degre;  
Who wil encrece bi vertu must ascende.

Finis totius libri.

[Explicit John Bochas.]  

1 MS. J. leaf 184 recto.
Blake be thy bondes and thy wede alsoo,
Thou sorrowfull book of matier disespeired,
In tokne of thyn inward mortal wo,
Which is so badde it may not be enpeired.
Thou owest nat outward to be feired,
That inward hast so many a rufull clause;
Such be thyn habite of colour as thi cause.

No cloth of tysswe ne veluet crymesyne,
But lik thi monke, moornyng vnder his hood,
Go weile and wepe wth wofull Proserpyne,
And lat thi teeres mulpte the flood
Of blak Lythey vnder the bareyn wood,
Where-as goddesse hath hir hermytage,—
Helpe hir to wepe, and she wyll geve the wage.

Noblesse of Ioye sith thou maist nat approche,
This blak goddesse I councell the tobeice.
Compleyne wth hir vnder the cragggy roche,
Wth wepyng soules vpon the said Lythey,
Sith thou of sorowe art instrument and keye,—
So harpe and synge there, as thou may be herde;
For euery Ioie is of thi name afferd.

Pryncesse of woo and wepyng, Proserpyne,
Whiche herborowest sorow euen at thyn hert[e] roote,
Admytte this Bochas for a man of thyne;
And though his habite blakker be than soote,
Yitt was it maked of thi monkes boote,
That him translated in Enlissh of Latyne:
Therfore now take him for a man of thyne.

4. impeyred P.
5. feared P.
6. Ruffull J.
8. cremesyne P 1, P.
20. mayst P.

1 The Envoy by Greneacres is supplied from MS. J. leaf 184 recto, collated with P 1 and P.
APPENDIX.

¶ The Daunce of Machabree

wherin is liuely expressed and shewed the state of manne, and howe he is called at vncertaine tymes by death, and when he thinketh least thereon: made by thatoresayde Dan John Lydgate
Monke of Burye.

¶ The Prologe

OYE folkes hard hearted as a stone,
Whiche to this worlde geue* al your aduertence,
Lyke as it should ever lasten in one, —
Where is your wit, where is your prouidence —
To seen aforne the sodayn violence
Of cruel death, that be so wyse and sage,
Which slayeth, alas, by stroke or pestilence
Both yong & olde of lowe and high parage?

Death spareth nought low ne high degre,
Popes, kynges, ne worthy Emperours;
Whan they shine most in felicite.
He can abate the freshnes of her flours,
Her bright[e] sunne clipsen with his shours,
Make them plunge fro her sees lowe; —
Maugre the might of al these conquerours,
Fortune hath them from her whole ythrow.

1. folkes] folkes that bene, Harley 116 = H.
2. this world geue] the worlde haue, Tottel = T.
3. laste euer H. 6. be] dethe corrected to slethe H.
7.] om. H. 8. high and loue H. 9. hight ne law H.
10. in thaire felicite H. 15. Maugre H.

1 The text, here printed because of its interest in connexion with the "Fall of Princes," is based on Tottel's edition (fol. ccxx to end of fol. ccxxiii), collated with MS. Harley 116 and in part with MS. Lansdowne 669. The punctuation and use of capital letters have been modernized, and th substituted for y (b). A superior text will be included by Miss Hammond in her forthcoming "Fifteenth Century Anthology." The two anonymous woodcuts (size of originals 160 x 110 and 158 x 110) are reproduced from Tottel. They are in both drawing and composition very superior to the average English woodcut of the period and of considerable interest as the work of an unknown designer of great talent.
Considereth this, ye folkes that been wyse,
And it emprinteth in your memoriall,
Like thensample which that at Parise
I fonde depict ones vpon* a wal
20
Full notably, as I rehearse shall.
Of a Frenche clarke takyng acquaintaunce,
I toke on me to translaten all
Out of the Frenche Machabrees daunce.

By whose aduise and counsayle at the lest,
Through her sticryng and her mocion,
I obeyed vnto her request,
Therof to make a playn translacion
28
In English tonge, of entencion
That proud[e] folkes that bene stout and bolde,
As in a mirrour toforne in her reason
Her vgly fine there clearly may beholde.

By [this] ensample, that thei in her ententes
Amend her life in euery maner age.
The which[e] daunce at Saint Innocentes
Portrayed is, with all the surplusage,
Youen vnto vs our lives to correct
And to declare the fine of our passage,—
Right anone my stile I wil direct
To shewe this worlde is but a pilgrimage.

¶ The ende of the Prologue.

¶ The Wordes of the Translatour.

CREATURES ye that bene reasonable,
The life desiring which is eternall,
Ye may sen here doctrine ful notable
Your life to lead[e], which that is mortall,
44
Thereby to learne in especiall,
How ye shal trace the daunce of Machabree,
To man and woman ylike naturall;
For death ne spareth high ne lowe degree.

In this myrour euery wight may fynde,
That him behoueth to gone vpon this daunce.
Who goeth toforne or who shall go behynde,
All dependeth in Goddes ordinaunce.
Wherfore eche man lowly take* his chaunce;
Death spareth nouther poore ne* bloud royall:
Eche* man threfore haue this in remembrance,
Of oo matter God hath yforged all.

¶ The Daunce of Machabree.

20. vpon] in T. 30. that] whiche H.
32. may clerly ther H. 44. Death] goeth H.
31. who H. 46. Machabree] that ye see H.
35. a] before H. 47. ylike] that be H.
41. ye] om. Lansdowne 699 = L. 42. which] pat H.
46. of Machabree] which that ye see L. 47. ylike] that be L.
49. wight] man L. 51. toforne] before L—shall go] goth L.
53. eche man lowly take] lowly euery man T.
54. nouther poore ne] not poore ne yet T. 55. Eche] euery T.
Death fyrst speaketh vnto the Pope, and after to euery degree as foloweth.

YE that been set most high in* dignitie
Of al estates in earth spirituall,
And like to* Peter hath the soueraintee
Ouer the church and states temporall,
Vpon this daunce ye first begin[ne] shall,
As most worthy lord and gouernour;
For all the worship of your estate papall,
And of [al] lordship to God is the honour.

The Pope maketh aunswere.

FYRST me behoueth this daunce for to lede,
Which sat in earth[e] highest in my see,
The state ful perilous, whoso taketh hede,
To occupie Seynt Petris* dignitee;
But for all that [fro] Death I may not flee,
Vpon* this daunce with other for to trace;
For which al honor, who prudently can see,
Is little worth that doth so soone passe.

57. most] om. L — high in] in high T.
59. to] as T, H — hath] have L, hadde H.
60. chirche most in especiall L. 61. ye] om. H.
70. Vpon] On T, H — this] his H. 71. which al] sich L.
The Daunce of Machabree

Death speaketh to the Emperour.

Syr Emperour, lord of al the grounde,
Most souereine prince, surmountying of noblesse,
Ye mot forsake of gold your apple round,
Scepter and swerde, & al your high provesse;
Behind you leue* your treasure and* riches,
And with other to my daunce obey:
Against my might is worth none hardines,
Adams children al they must[e] deye.

The Emperour maketh answer.

NOTE to whom that I may [me] appeale
Touching death, which doth me so constrein;
There is no gin to helpen my querel,
But spade and pickoys my graue to atteyne,
— A simple shete, there is nomore to seyn,
To wrappen in my body and visage:
And therupon I may me sore* compleyne,
That lordes great haue litle auantage.

Death speaketh to the Cardinal.

YE been abashed, it semeth, and in drede,
Syr Cardinal, it sheweth by your chere;
But yet for-thy ye folowe shall in dede,
With other folke my daunce for to lere.
Your great aray, al shall ye leauen here,
Your hat of red, your vesture of great coste;
All these thynges reckoned well in fere,*
In great[e] honour good auyse is loste.

The Cardinall maketh answer.

HAUE great cause, certes this is no faile
To be abashed and greatly dread[e] me,
Sith Death is come me sodainly tassaile,*
That I shall neuer hereafter clothed be
In grise nor ermine like vnto my degree,
Mine hat of red leuen eke in distresse,—
By which I haue conceyued* wel and see
That worldly* ioye endeth in heauines.

Death speaketh to the Kyng.

NOBLE Kyng, most worthy of renoun,
Come foorth anone, for al your worthines
That whylom had about you enuiron
Great royaltie and passing hye noblesse.

75. mot] muste L, moste H.
77. you leue] leten T, L — and] and your T, L.
79. is worth] worthes is H. 81. me] om. L. 83. gin] bote H.
87. And therupon I may me sore] wherupon sore I me T, L.
88. litle auuantage] so lytell vauntage H.
99. tassaile] to assaile T. 100 and 101 are transposed in H.
103. conceyued] learned T, L.
The Daunce of Machabree

But right anon [for] al your great highnes,
Sole from your men in hast ye shall it lete,
Who most aboundeth here in great riches,
Shall beare with hym but a [single] shete.

The Kyng maketh aunswere.

I
HAUE nought learned here-toforn to daunce
No daunce in sooth of footyng so sause,
Where-through I se by clere demonstraunce,
What pride is worth or force of high linage!
Death all fordo[de]th, this is his vsage,
Great and smal that in this world soiourne:
Who is most meke, I hold[e] hym most sage;
For we shall all to dede* ashes tourne.

Death speaketh to the Patriarche.

SYR Patriarche, al your humble chere
Ne quiteth you nought nor your humilitie;
Your double crosse of gold and stones clere,
Some other shall of very equitie
Posseide anon, as I rehearse can:
Trusteth neuer that ye shall Pope be;
For foly* hope deceueth many a man!

The Patriarche maketh aunswere.

WORLDLY honour, gret treasour & riches
Haue me deceiued soothfastly in dede;
Mine old[e] joyes been turned to* tristesse!
What auayleth such treasours to possede?
Hie clymbyng* vp a fall hath for his mede.
Great estates folke wasten out of number;
Who mounteth high, it is sure and no drede,
Great[e] burden doth hym oft encomber.

Death speaketh to the Cunstable.

IT is my ryght to arrest you and constreyne
With vs to daunce, my mayster Sir Cunstable!
For more stronger thaw euer was Charlemain,
Death hath afforced, and more worshipable;
For hardines ne knighthode, this no* fable,
Nor strong armure of plates ne* of maile,—
What gayneth armes of folkes most notable,
Whan cruel deat list hem* to assayle?

The Cunstable maketh aunswere.

MY purpose was and whole entencion
To assail castell[le]s & mighty fortresses,
And bryng[e] folke vnto subieccion,
To seke honour, fame, and great richesses;

110. I holde hym] holde he is H. 120. dede] the dead T, L.
121. al] with all H. 128. foly] holy T, L. 131. to] into T, L.
133. Hie clymbyng] It climbeth T, L.
140. afforced] enforce H.
141. this] om. H. — no] is no T, L. H. 142. ne] nother T, L.
144. hem] him T. 146. fortresse H. 148. richesse H.
But I see that all worldly provess
Death can abate, which is a great despite;
To him alone, sorrow and eke sweetnes;
For agaynst death is found[n]e no respite.

Death speake-th to the Archebishop.

SYR Archebishop, why do ye you withdrawe
So frowardly, as it wer by disdayne?
Ye must approche [vn] to my mortall lawe;
It to contrary it wer but* in yayne:
For day by day there is none other gayne.
Death at the hand pursueth every coast;
Prest and debte mot bee yeled againe,
And at a daye men counten with her host.

The Archebishop maketh aunswere.

ALAS, I wote not what* parte for to flee.
For drede of death I haue so gret distres!
Tescape* his might I can no refute see;
That who-so knew his constreint and duresse,
He would[e] take reason to maistresse.
Adue my treasure, my Pompe & pride also,
My painted chambers, my port & my freshnes,—
Thyng that behoueth nedes mot be do.

Death speake-th to the Barone.

YE that among[es] Lordes and Barons
Haue had so long[e] worship and renown,
Foryet your trumpetes and your clarions;
This is no dreame nor simulacion.
Whylom your custom and entencion
Was with ladies to daunsen in the shade;
But oft it happeth, in conclusion,
One man breaketh that another made.

The Barone maketh aunswere.

FULL oft[e] sith I haue been auctorised
To high emprises & thinges of gret fame.
Of high & low my thanke also devised,
Cherished with ladies & women high of name;
Ne neuer on me was put no defame,
In lordes courte,* which that was notable;
But deathes stroke hath made me [so] lame:
Under heauen in earth is nothyng stable.

Death speake-th to the Princesse.

COME forth anon, my Lady good Princesse,
Ye must also gon vpon this daunce.
Nought may auayle your great straunogensse,
Nether your beauty nor your gret pleasauence,

153. you] so H.  155. vnnto] to L.
156. but] nought but T, L.  158. the] om. H.
163. Tescape] To escape T.  166. &] my H.
182. courte] of court T, L.  183. so] om. L.
The Daunce of Machabree

Your riche aray, nother your daliaunce,
That whylom couth so many holde in hond
In loue, for al your double variaunce.
Ye mot as nowe this footyng vnderstonde.

The Princesse maketh aunswere.

ALAS, I see there is none other boote,
Deth hath in earth no lady nor maistres,
And* on this daunce yet mot I nedes fote:
For there nis quene, countesse ne dutchesse,
Flouring in bountie nor in her fayrenes,
That shode of Death mot passe the passage,
When our beautie and counterfeit fairnes
Dieth, adue then our rimpled age!

Death speaketh to the Bishop.

MY Lord Sir Bishop, with miter & crosse,
For al your riches, soothly I ensure.
For all your treasour [so longe] kept in closse,
Your worldly goodes and goodes of nature,
[And] of your shepe the ghostly dredeful* cure,
With charge committed to your prelacie.
For to accoumpt ye shal be brought to lure,
No wight is sure that climbeth ouer hye.

The Bishop maketh aunswere.

MINE heart truely is nother glad ne mery,
Of sodein tidinges which that ye [me] u.ing;
My feast is turned vnto a simple ferye,*
That for discomfort me list nothyng [to] syng.

Death speaketh to the Squyer.

COMMETH forth Syr Squyer, right fresh of your araye,
That conn of daunces al the new[el] guise,
Thoghe ye bare armes, fresshe horsed yesterday,*
With spere & shielde at your vncouth deuise,

195. And] & T — this] his H.  197. bountie] beaute H.
198.] That she of right most nedys the trace sew H — shode] shooe T.  199. When] For to H.
200.] Our Rewedel age saith farwell adiev H.
210. me] om. L.
211. vnto a simple feryc] into simple terie T, L.
212. to] om. L.
213. contrarie now to my] contrarieth to me now in T — word[el] word L — now] om. L — my] me in L.
215.] And needis we must on to our departyng L.
216. And al] Al thyng T, H.
217. This stanza is omitted in L — Commeth] Come H — of] in H.  218. davnce H.
219.] If ye bare harnes freshly horsed yesterday T.
The Daunce of Machabree

And take on you so many high emprise,
Daunseth with vs: it wyl no better be;
There is no succour in no maner wyse:
For no man may fro Deathes stroke flee.

The Squire maketh answer.

SITHENS that Death me holdeth in his lase,
Yet shal I speake no worde or that* I passe:
Adue al myrth, adue now al solace,
Adue my ladies whilm so freshe of face,
Adue beaute, pleaasance, and al solace!
Of Deathes chaunge ecuy day is prime,
Thinke on your soules or* that Death manace;
For all shal rot, and no man wot what time.

Death speaketh to the Abbot.

COMMETH forth Syr Abbot, with your brode hatte,
Beeth nought abashed thogh* ye hauen ryght;
Great is your head, your belly rounde* and fat,
Yemot come daunce, thogh* ye be nothyng light.
Leaueth your aubrey to some other wight,
Your heyre is of age your state to occupie;
Who that is fattest, I haue hym behyght,
[Shall] in his graue* soonest putrifie.

The Squire maketh answer.

Or thy manace I hauen o grete* enuy,
That I shal now leaue al* gouernance,
But that I shal as a cloyster dye;
This Death is to me passing great grauance.
My libertie nor my great habundance,
What may they vayle* in any maner wyse?
Yet aske I mercy with devoute* repentaunce,
Thogh* in dying to late men them ause.

Death speaketh to the Abbesse.

AND ye my lady, gentle dame Abbesse,
With your mantell[le]s furred large and wyde,
Your veile, your wimple, your ryng* of grete riches,
And bedes, sister, ye mot now leyn a-syde;*
For to this daunce I must be* your guide,
Thogh* ye be tender borne of gentle bloode,
While that ye* lieue for your selue prouide;
For after death[e] no man hath no good.

222. no] not H.
225. lace H. 226. or that] ere T, L. 231. or] ere T, L.
233. Come H. 234. abashed thogh] abasht if T, L.
235. rounde] large T, H. 236. if] thogh H.
239. fattest] most fatte H. 240. Shall in his graue] In his graue shall T, L. 241. thy] these T.
241. thy manace I haue no grete] these threets haue I none T —
thi tretysye L — no gret] noon L.
250. mantel L. 251. your ryng] passing T, H.
252. a-syde] on syde T, H. 253. must be] shalbe T.
254. Thogh] If T — borne] and borne H.
255. While that ye] Whiles that you T, L. 256. man] wyght H.
The Abbess maketh aunswere.

ALAS that Death hath thus for me ordained,
That in no wise I maye it nought deelyne,
If it so be ful oft I am* constreined,
Brest and throte my notes out to twyne,
My checkes round vernyshed* for to shine,
Ungird ful oft to walken at the large, —
Thus cruel Death with al estates fine,
Who hath no shippe must* rowe in bote or barge.

Death speaketh to the Bayly.

COME forth, Sir Bayly, that knowen all the guise,
By your office of trouth & rightwisnes,
Ye must come to a newe assyse,
Extorcions and wronges to redresse;
Ye be somned, as lawe biddeth expresse,
To yeue accomptes the* judge wil you charge,
Which hath ordained to excluden al falsnes,
That euery man shal beare his own[e] charge.

The Bayly maketh aunswere.

OTHOU Lord God this is a hard iourney,
To which aforne I toke but litle hede;
My chauce is turned, & that forthinketh me,
Whilom what me list to spede
Lay in my might, by labour oft for mede.
But sith there is no rescus by battayle,
I hold him wise that couth wel seen in dede,
Again[es] Death that none apel may vayle.

Death speaketh to the Astronomer.

COME foorth, Maister, that lookest vp so farre,
With instrumentes of Astronomie
To take the grees and hyght of euery starre;
What may auaille all your astrologie?
Sith of Adam all the genealogie,
Made first of God to walke vpon the ground,
Deatharesteth;* thus sayth theologie:
And all shall dye for an apple rounde.

The Astronomer maketh aunswere.

FOR all my craft, cunnyng and* science,
I can nought find[e] no provision,
Ne* in the starres seke* no difference
By domifying nor calculacion,

257. thus for me الآخرین 257. it nought deelyne] nat hym eschewe L.
259. am] have T, L. 261. vernyshed] garnished T, L.
262. Vgirt H. 264. must] he must T, L.
266. Extorcioun H. 270. the] that T, L. 274. To] To the H.
277. by] for H. 278. sith] sethyn H — by] ne H.
279. couth wel seen] cowde see H.
285. of] that of H.
287. aresteth] with arest T, L. 289. and] or T, L.
292. domifying] demonstrynge H — nor] ne H.
Saue finally, in conclusion,
For to descriue our cunning every deke:
There is no more by sentence of reason,
Who liueth aright mot nedes dye well.

Death speake the to the Burgis.

SYR Burgis, what doe ye lenger* tarye?
For all your auoyre and youre great riches,
Thogh* ye be strong, deinous and contrary,
Toward this daunce ye mot you nedes dresse;
For your* treasour, plentie and largesse,
From other it came and shall ynto straungers.
He is a foole that in such busines,
Wot nought for whom he stuffeth his garners!

The Burgis maketh aunswere.

CERTES to me it is great displeasaunce,
To leaue al this & mai it nought assure:
Howses,* rentes, treasour & substaunce, —
Death al fordoth, suche is his nature.
Therfore wise is no creature,
That set his heart on good that moste* disseuer;
The world it lent, the worlde wil it recure;
And who most hath, lothest dyeth euer.

Death speake the to the Chanon Seculer.

AND ye, Syr Chanon, with many great prebende,
Ye may no lenger haue distribution
Of golde [and] siluer, largelye to dispende;
For there is nowe no consolation
But daunce with vs, for al your high renoun.
For ye of death[e] stonde* vpon the brinke,
Ye may therof haue no delacion;
Death commeth ay when men least on him think.

The Chanon maketh aunswere.

MY benefice with mony personage,
God wot ful lite may me now comfort.
Death hath of me so great auauntage,
That al my riches may me nought disport, —
Amisse of gris, they wyl ayein resorte,
Vnto the world a surples and prebende.
Al is vainglory, truely to reporte,
To dyen well eche man should entende.

297. lenger] long T, L. 298. auoyre] haueur H.
299. Thoghe] Yf T, L.
300. Toward] To H — mot you] muste now H.
308. fordoth] destroieith H.
310. on] of H — moste] may T, L. 311. 1st it] is H.
318. For ye of death stonde] For if death stode T, R.
320. ay] euer H.
321. benefice] benefices H. 322. lytell H. 323. of] our H.
324. That] om. H — me nought disport] be me not support H.
325. Amys H.
Death speaketh to the Marchaunte.

YE rich Marchant, ye mot looke hitherwarde,  
That passed haue ful many diuers lond  
On horse, on foote, hauing most regard  
To lucre & winnyng, as I vnderstond.  
But now to daunce ye mot geue me your hond;  
For al your labour ful little auayleth nowe.  
Adue vaynglory, both of free and bonde,  
None more coueit then thei that haue ynow.

The Marchaunt maketh aunswere.

BY many an hyll and many a strong[e] vale  
I haue traualled with many marchandise;  
Ouer the sea downe cary many a bale  
To sondrye Iles, more than I can deuyse.  
Mine heart inward ay fret* with couetise,  
But al for nought, now Deth me doth* constrein:  
For which I so, by record of the wyse,  
Who al embraceth little shall restrayne.*

Death speaketh to the Chartreux.

YEUE me your honde, with chekes dead and pale,  
Caused of watche & long abstinance,  
Sir Chart[e]reux, and your self auale  
Vnto this daunce with humble pacience.  
To striue ayein may be no resistence,  
Lenger to lye set nought your memorye;  
Thogh* I be lothsome as in apparence,  
Abouen[.] al men Death hath the victorie.

The Chartreux maketh aunswere.

VNTO this* world I was dead long agon  
By mine order and my profession;  
And eueryman, be he neuer so strong,  
Dreadeth to dye by kindly mocion  
After his fleshly inclination.  
But' please to God my soule [for] to borowe  
Fro Fiendes myght and fro damnacion:  
Some arne to-day that shal nought be to-morow.

Death speaketh to the Sargeaunte.

COME foorth Sir Sargeaunt, with your stately mase,  
Make no defence nor rebellion,  
Nought may* auale to grutchen in this case,  
Thogh* ye be deyners of condicion:

339. downe] do H.  
341. fret] freteth T.  
342. me doth T.  
343. For] By H.  
344. restrayne[.] constrein T.  
351. Thogh[. If T — as] om. H.  
353. this[.] the T.  
355. And] Thogh H.  
358. to] it to H.  
359. 2nd fro] om. H.  
362. nor] ne no H.  
363. Nought may[.] It may nought T.  
364. Thogh[. If T — deynous H.
The Daunce of Machabree

For neyther [ap]ple nor protection
May you franchisise to doe nature wrong;
For there is none so sturdy chaumpion,
Thogh* he be mightie, another is also strong.

The Sargeaunt maketh aunswere.

H OWE durste thou* Death set on me arest,
That am the kynges chosen officer,
Which yesterday, both[en] east and west,
Mine office dyd, ful surqucedous of chere;
But now this day I am arested here,
And can nought flee, thoh* I had it sworne.
Eche* man is loth to die, both farre & nere,
That hath nought learned for to dye* aforne.

Death speakeyth to the Monke.

SYR Monke, also with your blacke habite,
Ye may no longer hold[e] here soiooure;
There is nothyng that may you here respite
Again my might you for to doe succour;
Ye mot accompt[e] touchyng your labour,
How ye haue spend it, in dede, word & thought.
To earth and ashes turneth euery floure;
The life of man is but a thyng of nought.

The Monke maketh aunswere.

I HAD leauer in the cloyster be,
At my booke and study my seruice,
Which is a place contemplatife to see;
But I haue spent my life in mony wyse,
Like as a foole dissolute and nice.
God of his mercy graunt me repentaunce.
By chere outward hard is to deuise,
Al be not merye which that men seen daunce.

Death speakeyth to the Usurer.

THOU Usurer, looke vp and beholde,
Unto wynnyng that settest al* thy payne,
Whose couetise waxeth never colde,
Thy gredy thrust so sore the doth constraine.
Suce an etike thyne heart[e] freten shall,
But that of pitie God his honde refraine,
One perilous stroke shal make thee losen al.

The Usurer maketh aunswere.

NOW [me] behoueth sodeinly to dye,
Which is to me great paine & eke greuance.
Succour to fynde I see no maner way
Of golde nor siluer by none cheuisance; 404
Death through his hast abideth no purueiace
Of folkes blynde that can nought loke wel:
Full oft happeth by kynde of fatall chaunce,
Some haue fayre eyen that seen neuer adel. 408

The Poore Man boroweth of the Usurer.

USurer to God is full great offence,
And in his syght a great abusion;
The poore boroweth percase for indigence,
The riche lent by false collusion,
Onely for lucre in his entencion.
Death shal both[e] to accoumptes fette,
To make reconing by computacion:
No man is quit that is behynd of dette. 416

Death speaketh to the Phisicien.

MAISTER of Phisike, which on your vryne
So looke and gase and stare agaynst the sunne,
For al your craft and study of medicine,
[And] all the practike and science that ye cunne,
Your lyues* course so farre forth is yrunne,
Ayein my might your craft may not endure,
For al the gold that ye thereby* haue wunne:
Good leche is he that can himself* recure. 424

The Phisicien maketh aunswere.

FULL long agon that I vnto Phisike
Set my wit and eke my diligence,
In speculatife and also in practike,*
To geat a name through mine excellenc,
To fynd out agaynes* pestilence
Preseruatifes to staunche it and to fine:
But I dare [say] shortly in sentence,
Againes* Death is worth no medicine. 432

Death speaketh to the Amerous Squyre.

YE that be gentle, so fresh & amerous,
Of yeres yong flouring in your grene age,
Lusty [and] fre, of hert eke* desirous,
Ful of deuises & chaunge in your courage, 436

402. eke] om. H.
409. This stanza is omitted in H.
416. No is repeated in T.
417. on] in H. 421. lyues] life T.
423. ye thereby] thereby ye T — haue] hath H.
424. can himself] himself can T. 426. eke] om. H.
427. practike] pracktife T.
429. agaynes] agaynst T.
432. Againes] Say that against T.
435. eke] & eke T, and (the rest erased) H.
That Tofore To
That Arested
As And
For Penelope
For Alas,
Pleasaunt
OF
COME
ALAS,
C RUEL
SYR
OF
The Squerer maketh aunsWer.

LAS, alas, I can nowe no succour
Agaynes* Death[e] for my selfe prouide!
Adue of youth the lusty fresh[e] flower,*
Adue vainglory of beautie and of pride,*
Adue all service of the god Cupide,
Adue my Ladies, so fresh so wel beseyn:
For agayn[a] Death nothing may abyde,
And windes great gon doun with litel reyn.

Death spekesthe to the Gentlewoman.

COME forth Maistresse, of yeres yonge and grene,
Which hold your selfe of beautie souereyn,
As fayre as ye was whilom Pollixene,
Penelope and the quene Helein.
Yet on this daunce thei went[e] both[e] tweyne,
And so shall ye, for al your straungenesse;
Thogh* daunger long in loue hath lad your reyn,
Arested is your chaunge of doublenes.

The Gentlewoman maketh aunsWer.

O CRUEL Death, that spareth none estate,
To old and yong thou art indifferent;
To my beautie thou hast said checkmate,
So hasty is thy mortail judgement.
For in my youth[e] this was mine entent,
To my seruice many man to haue lured;
But she is a foole, shortly in sent[e]ment,
That in her beautie is to muche assured.

Death spekesthe to the Man of Law.

SYR Advocate, short proces for to make,
Ye mot come plete afore the* high[e] iudge.
Many a quare[l]* ye haue vndertake
And for lucte done to folke refuge;
But my fraunchise is so large and huge
That counsel ye none auaille may but trouth:
He scapeth wisely of death the great deluge,
Tofore the dome who is nought teint with slouth.

The Man of Law maketh aunsWer.

OF right & reason by Natures law,
I can nought putte against Deth no defence,
Ne by my* sleight me kepen or withraw,
For al my wit and al* my gret prudence,*

439. al] al your H. 442. Against T. 444. of pride] the prouide T.
462. sentement] sentence H. 466. the] that H.
467. a quare[l] quarels T. 468. done to] to do H.
476. and al] and H, for al T.
To [make] appeale from his dreadful sentence;
Nor nothyng in earth may a man preserue,
Agayn his might to make resisstance:
God quiteth all men like as they deserue.

Death speaketh to Maister John Rikil Tregetour.

MASTER John Rikil, whilom Tregetour
Of noble Henry king of Engle[lond,
And of Fraunce the mightie conquerour,—
For al the sleightes and turning of thine hond,
Thou must come nere my dauce to vnderstond.
Nought may auyale al thy conclusions;
For Death, shortly, nother on sea ne lond,
Is not deceiued by none illusions.

The Tregetour maketh aunswere.

WHAT may auyale magike naturall
Or any craft shewed by apparence,
Or course of starres aboue celestiall,
Or of the heauens al the influence
Ageynes* Death to stonde at defence?
Legerdmain now helpeth me right nought.
Fare wel my craft and [al] such sapience;
For Death hath mo maistries than I haue wrought.*

Death speaketh to the Person.

OSIR Curate, that been now here present,
That had your worldly inclinacion,
Your heart entere, your study & entent,
Most of your tithes and* oblacion,
Which should haue be of conuersacion
Mirrour to other, light and examplarie,—
Like your desert[e] shalbe your guerdon,
And to eche* labour due is the salarye.

The Person maketh aunswere.

MAUGER my wil I must[e] condescende;
For death assailleth every liuely thing
Here in this world[e], who can comprchend
His sodein stroke and his vnware commyng,*
Fare wel [my] tithes, and fare wel mine offring,—
I mot go coumpten in* order by and by,
And for my shepe make a iust reckonyng:
Whom he acquiteth* I hold he is happye.

479. make] make no H.
481. *This stanza is transposed in H, following the Minstral.
485. my] this H. 487. ne] and H.
496. ] For Death mo maistries hath wrught T — wrought]
wronge H. 500. and] and your T. 504. eche] ever T.
508. commyng] turnyng T.
510. in] by T.
512. Whom he acquiteth]] & who that so him quiteth T.
Death speaketh to the Iurour.

MAISTER Iurour, which that at assises
And at sheres questes dydst embrace,
Departist* lond like to thy devise,
And who most gaue most stode in thy grace:
The poore man lost both[en] land and place;
For golde thou couldest folke disherite.
But now let se, with thy teynt[en] face
Tofore the Judge how [thou] canst thee quite!

The Iurour maketh aunswere.

WHILOM I was cleped in my countrey
The belweather, and that was not alite.
Nought loued but drad of high & low degree;
For whom me list by craftJ could ende,
—Hongen the true and the thefe respite:
Al the countrey by my worde was lad.
But I dare sein, shortly for to write,
Of my death many a man is glad.

Death speaketh to the Minstral.

OTHOU Minstral, that can so note and pipe
Unto folke[s] for to done pleasaunce,
By thi* ryght honde anone I shall the gripe,
With these other to gone vpon my daunce;
There is no scape nother auoydaunce,
For in musike by craft and accordaunce
Who maister [shall] shewen his science.*

The Minstrall maketh aunswere.

THIS new[e] daunce is to me so straunge,
Wonder diuers and passingly contrarye;
The dredefull footyng doth so oft[en] chaunge
And the measures so oft[e] tymes* varye,
Which now to me is nothyng* necessar[ye].
If it wer so that I might asterte!
But many a man, if I shal nought tary,
Oft [tyme] daunseth, but nothyng of hert.

Death speaketh to the Labourer.

THOU Labourer, which in sorowe and peyn
Hast lad thy life in [ful] great trauayle,
Ye must eke daunce and therfore nought disein;
If thou do, it may the nought auayle.
And cause why that I thee assayle
Is onely this: from thee to discuer
The false world that can so folkes fayle;
He is a foole that wenuity to liuen euer.

513. at] is at H.
529. can] canst H. 531. thi] the T.
534. contreire] contune T. 536. science] sentence T.
540. tymes] sith T. 541. now to me is] vnto me is now T.
545. Thou] O thou H. 548. if] thoghe H.
552. liuen] liue H.
The Labourer maketh aunswere.

IHAUE wished after Death ful oft,
Albe that I would haue fled him nowe.
I had leauer to haue lyen vnssoft,
In wind & rain to haue gon at the plowe,
With spade & pikoys labored for my prow,
Doluen and ditched and at the cart[e] gone:
For I may say and tell[e] platlye howe,
In this world[e] there is rest[e] none.

Death speaketh to the Frere Menour.

SYR Cordelere, to you mine hande is taught.
To* this daunce [you] to conuay & leade,
Which in your preaching han ful oft ytaught
How that I am most gastful for to drede,
Albe that folke take thereto none hede.
Yet is there none so strong ne so hardye,
But Death dare hym rest and let for no made;
For Death yche* houre is present and ready.

The Frere maketh aunswere.

WHAT may this be, that in this world no man
Here to abide may haue no suretie?
Strength, riches, nor what so that he can
Of worldly wisedom; all is but vanitie!
In great estate nor in pouertie
Is nothing founde that may from* death defend;
For which I saye to high and low degree,
Wise is the* sinner that doth his lyfe amend.

Death speaketh to the Chylde.

LITLE Faunte, that were but late borne,
Shape in this worlde to haue no pleasaunce,
Ye must with other, that gone here beforne,
Be lad in hast by fatall ordinaunce.
Learne ouer* new to gone [up]on my daunce:
There may none age escape in soth therefro.
Let euery wight haue this in remembraunce.
Who lengest liueth most shal suffer woe.

The Yong Childe maketh aunswer.

A A a, a woorde I cannot speake;
I am so yonge; I was borne yesterday.
Death is so hasty on me to be wreake,
And list no lenger to make no delaie.
I come but now,* and now I go my way;
Of me no more tale* shall [ye] be told.
The wyll of God no man withstonde maye;
As soone dyeth a yong [man] as an olde.
The Daunce of Machabree

Death speaketh to the Yong Clerke.

O
YE, Syr Clerke, suppose ye to be free
Fro my daunce or your selfe defende,
That wende haue risen vnto high degree
Of benefice or some great prehende?
Who climbeth highest sometime shal descend.
Let no man grutche ayeines* his fortune,
But take at gree what-euer God him sende,
Which punisheth al when time is oportune.

The Clerke maketh aunswere.

SHALL [I] that am so yong a clerke now die,
Fro* my seruice & haue no bet guerdon?
Is there no gaync nor better way,
No seurer* fraunchise nor protection?
Death maketh alway a short conclusion;
To late ware, when men been on the brynke:
The world shall fayle and all possession;
For much faileth of thing that folkes* thinke.

Death speaketh to the Hermite.

YE that haue liued long in wilderness
And there continued long in abstinence,
At the last[e] yet ye mot you dresse,
Of my daunce to haue experience;
For there against may be* no resistance.
Take now leave of thynye hermitage:
Which punisheth al when time is oportune.

The Hermite maketh aunswere.

TO liue in desert called solitarie
May again Death haue respite none nor space;
At vnset hour his commyng doth not tary,
And for my part welcom by Goddes grace,
Thankyng hym with humble chere & face
Of al his giftes and great haboundaunce,
Finally affirmynge in this place,
That [in] this life is* no sure heritage.

Death speaketh agayn to the Hermite.

THAT is wel sayd, and thus should euery wight
Thanken his God & al his wittes dresse
To loue & dread him with all his heart & might,
Sith Death to escape maye be no sikernes.
As men deserue, God quiteth of rightwisnes
To riche and poore vpon euery syde:
A better lesson there can no clerke expresse,
Than til to-morow is no man sure to abide.

597. highest] hie H. 598. ayeines] ayeinst T.
599. in gree H. 602. Fro] Of T — bet] better T.
604. seurer] better T — nor] ne H. 608. folkes] folkes T.
613. may be] is T. 615. yche] euery T — to] om. H.
616. is] here is T. 617. To liue] Lyff H.
619. hour] stewyne H. 624. suffraunce] suffisaunce T.
629. quiteth)] quite H. 630. To] The H.
Nil in sublme est sup ✔ p a perc ula tendit;
Non sit vt inferius suppositum deo.

§ The King ligging eaten of Wormes.

YE folke that loke vpon this porttature,
Beholding here all estates daunce,
Seeth what ye been & what is your nature:
Meat vnto wormes; nought els in substaunce.
And haueth this mirrour aye in remembrançe,
Howe I lye here whylom crownd [a] kyng,
To al estates a true resemblaunce,
That wormes foode is* fine of our* liuyng.

§ Machabree the Doctoure.

MANS lyfe* is nought els, platly for to thinke,
But as [a] wind[e] which is transitory,
Passing ay forth, whether he wake or winke,
Toward this daunce, haueth this in memorye,
Remembrynge aye there is no better victory
In this lyfe here than the syn at the least;
Than shal ye reygne in paradise with glorye.
Happy is he that maketh in heauen his feast!
Yet been there folkemo than sixe or seuen,
Recheles of life in many maner wyse,
Like as there were hell[e] none nor heauen.
Such false errour let euery man despise;

633. folkene H.
640. is] is the T — our] your T.
648. in heuen that maketh H. 652. erreours H.
The Daunce of Machabree

For holy sayntes and olde clerkes wyse
Written contrary, her falsenes to deface:*
To liuen wel, take* for the best emprise,
Is much[e] worth when men shal[e] hence passe. 656

¶ Lenuoye of the Translatoure.

O YE my lorde & maisters all in fere,*
Of auenture that shal this daunce reade,
Lowely I pray with all myne heart entere
To correct[e] where-as ye se ned[e]; 660
For nought elles I aske for my med[e]
But goodly support of this translacion,
And with fauour to suppowale drede,
Bening[e]lye in your correccioun. 664

Out of the French I drough it of entent,
Not word by word but folowing in substaunce,
And from Paris to Eng[el]and it sent,
Only of purpose you to do plesaunce. 668
Rude of langage, I was not borne in France,—
Haue me excused, my name is John Lidgate;*
Of ther tong I haue no suffisance,
Her curious miters in Englishe to translate. 672

¶ Here endeth the Daunce °of Machabree.

654. deface] defame T.
655. lyue H — take] take thys T.
656. shall] should T.
657. my lorde & maisters] maistres and folkes H — fere] feare T.
667 and 668 are transposed in T.
669 and 670 are transposed in T.
669. ther] other T.
Lydgate, John
Fall of princes
1923
pt. 3