

RICHARD PYNSON'S 1492 EDITION OF THE CANTERBURY
TALES: A STUDY PRELIMINARY TO AN EDITION

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I

Until recently Chaucer scholars have given very little attention to the early printed editions of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. The exceptions are the two editions of Caxton, of course, since these editions have been viewed as having manuscript authority; and, surprisingly enough, these editions are only now being edited for the first time. The editions after Caxton, especially the two of Richard Pynson and that of Wynkyn de Worde, have been considered as mere "copies" of Caxton's second edition. Thomas Tyrwhitt, for example, in his Appendix to the Preface for The Canterbury Tales of Chaucer (1775) observed that "it is evident from the slightest comparison of the three books, "Caxton's second, and the two editions of Pynson, that Pynson's editions were "really Caxton's second Edition."¹ Even about William Thynne's edition of Chaucer's Workes (1532), Tyrwhitt remarks: "With respect to The Canterbury Tales, I am under a necessity of observing, that, upon the whole, they received no advantage from the edition of 1532. Its material variations from Caxton's second edition are all, I think, for the worse" (p. xvii). Thynne's 1532 edition has nevertheless, been reproduced twice during this century.²

No one would deny Caxton's eminence in the textual history of the printed editions, nor would he attempt to extol the early editions, especially those of Pynson and de Worde, as significant contributions to that same textual history. The fact remains, however, that the texts of Pynson and of de Worde have not been thoroughly or even sufficiently examined to allow the Chaucer textual scholars to be completely comfortable in relying on the statements of Tyrwhitt and hence on the assumptions which they have held for two hundred years. The time is now ripe for editions of these works of Pynson and de Worde. Perhaps the reason most urgently pressing for a thorough examination of these works is the knowledge acquired, and still coming to light, about the early printers' methods of stop-press corrections. In this practice, the printer stopped the press, unlocked the type, and made corrections in the text, often from a manuscript unknown to him at the time of an earlier printing. The result for the textual scholar is that he must collate all of the existing copies of a particular work, Pynson for example, before he can speak confidently about an author's "text" or "texts" at all. In short, each printing may be a different edition, or there may even be editions within the same printing. A second factor which has occasioned the necessity for editions of Pynson and de Worde has been the plan of the Chaucer Variorum Committee to survey the textual

history of all of the important editions of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. This plan has stimulated a renewed interest in all the editions of Chaucer, but especially in the editions between Caxton (about 1478) and Tyrwhitt (1775), since so little about them has heretofore been made known. Even if thorough examinations of these works, specifically of Pynson and de Worde, do not reveal any textual independence from the edition of Caxton, they need to be undertaken to define this fact once and for all, and to record the nature and extent of the variants which there must certainly be in the editions of Pynson and of de Worde. A third reason, finally, for the publishing of editions of Pynson's first edition and the edition of Wynkyn de Worde is that they are incunables and, as such, are important in the history of printing, independently of their roles in the history of the Chaucer textual tradition.

I have attempted, therefore, in this study to begin, albeit of necessity in a very limited way, work preliminary to the editing of the first edition of Richard Pynson, 1491 or 1492. I have chosen for my examination The Myller's Tale and part of The Parson's Tale as verse and prose specimens from the Pynson edition. Since there has never been a transcription made of any of Pynson's work, I have transcribed these verse and prose selections, primarily to make them available for the first time to students of

Chaucer. I have also collated these selections from the Pynson with those of the Caxton 2 in the hope of showing, at this time, but of determining at a later time, the nature and extent of Pynson's dependence on Caxton; or at least the nature and extent of his variants. In Pynson's variants, I have considered not only his additions, transpositions, and omissions, but also the variants of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, breviographes and abbreviations. In this beginning study, my findings have not been so significant to invalidate Tyrwhitt's statement about the source of the Pynson, but they do suggest that a complete collation of the two texts will be highly useful to Chaucer scholars, even to become more knowledgeable and specific about a smaller chapter in the history of the printed texts.

II

Richard Pynson's letters of naturalization make clear that he was Norman by birth but, according to Charles Muscatine, came to England between 1486-1490.³ He may even have been in England as early as 1482. A Richard Pynson, glover, is mentioned in the Saint Clement Danes Public Record Office Controlment Roll of that year.⁴ He probably started printing on his own at Saint Clement Danes in 1487, succeeding William de Machlinia as a printer of law books. He continued his work at Saint Clement Danes until 1500 by

which time he had published about eighty-eight books. But in spite of the Act of 1484, which established free trade in books, Pynson was not free from the jealousy that the native printer felt for the foreign printer. Sometime before 1501 as he, his wife, and friends were returning home from an evening at the tavern, a crowd of angry boys and men attacked him, while declaring that "neither Frenchman nor Fleming would live in Saint Clement's Parish."⁵ Soon after this incident, Pynson moved within Temple Bar on Fleet Street. In 1508, following the death of William Faques, Pynson was appointed Printer to the King. From 1500 until his death in 1529 or 1530, he continued printing a variety of books and proclamations at the Fleet Street location.

The location of Pynson's apprenticeship has not been clearly established. In the Prohemie to his second edition Pynson refers to Caxton as "master." Henry Plomer believes that Richard Pynson, printer, could be the same Richard Pynson, glover, who is mentioned in the Controlment Roll of 1482. If Pynson were in England in 1482, it is possible that he may have been Caxton's apprentice.⁶ Duff believes, however, that Pynson learned printing at Rouen or from Machlinia in London; and presents evidence to show that the term "master" was sometimes applied to Caxton by printers who could not have had any business relations with him.⁷ According to Duff, the two best guides to determine the

master from whom a printer learned his art are the appearance of the printer's type and his method of working.⁸ Pynson's earliest type, that used in a Latin grammar (now consisting only of the last leaf found among the Hearne fragments in the Bodleian Library) bears a strong resemblance to some of the type used by Machlinia.⁹ Furthermore, the founts of type of the Pynson Chaucer, printed around 1492, bear no resemblance to those of Caxton, but are slightly similar to the type used by Machlinia.¹⁰ Pynson most certainly knew Machlinia who had been printing books near Fleet Bridge since 1493. Machlinia continued printing until 1487 when it seems likely that Pynson succeeded him as a printer of law books.

It is possible, on the other hand, that Pynson had learned printing at Rouen rather than in England since his method of signing his quartos is a method rarely used by other English printers and is confined almost entirely to the printers at Rouen.¹¹ In addition, before Pynson started work on his own, he commissioned Guillaume le Talleur, a Rouen printer, to print law books for sale in England, a fact which at least establishes his business transactions with a Norman printer.¹²

Pynson's first device appears in his undated Year Book. This device, simply a monogram, resembled that of the Rouen printer, le Talleur. His second device consisted of "his

initials on a black shield, surmounted by a helmet upon which is perched a small bird, a finch, the Norman name for which was 'pynson.' This shield was inclosed within a border of foliage, birds, and animals."¹³ The third somewhat resembled the previous one, but the shield was supported by a boy and girl with figures of the Virgin and a king and queen in the lower corners. Next he sometimes used "a large block measuring 148 by 98mm., evidently a reproduction, on a large scale of the third device with modifications. A stork holding in its beak a branch with fir cones is substituted for the finch. One of the female figures is holding a palm branch, and the printer's monogram is shown black on a white shield."¹⁴ Finally, he used a small block showing the stork and his monogram supported by a man and woman.

During his career, Pynson printed a great variety of books. His earliest dated work is the Doctrinale of Alexander Grammaticus, the colophon of which gives the date as November 10, 1492.¹⁵ Several texts, however, can be placed with certainty before this date. Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, the Donatus Melior, and the Ghost of Guy are among these early texts.¹⁶ In 1494, Pynson printed Lydgate's translation of Boccaccio's Falle of Princes.¹⁷ Also in this year, he printed the Speculum vitae Christi, which is noted for its illustration.¹⁸ Perhaps the most interesting book

that Pynson printed in 1495 is John Mandeville's Wayes to Ierusalem.¹⁹ In 1499, he printed a dictionary, The Promptorium; a book "to learn to speak French for those who wish to do merchandize in France," and a cookbook.²⁰ In 1500, Pynson printed the beautiful Sarum Missal, commissioned by Cardinal John Morton. This book has been called "one of the finest specimens of early printing in England."²¹ Pynson introduced roman type into England in 1509 with the printing of Oration.²² He also printed the first Latin grammar in English, Milk for Babes²³ and the first arithmetic book in English, De arte supputandi.²⁴ More popular than the school books was Pynson's series of the lives of the saints. In addition, Pynson also printed a chronicle of England and France, 1516; four medical treatises of Galen, 1522-24; a history of Rome, 1557; and a number of small publications describing marriages, state celebrations and funerals.²⁵

In the first decade of the sixteenth century, in fact, Pynson and Wynkyn de Worde together were responsible for seventy percent of the output of books in English. In the next decade, they produced seventy-three percent of the books in English. As for Pynson's own works, religious and legal books accounted for two-thirds of his total output.²⁶ According to Sir William Holdsworth, in fact, Pynson's Year Books are "by far the most important source of, and authority for, the medieval common law."²⁷

Most critics of fifteenth and sixteenth century printing agree that Pynson's work is "undoubtley superior to tha of his contemporaries."²⁸ From the point of view of crafts manship Pynson was "the best printer to have appeared in England; he had a large and varied stock of type and showed considerable judgment in its use."²⁹ He was "better educated than his contemporary, de Worde, and had higher typographical standards."³⁰

III

The first Pynson edition of The Canterbury Tales was printed in London around 1492 in folio. Muscatine describes the work as a "handsome book."³¹ Altogether there are 324 leaves, but folio 324 is blank. The verse is in one column with thirty-three lines to a page, and the prose is in two columns with thirty-eight to thirty-nine lines to a page. Pynson's device, a large capital "R," appears on page 323. The Retraction is omitted from this edition.³²

The edition is printed in two founts of type, one a large and bold Black Letter measuring 120mm. to twenty lines, and the other a smaller letter, resembling script and generally known as "secretary type," which measures 101mm. to twenty lines.³³ The larger type is used for the poetry, the smaller for the prose. Both types are probably of French origin.³⁴ Pynson uses the woodcuts from Caxton's

second edition, which contains twenty-three woodcuts of the pilgrims separately, and a picture of them grouped around a table. These woodcuts are "rather coarsely drawn and executed."³⁵ The ordering of the tales (the same as in Caxton 2) is as follows: AB¹E²FDE¹GCB²HI.

Copies of this edition are found in the following libraries, museums, and private collections: the British Museum, two copies; the Bodleian, two copies; J. R. L. Magdalene College, Cambridge; Hunterian Museum, Glasgow, two copies; The Royal Society; the Marquis of Bath; and two copies of J. Pierpont Morgan.³⁶

In his long study of the early printed edition of The Canterbury Tales, published in 1924, W. W. Greg points out that while no complete investigation has been attempted of the six early prints of the Tales, "it is evident that no print after Caxton's original Edition was set up from a manuscript, but it still remains to determine what particular copy the later editions used, and to inquire what were the affinities of the manuscripts which were consulted for corrections."³⁷ In examining The Knight's Tale, Greg finds that the first edition of Pynson's Tales reproduced the distinctive readings of Caxton's second edition; but he also finds forty-two variants, eight of which are rather significant. Upon comparing these variant readings found in The Knight's Tale with the major families of

manuscripts, he determines that some manuscript was used in the preparation of Pynson's first edition, but Greg himself is unable to determine its affinities. It is possible, according to Greg, that the affinities of the early printed editions to the manuscripts may never be known; he insists, however, that a more extensive research is needed before any considered opinion can be expressed.³⁸

Even fifty years after the appearance of Greg's study, no systematic research has been undertaken to determine once and for all the source or sources of Pynson's work. Nor do I presume that the limited study such as I present here will add significantly to the statements of Professor Greg concerning the Pynson edition. My study, nevertheless, offers the beginning or the "sample" of the kind and the amount of work needed before Chaucer scholarship can speak definitively about the work of Pynson. The following synopsis of my findings makes this beginning.

Verse

In collating the 746 lines of The Myller's Tale of Caxton's second and Pynson's first editions, I have discovered sixty-one variant readings other than those of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and abbreviation. Nine of these variants are words added in the Pynson (in lines 16, 153, 232, 280, 320, 398, 481, 541, and 705). Of these nine

additions, three are prepositions; four are articles; one is a pronoun, and one, an adjective. As the nature of these additions would perhaps suggest, none substantially changes the meaning of the text. Sixteen of the variants consist of omissions from the Pynson (in lines 31, 40, 81, 119, 203, 325, 352, 407, 410, 521, 613, 619, 642, 663, 675, and 716). Of these sixteen omissions, four are auxiliary verbs or verb forms; three are pronouns; three are adverbs; three are prepositions; one is an article; one is a conjunction; and one is a word of negation. Only two of these omissions change the meaning of the text, and only slightly; however, the omissions alter the meter of the verses in which they occur in the Pynson text. In line 81, for example, Caxton has, "With hym ther was dwelling a pour scoler." In the same line, Pynson reads, "With hym was a poure scoler." In line 675, Caxton reads, "I shalle wel telle it the to morow or day." Pynson has, "I shalle it telle the to morow or day." In five instances (in lines 59, 124, 358, 494, and 740), where Caxton uses "hys," Pynson substitutes "this"; or where Caxton uses "this," Pynson substitutes "his." Word transpositions occur in lines 167, 386, 429, 575, 675, and 720. In several lines (203 and 310 for example) Pynson uses the article "the" where Caxton substitutes "that." In lines 312 and 323, Pynson substitutes "and" for Caxton's "or." Other variants follow:

<u>Lines</u>	<u>Caxton</u>	<u>Pynson</u>
63	most	must
64	here	their
69	hystoryal	history all
121	old	age
190	beset	beseed
272	be wonnen	bye women
321	a	on
446	of	on
447	none	one
510	many	may*
533	thys	the
624	hym	ne
642	than	and
649	ful	And
656	undo	unto
694	to	of
726	that	and
733	into	to

*Probably a printing error.

The variants which change the text most significantly, however, are found in lines 69, 272, and 656:

- Line 69, Caxton: "Of hystoryal thyng that towchyth gentylnesse."
 Line 69, Pynson: "Of history alle thing that towcheth gentylnesse."
- Line 272, Caxton: "For somme folk wol be wonnen for rychesse"
 Line 272, Pynson: "For some folk wol bye women for richesse"
 ("bye could be present plural of the ME bye(n), "to buy" in this instance in Pynson. "By" is sometimes used to mean "buy" in Chaucer (Gl294); but "bye" is not used for the preposition "by.")
- Line 656, Caxton: "And sayd undo gernays and that anon"
 Line 656, Pynson: "And sayd unto gernays and that anon"

The spelling variants of the poetry in the two editions fall into several general patterns:

1. Pynson substitutes "i" for "y," a common practice in the fifteenth century when the two letters were used interchangeably: in lines 7, 10, 11, 13, 15, 22, 25, 29, 34, 39, 40, 41, 44, 47, 48, 88, 89.
2. Both Pynson and Caxton sometimes add excrescent "e's." These additions account for a large number of the spelling variants: in lines 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 15, 16, 20, 21, 28, 30, 35, 37.
3. Pynson substitutes an "e" where Caxton uses "y" or "i": in lines 7, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 22, 41, 78
4. Pynson substitutes "a" where Caxton uses "o": in lines 45, 49, 53, 56, 62, 66, 71, 72, 76, 89, 95, 9
5. Pynson substitutes "a" where Caxton uses "e": in lines 31, 42, 86.
6. Pynson substitutes "ode" for Caxton's "ood": in lines 14, 17, 217.

Punctuation is used for a total of only thirteen times in both editions, three instances in the Pynson and ten in the Caxton. The marks found in Pynson are in lines 352 and 657, both small crosses, "+"; and a period in line 659. In Caxton, virgules are found in lines 100, 252, 398, 657, 658, 659, 662, 670, 680. In line one, double points similar to the modern colon appear, ":". I am unable to find any consistency in the use of punctuation in the texts of either editor and, in addition, have observed that the editions share punctuation in only a limited way.

Thirty-nine variants in the use of majuscules occur in the editions, usually involving proper names. With no

apparent consistency, names in both editions may or may not be capitalized. Of the thirty-nine variants, only eight capitalizations of proper names occur in the Pynson where the same name is uncapitalized in Caxton. Often the same name appears in minuscules in both editions only to appear a few lines later in majuscules.

Pynson uses no abbreviations in his text of The Myller's Tale. Forty-four abbreviations appear in Caxton's text.

Prose

In the three hundred fifteen lines examined in The Parson's Tale, forty-three variants other than spelling, capitalization, or punctuation occur. Sixteen of these variant readings result from word-omissions in the Pynson edition. These omissions follow:

<u>Lines</u>	<u>Pynson's omissions</u>
78	walketh in that wey and
82	it
134	grete
142	saynt
191	this
193	that
195	ye
199	her
211	of deth
214	wretchyd
229	the*
262	and sensualite
263	but
312	the
313	was

*The is omitted twice

The omissions change the meaning of the text in the following lines:

- Line 78, Caxton: "and walketh in that weye and that is refresshyng for your sowlys/"
- Line 78, Pynson: "and ~~at~~ is refresshyng for poure sowlys."
- Line 193, Caxton: "The ryche folke that embracen and coueten in al her herte the ryches of thys world shul slepe in the slepyng of deth/"
- Line 193, Pynson: "The riche folke embracen and coueten in al her herte the riches of this world shul slepe in the slepyng of deth."
- Line 263, Caxton: "but sothly in man semeth al this but order of ordenaunce is turned vp so doun/"
- Line 263, Pynson: "but sothly in man semeth al this order of ordenaunce is turned vp soo doun."

In several instances, the omissions appear to be printing errors since a phrase or word is needed to make sense of the line:

- Line 195, Caxton: "for god sayth thus by moyses/ ye shal be wasted wyth hunger/"
- Line 195, Pynson: "for god sayth thus by moyses. shal be wasted wyth hounger."
- Line 211, Caxton: "and for as muche as they shul not wene that they mowe dye for peyn and by deth fle fro peyn that may they vnderstonde in the word of Iob that saith that there is that shadowe of deth/ certes a shadowe hath a lykenes"
- Line 211, Pynson: "and for as moche as they shul not wene that they mowe dye for peyn and by deth fle for peyn that may they vnderstonde in the worde of Iob that sayth that there is that shadowe hath a lykenes"

- Line 262, Caxton: "as thus god shold haue lordshyp ouer reson/ and reson ouer sensualite and sensualite ouer the body of man"
- Line 262, Pynson: "as thus god shold haue lordshyp ouer reson. and reson ouer sensuallyte ouer the body of man"
- Line 313, Caxton: "And ferther ouer hit maketh hym that was whylom sone of yre to be the sone of grace/ And alle these thynges he putteth to holy wryt/"
- Line 313, Pynson: "And ferther ouer hit makyth hym that whylom sone of yre. to be the sone of grace. And alle these thynges he putteth to holy writ"

In my transcription of The Parson's Tale, Pynson adds only three words not found in Caxton's text. In line 133, "a" is added. In line 255, "cryst" is added after "Ihesu," and in line 275, the diphthong symbol "y" is added to "ordeyned."

In the following lines a change in tense occurs:

<u>Lines</u>	<u>Caxton</u>	<u>Pynson</u>
107	stonden	stonde
137	ben	be
138	torneth	torned
191	shulle	shullen
245	hath	haue

The following variants show an altering of Pynson's text:

<u>Lines</u>	<u>Caxton</u>	<u>Pynson</u>
78	your sowlys	poure sowl
87	he shall be	he that be
88	auayle	auayse
137	foul membris	ful membri
175	for	fro
197	al maner	a maner
310	sad purpose	sayd purpo

Some variants are obviously printing mistakes, such as those that occur in lines 92, 105, 106, 185, and 194. Other less significant variants are found in lines 129, 149, 152, 273, and 290.

The spelling in The Parson's Tale does not follow the pattern found in The Myller's Tale. In The Myller's Tale, where Caxton uses "y" predominately and Pynson predominately uses "i," in The Parson's Tale, both editors interchange these letters freely. But often when the one uses "i," the other will use "y." The same practice applies for the exchange of "a" and "e," as in lines 98 and 89.

In general, I detect some consistency in the editors' use of punctuation. Most often where Caxton uses a virgule, Pynson uses a period. In some cases, however, one editor will use a mark of punctuation and the other will not. Caxton uses more punctuation than does Pynson. Altogether he uses virgules seventy-five times where Pynson has no mark of punctuation. Pynson uses periods thirty-four times where Caxton has no mark. Four lines (80, 145, 153, 199) show Pynson's use of a colon where Caxton uses a virgule.

Capitalization is usually the same in both editions, with first words of the lines and proper names often, but not always, capitalized. Pynson uses capitalization thirty-two times where Caxton uses none, and Caxton uses capitalization only fifteen times where Pynson has none.

The widest divergence between the two editions is in the editor's uses of breviographs and abbreviations. Approximately 180 abbreviations and breviographs are used.³⁹ Of this number, Caxton uses only seventeen. This greater use of abbreviations by Pynson in the prose, as opposed to his use of none at all in the poetry, is doubtless attributed to the two-column format of the prose.

From the sparsity and the nature of these Pynson variants, one might make the following comments about his variants generally. Like the scribes before him and the early printers in general, Pynson shows no consistency whatsoever in his uses of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Sometimes, and understandably since Pynson's native language was French, he changes the spellings of the Caxton 2 to the French form, as "better" to "bette" (in line 64 of the verse), "carpenter" to "carpentre" (line 80 of the verse); "senser" to "censoure," and "conclusion" to "conclusioun." Pynson's variants as a result of this practice, however, are not significantly numerous.

Other variants, furthermore, might easily be attributed to the fact that Pynson, like Caxton, probably used French or Flemish compositors to set his type. A compositor, for example, little familiar with the English language and never having seen the word "historyal," might correct the word to read "history alle" (verse, l. 69). One not familiar with

the language certainly would be more disposed to render the l in Caxton's "auayle" as the elongated s in "auayse" (as in lines 88 and 90 of the prose); or Caxton's "synne" to "fynne" (line 92, prose). The compositor's misreadings in these instances clearly suggest his unfamiliarity with the language with which he was working.

Very many of Pynson's variants result simply from the compositor's (or his own, if he was setting the type) carelessness or another form of human error. Examples nearly abound to account for the Pynson variants of this type: "may" for "many" (l. 510, verse), "fro" for "for" (l. 175, prose), "sayd" for "sad" (l. 310, prose), "synnep" for "synnes" (l. 106, prose), "hod" for "god" (l. 185, prose); and the pronominal omission of "ye" in the prose (l. 195). Variants such as these are found in the works of all printers and do not hold a serious place in the Chaucer scholar's consideration of the textual history of The Canterbury Tales.

The variants in Pynson which deserve the Chaucer scholar's most serious attention, however, are those such as the following which are found also in the Chaucer manuscripts for the primary value of any study of Pynson's variants is ultimately to determine if he corrected Caxton 2 with another source and, if so, to be able to identify that particular source.

1. Py: "And sayd unto gernays and that anon"
Cx: "And sayd undo gernays and that anon"
(line 656, verse;
underscoring of course my own)
2. Py: "For youth and age been often at debate"
Cx: "For yongthe and old ben often at debate"
(line 212, verse)
3. Py: "For some folk wol bye women for richesse"
Cx: "For somme folk wol be wonnen for rychesse"
(line 272, verse)⁴⁰

The variants (underscored) shown in these passages might easily be dismissed as attributed to carelessness, misreadings of Caxton's letters, unfamiliarity with the context, or any number of other reasons; except for the fact that these same readings which are found in the Pynson also appear, as I have indicated, in a significant number of the Chaucer manuscripts. These correspondences alone, it seems to me, aside from all the other lesser important (but important, nonetheless) reasons for a thorough and complete collation of the Pynson and the Caxton 2, signifies and suggests the relevance of a complete study of the Pynson.

NOTES

¹Geoffrey Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales, ed. Thomas Tyrwhitt (1775; rpt. New York: AMS Press, 1972), p. ix.

²Geoffrey Chaucer, The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer Newly Printed With Dyuers Works Which Were Neuer in Print Before, ed. W. W. Skeat (1532; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1905), p. xvii.

³Charles Muscatine, The Book of Geoffrey Chaucer: An Account of The Publication of Geoffrey Chaucer's Works From the 15th Century to Modern Times (San Francisco: The Book Club of California, 1963), p. 8.

⁴Henry R. Plomer, Wynkyn de Worde and His Contemporaries (London: Grafton and Co., 1925), p. 109.

⁵Plomer, WdW., pp. 122-3.

⁶Plomer, WdW., p. 109.

⁷E. Gordon Duff, Early English Printing (1896; rpt. New York: Burt Franklin, 1970), p. 16.

⁸Duff, EEP., p. 17.

⁹E. Gordon Duff, Early Printed Books (1893; rpt. New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1968), p. 166.

¹⁰Duff, EEP., p. 17.

¹¹Duff, EEP., p. 17.

¹²Duff, EEP., p. 17.

¹³Plomer, WdW., p. 117.

¹⁴Plomer, WdW., p. 153.

¹⁵Plomer, WdW., p. 115.

¹⁶Plomer, WdW., p. 113.

¹⁷Plomer, WdW., p. 117.

¹⁸Plomer, WdW., p. 118.

¹⁹Plomer, WdW., p. 119.

²⁰H. S. Bennett, English Books and Readers 1475 to 1557 (Cambridge: The University Press, 1952), pp. 89-93.

²¹Colin Clair, A History of Printing in Britain (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 34.

²²Plomer, WdW., p. 138.

²³Plomer, WdW., p. 139.

²⁴Plomer, Wdw., p. 141.

²⁵Bennett, pp. 127, 109, 132, 136.

²⁶Bennett, p. 188.

²⁷Clair, p. 36.

²⁸Clair, p. 37.

²⁹Plomer, WdW., p. 149.

³⁰Bennett, p. 185.

³¹Muscatine, p. 10.

³²E. Gordon Duff, Fifteenth Century English Books: A Bibliography of Books and Documents Printed in England and of Books For The English Market Printed Abroad (1917; rpt. Germany: Hain, Meisenheim, 1964), p. 25.

³³Plomer, WdW., p. 112.

³⁴Plomer, WdW., p. 113.

³⁵Plomer, WdW., p. 113.

³⁶Duff, FCEB., p. 25.

³⁷W. W. Greg, "The Early Printed Editions of The Canterbury Tales," MLA, XXXIX (1924), 737-761.

³⁸Greg, p. 760.

³⁹Properly speaking, it is not accurate to refer to breviographs as abbreviations since breviographs are themselves symbols which indicate shortened symbols. I treat breviographs and abbreviations together here merely for convenience.

⁴⁰ (1) As found in manuscripts: Ad³, Bw, c, Ha², Ha³, Ha⁴, Ht, Ii, Lc, Ld¹, Ps, Pw, Ra³, Ry¹, Sl¹, Tc¹, To.
 (2) As found in manuscripts: a, Bo¹, Ry¹. (3) As found in manuscript Ry¹. Interestingly, all these variants are found in the Royal 17 D X V (Ry¹) manuscript.

PREFACE TO THE TRANSCRIPTION

In the following transcription of the Pynson, and also of the Caxton, breviographs have been expanded and the abbreviations have been written out (or the missing letters supplied). In these cases the expansions and letters supplied have been underscored. Where Caxton's text differs in any way (i.e., I am supplying a diplomatic transcription) from that of Pynson, the text of Caxton appears above the Pynson line; and a word or phrase in Caxton but not in Pynson has been typed between the words which appear in the Pynson text. The line designation in The Myller's Tale is my own; but that of the prose follows the line numbering as it appears in F. J. Furnivall, A Six-Text.

CHAPTER II

A COMPARISON OF THE MYLLER'S AND PARSON'S TALES OF THE 1492 PYNSON EDITION AND THE SECOND EDITION OF CAXTON

- Whan ~~that~~ ^{at} : told
1. W han ~~that~~ the knyght had thus his tale tolde
- al companye ther old
2. In alle the company nas there yong ne olde
- nobyl
3. That he ne sayd it was a noble story
4. And worthy to be drawe in memory
- gentyllis euerichon
5. And namely the gentyllles euerichone
- Our lowgh swoor goon
6. Oure hoost lough and swore so mot I gone
- Thys unbokelid
7. This goth aright unbokelid is the male
- telle
8. Let se now who shal tel another tale
- treuly wele
9. For truly the game is wel begonne
- syr monk yf
10. Now telle ye sir monke if that ye konne
- Som what hys
11. Somwhat to quyte the knyght his tale
- Mylward dronkyn
12. The Myller that for dronken was al pale
- unnethys vp on hys hors
13. To that unnethes vpon his horse he sat

14. He nolde auale nother hode ne hat
hood
15. Ne abyde noman for his curtesy
hys curtesye
16. But in pylates voyce he gan to cry
pylatis voys x crye
17. And swore by armes blode and bones
swoor armys blood bonys
18. I can a noble tale for the nones
nobyl nonys
19. With whiche I wol now quyte the knyghtes tale
e
20. Oure hoost saw that he was dronke of ale
Our
21. And sayde abyde Robyn leue brother
sayd brothyr
22. Som bettre man shal telle first another
Sum bettyr fyrst anothyr
23. Abyde and let us werke thryftely
24. By cokkes soule quod he that nyl nat I
Be cokkis not
25. For I wil speke or elles go my wey
wyl ellis
26. Our hoost aunswerd telle on a deuyl wey
answerd tel
27. Thou art a fool thy wyt is ouercome
wytte
28. Now herkneth quod the Myller alle and some
herkeneth Myllere and
29. But first I make a protestacioun
fyrst
30. That I am dronke I know by my soun
knowe

31. And therfore if I mys speke or sey
aught say
32. Wyte it the ale of Suthwerke I you pray
suthwerk
33. For I wol telle a legende and a lyf
34. Bothe of a carpenter and of his wyf
hys
35. How that a clerke hath set the wryghtes cappe
clerk wryghtis
36. The reue aunswerd and sayd stynt thy clappe
answerd
37. Let be thy lewde dronkyn harlottrye
lewd
38. It is a synne and eke grete folye
Hyt greet folye
39. To appeyre any man or him defame
ony hym
40. And eke bring wyues in suche name
brynge wyuys a
41. Thou mayst ynough of other thyngis sayn
inough othyr thyngis
42. This dronken Myller spake ful sone ageyn
dronkyn Mylward spak agayn
43. And sayd o leue brother Oswolde
O brothyr Oswold
44. Who hath no wif he is no cokecolde
wyf cokecold
45. But I say nat therfore that thou art one
not therfor
46. There been gode wyues many one
Ther ben wyuys on
47. Why art thou angry with my tale now
wyth

48. I have a wif^{wyf} as wel^{as wel} as thou^{thow}
49. Yet nolde I nat^{not} for the oxen in my plow
50. Take vpon^{vp on} me more than ynow
51. As deme of my selue^{self} that I were one
52. I wol beleue wele^{wel} that I am none
53. An husbond shold^{husbond} not^{not} inquysytyf^{inquysytyf}
 An husbonde shulde^{husbonde} nat^{nat} be inquysityf^{inquysityf}
54. Of goddis^{goddys} pryuyte^{hys wyf} ne of his wif
55. So he may fynde^{goddys} goddes fuson there
56. Of the remenaunt nedith^{nedyth not} nat to enquere
57. What sholde^{shold} I more say but this myllere^{thys mllere}
58. He nolde his wordes^{hys word} for no man^{noman} forbere
59. But tolde^{told} his chorlis^{hys} tale in this manere
60. Me at thinketh^{thynketh} that I shal reherse^{reherce} it here
61. And therfore euery gentyl wight^{wyght} I pray
62. Demeth nat^{not} for goddes^{goddys} love that I say
63. Of euy^{most}l entent but that I must reherce
64. Here talis^{Here talis} better^{better}
 Their tales al be they bettre or werce

65. ellis somme
Or elles falsen som̄ of my matere
66. lystyth not
And therfore who so lystith nat to here
67. chees another
Turne ouer the leef and chese a nother tale
68. ynowe bothe
For he shal fynde y now both grete and smale
69. hystoryal thyng towchyth
Of history alle thing that towcheth gentylnesse
70. moralyte
And eke moralite and holynesse
71. not yf
Blameth nat me if that ye chese amys
72. Myllere know wel thys
The Myller is a chorle ye knaw wele this
73. So is the reue and eke other mo
74. harlottrye
And harlotrye they tolde bothe two
75. Auysyth out
Auyseth you and put me oute of blame
76. shul not
And eke men shal nat make ernest of game
77. mylleres
Here begynneth the myllers tale
78. Whylom dwelllyng
W hilom ther was dwelling in Oxenforde
79. ryche gestis
A riche gnof that gestes hadde to borde
80. carpenter
And of his craft was he a carpentre
81. hym dwellling a pour scoler
With him ther was a poure scoler

82. Hadde lernyd hys
Had lerned art but al his fantesye
83. turnyd lerne
Was turned to lere astrologye
84. conclusions
And coude a certayn of conclusiouns
85. interrogacions
To demyn by interrogaciouns
86. axed hym certayn
If that men asked him certeyn houres
87. w ether shold
Whether they shuld haue drought or shoures
88. yf axed hym shold
Or if that men asked him what shulde befall
89. thyng no rekene
Of every thing I may nat reken alle
90. Thys clerk clepyd hende Nycholas
This clerke was cleped hend nycholas
91. dern couthe
Of derne loue he coude and of solas
92. And therto he was sly and ful pryue
93. lyk se
And lyke a mayden meke for to see
94. chambyr
A chambre hadde he in that hostelrye
95. wythout ony companye
Alone with oute any company
96. y dyght wyth herbys
Ful fetously ydyght with herbes sote
97. hym self
And he him selue was swete as is the rote
98. ony Cetewale
Of lycoryce or of any cetewale

99. Hys almegeste hys bokys
 His almagest his bokes grete and smale
100. Hys / longynge hys art
 His astrologye longing for his arte
101. Hys albgrym lay feyre
 His augrym stones ley fayre a part
102. sheluys cowchned hys beddis
 On shelues couched at his beddes hed
103. Hys ycouered wyth foldyng reed
 His presse y couered with a folding rede
104. al
 And alle aboue ther lay a gay sawtrye
105. whyche a nyghtis
 On whiche he made anyghtes melodye
106. chambyr
 So swetely that al the chambre rong
107. And Angelus ad virginem he song
108. after kyngis
 And after that he song the kynges note
109. blyssyd hys
 Ful often blissed was his mery throte
110. thys clerk hys
 And this swete clerke his tyme spent
111. Aftyr hys and hys
 After his frendes fyndyng and his rent
112. Thys carpenter weddyd newe wyf
 This carpentre hadde wedded new a wif
113. Whyche louyd hys
 Whiche that he loued more than his lyf
114. yeer
 Of xviii yere she was of age
115. Ielous he was and held her narow in cage

116. For she was wylde and yong and he was olde
117. And demed him selue lyk cokewolde
lyke to be a cokecolde
118. He knew nat caton for his wyt was rude
not Caton hys
119. That badde a man shold wedde his symlytude
man shold wed his symplitude
120. Men sholde wedde after their estate
shold aftyr hyr astate
121. For youth and age been often at debate
yongthe old ben
122. But sythen he was fallen in the snare
sythen
123. He must endure as other folke his care
muste othyr folk hys
124. Fayre was his yong wif and ther withalle
Fayr this wyf there whth all
125. As any wesel her body gent and smalle
ony wesye hyr small
126. A seynt she wered barred alle of silke
weryd barryd silk
127. A barmecloth as white as morow mylke
whyte mulk
128. Vpon her lendes with fulle many a gore
Vp on hyr lendys wyth ful meny agore
129. White was her smoke and broden alle bifore
Whyte smok broyden al before
130. And eke behinde on her coler aboute
behynde hyr
131. Of coleblake sylke within and eke withoute
coleblak sylk wythynne and wythoute

132. tapettis whyte
The tapettes of her white voluper
133. Were of the same sute of the coler
134. filet brood silk
Her fylet brode of silke and set ful hye
135. sikyrly lykerous
And sikerly she hadde a likerous eye
136. pullyd here browis
Ful smale y pulled were her browes two
137. bente blak ony slo
And they were bent and blake as any sloo
138. blysful see
She was moche more blisful on to se
139. tree
Than is the newe pere genet tre
140. wulle a
And softer than is the wolfe of the weder
141. hyr gyrdye hangyth
And by her gyrdel hangtth a purs of leder
142. Tarselyd wyth sylk perlyd wyth
Tarsalet with silke and perled with laton
143. al thys world
In alle this worlde to seke vp and doun
144. Ther wyse thenche
There is no man so wise that coude thinche
145. wenche
So gay a pupelot or so praty a wynche
146. Ful bryghter shynyng
Fulle bryghter was she shynyng of her hue
147. tour nobyl forgyd newe
Than in the toure the noble forged new

148. But of her song it was as lowde ^{lowde and} and yern
149. As any ^{ony} swallow ^{sittyng} sittynge on in the bern
150. Thereto she coude ^{skyppe} skippe and make game
151. As any ^{ony kyd} kydde or calf ^{folowyng hys} folowing his dame
152. Her ^{mouth} mouthe was swete as ^{braket} braget or ^{methe} meth
153. Or ^{hord} horde of ^{appelis leyde} apelles leyde on the ^{X hey} hay or heth
154. ^{Wynsyng} Wynsyng she was as is a ioly colt
155. Long as a mast and ^{vptryght} vp right as a bolt
156. A broche she bare ^{baar vp on hyr} vpon her low coler
157. As ^{brood} brode as is the boos of a bokeler
158. ^{Here shoon} Her shoen were laced on her ^{hyr leggis} legges hye
159. She was a prymerolle a ^{pyggis} pygges nye
160. For any ^{ony lord} lorde to ^{hys} ligen in his bed
161. Or yet for any ^{ony good} gode yeman to ^{wed} wedde
162. Now syre and eft syre so ^{befyl} befel the caas
163. That on a day ^{thys} this hend ^{Nycholas} Nicholas
164. ^{wyth thys} Fyl with this ^{wyf} yong wif to rage ^{and} and to ^{pleye} pley

- Whylys Oseneye
 165. Whiles that her husbond was at Oseney
- clerkys subtyl queynt
 166. As clerkes be ful subtil and ful queynte
- caughte hyr the by queynt
 167. And pryuely he caught her by the queynte
- ywys yf wylle
 168. And sayd y wys but if I haue my wille
- spyllle
 169. For dern loue of the lemman I spye
- here shank
 170. And held her hard by the shanke bones
- al onys
 171. And sayd lemman loue me alle at ones
- wold
 172. Or I wol dye al so god me saue
173. And she sprong as a colt doth in the traue
- wyth heed wryeth faste away
 174. And with her hede she wrieth fast a wey
- sayd not
 175. She sayde I wol nat kysse the by my fay .
- Nycholas
 176. Why let be quod she let be Nicholas
- wyl crye out harow
 177. Or I wol cry oute harrow and allas
- hondis curtesye
 178. Do wey your hondes for your curtesy
- thys Nycholas crye
 179. This Nicholas gan mercy for to cry
- spak and faste
 180. And spake so fayre and profered her so fast
- hym
 181. That she her loue graunted him at the last

182. swere oth Saynt
And swore her othe by Seint Thomas of Kent
183. wold hys
That she wolde be at his comaundement
184. wel
Whan that she may her leyser wele espye
185. Myn husbond is so ful of ielousye
186. wel
That but ye wayte wele and be pryue
187. wot ryght wel ded
I wote right wele I nam but dede quod she
188. thys
Ye must be ful dern as in this caas
189. ~~ye~~ Nycholas
Nay therof care the nat quod Nicholas
190. Lythyrly clerk had beset hys whyle
Lytherly a clerke hath beseed his while
191. yf carpenter
But if he coude a Carpenter begyle
192. ben
And thus they been accorded and y sworn
193. told befor
To wayte a tyme as I haue tolde biforn
194. Nycholas euerydeel
Whan Nicholas hadde do thus euerydele
195. thackyd lendys wel
And thacked her aboute the lends wele
196. took
He kyste her swete and toke his sawtrye
197. pleyde faste
And played fast and made melodye

198. Than fel it thus that to the ^{fyl} ^{paryshe} ^{chyrche} ^{parisshe} chyrche
199. Crystys owen werkis ^{werche}
Cristes own werkes for to wyrche
200. Thys good wyf wente ^{holiday}
This gode wif went on an holy day
201. ^{forhed} ^{shoon} ^{bryghte}
Her forhede shone as bright as ony day
202. ^{when} ^{werk}
So was it wasshe whan she leet her werke
203. ^{ther} of that chyrche a ^{parsyshe} clerk
Now was of the chyrche a ^{parisshe} clerke
204. ^{whyche} ^{clepyd}
The whiche that was y cleped Absolon
205. ^{heer} ^{and} ^{gold} ^{shoon}
Crulled was his here ^{and} as the golde it shone
206. ^{strowtyd} ^{and brood}
And struted as a fan large ant brode
207. ^{streyght} ^{euen} ^{hys} ^{shod}
Ful streight and euyⁿ lay his ioly shode
208. ^{Hys} ^{reed} ^{hys}
His rode was rede his eyen gray as goos
209. ^{Wyth} ^{powlis} ^{hys shoos}
With powles wyndowes coruen in his shoes
210. ^{hosis} ^{reed} ^{wente} ^{ful}
In hoses rede he went fulle fetously
211. ^{clad} ^{smal}
y cladde he was ful smalle and fetously
212. ^{kyrtyl} ^{lyght}
Alle in a kyrtel of a light waget
213. ^{thycke} ^{be} ^{poyntis}
Ful fayre and thicke by the poyntes set

- ther upon surplys
 214. And therupon he hadde a gay surplice
 whyte rys
 215. As white as is the blossom on the ryse
 chyld
 216. A mery childe he was so god me saue
 Wel blood and clyppe
 217. Wele coude he leten blode and clippe and shaue
 chartyr and aquytance
 218. And make a charter of lond and a quictaunce
 tryppe and
 219. In twenty maners coude he trippe and daunce
 Aftyr Oxenforde
 220. After the scole of Oxenford tho
 wyth hys caste and
 221. And with his legges cast to and fro
 pleye songis smale ribyble
 222. And play songes on a smalle rebyble
 songe lowde
 223. Therto he song somtyme a loude quynnyble
 wel play hys geterne
 224. And as wele coude he play on his getern
 al hous ne tauerne
 225. In alle the toun nas brewe house no tauern
 vysited wyth hys
 226. That he ne visited with his solace
 ony gaylard
 227. There as any gayland tapster was
 say somdel skweymous
 228. But soth to sey he was somdele sk weymous
 229. Of fartyng and of speche daugerous

- Thys
 230. This absolon that iolyf was and gay
- wyth senser
 231. Goth with a censoure on the holy day
- Sensynge X wyuys paryshe
 232. Sensyng the wyues of the parysshe fast
- meny hem
 233. And many a louely loke on them he cast
- thys carpentyres
 234. And namely on this carpenters wyf
- hyr hym
 235. To loke on her him thought a mery lyf
236. She was so propyr swete and eke lykerous
- wel yf had mows
 237. I dar wele say if she hadde be a mous
- hente anon
 238. And he a cat he wolde her hent a none
- Thys parysh clerk thys
 239. This parisshe clerke this ioly absolon
- hys longynge
 240. Hath in his hert suche a loue longing
- wyf offrynge
 241. That of no wif toke he non offring
- curtesye sayd wold
 242. For curtesy he sayde he wolde non
- bryght shoon
 243. The mone whan it was nyght bright shone
- hys gyterne I
 244. And Absolon his gytern hadde y take
- thoughte
 245. For paramours he thought for to wake
246. And forth he goth iolyf and amerous

247. Tyl he cam to the Carpenters hous
house
248. lytyl aftyr cockys
A litel after cockes hadde y crowe
249. hym
And dressed him vp by the shot wyndowe
250. wal
That was vpon the Carpenters walle
251. syngyth hys voys smal
He singith in his voyce gentyl and smalle
252. /yf
Now dere lady if thy wyl be
253. you wyl thynke
I pray yow that ye wil thinke on me
254. wel accordynge hys gyternynge
Ful wele according to his gyteryng
255. Thys awoke and hym synge
This carpenter a woke and herde him sing
256. spak hys wyf sayd
And spake vnto his wif and sayde anon
257. not
What alyson herist thou nat absolon
258. chauntyth vnder our bowris wal
That chaunteth thus vndre oure boures walle
259. answerd ther wyth al
And she aunsuerd her husbond therwith alle
260. euerydel
Yes god woot Iohn I here it euerydele
261. Thys passeth wyl bet wel
This passith forth what wille ye but than wele
262. From day to day this ioly Absolon

280. And thus she maketh of absolon her ape
makyth X
281. And al his ernest turneth tyl a Iape
hys
282. Ful soth is this prouerbe it is no lye
thys
283. Men say right thus alwey the nygh flye
ryght nyghe
284. Maketh the fer leef for to be lothe
looth
285. For though that absolon be wood or wrothe
wroth
286. Bicause that he fer was from her sight
Be cause hyr sighte
287. This nygh Nicholas stode in his light
Thys nyghe Nycholas stood hys lyght
288. Now here the wele thou hende Nicholas
wel hend
289. For absolone may wayle and syng allas
Absolon synge Alas
290. And so befel it that on a saturday
befyl satirday
291. This carpenter was goon tyl Oseney
Thys Osnay
292. And eke hend Nicholas and alyson
nycholas Alyson
293. Accorded be fully to this conclusioun
A cordyd thys conclusion
294. That Nicholas shal shapen hem a wyle
Nycholas hym
295. This sely ielous husbond to begyle
Thys Ielous
296. And if so be the game went a right
yf wente ryght

297. She sholde slepe in his armes alle nyght
 hys armys al
 298. thys desyre
 For this was her desire and his also
 299. ryght anon wythout wordys
 And right anone withoute wordes mo
 300. Thys Nycholas wold tarye
 This nycholas no lenger welde tary
 301. doith ful softe hys chambyr
 But doth fulle soft in to his chambre carye
 302. drynke tweye
 Bothe mete and drinke for a day or twey
 303. had
 And to her husbond hadde her for to sey
 304. yf axed aftyr Nycholas
 If that he asked after Nicholas
 305. nyste
 She shold say she nyst where he was
 306. al hym not wyth
 Of alle that day she saw him nat with eye
 307. somme
 She troweth that he is in som maladye
 308. cry couthe hym
 For that no crye her mayde coude him calle
 309. answer nothyng myghte
 He nolde aunsuer for nothing myght falle
 310. Thys passyth al that satirday
 This passith forth alle the saturday
 311. Nycholas hys chambyr lay
 That nycholas styll in his chambre ley
 312. or sleep dede hym
 And ete and slepe or dyd what him lyst
 313. reste
 Tyl sonday that the sonne goth to rest

314. Thys gret meruayl
 This sely carpenter hath grete meruayle

 315. Nycholas hym ayl
 Of nycholas or what myght him ayle

 316. sayd adrad saynt
 And say I am adradde by seynt Thomas

 317. stondyth not wyth Nycholas
 It stondith nat aright with Nicholas

 318. shylde deyde
 God sheld it that he dyed sodenly

 319. Thys world ful tykyl sikyrly
 This worlde is now fulle tykel sykerly

 320. X chyrche
 I sawe a corps to day bore to the chirche

 321. a seyh hym wyrche
 That now on monday last I sawe him wirche

 322. hys anon
 Go vp quod he vnto his knaue anone

 323. or wyth ston
 Clepe at the dore and knocke with a stone

 324. boldely
 Loke how it is and telle me boldly

 325. Thys hym
 This knaue goth up ful sturdely

 326. chambir whyl stood
 And at the chambre dore while that he stode

 327. cryde knocked
 He cryed and knocked as he were wood

 328. doe maystir Nycholay
 What how what do ye master Nicholay

 329. How may ye slepen al the long day

 330. al nought not word
 But alle for naught he herd nat a worde

331. lowe vp on borde
An hool ful low he fond vpon a bord
332. There as the cat was wont in for to crepe
333. And at the hole he loked in ful depe
334. hym sighte
Tyl at the last he hadde of him a sight
335. Thys Nycholas satte gapyng euyr vpright
This nycholas sat gaping euir vp right
336. As he hadde kyked on the new mone
337. told hys mayster
Adoun he goth and tolde his master sone
338. saw thys ylke
In what aray he sawe this ilke man
339. Thys te blysse hym
This carpenter to blisse him began
340. sanyt frideswyde
And sayd help vs seint friedswyde
341. woot lytyl hym
A man wote lytel what him shal betyde
342. Thys wyth hys astronomye
This man is fallen with his astronomy
343. somme somme
In some woodnesse or in some agonye
344. thoughte wel
I thought ay wele how it sholde be
345. shold not knowe goddis
Men sholde nat knaw of goddes pryuyte
346. blyssed alewd
y blessed be alwey a leude man
347. nought hys
That naught but only his beleue can

348. anothyr clerk wyth astronomye
 So ferd another clerke with astronomy
349. feldis
 He walked in the feldes for to pry
350. sterrys shold
 Vpon the sterres what ther sholde befalle
351. Tyl he was in a marlepit y falle
352. not X that but yet by saynt Thomas
 He saw nat + but yet by seint Thomas
353. rewyth
 Me rewith sore of hend Nicholas
354. shal be ratyd hys studyyng
 He shalbe rated of his studiyng
355. Ihesu kyng
 If that I may by iesu heuyn king
356. Gete me a staf that I may vnderspore
357. Whyle
 While that thou Robyn heuyst of the dore
358. shal out thys studyyng
 He shalle oute of his studiyng as I gesse
359. chambyr hym
 And to the chambre dore he gan him dresse
360. nonys
 His knaue was a strong chorle for the nones
361. hasp
 And by the haspe he haf it vp at onys
362. floor fyl anon
 In to the flore the dore fel anone
363. Thys Nicholas ston
 This nycholas sat ay as styлле as stone
364. euyr vpward eyr
 And euir gaped vp ward in the eyre

- Thys despeyr
 365. This carpentere wende that he were in dispeyre
- hente hym sholdris myghtely
 366. And hent him by the shulders myghtyly
- shook hym cryde spetously
 367. And shoke him harde and cryed spetousey
- Nicholay looke
 368. What nycholay what how loke a doun
- thynk crystis passion
 369. A wake and thinke on cristes passioun
- wyghtis
 370. I crouche the fro eluys and fro wightes
- Therwyth sayd anon
 371. Ther with the nyghtspel sayde he anone rightes
- four hous
 372. On foure haluys on the house aboute
- thresshold wythout
 373. And on the thressholde of the dore withoute
- Ihesu cryst saynt benedyght
 374. Iesu crist and seint benedight
- thys hous wyckid
 375. Blysse this house from euery wicked wight
- nyghtis wyght
 376. For nyghtes verry the wight pater noster
- wonnest saynt Petris suster
 377. Where wonest thou seynt Petyrs sustre
- thys hend Nicholas
 378. And at the last this hende nycholas
- sighe sayd alas
 379. Gan for to sigh sore and sayde allas
- al the world eftsones
 380. Shal alle this worlde be loste eft sones now

381. Thys answerd sayst
 This carpenter aunswerd what sayest thou
382. What ^{thynk} thinke on god as we do men ^{that} ~~that~~ swynke
383. Thys Nicholas answerd
 This nycholas aunswerd fette me drynke
384. ^{aftyr} And after wil I speke to the in ^{pryuyte} pryute
385. ^{thyngis} Of certayn thinges that ^{towchen} touchen me and the
386. ^{wyl} I wil it telle none other man certayn
387. Thys carpenter comyth agayn
 This carpentere goth doun and cometh ageyn
388. ^{broughte} And brought of myghty ale a large ^{quart} quarte
389. ^{hem} And when eche of them hadde dronke ^{hys} his part
390. Thys Nycholas hys
 This nycholas his dore faste shette
391. ^{by hym} And doun the carpenter be him he ^{sette} set
392. ^{leue} He sayd Iohn myn hoost leef and dere
393. ^{vp on} Thou shalt vpon thy trouthe swere me here
394. ^{counsel} That to no wight thou shalt this counsel wrey
395. ^{crystis} For it is cristes counseyl that I sey
396. ^{yf} And if thou telle it man thou art forlore

397. thys
For this vengeaunce thou shalt have therfore
398. wreye / X wood
That if thou wrey it man thou shalt be wode
399. cryst hys blood
Nay crist forbede it for his verry blode
400. thys
Quod tho this sely man I am no blabbe
401. thogh not leue
Ne though I say I am nat leef to gabbe
402. wylt neuyr
Say what thou wilt I shal it neuir telle
403. chylde wyf by hym
To childe ne wif be him that harowed helle
404. Nicholas wyl not
Now Iohn quod nycholas I wil nat lye
405. I have founde it in myn astrologye
406. bryght
As I have loked in the mone bright
407. at
That now a monday next a quartyr nyght
408. Shal falle and wylde and wood
Shalle fal a rayn and that so wilde and wode
409. gret neuer flood
That half so grete was neuir noes flode
410. Thys world say de in hour
This worlde he sayde in lesse than an houre
411. al shour
Shal alle be dreynt so hydous is the shoure
412. mankynde her
Thus shal mankynd drenche and lese their lyf

- Thys carpenter answerd
 413. This carpentere aunswerd allas my wyf
- alas
 414. And shal she drenche allas my alisoun
- thys fyl almoost adoun
 415. For sorow of this he felle almost a doun
- sayde thys
 416. And sayd is ther no remedy in this caas
- Nicholas
 417. Why yes for god quod hend Nycholas
- wylt aftyr
 418. If thou wilt worke after lore and rede
- not aftyr owen
 419. Thou mayst nat worke after thyn own hede
- sayth
 420. For thus sayeth Salamon that was ful trewe
- al counsel and not
 421. Worke alle by counseyl and thou shalt nat rewe
- yf good counsel
 422. And if thou worke wilt by gode counseyl
- vndirtake wythouten sayl
 423. I vndertake withouten mast or sayle
- save here
 424. Yet shal I have her and the and me
- not how
 425. Hast thou nat herd hou saued was Noe
- our hym befor
 426. Whan that oure lord hadde warned him biforn
- world wyth shold
 427. That al the worlde with water sholde be lorn
- thys Carpenter
 428. Yes quod this carpentere ful yore ago
- Hast thou not Nicholas
 429. Thou hast nat herd quod nycholas also

430. Noe wyth hys feleship
 The sorow of noe with his felawship
431. gete wyf
 Or that he myght get his wif to ship
432. Hym be leuer wel
 Him hadde beleuer I dar wele vndertake
433. al hys wetheris
 At that tyme than alle his wedders blake
434. hadde had shyp self
 That she had hadde a ship her selue alone
435. wotist
 And therfore wotest thou what is best to done
436. askith haste thyng
 This asketh hast and of an hasty thing
437. May men not taryyng
 Men may nat preche ne make tariyng
438. gete faste in to in
 Anon go get vs fast into this inne
439. knedying trough ellis kemelyn
 A knedding trough or elles a kymelyn
440. For eche of vs but loke that they be large
441. mowe
 In whiche we may swymmen as in a barge
442. vitayl sufficiaunt
 And haue therin vytaile suffisaunt
443. o remenaunt
 But for one day fy on the remanaunt
444. oway
 The water shal a slake and go owey
445. vp on nexte
 Aboute pryme vpon the next day
446. not wyte of thys
 But Robyn may nat wyt on this thy knaue

447. Ne eke thy mayden gylle I may nat saue^{not}
448. Axe^{not} nat why for though thou aske me
449. I wyl nat telle^{not} goddis pryuyte^{goddis pryuyte}
450. It suffysith^{suffysith} the but if thy wyt be madde^{yf wit mad}
451. To have as grete^{gret} a grace as Noe hadde^{noe had}
452. Thy wif shal I wele saue oute of doute^{wyf wel out}
453. Go now thy wey and spede the here aboute^{speed}
454. But whan thou hast for the and her and me
455. Y goten vs thies knedding tubbis^{thyse knedyng tubbis}
456. Than shalt thou hong them in the roof ful hye^{thoo honge hem}
457. That noman of oure pourueyance^{our pourueyance} espye
458. And whan thou thus hast done as I haue seyd^{don}
459. And hast oure vytayl fayre in them y leyde^{our fayre hem}
460. And eke an axe to smyte the corde a two
461. Whan that the water cometh that we may go^{watyr}
462. And breke an hole an high vpon the gable^{hool hygh gabyl}

463. In to the gardeyn ward ouer the ^{stabyl} stable
464. That we may frely passe forth ^{our} oure way
465. Whan that the grete ^{shour} shoure is ^{passid} passed away
466. Than shul ^{swymme} swymme ^{merily} as merely I vndertake
467. As doth the white doke ^{whyte} after the ^{aftyr} drake
468. Than wol I clepe how alison how Iohn ^{wyl}
469. Be mery for the ^{flood} flode wil ^{wyl} passe ^{anon} anone
470. And thou wilt sey hayle mayster Nicholay ^{wylt} say hayl
471. Gode morow I se the ^{wel} wele for it is day
472. And than shal we be ^{lordys} lordes ^{al} alle ^{our} oure ^{lyf} lyue
473. Of alle the ^{al} worlde as ^{world} noe and ^{hys} his ^{wyf} wif
474. But of o ^{thyng} thing I warne the ^{ful} fulle ^{ryght} right
475. Be ^{wel} wele ^{auysyd} auysed on that ilke nyght
476. Whan we be entred ^{in to} into the ^{shyp} shippe bord
477. That one of vs ^{none} ne ^{not} speke nat a word
478. Ne clepe ne ^{crye} cry but be in his ^{hys} prayere

- goddys owen
479. For it is goddes own hest dere
- wyf and twyn
480. Thy wif and thou must hang fer a twynne
- betwyx X
481. For that betwixt you twey shal be no synne
- Nomore lokynge ther
482. No more in lokyng than there shal in dede
- Thys sayd goo
483. This ordenaunce is sayde go god the spede
- To morow
484. Tomorow at nyght when folke be alle a slepe
- our knedyng tubbis
485. Into oure knedding tubbes wyl we crepe
- abydyng goddis
486. And sittyn there abyding goddes grace
487. Go now thy way I have no lenger space
- thys sermonyng
488. To make of this no lenger sermonyny
- sey wyfe and nothyng
489. Men say thus send the wife and say no thing
- wyse nedyth not
490. Thou art so wise it nedith the nat to teche
491. God saue our lyf and that I the beseche
- Thys Carpenter hys weye
492. This sely carpentere goth forth his way
- oft alas and weleaweie
493. Ful ofte he sayd allas and wela wey
- hys wyf told thys
494. But to his wif he tolde his pryuyte

495. And she was ware ^{waar and} knew it bet than he
 496. What alle this queynte ^{al thys} cast was for to ^{seye} sey
 497. But natheles ^{natheles} she ferd as she wolde ^{deye} dey
 498. And sayde alas ^{sayde alas} go forth thy wey ^{anon} anone
 499. Help vs to scape or we be ^{ded echone} dede ^{echoon}
 500. I am thy true verry wedded wif ^{trewe very weddid wyf}
 501. Go dere spouse and ^{help} helpe to saue ^{our} oure lyf
 502. Lo whiche a gret ^{whyche} thing ^{thyng} is ^{affection} affectioun
 503. Men may dye ^{al day} alday of ^{ymagynacion} ymaginacioun
 504. So depe may ^{impression} impressioun be take
 505. This sely ^{Thys} carpentere ^{carpenter} begynneth quake
 506. Him ^{Hym} thinketh ^{thynketh} veryly that he may se
 507. Noes ^{Noes} flood ^{flood} come ^{walowynng} walowing as the see
 508. To drenchen ^{alison hys} alisoun his hony dere
 509. He ^{wepyth waylyth} wepith waleth and maketh sory chere
 510. He syghed ^{wyth many} with may a sory swough
 511. He goth and ^{getyth hym} getteth him a ^{knedynng} knedding trough

512. afty
 And after that a tub and a kemelyn
513. pryuely hem hys in
 And pr yuely he sent them to his Inne
514. heng hem roof pruyte
 And hange them in the rofe in pryuete
515. Hys owen laddres
 His own hond he made ledders thre
516. clymben rengis stalkis
 To clymbyn by the renges and the stalkes
517. tubbis hangyng balkys
 In to the tubbes hanging in the balkes
518. hem vytaylith bothe tub
 And them vitayleth both trough and tubbe
519. Wyth breed and good
 With brede and chese and gode ale in a Iub
520. Suffysyng inow o
 Suffisyng right ynow as for one day
521. that maad aray
 But or he hadde made alle that araye
522. sente hys hys
 He sent his knaue and eke his wenche also
523. Vp on hys goo
 Vpon his erond to london for to go
524. when
 And on the monday whan it drew to nyght
525. hys wythoute lyght
 He shytte his dore withoute candel light
526. dressyd thyng shold
 And dressed al thing as it sholde be
527. clomben
 And shortly vp they clombyn alle thre
528. syttyn styлле wel waye
 They sytten styl wele a furlong wey

529. Now pater noster clum sayd Nycholaye
530. And clum sayde Iohn ^{sayd} and clum sayd alyson
531. Thys Carpenter hys deuocion
This carpentre sayd his deuocioun
532. And styлле he ^{sytttyth} and byddyth hys prayere
And styлле he sitttyth and byddith his prayer
533. A waytyng yf
Awayting on the rayn if he it here
534. The dede ^{sleep} sleepe for wery besynesse
535. Fyl on this Carpenter right as I gesse
^{thys carpenter}
536. Aboute ^{curfu} curfue tyme or ^{lityl} lytel more
537. For trauayl of his ^{hys ghoost} goost he groneth sore
^{gronyth}
538. And eft he ^{rowtith} rowtyth for his hede ^{hys hed} mys lay
^{mys lay}
539. Doun of the ^{ladder stalkyth} ledder stalketh nycholay
540. And ^{alison} Alisoun ^{softe} ful soft doun she spedde
541. Wythoute wordis X
Withoute wordes mo they go to the bedde
542. Ther
There as the carpenter was wont to lye
543. There was the reuel and the melodye
544. And thus lieth alison and Nicholas

- besynes myrthe
 545. In besynesse of myrth and in solas
- rynge
 546. Tyl that the belle of laudes gan to ryng
- freris synge
 547. And freres in the chauncel gan to syng
- Thys parysh clerk thys amerous absolon
 548. This parisshe clerke this a merous Absolon
- alwey
 549. That is for loue al wey so wo begon
- Vp on
 550. Vpon the Monday was at Oseney
- Wyth companye hym dysport
 551. With company him to disporte and pley
- askyd
 552. And asked vpon a caas a cloysterer
- aftyr Iohn carpenter
 553. Ful pryuely after Iohan the Carpentere
- hym apart out chyrche
 554. And he drew him a parte oute of the chirche
- sayd hym not
 555. And sayde I not I saw him nat wyrche
- Syth satirday
 556. Sithen saturday I trow that he be went
- tymbir ther hym
 557. For tymber there our abbot hath him sent
- tymbyr
 558. For he is wont for tymber for to go
- dwelle
 559. And duelle at the graunge a day or two
- ellis hys hous
 560. Or elles he is at his house certeyn
- not
 561. Where that he be I can nat sothly sayn

- Thys lyght
 562. This absolon ful ioly was and light
- walke
 563. And thought now is tyme to wake al nyght
- sikirly hym not steryng
 564. For sykerly I saw him nat stering
- hys syn sprynge
 565. Aboute his dore sithen day gan to spring
- shal cockis
 566. So moot I thryue I shalle or cockes crowe
- hys
 567. Pryuely knocken at his wyndow
- lowe vp on hys bowris
 568. That stont ful low vpon his boures wal
- alison wol al
 569. To Alisoun now wil I tellen alle
- longynge not
 570. My loue longing for yet I shal nat mys
- leste kys
 571. That at the leest wey I shal her kysse
- comfort
 572. Som maner comforte shal I haue parfay
- al thys longe
 573. My mouth hath itched alle the long day
- kyssynge leste
 574. That is a signe of kyssing at the leest
- X eke feste
 575. Al nyght eke me mette I was at a feest
- Therfor hour tweye
 576. Therefore I wyl go slepe an oure or twey
- al and pleye
 577. And alle the nyght than wil I walke and pley
- fyrst cok anon
 578. Whan that the first cocke hath crowe ano

- risith thys
 579. Vp riseth this ioly loue Absolon
- hym arayeth
 580. And him arrayeth gay at poynt deuyse
- chewyth lycoryse
 581. But first he chewith grayn and lycoryce
- hys heer
 582. To smellen swete or he hadde kempt his here
- Vnder hys trew beer
 583. Vndre his tong a true loue he bere
- wende
 584. For therby went he to haue be gracious
- hous
 585. He rometh to the Carpenters house
- styлле vnder
 586. And styl he stont vndre the shot wyndow
- hys lowe
 587. Vnto his brest it raught it was so low
- softe wyth semysoun
 588. And soft he cowheth with a semy soun
589. What do ye honycombe swete alysoun
- feyre swete
 590. My fayre byrde my suete synamome
591. Awaketh lemman myn and speke tome
- lytyl thynke vp on woo
 592. Ful lytel thinke ye vpon my wo
- goo
 593. That for your loue I swete there I go
- wonder swelte
 594. No wondre is though I swelt and swete

595. I morne as doth a lamb after the tete
lamb after
596. I wys lemman I have suche loue longyng
Iwys longynge
597. That lyke a turtyl true is my mornyng
lyk trewe mornynge
598. I may nat ete no more than a mayde
not nomore amayde
599. Go fro the wyndow iacke fool she sayde
Iacke sayd
600. As helpe me god it wol nat be combame
not
601. I loue a nother and elles I were to blame
another ellis
602. Wele bet than the by Iesu absolone
Wel Ihesu absolon
603. Go forth thy wey or I wil throwe a stone
wyl stoon
604. And let me slepe a twenty deuyl way
wey
605. Alas quod absolon and wele a wey
allas Absolon wel away
606. That true loue was euir so euyl beset
trewe euyr euel be set
607. Than kysse me sithen it may be no bet
kys syn noo
608. For iesus loue and for the loue of me
Ihesu
609. Wylt thou than go thy wey therwith quod she
610. ye certis lemman quod this absolone
thys
611. Than make the redy quod she I come anone
anon

612. And vnto Nicholas she sayde stylle
sayd
613. Now pease and thou shalt laugh thy fylle
pees and lawghe all thy fylle
614. This absolon doun set him on his knees
Thys hym hys
615. And sayde I am a lord at alle degrees
sayd al
616. For after this I hope ther cometh more
after thys comyth
617. Lemman thy grace and swete byrd thyn ore
and bryd
618. The wyndows she vndoth and that in hast
wyndowes haste
619. Haue do quod she com and spede the fast
of faste
620. Lest that oure nyghboures the aspye
our neyghebouris
621. This absolon gan wype his mouth fulle drye
Thys hys ful drye
622. Derke was the nyght as pyche or cool
623. And at the wyndow she put oute her hole
wyndowe out hool
624. And absolon ne felt ne bet ne wers
hym felte
625. But with his mouth he kyst her ers
wyth hys
626. Fulle sauerly or he were ware of this
Ful thys
627. A bak he stert and thought it was a mys
bac thoughte amys
628. For wele wist he a woman hadde no berd
wel wyste womman

629. felte thyng al row herid
He felt a thing alle rough and long hered
630. And sayd fy allas what haue I do
631. clappid
Tehe quod she and clapped the wyndow to
632. And absolon goth forth a sory paas
633. sayd
A berd a berd sayde hend Nicholas
634. goddis thys fayr weel
By goddes corpus this goth fayre and wele
635. Thys deel
This sely absolon herd euey dele
636. hys angyr
And on his lippe he gan for angre byte
637. hym self sayd
And to him selue he sayde I shal the quyte
638. rubbith frotith hys lippis
Who rubbyth now who frotyth now his lippes
639. Wyth wyth chyppis
With dust with cloth with sond with chippes
640. Absolon sayth alas
But absolon that sayeth ful ofte allas
641. sayd
My soule betake I sayde he to sathanas
642. were than al
But me leuyr and alle this toun quod he
643. thys despyt wrokyn forto
On this despyte a wroken for to be
644. alas
Alas quod he allas that I ne hadde blent
645. hoot cold al
His hote loue was colde and alle queynt

646. For fro that tyme he hadde kyst her ars
 647. Of paramours set he nat a carse
 648. For he was heled of his maladye
 649. Ful ofte And oft paramours gan he diffye
 650. And wept as doth a childe that is bete
 651. A soft paas he went him ouer the strete
 652. Vnto a symth men called dane gerueys
 653. That in his forge smytyth plow harneys
 654. He sharpith the share and the cultre besily
 655. This absolon knocketh alle easely
 656. And sayd unto gernays and that anon
 657. What who art thou + it am I absolon
 658. What absolon what cristes swete tre
 659. Why ryse ye so rathe . ey benedicite
 660. What ayleth you som gay gyrle god it woot
 661. Hath brought you thus vpon the verytote
 662. By seynt Note ye wote what I mene

663. Thys ne not
This absolon rought nat a bene
664. thys agayn
Of alle this pley ayen no word he yaf
665. wel towh hys dystaf
He hadde wele more thought on his distaf
666. knew sayd
Than geruays knewe and seyð frend so dere
667. hoot
That hote cultre in the chymney here
668. therwyth doon
As lene it me I haue therwith to done
669. brynge agayn ful
I wol bringe it the ageyn fulle sone
670. answerd / certis gold
Geruays aunswerd certys were it golde
671. noblis vntold
Or in a poke nobles alle vn tolde
672. trewe
Thou sholdest it haue as I am true smyth
673. crystis foot wyl doo therwyth
By cristes fote what wol ye do therwith
674. Therefore quod Absolon be as be may
675. shal wel it
I shalle it telle the to morow or day
676. caughte cold steele
And caught the cultre by the colde stele
677. Ful out
Fulle softe oute of the dore he gan stele
678. carpenteris wal
And wente vnto the carpenters walle
679. cowghed fyrst knocked therwyth al
He coughed first and knocketh therwith alle

680. Vp on wyndowe / ryght eer
 Vpon the wyndow right as he dyd ere
681. Thys alison answerd
 This alysoun aunswerd who is there
682. That knockyth y warant thef
 That knockith so I warraunt it a theef
683. Why nay quod he god wote my swete leef
 woot lef
684. I am absolon thyn own derlynge
 thy owne derlynge
685. Of golde quod he I have the brought a ryng
 gold
686. My moder yaue it me so god me saue
 yaf
687. Fulle fyne it is and therto wele y graue
 Ful wel I
688. This wyl I gyue the if thou me kysse
 Thys wol yf
689. This Nicholas was rysen for to pysse
 Thys nycholas
690. And thought he wolde amende alle the iape
 thoughte al
691. He sholde kysse his ers or that he scape
 shold hys
692. And vp the wyndow dyd he hastely
 dede
693. And oute his ers he puttyth pryuely
 out hys ars puttyth
694. Ouer the buttocke of the shanke bone
 buttock to shank boon
695. And therwith spake this clerke absolon
 therwyth spak thys clerk Absolon
696. Speke swete byrde I not where thou art
 Spek bryd

- Thys Nycholas anon
 697. This Nicholas anone let fle a fart
- gret hath be thonder dent
 698. As grete as it hadde been a thondre dynt
- wyth strook almost I blent
 699. That with the stroke he was almoost y blynt
- wyth hys yren hoot
 700. And he was redy with his iron hote
- Nycholas smoot
 701. And nycholas amynd the ers he smote
- skyn hond
 702. Of goth the skynne an hande brede aboute
- hote hys towte
 703. The hote cultre brende so his toute
- wende
 704. And for the smert he wend for to dye
- wood woo X
 705. As he were wode for wo he gan to crye
- goddis
 706. Help water water help for goddes hert
- Thys carpenter out hys slombyr
 707. This carpentere oute of his slombre stert
- herde crye wood
 708. And herd one cry water as he were wode
- thoughte comyth flood
 709. And thought allas now cometh the flode
- hym wythout wordis
 710. He set him vp withoute wordes mo
- wyth hys smoot
 711. And with his axe he smote the corde a two
- all fond
 712. And doun goth alle he fonde neyther to selle
- come
 713. Ne brede ne ale tyl he cam to the selle

714. Vp on floor a swoun
 Vpon the flore and there aswoun he lay
715. alisoun Nycholay
 Vp stert her alyson and nycholaye
716. cryde out and
 And cryed oute harow in the strete
717. neygheboours bothe
 The nyghboures both smale and grete
718. thys
 In ronnyng for to gawryn on this man
719. a swoun bothe
 That yet aswon lay both pale and wan
720. wyth fal broste hath he hys
 For with the falle brost he hath his arme
721. stonde muste hys
 But stond he must vnto his owen harme
722. spak anon bore
 For whan he spake he was anone born doun
723. Wyth Nicholas alysoun
 With hende nycholas and alisoun
724. told wood
 They tolde euery man that he was wode
725. So he was agast of noes flood
726. Thorow fantesye that hys
 Through fantasye and of his vanyte
727. hym knedyng tubbis
 He hadde bought him knedding tubbes thre
728. hym
 And hadde them hanged in the roof aboue
729. prayde hem goddys
 And that he prayed them for goddes love
730. sittyn per companye
 To sitten in the roof par company

731. folk lawghen hys fantesye
The folke gan laughen at his fantasy
732. In to the roof they kykyn and they gape
733. al hys in to a Iape
And turned alle his harm to a iape
734. what so euer thys answerd
For whatso euir this carpenter aunswerd
735. nought hys
It was for naught noman his reson herd
736. Wyth othys
With othes grete he was swore a doun
737. wood all
That he was holde wode in alle the toun
738. clerk held wyth
For every clerke right anon helde with other
739. said wood leue
They sayd the man was wode my leef brother
740. wyght lawghe thys
And euery wight gan laugh at his stryf
741. swyuyd wyf
Thus swyued was the carpenters wif
742. al hys al hys Ielousye
For alle his kepyng and alle his ielousy
743. nethyr
And absolon hath kyssed her neyther eye
744. Nycholas
And nycholas is scalded in the toute
745. doon al
This tale is done and god saue alle the route
746. endeth tale
Here endith the Myllers Tale
- prolog
And here begynneth the reues prologue

Iheremie vi[/] State suger vias et videte ^{and} et interrogate de vus
 antiquis[/] que sit via bona. ^{and} et ambulate in ea. et inuenietis
 refrigerium animabus vestris ^{and} etc. Our god heuen
 [75] Or swete lord God of heuen
 that no man wyl perisshe but wyl that we comen
 knowlechyng of hym ^{and} and to the blisful lyf that is pardurable
 [76] amonesheth vs by the prophete Iheremye ^{that} ~~at~~ saith in
 this wyse. [77] stondeth vpon the weyes. ^{and} and see ^{and} axe ye
 of olde pathis. that is to saye of olde sentencis whiche is
 good weye [78] and* ^{that} ~~at~~ is refresshyng for poure sowlys. [79]
 Many ben the weyes spirituel that leden folke to our lord
 Ihesu Cryste. And to the regne of glorye. [80] Of whiche
 wayes / whyche
 weyes: There is a ful noble weye and wel couenable whiche
 may not faylle to man ne to woman that thurgh synne hath
 mysgoon right celestyal**/
 misgoon fro the ryght weye of Iherusalem celestial. [81]
 And this weye is cleped pentyence. Of whiche man shold
 gladly herken and enquiry wyth al his herte [82] to wete.

*In Caxton, "walketh in that weye and" is inserted.

**"S" is inserted in Caxton.

what is penytence or penaunce. / And wite whens ^{it} is clepyd
 penytence. / And how many maners ben the actions of werchyng
 of penytence. ^X [83] and how many spyces there be of
 penytence. / and whiche thynges behouen and apperteynen to. ^X
 penytence. [84] Saynt ambrose sayth ^{that} ~~that~~ penytence is the
 pleynyng gylte do /
 plenyng of the man for the gylthe that he hath doo. And
 nomore to doo ony ^{thyng} thyng for the whiche hym ought to
 pleyne. / [85] And some doctor sayth. / that penaunce
 is the weymentyng /
 is the weymentyng of man that soroweth for his synne. And
 pyneth hym self for he hath mysdon. [86] Penytence wyth
^{circumstaunce} ^{repentaunce}
 certeyn circumstance is verry repentantaunce of man that
 holdeth hym self in sorowe ^{and} and other payne for his gyltes. /
 [87] And for he that be verry penytent. ^X He shal first
 bewaylen the synnes that he hath don. / and stedfastly
 purpose in his herte to haue shrift of mouth. / And to doo
 satisfaction [88] and neuer for to do thinge for whiche
 doo thyng

compleyne / And
hym oughte more to bewayle or compleyne. and to contynue

repentaunce auayle /
in good werkis Or ellys his repentaunte may not auayse.

sayth saynt Ysodre / Iapar
[89] For as saith saint Isodre. He is a Iaper and a

gabber verey /
gabbar and not very repentaunte that eftsones doth thyng

stynte /
for whiche hym oweth to repente [90] ne stinte to doo synne.

auayle / netheles
may not auayse. [91] But neuertheles men shold take hope

that at euery tyme that men falleth be it neuer so ofte

through /
that he may aryse thourgh penytence yf he haue grace. But

/
certeynly it is grete doubte. [92] For as sayth Saynt

/ synne /
Gregore. Vnnethe ariseth he out of his fynne. that is

usage /
charged of euyl vsage. [93] And therfore repentaunte

folke that stynte for to synne and for to lete synne or

hem / chirche siker
synne forlete thym. Holy chyrche holdeth hem syker of

saluacyon / verily
her saluacion. [94] And he that synneth and veryly

/ chirche his
repenteth hym in hys laste. Holy chirche hopyth hys

Ihesu cryste
saluacion by the grete mercy of our Lord Ihesu Cryste for

/ siker certeyn /
his repentaunce. But take ye the syker and certayn waye.

[95] And now ^{sithe} sythe I have declared ^{you} yow what thyng is
^{vnderstande}
 penaunce Now shul ye vnderstonde that there be thre
 actions /
 accions . [96] The first is that a man be baptised after that
^{synned /}
 he hath synneth . [97] Saynt Augustyn sayth but he be
^{his /}
 penytent for hys olde synful lyf . He may not begynne the
^X
 newe clene lyf . [98] For yf he be baptised wythout
^{hys /}
 penytence for his olde gylte . He reteyneth the marke of
^{/ but}
 baptesme . But not the grace ne the remyssion of his
^{til}
 synnes tyl he haue very repentaunce . [99] Another defaute
^{dedly}
 is that men done dedely synne after they haue receyued
 baptesme /
 baptisme [100] The thirde defaute is that men falle in
[/]
 venyal synnes after her baptesme fro day to day . [101]
^{Austyn}
 Therof sayth saynt Augustyn that penaunce of good and
^{humble}
 humble folke is the penytence of euery day . [102] The
^{penaunce /}
 spyces of penaunce ben thre . That one of them is
^{/ comene / And thyrd /}
 solempne . Another is comen and the thirde is pryue .
^{penaunce that solempne /}
 [103] That penaunce ~~that~~ is solepne is in two maners . as

is to be put out of holy ^{chyrche} chirche in lenton for slaughter of

chyl^dren /
children and suche maner thynges. [104] Another is whan a

man hath synned openly. / ^{synne} of whiche sinne the fame is openly

knownen in the contree and ^{thenne} thenne holy chyrche by Iugement

distreyneth hym for to do open penaunce [105] Somme

penaunce comenly certeyn
penaunce is that prestes enioyne men comenly in certayn

caas as for to ^{goo} god perauenture naked on ^{pylgremage} pylgrymage or

/ ^{penaunce}
barefoot [106] Preuy penaunce is that men doon al day for

^{synnes} preuy synnep of whiche we shryuen vs ^{pryuely} preuely and receyuen

X
pryuy penaunce . [107] Now shal thou vnderstonde what

and ^{penytent/} and
behoueth and is necessarye to euery preuy penytent And

^{stonden} / ^{Contricion} /
these stonde in thre . [108] Contrycion of herte .

/ / ^{whyche}
Confessyon of mouth . And satisfaction [109] For whiche

/ ^{distreyneth}
Iohan Crisostom sayth . Penytence distreneth to accepte

^{that} ^{contricion}
benyngly euery peyne ~~pat~~ is hym enioyned wyth contrycion

of herte and shryfte of mouth wyth satisfaction and

^{humylite/} ^{thys}
worchyng of alle maner humylyte . [110] And this is

fruytful
fruytfull penaunce ayenst tho thynges in whiche we wrathen

Ihesu
our Lord Ihesu cryst [lll] This is to saye delyte in

thynkyng. / By rechelesnes in spekyng. / wicked
by wycked and synful

worchyng. / [112] Ayenst these wycked gyltes is penaunce X
penaunce.

That may be lykened to a tree. [113] The rote of this tre

contricion
is contrycion that hydeth hym in the herte of hym that is

veray repentante ^{right} ryght as the rote of a tree hydeth hym in

the erthe. / [114] Of the rote of contricyon
contricyon spryngeth a

stalke that bereth braunchys and leuys confessyon X and
 and leuis of confession. X

fruyt of satisfaction / X X X X
X X X X And the flesshe. [115] Of whiche

cryst / of /
cryste sayth in the gospel. Do ye dygne fruyt off penytence.

For by this fruyt men may knowe this tree and not by the

rote that is hyd in the herte of a man / braunchys
Ner by the branchys

ne leuys of confessyon. [116] And therfore our Lorde Ihesu

Criste sayth thus. / By the fruyt of ^{hem} them ye shal knowe

[illegible]

seed is moder of sykernes. / And this seed is eger and hote. /

[118] the grace of ^{this} thys seed spryngeth of god ^{through} the
remembraunce
remembraunce of the day of dome and of the peynes of helle. /

X
[119] of this mater. Salamon sayth that in the drede of god

a man forlettith his synne. / [120] The hete of ^{thys} this seed is
the loue of god ^{and} and desyryng of the Ioye perdurable. / [121]

This hete draweth the herte of man to god and doth hym hate

his synne / [122] For there is nothyng that sauoureth so

sote to a chylde as the mylke of his noryce. / Ne no thyng

is to hym more abhomynable than that mylke whan it is

^{mylk} medlyd wyth other mylke. / [123] Ryght so the synful men

that /
at loueth his synne. hit semeth it is to hym most swete

of ony thyng. / [124] But fro ^{that} at tyme that he loueth sadly

our ^{cryst} Ihesu Cryst and ^{desireth} desyreth the lyf pardurable. /

There is to hym no thyng more abhomynabyll. / [125] For soth

the loue of god is the lawe of god. / For whiche dauyd the

prophete /
prophete sayth I have loued thy lawe and ^{wickednes} hated wyckednes.

that his /
 he ~~/at~~ loueth god kepeth hys lawe and his worde. [126]

prophete
 This the prophete danyel enspyred vpon the vysyon of
 Nabugodonosor counceylled doo /
 Nabogodonosor whan he counceyled hym to do penaunce. [127]

tre hem /
 Penaunce is of the tree of lyf to them that it receyuen.

And penytent blessyd
and he that holdeth hym verry penytent is blesyd after the
 sentence of salamon / [128] In this penytence or contricion

/
 man shal vnderstonde four thynges. that is to saye what is

contricion / whyche that
 contricyon. And whiche ben the causes ~~/at~~ meuen a man to

/ sholde contryte /
 contricion. And how he shold be contrite. And what

X is hit
 contricyon auayleth to the sowle. [129] Than it is thus

contricion sorowe
 that contricion is the verry sorow that a man restreyneth

in his herte for his synnes wyth sad purpose to shryue hym

doo doo /
 and to do penaunce and neuer more to do synne [130] And

sorow thys saynt bernard /
 this sorowe shal be in this maner as sayth saint Bernard.

Hyt and sharp
 It shal be greuous and heuy and wel sharpe and poynaunt in

X First lord
 herte. [131] Fyrst for a man hath agylted his lorde and

his / sharp
 hys creatour. And more sharpe and poynaunt for he hath

agilted
 agylted his fader celestyal [132] And yet more sharp and
 poynaunt for he hath wrathyd hym and agylte hym that bought
 that precious deliuaryd from
 hym ~~that~~ wyth his precyous blood hath delyueryd hym fro
 the bondes of synne and fro the cruelte of the deuyll and
 fro the peynes of helle. [133] These causes that meue a
 contricyon ben vj / First X
 man to contrycion been vi. Fyrst a man shal remembre hym
 hys / remembraunce
 of his synnes [134] but loke that remembraunce be to hym
 delite grete and sorow gilte /
 no delyte by no weye but shame and sorowe for his gylte
 saith / werkis /
 For Iob sayth synful men don werkys worthy of confusion.
 therfor saith ezechyel / Remembre
 [135] and therefore seith Ezechyel. I wyl Remembre me al
 the yeres of my lyf in bytterness of my herte. [136] And
 god sayth in the appocalips. Remembre yow fro whens that
 ye befall / for before the tyme that ye synned ye were the
 chyl dren /
 children of god and lymmys of the regne of god. [137] But
 ben foul membris
 for your synne ye be waxen thral and ful menbris of the
 fende. / Hate of aungels. / sklaundre of holy chyrche. / And
 of the fals serpent. / perpetuel matier of the fyre of helle /

[138] And that more foule and ^{abhomynable} abhominable for ye trespace as
 oft tyme as doth the hound that ^{torneth} tourned agayn to ete his owen
 spuyng. / [139] And yet fouler for your long contynuyng in synne
 and your synful vsage. / For whiche ye be roten in your synnes
 as a beest in his dung. ^{hys} / ^{thoughts} [140] Suche maner thoughtys maketh a
 man
 man a shamed for his synnes and no delyte as sayth the
 prophete Ezechyel. / [141] ye shul remembre you of your weyes. /
 and they shal dysplese yow ^{Sothly} Sothely synnes ben the ^{weyes} wayes that
 lede folk to helle. / [142] The second cause that ought to make
 a man haue desdaygn of synne is this as ^{thys} saynt / Peter. who so
 doth synne is thral to synne. / ^{synne putteth} And sinne puueth a man in grete
 thraldom / ^{therfore} [143] And thefor sayth the prophete ezechyel I
 wente sorowful and had disdaygn of my self Certes wel ought
 a man haue dysdaygn of synne ^{dysdaygn} and ^{and withdrawe} wyth draw hym fro that
 thraldom ^{and} / ^{Seneca} vylonge. [144] For lo what sayth Seneke
 in this mater he sayth thus. / ^{wist} Though I wist that

neyther god ne man shold / wold
 knowe it. yet wolde I haue
 desdaygne for to doo synne: [145] And the same Seneca
 borne be
 sayth I am born to gretter thynges than to be thralle to
 my body. [146] more thral may noman ne woman make of his
 body than yeue his body to synne. [147] And were it the
 fowlest chorle or the fowlest woman that lyueth and lest off
 valew. yet he is charged and moost foule and most in
 seruytude [148] euer fro the hyer degre that a man falleth.
 To more is he thral and more to god and to the world vile
 and abhomynable. [149] O Do good god wel ought a man haue
 disdaygne of synne syth that thourgh ~~at~~ that there as he was
 fre now is he made bonde [150] And therfore sayth saynt
 Austyn. yf thou hast disdaygne of thy seruaunt. yf he
 agylte or synne haue thou thenne no disdaygne that thou
 thy self sholdest do synne. [151] Take rewarde of thyn
 owen valewe ~~at~~ that thou ne be to foul to thy self ne to thyn.
 wel
 [152] Alas we oughten they that haue disdayn to be

seruauntes and / hym
 seruauntes and thral to synne / Sore to be ashamed of him

/
 self: [153] that god of his endles goodnes hath sette in

high strengthe / / prosperite
 hygh astate or yeue hym strenthe of body. beaute. prosperyte

and hys blood /
 [154] and bought hym fro the deth wyth his herte blod that

his gentilnes guy n* hem
 they so vnkyndely agaynst hys gentylnes guyten them so

fowlis /
 vyleynsly to slaughter of her owen fowlys. [155] O good

you
 god ye wymmen that ben of grete beaute remembre yow on the

salamon fayr woman
 prouerbe of Salamon He sayth he [156] lykeneth a fair woman

that is a fool of her body to a rynge of golde that is worn

/ right wrotith
 in the groyn of a sowe. [157] For rihgt as a sowe wrotyth

/ stynkyng
 in euery ordure. so wroteth she her beaute in stinkyng

/ third
 ordure of synne. [158] The thirde cause that ought to meue

contrycoun /
 a man to contricion is drede of the day of dome And the

horrible paynes / sayth Iherome /
 horryble peynes of helle. [159] For as saith saynt Ierome.

that /
 At euery tyme at I remembre of the day of dome I quake

whan doo /
 [160] for whan I ete or drynke or do what so I do euer me

*Part of word gone in C

semeth the trompe sowneth in myn eres. [161] Ryseth vp ^{that} ~~at~~

ben dede and come ye to the Iugement. ^X [162] Of good god

muche
moche ought a man to drede suche a Iugement there as we

alle / sayth paule /
shal be al. as saith saynt Poule. Before the strait Iugement

lord cryst /
of our Lord Ihesu Cryste [163] where as we shal make a

congregacion / where man absent /
general congregacion wher as no man may be absente. [164]

For certes there auayleth none esoyne ne non excusacion /
none excusacion /

and
[165] and not only that our fautes shal be Iuged but eke our

werkes shal openly be knowen. / [166] And ^{that} ~~at~~ as sayth saynt

bernard /
Bernard There ne shal no pletyng auayle ne no sleight. we

rekenyng There
shal yeue rekenyng of euery ydle worde. [167] Ther shal we

haue a Iuge that may not be deceyuyd ne corrupt. / and why for

certes ^X
certis al our thoughtes be discouerd as to hym. ne for

^X he
prayer ne for mede. He wyl not be corrupt [168] And also

sayth /
he saith The wrath of god wyl not spare no wyght for prayer

/
ne for yeft. [169] And therfore atte day of dome there is none

/ sayth / anguyssh
hope. Wherfore as saith saynt Ancelme. ful grete anguysshe

folke X
shal the synful folke haue at that tyme. [170] where shal

and syttyng /And
be the sterne and wroth Iuge sittying aboue and vnder hym the
horrible destroye wolde
horryble pyt of helle open to distroye hym that wold not be
bekonowen
known his synnes whiche synnes shullen openly be shewyd

before god and euery creature. [171] And on the lift syde

deuyllis than and
mo deuyllis than the herte may thynke for to harrye and

drawe the synful sowles to the pytte of helle. [172] And

wythin the hertes of folke shal be the bityng /
betyng conscience.

and werkes /
And wythout forth shal his werkis accuse hym. [173] Thenne

shal the wretchyd sowle fle to hyde hym. But certes he may

not hyde hym he must come forth and shewe / shew hym [174] For

sayth Iherome / hym
certes as saith saynt iherome. the erthe shal cast him out

of hym and the see also and the ayer also that shal be ful

clappys and lightnyng /
of thunder clappis and lyghtnyng. [175] Now sothly who so

wyl remembre hym of ^{these} thyse thynges I gesse that his synnes

torne sorow for
shal not tourne hym to delyte but to grete sorowe fro drede

of the peyne of helle. [176] And therfor sayth Iob to god.

Suffre lord ^{that} ~~at~~ I may a while bewayle ^{whyle} and bewepe or I go
 retornyng to the derk erthe ^{and} and coueryd wyth derkenes the
 londe of myserye and of derkenes where as is shadow of
 deth [177] where as there is none other ^{ordenaunce} ordeynaunce but
 grysly drede that euer shal laste. / [178] Lo here may ye see
 that Iob prayed respyte a whyle to bewepe and wayle his
 trespaas. / For sothly one day to respyte is ^{bettir} better than ^{al} alle
 the tresour of this world. ^{thys} / [179] And for as ^{muche} moche as a man
 may acqyte hym self by fore god by penytence in thys worlde
 and not by tresour. / Therfor shold
 yeue hym respyte a whyle to bewepyn and ^{bewaylen} bewayylen his
 trespaas. / ^{al} For certes all the ^{sorow} sorowe that a man myght
 make fro the begynnyng of the worlde ^{lityl} nys but a lytyl thyng
 at the regarde of the sorow of helle. / [181] The cause why
 that Iob clepeth the lond of derknes [182] vnderstondyth
 that he clepyth it londe or erth for it is stable ^{hit} ^{erthe} ^{and} and
 neuer shal fayle derkenes. / For he that is in helle hath

light
defaute of lyght naturel. [183] For certes the derke lyght

shal
that shalle come out of the fyre that euer shalle brenne

all that /
shall torne hem al to peyne at be in helle. For it

hem
sheweth hym al the horryble deuylles that them tormente

that
[184] couerd wyth the derknes of deth at ben the synnes

that don /
at the wretchyd man hath doon. [185] whyche that

god
destourben hym to see the face of hod. Ryght as a derke

/
cloude betwene vs and the sonne. [186] Londe of mysese

that ayenst
by cause at there be thre defautes ayenste the thynges

thys thys /
that folke of this world haue in this present lyf that is

/ / / and Ayenst
to saye honouris. delytes. and ryches. [187]. Ayenste honour

confusion /
haue they in hell shame and confucion. [188] For wel ye

/
wote they clepen honour the reuerence that men don to men.

/
But in helle is non honour ne reuerence For certes no more

kyng /
reuerence shal be there to a kynge than a knaue. [189] For

sayth / folke
whiche god saith by the prophete Iheremye. The folk that

/
me dispysen shal be in despyte. [190] Honour is eke

lordship there /
 clepyd a grete lordshyp ther shal no wyght seruen other /
 but and turmente /
 But of harme and turmente. Honour is eke clepyd grete
 dignyte and /
 dygnyte and hyghnes. But in helle shal they alle be
 fortroden /
 fortroden wyth deuylls [191] as god sayth. The horryble
 shulle goo
 deuylls shullen go and comyn vpon the hedys of dampnyd
 /
 folke And this is for as moche that the hyer that they
 thys and
 were in present lyf the more they shul be abated and
 / Ayenst thys /
 defowled in helle. [192] agenst the riches of this world
 / thys
 shal they haue mysese of poverté. And this pouerte shal
 four In of
 be in foure thynges [193] in defaute of tresour off whiche
 / ryche that and coueten
 Dauyd sayth. The riche folke embracen and coueten in al
 ryches thys
 her herte the riches of this world shul slepe in the
 / thyng
 slepyng of deth. as no thing shul they fynde in there
 /
 hondes of al her tresour [194] And more ouer the mysese
 of /
 of helle shal be in defaute of mete and drynke [195] For
 /ye hunger /
 god sayth thus by moyses. shal be wasted wyth honger.

And the byrdes of helle shal devoure hem wyth bytter deth. /

And the galle of the dragon her morcellys. / [196] And

ferther ouer her mysese shal be in defaute of clothyng for

they shal be nakyd in body as of clothyng. ^X Save the fyre

whiche and /
in which they brenne and other fylthes [197] And naked

shal they be in sowle of a maner vertues. ^{al} / whiche that is

the clothyng of sowle. / where ben thenne the gay robys ^{and} and

the softe shetis and fyn shertis. / [198] Lo what sayth

hem prophete Ysaye / that hem
god of them by the prophete ysaye. ~~at~~ vnder them shal

be strawed mothes ^{and} and her couertours shal be of wormys

helle: / furtherouer her
[199] And fortherouer mysese shal be in defaute

of frendes for he is not poure that hath good frendys. /

but there is no frende. / [200] For neyther god ne good

creature shal be frende to them. ^{hem} / And euery of hem shal

hate other wyth dedely hate. / [201] The sones ^{and} and the

doughters shal rebelle ^{ayenst} / ayenste the fader and moder. And

ayenst
kynrede ayenste kynrede and chyden and despysen eche other

both day and nyght / as god sayth by the prophete mycheas / mychecis.

[202] And the louyng chyldren ^{that} / ~~at~~ ^{at} somme tyme loueden so
^{eueriche} flesshly ^{wolde} eueryche of them wold ete other yf he myght. ^X [203]

For how shold they loue to gyder in the peynes of helle. /

whan they hated eche other in the ^{prosperyte} prosperite of this ^{thys} lyf /

[204] For truste wel her flesshly loue is dedely hate as
 sayth the prophete Dauyd who so ^{wickednes} louyth wyckednes he hateth
 his owen sowle. / [205] And who so hateth his owen sowle. /

^{non} Certes he may loue none other wyght in ^{no} noo manere / [206]

^{no} And therfore in helle is noo frendshyp but euer the more
 cursyng
 cursing the more chydyng and the more dedely hate is among
 hem /
 them. [207] And further ouer they shal have defautes of

alle maner delytes. / for why. / ^{appetites} For delytes ben appetytes

of the wittes as ^{sight / Heeryng /} syght [/] Heryng. [/] smellyng. [/] sauouryng. and

touchyng. / ^{sighte} [208] but in helle her syghte shal be ful of

derknes. / of smoke and ful of teris. / And her heeryng ful of

^X weymentyng. and of gruntyng of teth as sayth ^{Ihesu cryst /} Ihesu cryste

[209] her nostrylles shal be ful of stynkyng. / And as sayth
 Ysaye prophete /
 ysaye the prophete. Her sauouryng shalle be ^{ful} fulel of bytter
 galle. / [210] And as touchyng her body ^{it} hit shal be coueryd
 wyw / with wormys
 wyth fyre that neuer shal be quenched And wyth wormes that
 neuer shal deye as god sayth By the mouth of ysage. / [211]
^{muche}
and for as moche as they shul not wene ~~that~~ they mowe dye
 for peyn and by deth fle ^{fro} for peyn ^{that} ~~that~~ may they vnderstonde
^{word} in the worde of Iob that ^{saith} sayth that there is ~~that~~ shadowe*
 hath a [212] lykenes of the ^{thyng} thing of ^{whiche} which it is shadowed
^{ryght} right so ^{faryth} fareth the peyne of helle. / ^{deth} it is lyke dethe
 [213] for the anguyssh horrible. and why. / For it peyneth ^{hem} them
^{sholde} euer as though men shold dye anon. / But certes they shal
 dye / as saith saynt Gregore / wretchyd
 not deye. [214] For saynt gregore sayth, to caytyfs shal
 deth without ^{and} and ^{and} ende wythout ende and defaute
^{faylyng} without fayling [215] For her deth shal alway lyue. / And
 / And
 her ende shal euer more begynne. and her defaute shal

*In Caxton, "of deth / certes a shadowe" has been inserted.

neuer fayle [216] And therfore sayth saynt Iohan the

Euangeliste. They shalle folowe
They shall folow deth and they shal not fynde

hym and to desyre to deye and deth shal fle fro them [217]

And eke Iob sayth that in helle is non ordre of rewle. [218]

And al be it so that god hath created al in ryght / and
that god hath created al inn right ordre. and

without / thynges nombred /
nothyng wythout ordre But al thinges be ordeyned and nomgred.

Yet netheles that no
yet neuertheles they that be dampned be noo thyng in ordre ne

holde non ordre. [219] For the erthe shal bere them no

fruyt. [220] For as the prophete Dauyd sayth. God shal

destroie the fruyt of the erthe from them. Ne water shalle

yeue hem no moysture ne the eyer no refresshyng. ne the

lyght /
fyre no lyght. [221] For as sayth saynt Basyle. The

world
brennyng of the fyre of this worlde shal god yeue to hem

that ben dampned in helle. [222] But the lyght and the

clerenes shal be yeuen in heuen to his children Right
Ryght as

the good man yeueth brede to his children and his
and bones to his

houndes. [223] And so they shal have non hope to escape.

And therfore spekyth Iob. Atte last there shal horroure and

grisly drede dwellen wythouten ende [224] Horroure is alle

way drede of harme that is to come. And this drede shall

euer dwelle in the hertes of them that ben dampned And

therfore haue they lost al her hope for Vi. causes. [225]

First for god that ~~that~~ is her Iuge shal be wythouten mercy to

hem them. ne they may not plesse hym ne none of his halowes ne

paye may paye no thyng for theyr ransom [226] ne they haue no voys

to speke to hym. ne they may not fle fro payne. [227] And

therfore saith Salamon / wicked / and
therfore sayth salamon. the wycked man deyeth. and whan he is

dede he shal haue none hope to escape from payne. [228] who

wolde so wold wel vnderstonde these paynes and bethynke. hym wel

that he hath deseruyd the paynes for his synnes. Certes he

sholde shold haue more talent to syghe and wepe than for to synge

and for to pleye. [229] For as sayth Salamon. who that

had the the ben establysshyd
hath seyence for to knowe paynes that been establysshyd and

ordeyned for synne he wold forsake synne. [230] That

science makith
science sayth saynt Austyn makyth a man to weymenten in his

herte. [231] The fourth poynt that a man ought to make

contricion fore. is the sorowful remembraunce of the good

that he hath left to doo here in erthe and eke the good

that he hath lorn. [232] Sothly the good werkys that he

hath left eyther they be the good werkis that he wrought

er he fylle in to dedely synne or ellys the good werkys that

he wrought whyle he laye in dedely synne. [233] Sothly

the good that he dyd beforne that he fyl in dedely synne

ben all mortyfied and
al mortyfied and
ben all morthefyed astoned and dulled by the eft synnyng

[234] The other werkes that he wrought whyle he laye in

in synne ben vtterly dede as to the lyf perdurable in heuen.

[235] Than thylke good werkys that werkes ben mortefyed

by eft synnyng whiche good werkes he did whyles he was in

charite without
charyte mowe neuer quycken ayen wythout verey restreynt and

wythdrawyng the strenges of mannys corage and the meuynges

in his herte in suche manere as they ne skyppe out by anger

ne by yre. [236] And therof sayth god by the mouth of

Ezechyel /

ezechyel. That yf the rightful man retorne agayn from his

rightwysnes and to wyrche wyckednes / shal he lyuen [237]

nay. / For al the good werkys that he hath wrought shulle

neuer be in remembraunce. / For he shal deye in his synne. /

chappytre gregory
[238] And vpon that chapitre sayth saynt Gregory thus that

do
we shul vnderstonde pryncipally [239] that whan we doo dedely

/ Neyther
synne it is nought. Nether for to drawe in to memorye the

/ certes
good werkys that we haue wrought byforn [240] For certis in

trust
the werkyng of dedely synne there is no truste to [241] good

don / say
werke that we haue doon befor. That is to saye as to haue

lyf / sothly
therby the lyff perdurable in heuen. [242] But sothely the

in For
good werkys that men don whyles they ben in dedely synne for

synnethey
as mykyl as they were don in dedely synne thye may neuer

/ thynges that lyf
quycken. [243] For certes thinges ~~at~~ neuer hade lyff may

/ netheles that
neuer quyen. And neuertheles al be it ~~at~~ they auayle not

to haue the lyf perdurable[/] yet auaylen[/] auaylen
 they to a brydge of
 the peyn of helle[/] Or ellys to gete temporel riches.[/] [244] or
 ellys that god wyl rather enlumyne and lyghten the herte of
 the synful[/] synfull man to haue repentaunce.[/] [245] And eke they
 auayle to a man to doo good werkys that the fende^{hath} haue the
 lasse power of his sowle[/] [246] And thus the curteys lord
 Ihesu Cryste wyl that no good werke^{cryst} be^{be} loste.[/] For in
 som what[/] it shal auayle.[/] [247] But for as moche that the^{but}
 good werkes that men don whyles they ben in good lyf ben
 al mortefyed by synne folowyng.[/] And eke sythe al the good
 werkes that men^{don} doon whyles they be in dedely synne ben
 utterly dede as for to haue the lyff pardurable.[/] [248] wel
 may that man that no good werke^{werke} doth syng that fressh newe
 songe.[/] Iay tout perdu mon temps et mon labour.[/] [249] For
 certes it bereueth a man goodnes and nature and eke the
 goodnes of grace.[/] [250] for soth the grace of the holy goost
 fareth as frye that may not be ydle.[/] For fyre fayleth anon

as it leseth his ^{werchyng /} worchyng. [251] Than leseth the synful

man the goodnes of glorie that only is behoten to ^{good} goode

men that labouren ^{and /} and werken. [252] wel may he be sory

thenne that oweth al his lyf to god as long as he lyueth. /

And eke as longe as he shal lyue. ^{/ that} ~~/~~at no goodnes hath to

paye ^{with hys} wyth his dette to god to whom he oweth al his lyf. /

[253] For trust wel he shal yeue ^{acountys /} acountys. as sayth saynt

bernard / ^{alle} Bernard. Of all the goodes that haue be yeuen hym in this ^{thys}

present lyf. / And how he hath despended them [254] not so

much that ^{perisshe} ~~/~~at there shal perysshe an heer of his heed ne a

moment of an houre that he ne shal yeue therof a rekenyng /

[255] The ^{fyfthe} fyfte thyng is that ought to meue a man to

contrycion ^{remembraunce} contricion is remembraunce of the passyon that our lord

Ihesu X ^{synnys /} Ihesu cryst suffryd for our synnes. [256] For as sayth

^{/whylis} saynt Bernard. whyles that I lyue I shal haue remembraunce ^{remembraunce}

^{traueylis} of the traueylis that our lord Ihesu ^{Ihesu crist} cryst suffryd in

[/] prechyng. [257] his werynes in trauelyng. ^{/ his} His temptacions

when he fasted. / his wakynges /
 His long wakynges whan he prayd. his teris
 whan he wepte for pyte of good peple. [258] the woo and the shame
 and the flythe that men sayden to hym / of the foule spyttyng
 that / buffettis that
 /at men spytten in his face. of the buffettys /at men yaf
 hym of the foule mouthys and of the foule repreuys /at men
 to hym sayden. / [259] of the nayles wyth the whiche he was
 nayled to the crosse And of alle the remenaunt of his
 passyon no thyng
 passion that he suffryd for mannys synne and nothyng for his
 gylte. / [260] And ye shal vnderstonde that euery maner ordre
 of ordeynaunce is torned vp so soun. [261] For it is soth
 that god and reson and sensualite and the body of a man ben
 so ordeyned. / shul
 that eueryche of thyse four thynges shuld haue
 lordshyp that
 lordshyp ouer /at other [262] as thus god shold haue
 lordshyp reson/ and reson sensualite
 lordshyp ouer reson. and reson ouer sensualyte* ouer the
 man but
 body of man [263] but sothly in man semeth al this order of
 ordenaunce is turned vp so doun. / [264] And therfore thenne

*In Caxton, "and sensualite" has been added.

our lord Ihesu
worthy to haue shame And this suffred oure Lorde Ihesu

criste spitten /
cryst for man whan they spytted in his vysage. [271] And

thenne muche
ferther ouer thenne for as moche as the caytif body of man

sensualite therfore
is rebel both to reson and to sensualite therfor it is

dethe/ thys suffrid lord Ihesu Cryst
worthy the deth [272] And this suffryd our Lord Thesu crist

man / where there
for man vpon the crosse. wher as ther was no parte of his

thythout bitter passyon /
body fre wythout grete payne and bytter passion. [273] And

cryst that forfeited / To muche
al this suffred Ihesu crist ihat neuer forgeteth. Lo moche

X
am I peyned for tho thynges that . I neuer deseruyd and to

frendshyp /
mykyl defouled for frenshyp that man is worthy to haue. [274]

synful saynt bernard
And therfore may the synfull man wel saye as saint Bernard

/ cursid / certis
sayth. A corsyd be the bytternes. [275] For certes after

our pasciyn
dyuerse dyscordautes of oure wyckednes was the passion of

Ihesu crist X
Ihesu Cryst y. ordeyned in dyuerse thynges [276] as thus.

Certes synful mannys soule betrayed the deuyll by coutyse of

scornys
temporel prosperyte and scornes by disceyt whan he chesith

/ and
flesshly delytes. and is tormented by Impacience of

aduersite and
 aduersyte and bespet by seruage in subiection of synne. and
 atte last he is slayn fynally [277] for thys dyscordaunce
 of synful man. was Ihesu Cryst first betrayed. and after
 that bounde
at was he bound that cam for to vnbynde vs of synne and
 of the peyne. [278] Thenne was he bescourged at only shold
 honourid and
 be honouryd in al thynges and of alle thynges. [279] Thenne
 was his vysage bespytte at ought to be desyred for to be
 seyn of al mankynde. In whiche vysage aungels desyren to
 loke. and therin was vileynsly
 vileynsly bespette [280] Thenne was
 he scorned at no thyng had gylt. and fynally thenne was he
 crucified
 cruscefyed and sleyn. [281] Thenne were complisshed the
 wordes of ysaye that sayth. He was wounded for oure
 mysdedes and defouled for our vylonyes. [282] Now syth
 that Ihesu cryst
at Ihesu Cryst toke on hym self the peyne of al our
 wyckednes /
 wytshednes. mykyl ought synful man to wepe and to bewaylle
 that for his synnes goddis sone of heuen shold al this peyne
 endure . . [283] The Xi . thyng that ought to meue a man to

contricion
 contrycion is the hope of thre thynges that is to saye

forgeuenes /
 forpeuenes of synne. and the yefte of grace wel for to doo. do /

And the ioie of heuen wyth the whyche god shal guerdon man

for his good dedes. [284] And for as moche as Ihesu Cryst

yeueth us the yeftis of his grace and of his souerayn bounte. /

Nazerenus Rex Iudeorum /
 Therefore is he clepyd Ihesus nazarenus rex Iudeorum [285]

saye sauour sauacion
 Ihesus is for to say sauour or saluacion on whom men shul

hopen / which properly
 hope to haue foryeuenes of synnys. which that is properly

sauacion synnys / sayd
 saluacion of synnes. [286] And therfore said the aungel to

/ X hys that
 Ioseph. Thou. shalt clepe his name Ihesus that shal saue

/ And sayth peter /
 his peple of her synnes. [287] and herof saith seynt Peter.

heuyne that
 Ther is none other name vnder heuen that is yeuen to ony man

whyche /
 by which a man may be sau'd but only Ihesus. [288]

Nazarenus moche florissyng which
 nazarenus is as moche to saye as for florissing in which a

that yeuyth remysyon
 man shal hope that he that yeueth hym remysyon of synnys shal

do /
 also yeue hym grace wel for to doo. For in the flour is

/
 hope of fruyt in tyme comyng. And in foryeuenes of synne

hope of grace wel to doo. / [289] I was at dore of thyn herte
 sayd Ihesus
 said ihesus and cleped for to entre. / he that openeth to me
 shal have foryeuenes of synnys / [290] I wyl entre in to hym
 by my grace. / soupe / hyr / werkys
 and suppe wyth hym by the good werkes that he
 doo /
 shal do whiche werkes ben the fode of god. / and he shal soupe
 wyth me by the grete ioye that shal be yeuen to hym. / [291]

Thus shal man hope that for his werkys of penaunce god shal
 yeue hym ^{his} hys regne as he behoteth hym in the gospel. / [292]

Now shal man vnderstonde in what manere shall
 contricion / saye / and / that
contricion I say hit shal be vnyuersal and total. / ~~at~~ at is to
 saye a man shal be veray repentaunt /
 he hath don in delyte of ^{hys} his thought. / For delyte is
 perylous. / [293] For ther be two maners of consentynges that

one of them is cleped consentyng of affection /
 hem affection /
 whan a man is

meued to do synne [294] doo / ayenst
 ayenste the lawe of god. Al though

his / Yet
 the reson consente not to do synne in dede. [295] yet seyn

som doctours and men that suche delyte that dwellyth long
 dwellyth longe is

ful perilous lite /
full perylous. al be it neuer so lyte. [296] and also a man

shold sorow namely for al ^{sorowe} ^{that} ~~at~~ euer he hath desyred ayenst

the lawe of god wyth pafyght consentyng
parfyth consyntyng [297] to the dede

[298] wherfore I say that many men repente hem neuer of

delites
suche thoughtes and delytes and neuer shryue hem of it but

only of the dede of grete synnes outward. / wherfore
[299] wherfor I

say wicked delites
saye that suche wycked delytes and wicked thoughtes ben

subtil hem dampned /
subtyl begylars of them that shalle be damned [300] More

ouer man ought to sorow for his wycked wordes and for his

wicked dedes. / For certes repentaunce of a synguler synne

and not repentynq of alle his other synnes. or ellys

repentyng and
repentyng hym of alle his other synnes and not of a

synquler synne may not auaylle. [301] For certes god

almighty is al good. And therfor he foryeueth al or ellys

right nought. / [302] And therfore sayth saynt Austyn. / I

wote certeynly [303] that god is enemye to euery synnar.

And how than he ~~that~~ obserueth one synne. / Shal he haue

foryeuenes of the remenaunt of his other synnes. / / nay. [304]

and fertherouer contricion shold be wonder sorouful and
sorouful and

X And yeuyth hym pleynly /
anguysshous. and therefore yeueth him god pleynli his mercy.

And therefore whan soule anguysshous
and therfor whan my sowle was anguysshos wythin me I had

remembraunce that
remembraunce of God /at my prayer myght come to hym. [305]

Furtherouer contricyon muste contynuel and that
Fortherouer contricion must be contynuel and /at men have

and
stedfast purpose to shryue hem and for to amende hem of her
lif /
lyff. [306] For sothly whyle contricyon lasteth man may

haue hope of foryeuenes / And of this cometh hate of synne
that destroyeth and
/at destroyet synne both in hym self and eke in other folke

hys / whyche sayth /Ye
at his power. [307] For whiche Dauyd saith. ye that louen

god. / Hate wyckednes. / trusteth
For trusted wel to loue god is for

to loue that he loueth and hate that he hateth. [308] The
Te

last thyng that a man shal vnderstonde in contricion is

/ / say
thys. wherof auayleth contricion. I saye somtyme that

contricion deliuaryth / whyche
contricyon delyueryth a man fro synne. [309] Of whiche

Dauyd / quod /
dauyd sayth. I say quod dauyd. I purpose fermly to shryue

me and thou ^{lord}lorde hast ^{relecid}relycid my synne. / ^{right}and ryght so

as contricion auayleth not without ^{sad}sayd purpose of shryfte

^{satisfaction / right so}
and satisfaction. ryght soo confessyon ne satisfaction

auayle not wythout contrycion. / ^{much}For moche contrycion

destroyeth the pryson of helle / ^{And makyth}and makith week and feble

^{strength}
the strenth of the deuyll. / And restoreth the yefte of the

holy ghoost and of alle vertues [312] and ^{Interclensith}Interclensyth the

soule of synne and delyuereth the soule fro ^{the}peyne of ^{helle}hell

and fro the company of the deuyll. / And fro seruage of synne. /

^{restorith}And restoryth to alle ^{goodes}goodnes ^{spirituel}spirital in to the companye

and comunyon of holy chyrche. / [313] And ferther ouer hit

^{maketh}makyth hym that ^{was}whylom sone of yre. / ^{to be the sone of grace.}

And alle these thynges he putteth to holy ^{wryt}writ [314] And

therfore he that wyl sette his entente to ^{thynges}thyse thinges he

^{wyse}were ful wise. / For thenne he shold not in al his lyf haue

corage to synne / ^{his}But thenne his body and alle ^Xhys herte. he

sholde ^{Ihesu Crist}shold confourme to the seruyse of ^{Ihesu}criste. And

^{doo}
 therfore do hym homage [315] for certes our swete ^{lord} Lord Ihesu
 crist
 Cryste hath sparyd vs so benyngly in oure folyes that yf he
^{pyte} ^{sowle /}
 ne had pite on mannys soule. A sory songe myght we alle
 synge. /

^X
 Explicit prima pars pentencie.

Incipit secunda pars. /

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