

The introduction is divided into sections
1. the text 2. rhyme 3. versification
4. metre 5. diction and those 6. the Latin approach.
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A STUDY OF CHAUCER'S ABC:

Text, Source, and Literary Context

THE ABC AND RESOURCES:

of variants - an attempt, after the method of G. Kane,
to divide the variants into categories of scribal categories; findings
of a chart.

DIANA J. BARR
M Phil thesis: Bedford College

Printed Text
(i.e. stanza 1)
Alterations to Base Text
Textual Notes

of their words or lines which require
identification.

the French original - the literary
description, character and analysis
of the original; an analysis of manuscript
of the printed versions - a description
of editorial methods.

Stanza One
Alterations to Base
Textual Notes

is followed by the bibliography.

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ABSTRACT

A Study of Chaucer's ABC: Text, Source, and Literary Context

INTRODUCTION: The thesis commences with a critical analysis of the poem as a work of art. This introduction is divided into sections under the following headings:

1. literary context 2. metre and rhyme 3. versification
4. translation and language 5. image and theme 6. the Latin approach.

An introduction to THE TEXT is sub-divided as follows:

I THE MANUSCRIPTS AND VERSIONS:

- a) the manuscripts - earlier doubts as to authorship; a description of the manuscripts including date and whereabouts; the placing of the poem in the manuscripts; conclusions.
- b) the printed editions - listed with analysis and conclusions.

II CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS:

a discussion of previous methods of classification; an analysis of the variant groupings of ABC; results; impossibility of proving genetic relationships; conclusions.

III EDITORIAL METHOD AND RESOURCES:

- a) classification of variants - an attempt, after the method of G. Kane, to classify the variants into categories of scribal tendencies; findings summarized by means of a chart.
- b) the base text: reasons for choosing manuscript Ff.
- c) presentation of text and critical apparatus: details of method followed.

THE TEXT OF ABC:

For convenience, the Base Text and Edited Text are printed on facing pages.

Layout is as follows:

Base Text	Edited Text
(e.g. stanza 1)	(e.g. stanza 1)
Significant Variants	Emendations to Base Text
	Textual Notes

NOTES: to the edition - annotation of those words or lines which require explanation, interpretation or amplification.

APPENDIX: the French Version.

- I. An Introduction comprising: a. the French original - the literary context; b. the manuscripts - a description, comparison and analysis of variants in Chaucer and de Beauvillle; an analysis of manuscripts which Chaucer may have used; c. the printed versions - a description; d. the Base Text; e. outline of editorial methods.

II. Text of the poem arranged as follows:

Stanza One
Alterations to Base Text
Textual Notes

GLOSSARY to ABC.

Finally, a list of abbreviations used is followed by the bibliography.

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- NOTE:
- I. Footnotes are placed at the end of each chapter or appendix; they occur at (Introduction)...page 25 f. (I) ... page 41 f. (II) ... page 50. (III) ... page 63 f. Appendix ... page 137 f.
 - II. The forms and spellings of titles of Chaucer poems quoted below correspond to those of Robinson in his Edition.

INTRODUCTION

The Literary Context

The poem ABC or Priere a nostre Dame is probably the earliest extant example of Chaucer's work. It is called "Chaucer's A.b.c." in the Fairfax manuscript, and Speght (or Stowe, in imitation of Shirley) heads the 1602 edition thus: "Chaucer's A B C called La Priere de nostre Dame: made, as some say, at the request of Blanch, Duchesse of Lancaster, as a praier for her priuate vse, being a woman in her religion very deuout". This being so, the poem must be dated between 1359 and 1369 but no confirmation of Speght's statement has been found. Thus, Brusendorff:

"Since Stowe undoubtedly knew at least one Shirley volume, now lost, there is a theoretical possibility that the note may have been copied from such a source; it is, however, far more likely to have been composed in imitation of Shirley's headings to Mars and Venus, which were known to Speght and Stowe. Anyhow, the note is too late to be accepted, since there exists no corroborative evidence whatever."¹

Further speculations as to date emanate from the grouping together of the ABC and a similar work, the Second Nun's Prologue. Ten Brink estimates the date of both to be c. 1373²; on the other hand, Pollard³ ascribes both to the year 1366. Carleton Brown, arguing for the separation of the Invocacio ad Mariam in the Second Nun's Prologue on the grounds that it was a later insertion, prefers to date the poems after 1374.⁴

This conflicting information seems to point to internal evidence as a more reliable guide for the dating of the poem, but on this point Brusendorff, referring specifically to Skeat's Chaucer Canon, has this to say:

"On the whole, grammatical and metrical tests have not the absolute value that has been claimed for them, especially not when they are employed without any reference to the external evidence at all."⁵

Nevertheless, modern editors and critics tend to agree, with Robinson, that ABC "is probably to be regarded as one of the earliest poems of Chaucer that are preserved."⁶

ABC is a translation of a prayer to be found in a much longer work, the Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine of G. de Deguilleville. Though not necessarily the first poem Chaucer ever wrote, it was both experimental

and influential. For in this poem we find the first consistent use in English of the decasyllabic metre⁷; at least five Romance words are introduced probably for the first time into Middle English⁸; the image of the pilgrim is likewise assimilated from the French, and is a forerunner of the Canterbury Tales, where it also constitutes the theme; the translation, which is rather free, is the earliest example of Chaucer's imitatio; the theme links the poem with other contributions of Chaucer to the "Marian" tradition; it marks the beginning of the "Latin approach" in Chaucer's verse - a brief time before the ornate patterns of aureate verse gave way to the softer tones of the secular French "ballade".

On these experimental characteristics were based the writings of the "Chaucerian" poets of the fifteenth century. For despite the beauty of such Middle English poems as the Harley lyrics they may have had little or no influence.⁹ Chaucer's were the first sophisticated lyrics in English, introducing new metrical and stanzaic forms and new themes from the French which were to dominate court verse in the following century. Some poets went even further than acknowledging their indebtedness. Thus, Lydgate in his translation of the Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine left a blank space to contain Chaucer's own version of ABC rather than supplying his own.

But the poem does more than establish the style of a particular literary genre. The ABC is a beautiful poem in its own right. In it, Chaucer has transformed a rather dull original into a work of art that is also a sensitive and highly personalized prayer. If, as Speght tells us, it was a poem of patronage, written at the request of the Duchess Blanche of Lancaster, the mingling of religious veneration with "fin amor" undertones seems even more appropriate. From the point of view of style, the one image that is used throughout - the pilgrimage metaphor - provides a possible reflective source of inspiration for the Canterbury Tales. Given these details, it is not surprising that twentieth century critics such as Chesterton, Clemen and Luscatine have seen in ABC an important basis for Chaucer studies.¹⁰

METRE AND RHYME

Much has been written on Chaucer's technique of reconciling the rhythm of normal speech with his metres. Thus, Mustanoja:

"Chaucer's greatness as a metrical artist is seen in the easy flexibility with which he resolves the conflict between his meter and the natural prose rhythm of living speech."¹¹

Throughout the ABC the reader is reminded that the poem forms part of the medieval oral tradition. Besides being a prayer, and thus designed to be read aloud, the poem contains many conversational ejaculations and asides. Thus, in line 53: "Spek thou, for I ne dar not him ysee", the poet's plea to the Virgin to "Spek." intensifies for the listener the oral aspects of his prayer. Simultaneously, it underlines the interaction of two contrasting characters, Virgin and narrator, the one calm and serene, the other restless and apprehensive.¹² At line 179: "Therefore this lessoun oughte I wel to telle", the poet uses a speech reference so as to emphasize the didactic element of his verse. Appropriately enough, the line comes near to the end of the poem, as the narrator casts his mind back over his "lessoun". But there is otherwise little sign of a development of theme in ABC; despite the abcdical progression, the poem can perhaps best be seen as "23 different poems, each a complete prayer and each complementing the others".¹³

In underlining the oral tradition of the lyric, Chaucer does not restrict himself to grammar and rhetoric. It is by means of music also that he subtly emphasizes his point:

"Now, ladi full of merci, I yow preye,
Sith he his merci mesured so large,
Be ye not skant; for alle we singe and seye
That ye ben from vengeaunce ay oure targe." (lines 173-6)

In this quatrain, Chaucer develops his theme of generosity: this development is aided by the choice of the word "mesured" which has an alternative meaning here. It is a musical term, describing the dance, and makes a suitable prelude for the "singe and seye" of the next line, reminding us of the identification of the Virgin with melody in line 100: "We han noon oother melodye or glee". The alliteration with which Chaucer introduces these

musical references draws our attention to his metre: "merci mesured", "singe and seye", as it does in the earlier line: "Than in this world might any tonge telle" (line 128). While such examples may be classified, in Everett's terms, as "rhythmic echoes" of an Early Middle English alliterative tradition,¹⁴ they also draw the reader's attention yet again to the rhythmic aspects of the poem itself.

By using musical references to point to the harmony of his verse when read aloud, Chaucer achieves a rhythmic subtlety reminiscent of Dante. In the Convivio, Dante refers to the beauty of music in his canzone thus:

"la sua bellezza...è grande si per lo numero de le sue parti, che si pertiene a li musici." (Convivio, II, xi, 9).

He is referring not to a musical setting of his poems, but to the organization of the words themselves into harmonious structures by the use of metre and rhyme.¹⁵ So also with Chaucer's musical references in ABC. "Mesured", "singe and seye", "melodyeor glee" - all refer to the internal music which was for Chaucer as for Dante the distinctive element separating poetry from prose. And just as Dante used hendecasyllables not only because the line held more words but because it held more complex grammatical structures and thus a greater thought content, so Chaucer's decasyllabic metre expanded the four-stress pattern of his original, allowing the poet more freedom within this larger framework. Thus, harmony gave more scope for his use of those other liberal arts, grammar and rhetoric.

In the House of Fame, Chaucer denounced the four stress line as "lyght and lewed" (line 1096), and his experimental use of the decasyllabic five-stress line in ABC recalls the French "decasyllabe" of the Troubadour poets.¹⁶ Another of the ways in which Chaucer enriched his original was by skilful manipulation of the caesura, which he used to alter the cadence and affect the pace of the poem's narration:

"Fleeinge, * I flee for socour to thi tente
Me for to hide * from tempeste ful of dreede,
Biseeching yow * that ye you not absente,
Thouh I be wikke. * O help yit at this neede!" (lines 41-44)

Closely connected with Chaucer's use of the decasyllabic metre was his choice of the rhyme royal stanza. By superimposing the "ballade" form of the French courtly tradition on his original he not only increased the breadth of verse to ten syllables, but

compressed the stanzaic length. For in altering the number of lines from twelve to eight, and the rhyme pattern from de Deguillville's aabaabbbabba to the more varied ababbcb, he freed himself from the restrictions of having only two rhymes in a twelve-line stanza.

In the early poems, Chaucer probably chose his rhyme words before he wrote his line.¹⁷ Again, this was in the tradition of Machaut and the other French court poets whose work he used as stylistic models.¹⁸ In the case of ABC however they were frequently already supplied and the poet made no effort in some cases even to translate. Such rhyme words as "adversaire" and "resygne" were direct borrowings, taken over by Chaucer and thus incorporated into the English language. Others, like "refui", were translated but were used at a later point in the poem though not as rhyme words: "Ever hath myn hope of refut been in thee" (line 33).

Among the advantages which the use of the rhyme royal stanza gave to Chaucer was the possibility of matching rhyme with reason.¹⁹ In the mechanical two-rhyme, 12-line stanza of the French, little scope was given for matching meaning with style. But Chaucer's choice of three rhymes within only eight lines permitted a relationship between rhyme-words which gave added point to the "sentence" or theme which he sought to convey. In the eighth stanza, for example, all of the rhyme words relate to the legal imagery contained in the poem: wille, alliaunce, bille, acquitaunce, creaunce, praye, grevaunce, praye. The final rhyme word: "praye" (meaning "prey"), by means of its association with the devil or "foo", links the legal terms with the "hye justyse" of the Last Judgment which is referred to in stanza five. Here the rhyme words: wyse, assyse, justyse, tend to likewise reflect the legal terminology in the stanza. So too do those in stanza three, so that a cross-linking of rhyme-words in stanzas three, five and eight is possible. This technique intensifies the meaning and at the same time creates an aesthetic density unparalleled in the French original.

VERSIFICATION

Chaucer's language is late Middle English of the South East Midland type, and compared with Anglo-Saxon or some of the other Middle English dialects its inflections offer few problems to the modern reader.

The main difference, for the purpose of versification, lies in the numerous final e-s^{on words grammatically entitled to that ending} which are usually pronounced in the verse and are essential to the rhythm. They are also pronounced in rhyme and Chaucer consistently avoided rhyming words in -e with words not grammatically entitled to that ending. For example, four of the rhyme-words in stanza 18 are: goodnesse, maistresse, governeresse, witnesse. Some words, however, have alternative spellings in Chaucer - with or without final e. Thus we find "wil" at line 45 while "wille" appears at line 57; in this case, since "wille" is a rhyme word, Chaucer presumably intended to maintain rhyming consistency by agreement with "bille" at line 59.

Within the verse, final e is elided before an initial vowel (line 12: herte is), before a silent h or an h which is slightly pronounced (line 11: warne him). -e is usually sounded before initial consonants (line 15: sevene chasen), though in some cases it must have been apocopated or slurred. It is important however to differentiate between unstressed final e and the long e in words like adversitee or pitee; thus no elision occurs at line 135: "pitee haboundinge".

As was seen above, Chaucer's lines have a freedom and variety of movement compared with those of, for example, de Deguilleville, or Gower, which are brought about by the use of specific poetic techniques. Examples are: the occasional shifting of the caesural pause ("Fleeinge" I flee for socour to thi tente" - line 41); the reversal of the rhythm of a foot; the "headless" or 9-syllable line, where the unaccented syllable is omitted at the beginning of the line; and a trisyllabic foot in place of the usual iambus - two examples verging on this being "Continue on us thi" at line 88 and "an Ave-Marie or tweye" at line 104. So although Chaucer's lines, when read aloud, contain an evident rhythm, no rules can ever be laid down to settle all problems of versification which may arise. Paul Baum elucidates on the problem of final -e:

"The simplest statement would be that Chaucer's use of -e within the line is 'facultative,' 'a technical poetic [sc. metrical] device', in other words a convenience. Like the rainbow it comes and goes, and when it crossed the formal iambic pattern it is, or may be, heard so lightly - 'unnethe it mighte be lesse' - that it does not unset the rhythm...."

"The question, thus, is whether the -e ... is dropped, that is, suppressed in reading, silenced completely, or somehow blended with the following vowel, that is, presumably allowed a diminished, half-heard enunciation. The distinction is one between total absorption and smooth amalgamation. Metrically, for purposes of scansion, are there two syllables? or one syllable? or so to say one-and-a half - or less than two but more than one?"²⁰

TRANSLATION AND LANGUAGE

The medieval author had no scruples in borrowing a large section of poetry, translating it, and adapting it to his purpose: in fact, it gave authority to his work if he did so. He would usually acknowledge the source or "auctoritee", thus indicating what he owed to the work of the Latin author or Church Father from whom he obtained his "matiere". There would often follow a short exposition of unworthiness and an invitation to the reader to do better. Thus, the Second Nun in her Prologue in the Canterbury Tales:

Yet preye I yow that reden that I write,
 Foryeve me that I do no diligence
 This ilke storie subtily to endite,
 For bothe have I the wordes and sentence
 Of hym that at the seintes reverence
 The storie wroot, and folwen hire legende,
 And pray yow that ye wole my werk amende. (lines 78-84)

The rhetoric formula as handed down by Seneca was as follows: *sententiae, divisio, colores*. This formula was incorporated by Dante into the Vita Nuova and by Chaucer into the Canterbury Tales. The same procedure was also implicitly followed in translation, as the author proceeded to "reducen" and "amenden" his source, expanding the "matiere" and "sentence" of the original, by means of his own contribution of imagination or "colour". Unlike the Second Nun, Chaucer, the "grant translateur" of Deschamps' laudatory phrase, makes no apology for his translation, which is fairly free and in some places completely different from his original. Robinson has written: "The ABC being only a translation reveals very little about Chaucer."²¹ Not surprisingly, other critics disagree. Thus Ciemen:

"If we compare it with its French model, the prayer in Deguillville's Pèlerinage de l'Ame, several characteristic differences clearly emerge that throw light on Chaucer's individuality - a quality evident in this still largely derivative work."²²

Another argument, regarding the religious aspects, would be impossible to wage in reference to the French source. Wolpers, on the one hand, doubts the religious sincerity of the poem,²³ while G K Chesterton finds in the poem a striking example of Chaucer's religious conviction.²⁴ For our purpose, a comparison of the following two stanzas brings to light the individuality which Chaucer displays:

Almighty and al merciabile queene,
 To whom that al this world fleeth for socour,
 To have relees of sinne, of sorwe, and teene,
 Glorious virgine, of alle floures flour,
 To thee I flee, confounded in errour.
 Help and releeve, thou mighti debonayre,
 Have mercy on my perilous langour!
 Venquished me hath my cruel adversaire. (lines 1-8)

A toi, du monde le refui,
 Virge glorieuse m'en fui
 Tout confuz, ne puis miex faire
 A toi me tieng, a toi m'apui.
 Relieve moi, abatu sui,
 Vaincu m'a mon adversaire.
 Puis qu'en toi ont tous repaire,
 Bien me doi vers toi retraire,
 Avant que j'aie plus d'ennui.
 N'est pas luite necessaire
 A moi se tu debonnaire
 Ne me sequeurs com a autrui. (lines 1-12)

Chaucer's imagination asserts itself from the very beginning as the brief "Virge glorieuse" of de Deguilleville is altered to the resonant "Almighty and al merciabile queene". The address is brought forward from line 2 to the beginning, thereby achieving a tone of awesome invocation. The use of the word "almighty" - generally reserved only for the first person of the Trinity - and the alteration of "Virge" into "queene" intensifies this sense of majesty. De Deguilleville's "du monde le refui" is amplified to form the more urgent

"To whom that al this world fleeth for socour
 To have relees of sinne, of sorwe, and teene."

Returning to his original, Chaucer literally translates the "Virge glorieuse" of de Deguilleville but adds his own phrase "of alle floures flour".²⁵ Thus the poet introduces the type of perfection so as to multiply the allusions from the single "virge" to "queene", "flour" and "virgine". Three impressions - majesty, perfection and purity - are thus given by Chaucer. Having suggested these three qualities he emphasises them by juxtaposition. The epithet "mighti" is joined to the conventional "debonayre" of the French. A further possibility is suggested by the word "langour". Like the "floures flour" of line 4, it is not found in the French, and both words can be seen as amplifying the borrowed "debonayre". For the latter is a form of address used in the "fin amor" tradition, wherein the flower symbol and the reference to langour (or "hereos" the lover's malady) are alike conventional. This identification of the religious

with the courtly love symbol was not unusual in medieval poetry, the most notable example being the figure of Beatrice. The tradition is further exploited by Chaucer as he associates the "langour" not only with love, but with a wound. In transposing de Deguilleville's line 6 to the end of the stanza, he suggests that the "langour" was caused by the devil - the lover's "hereos" turns into the knight's wound. Further, the wound's significance deepens by its traditional association in Middle English lyrics with the Passion and with Longinus, the blind centurion mentioned by Chaucer at line 163.²⁶

By means of such richness of association, Chaucer invests his language with a depth of feeling which de Deguilleville's lacks. He does not hesitate to transpose a word or phrase of his original so as to heighten this rich texture. Formal petition alternates with informal pleading, the elevated style with the low, as Chaucer follows a pattern familiar in medieval Christian literature.²⁷ Paradoxically, Chaucer's passionate interjections and conversational, deeply personal tone serve to universalize the problems of "al this world" in a way that de Deguilleville's abstract and formal ornateness fail to do.

Despite the originality of Chaucer's language, it was semantically based on the French. As Clemen has remarked: "The ABC is an early and striking example of Chaucer's art of enhancing the expressive power and resonance of the English language by a varied and lavish use of words of romance origin".²⁸ J Mersand, in his analysis of Romance words in Chaucer, claims that at least five words were assimilated from the French and used in ABC for the first time in English literature. The words are: accioun, desperacioun, enlumyned, governeresse, resigne. Three important points arise from Mersand's analysis:

"The words directly borrowed from the French possess phonetic qualities which appealed to the poet's ear. Three of these - desperacioun, governeresse and resigne - are used finally. Accioun and desperacioun, abstract terms ending in the suffix -ion, represent a genuine instance of word-building on Chaucer's part".²⁹

Rhyme words were a particular instance of this "word-building." In a note on the word "governeresse", Masui comments on the ease with which Chaucer could either use words ending in -esse, -nesse, as rhyme words, or alternatively adapt English words to correspond with the French words by means of adding -esse, -nesse.³⁰

Not all the Romance words used by Chaucer are contained in de Deguilleville's poem. Chaucer's "eterne" (line 56) has no equivalent in the original. Nor has "vicaire", (line 140); it occurs originally in Alanus and is found again in Chaucer in the Romaunt and the Physician's Tale, where it relates to Nature.³¹ It is only here that he uses the term in reference to the Virgin - a procedure as unusual in Middle English or Old French literature as is the use of "almighty" in line 1, as an attribute of Mary.

Alternatively, Chaucer would often emphasise his meaning by introducing an English term. In line 159 he introduces the word "bench" as in Common Bench or King's Bench. The reference to Longinus (line 163), though not in de Deguilleville, is commonly found in Middle English texts³² and was probably derived from the Greek word meaning lance. The situation is appropriate here for a reference to the blind centurion who pierced the side of Christ. The translation of "oste chaucement d'ordure" into "to stinke eterne" indicates a realism unparalleled except in the Middle English mysteries and certain of the Middle English penitential lyrics such as the pictorial representation of the Dance of Death.³³ Chaucer's translation occasionally alters the meaning slightly. In line 85, "lystes of mischaunce" alters the meaning of French "mestrait" from "misdeed" to "misfortune", but his reference to the "lystes" indicates a familiarity with the convention of the devil as combatant which is also found in de Deguilleville.

IMAGE AND THEME

Just as Chaucer uses far more epithets than de Deguilleville in describing Mary as queen of heaven,³⁴ so he expands the image pattern of his original to create a far more vivid effect. Compare the following vaguely-outlined image in de Deguilleville:

Unbuisson contre nature
Vit qui ardoit sans arsure (136-7)

with the more concrete and vital picture evoked by Chaucer:

Moises, that saugh the bush with flawmes rede
Brenninge, of which ther never a stikke brende,
Was signe of thin unwemmed maidenhede.
Thou art the bush on which ther gan descende
The Holi Gost, the which that Moyses wende
Had ben a-fyr; and this was in figure.
Now, ladi, from the fyr thou us defende
Which that in helle eternalli shal dure. (lines 89-96)

Rosemary Woolf has contrasted the passage with examples from Middle English Marian carols where the burning bush is often described in a single line, as in "O ardent busshe that did not wast". In Chaucer, however, she finds a "literary development of the aesthetic potentiality of the type".³⁵ Thus the whole stanza is based on a kind of extreme antithesis as "the beauty and marvel of the flaming bush appropriately illuminates the quality of the Virgin's 'unwemmed maidenhede'".³⁶

Another example shows how Chaucer includes concrete details which appeal to the imagination. De Deguilleville describes the mystery of the Incarnation thus:

Pour savoir que Diex vint querre
Quant en toi se vint enserrer. (lines 170-171)

Chaucer however embroiders the abstract terms by evoking the imagery of the Annunciation:

Wherfore and whi the Holi Gost thee soughte,
Whan Gabrielles vois cam to thin ere. (lines 114-115)

But the mention of the Angel Gabriel is not merely a suggestive device. It gives a feeling of actuality and immediateness to the situation, just as the reference to Longinus vitalizes the passage describing the Passion (line 163).

Other images are expanded by Chaucer so as to occur in three or more stanzas thus emphasising their impact on the poem as a whole, a technique rarely found in de Deguilleville. An example is the

recurrence of the legal image. In stanza 3, the image of an "accioun" is outlined in a straightforward manner:

Comfort is noon but in yow, ladi deere;
 For, loo, my sinne and my confusioun,
 Which oughten not in thi presence appeere,
 Han take on me a greevous accioun
 Of verrey right and desperacioun;
 And, as bi right, thei mighten wel susteene
 That I were wurthi my dampnacioun,
 Nere merci of you, blisful hevене queene!

This legal aspect is expanded in stanza 5 to include the image of the Last Judgment, or "grete assyse":

But merci, ladi, at the grete assyse,
 Whan we shule come bifore the hye justyse!
 (lines 36-37)

In stanza 8, the legal image takes on further meaning as the "general acquitaunce" is seen to refer to the Passion of Christ:

And with his precious blood he wrot the bille
 Upon the crois, as general acquitaunce.
 (lines 59-60)

Chaucer deftly uses imagery to underline his theme of generosity.

The Virgin is variously equated with "Bountee" throughout the poem:

"Thou art largesse of pleyn felicitee" (line 13); "thou ground
 of oure substaunce" (line 87); "O tresoreere of bountee to
 mankynde" (line 107); "Who, but thiself, that art of pitee welle?"
 (line 126); "For evere in you is pitee haboundinge" (line 135).

Meanness, the opposite of generosity, is likewise hinted at in the imagery:

Thanne shalt thou bothe stinte al his grevaunce,
 And make oure foo to failen of his praye.
 (lines 63-64)

In the following passage a skilful use is made of contrast:

Sith he his merci mesured so large,
 Be ye not skent.."
 (lines 174-5)

The image of buying and selling occurs in relation to the Passion:

But for youre bothes peynes I yow preye,
 Lat not oure alder foo make his bobaunce
 That he hath in his lystes of mischaunce
 Convict that ye bothe have boughte so deere.
 (lines 83-86)

And in the following lines, Chaucer brings together three images to evoke his theme, describing the Virgin as a melody, as an "advocat" and as a labourer who generously works for "litel hire":

We han noon oother melodye or glee
 Us to rejoyse in oure adversitee,
 Ne advocat noon that wole and dar so preye
 For us, and that for litel hire as yee,
 That helpen for an Ave-Marie or tweye. (lines 100-104)

Perhaps the most interesting image to the student of Chaucer is the pilgrimage metaphor.³⁷ Reflecting the theme of de Deguillville's Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine, stanza 9 of the ABC contains the chief references to be found in the French prayer. But in Chaucer's version the image recurs throughout the remaining stanzas, appropriately threading its way towards the final couplet:

Bring us to that palais that is hilt
 To penitentes that ben to merci able. (lines 183-4)

To this end the "Kalenderes" of stanza 10 symbolically light the way:

Kalenderes enlumyned ben thei
 That in this world ben lighted with thi name;
 And whoso goth to yow the righte wey,
 Him thar not dreedein soule to be lame. (lines 73-76)

To this picture of the pilgrimage through life is added that of man's flight from the wrath of God:

Allas! I caityf, whider may I flee? (line 124)

and again:

To you my soule penitent I bringe.
 Receyve me - I can no ferther fleeen! (lines 147-8)

....
 I am so wounded, as ye may wel seen,
 That I am lost almost, it smert so sore. (lines 151-2)

The protective qualities ascribed by Chaucer to the Virgin - "tente," "haven of refut" - are skilfully employed so as to emphasise the hazardous progress of the pilgrim.

Thus, the image of the "weye" changes and gathers significance from its initial use as a reflection of the path through life, through the approach to the Last Judgment and on towards the "palais" of the final vision. It was a progress that preoccupied Chaucer for 20 years. In the ballad Truth, the message is essentially one of deliverance:

Forth, pilgrim, forth! Forth, beste, out of thy stal!
 Know thy contree, look up, thank God of al;
 Hold the heye wey, and lat thy gost thee lede;
 And trouthe thee shal deliver, it is no drede. (lines 18-21)

In the Canterbury Tales, however, the perspective is lengthened, as the actual pilgrimage is seen to reflect the pilgrimage of life, culminating in the words of the Parson's vision of the new Jerusalem:

And Jhesu, for his grace, wit me sende
To shewe yow the wey, in this viage,
Of thilke parfit glorious pilgrymage,
That highte Jerusalem celestial.

(Parson's Prologue,
lines 48-51)

THE LATIN APPROACH

The arbitrary division of Chaucer's works into a series of periods, such as the "French" period, has been dismissed as unworkable by contemporary critics. This dismissal is arguable if a Crocean theory of chronological development is strictly referred to. But the discussion of a certain approach in the poems can usefully be treated in terms of a continuous development rather than a fixed chronological entity.³⁸ Seen in this light, the "Latin approach" in Chaucer's works can justifiably be considered.

Chaucer's Latin approach can be traced in poems in honour of the Virgin, written in the "aureate" style, and spanning some 20 years of poetic development. The poems are as follows:

1. The ABC - based on a French text whose author composed Latin poems to insert in his "Pelerinage" and then translated one of them back into French: *La priere de nostre dame* or *A.b.c.*;³⁹
2. The Second Nun's Prologue (a poem in the "Invocaccio ad Mariam" genre) and Tale (a Saint's Life);
3. Constance's prayer to the Virgin in the Man of Law's Tale;
4. The Prioress' Prologue and Tale.

It will be useful to distinguish between the terms "aureate" and "liturgical" - both of which can be used to describe the poet's style in these poems.

At line 73 of ABC, Chaucer translated closely from his source:

"Kalenderes enlumyned ben thei
That in this world ben lighted with thi name"

and it was a similar illumination in Chaucer's own verse to which other writers later paid tribute. Thus, Lydgate termed him:

"the first that ever enlumined our language with flowers of
rethorick eloquence".⁴⁰

Hoccleve, in 1412, wrote:

"With bookes of his ornat endytyng,
That is to al this land enlumynyng."⁴¹

The unknown author of The Book of Curtesye had this to say:

"O fader and founder of ornate eloquence
That enlumened hast alle our bretayne".⁴²

The fervour which the subject inspired was another aspect of this "illumination", so that there arose:

"a kind of devotional poetry in which [the] process of selection and emphasis is highly intensified, and is accompanied by an artistic transformation of the subject through the successful operation of the poet's fancy or creative imagination ... The authors of this kind of religious lyric were not merely devotees ... but also artists, whom these subjects inspired to a more or less successful creative effort."⁴³

Kane's apprehension of the medieval aesthetic in relation to poetry and the visual arts is strikingly apt here. He continues with a description, also appropriate here, of one means by which a poet would transform his material through "a 'literary' treatment involving the use of rhetorical, stylistic adornment, particularly of the special poetic vocabulary which began to be developed during the later fourteenth century."⁴⁴ Originating in France, this type of religious poetry was very ornate; it employed long words, especially polysyllabic rhyme-words, and abounded in allusions and in all kinds of ornaments; thus:

"O femme resplendissans, roine glorieuse!"⁴⁵ and

"Cast by respeccyoun one my mortall countenance."⁴⁶

Scholars such as Patterson, Woolf and Clemen agree that Chaucer's "imitation of an imitation"⁴⁷ managed to avoid such literary affectation, while at the same time inaugurating a new school of English lyric poetry.

It would be wrong to assume that, because it originated in France, English poetry in the "aureate" style consisted mainly of Romance words.⁴⁸ Mersand has shown that 35.05% of the words in ABC are Romance words; set against the average in Chaucer's poems of 30%, this proportion is not large. So with the other poems under discussion. The Second Nun's Prologue and Tale contains 33.13%; the Man of Law's Prologue and Tale 37.84%; and the Prioress' Prologue and Tale has 28.94%. Nor are the Romance words used in Chaucer's "aureate" style peculiar to the poems under discussion; "governeresse", for example, appears in Pity (line 30), as well as in ABC, as does "alliaunce" (42).

A proliferation of Anglo-Saxon vocabulary can be traced in ABC, as in the other poems in the genre: "ladi bryghte", "hevene queene", "mayde and mooder".

It is rather the concentration of clusters of Romance words in certain parts of the poem which is the characteristic feature of "auration".

Rhyme-words especially form a part of this tradition; the following occur in stanza 8 of ABC: "alliaunce", "acquittaunce", "creaunce", "grevauunce"; and again in stanza 11: "pensaunce", "bobaunce", "mischaunce", "substaunce".

Though Romance words that rhyme form only 38.11% of the total rhyme-words

in ABC,⁴⁹ they are more often polysyllabic than those of Anglo-Saxon origin. As was seen above, they form a sequence whose meaning is intensified by a complex interweaving of thought and structure. For the most part, such rhyme-words as appear in ABC are nouns.⁵⁰ Within the line, the proliferation of adjectives and adjectival phrases in praise of the Virgin is the notable feature. Complexity here is heightened by the fact that a single word - such as "merciable" in line one of ABC - is used in place of several ("able to grant mercy"); further, the word is preceded by another comprehensive adjective "al", whose meaning, suggestive of exclusive power, is emphasised by the proximity of yet another adjective of similar weight: "almighty".

The constituent elements of the "aureate" style are embellishment, emphasis, transformation and rhetoric. A further element, inseparable from the rest, remains to be discussed since it complements Chaucer's use of "auration" in the development of his Latin approach.

The liturgical element, as its name implies, concerns those phrases in the four poems which derive from or are associated with the liturgy, or services of the Church. Whereas "aureate" diction involved verbal decoration, liturgical poetry contained words and images which were technical in their religious connotations. At line 4 of ABC, the phrase "of alle floures flour" adds to and embellishes the laudatory "Glorious virgine" which precedes it. In this sense, the phrase comes within the scope of "aureate" verse. But the phrase also occurs as a response in the litany;⁵¹ its religious connotations would at once be recognized by a medieval reader and the image of Mary as the type of perfection would be established in his mind. The paradox at line 49: "Glorious mayde and mooder" is derived from the Horae⁵²; the image of the burning bush (line 89) was equally well-known. More subtly interwoven are those images whose parallels are suggestive rather than specific, showing however the similarity of ideas, development and wording. "Crystes blisful mooder deere" (28) and "Whan Gabrielles vois cam to thin ere" (115) recall the words of the Primer: "Heil thou, virgyne modir of Crist, that bi eere conceyuedist; thurȝ Gabriels message".⁵³ Other words were more usually applied to the Trinity than to the Virgin: "almighty" (1); "vicaire" (140), some clearly being adapted to the feminine gender: "governeresse" (141). Certain images were identified with both Christ and the Virgin in the liturgy: "of pitee welle" (126); "to whom I seeche for my medicyne" (73).⁵⁴

The foregoing has concentrated on the poem ABC. It is now necessary to turn to the other poems and compare them so as to establish the existence of a "Latin approach" in Chaucer's poetry.

Because of its immature style and closeness of translation, it is generally agreed that the Second Nun's Prologue represents an adaptation of

an earlier poem to the requirements of the text of the Canterbury Tales which view is supported by both manuscript and internal evidence, such as the phrase "reden that I write". The date of the poem has been approximately set as 1373 - that is, after the Italian journey - on the basis of Dantesque elements in the Invocaccio. But it is possible that the translations from Dante date only the Invocaccio as post-1372, the remainder being written as early as 1371. In addition to the "aureate" or elaborate tone of the poem, the subjective and persuasive language ally it to the earlier ABC. Written c. 1370, ABC abounds in phrases like "Oh help yit at this neede!" or "Have mercy on my perilous langour !" - ejaculations similar to the phrase "unworthy sone of Eve" in the Second Nun's Prologue, and equally reminiscent of liturgical poetry.⁵⁵ The "flemed wrecche" of the Second Nun's Prologue matches the "caityf" of ABC; in ABC bounty, one of the seven virtues, is the theme, while that of the Second Nun's Prologue is idleness - one of the seven vices. In both poems, the "theeves sevene" or seven deadly sins are referred to equally passionately. Apart from expression and theme, other similarities exist. The torments of hell are echoed in "That I be quit fro thennes that most derk is!" as well as "To stink eterne he wole my gost exile". The chief disparity emerges in the image pattern. We have seen that the pilgrimage motif runs throughout the poem ABC. But no suggestion of this is found in the Second Nun's Prologue and Tale. Apart from this difference, however, liturgical images run along similar lines in both poems, so that a pattern emerges: in both, Mary is addressed as "Haven of refut"; in both, she is a type of tabernacle: "Temple devout", "Cloistre". Specific parallels have been noted by Carleton Brown who argues for the separation of the Invocaccio (which he would date as 1374) from the first part of the poem, written he suggests in 1371.⁵⁶ These and other parallels are set out below:

PHRASES & WORDS

<u>Second Nun's Prol.</u>	<u>ABC</u>
1. ministre	140. vicaire
37. welle (of mercy)	126. welle (of pity)
46. whom erthe and see	50. erthe nor in see
46 relees	3. relees
56. leche	134. leche
58 galle	50. bitter
75. haven of refut	14. haven of refut
43 withime the cloistre blisful of thy sydis	145. Temple devout ther God hath his woninge

The following similarities which exist between ABC and the Second Nun's Prologue link the poems with a later work, the Prioress's Prologue. All include a form of invocation, all are written in the "aureate" tradition, and all are translations in one form or another of liturgical texts.⁵⁷ Most important, all are addressed to the Virgin. Thus Chaucer's most overtly religious works are all written in the form of hymns or prayers in the Marian tradition. The Prologue to the Prioress's Tale takes the form of a hymn as the last line shows:

Right so fare I, and therefore I yow preye,
Gydeþ my song that I shal of yow seye.

The musical motif continues throughout the Prioress's Tale. The references: Ave Maria, Alma redemptoris, O Alma Redemptoris Mater - are to the titles of Latin hymns. In a similar way, the "singe and seye" of ABC reinforces the earlier "That helpen for an Ave Marie or tweye". The poem's personalized expression, traditional images and ornate vocabulary echo the aureate tones of ABC and the Second Nun's Prologue and Tale. Further, the Prioress's Prologue contains many ideas and expressions drawn from the Scriptures, the service of the church, and other religious writings.⁵⁸ But the rhyme-scheme and conversational asides ("To telle a storie I wol do my labour", "Quod she") serve to remind us that the Prioress's Prologue is a later poem and part of the Canterbury Tales. The tale also is a far more sophisticated example of translation than ABC or the Second Nun's Prologue, made from an unknown source of a well known literary type - an Old French "Miracle de notre Dame". This sophistication is evident from the following stanza of the Prioress's Prologue:

O mooder Mayde! o mayde Mooder free!
O bussh unbrent, brennyng in Moyses sighte,
That ravyshedest down fro the Deitee,
Thurgh thyn humblesse, the Goost that in th'alighte,
Of whos vertu, when he thyn herte lighte,
Conceyved was the Padres sapience,
Help me to telle it in thy reverence!

(lines 467-73)

A similar use of the burning bush image in ABC has been much praised.⁵⁹ But as J. Lawlor has pointed out, the above example forms one of the highest achievements of aureate language:

"The polysyllables of romance-adoption can give a resounding close ("sapience"; "reverence"); placed at the beginning and end, they constitute the "springing line" on which the whole arch is projected ("Conceyved was the Fadres sapience"); or, standing medially (as, "ravyshedest"), they carry, cantilever-like, the line's weight.

In such apposite placing we may see the real attraction of "auration" when it is not meaningless embellishment. It stands as the great safeguard against a danger ever-present in a language characterised by dominance of stress and frequency of monosyllable. "Ten low words' are always ready to do their fatal work." 60

Chaucer's interest in theology has been underestimated by many, but Kittredge recognized its fundamental importance in his poetry: "Paradoxical as it seems to us, Chaucer must have ranked high as a religious writer. Not to speak of his legends, he put forth his ABC, an elaborate prayer to the Virgin, advancing through all the letters of the alphabet. He translated a famous work of mortification, Innocent on the Wretched Condition of Mankind, and a famous homily upon the Magdalen, ascribed to Origen. Finally, he closed his great survey of human life in the Canterbury Tales with a practical treatise on Penitence and the Seven Deadly Sins, which he appropriately assigned to the good priest, the poor but learned parson of a town. Chaucer's knowledge of theology and his interest in some of its highest problems, are evinced in countless passages, long and short, in his poetical works." 61

The apparent lack of interest in Chaucer's role as a religious writer is easy to understand, since his mixture of the social and the religious, the humorous and the serious, rarely permits an isolation of one particular aspect of his art. Thus in the Man of Law's Tale, the following piece of aureate verse can easily escape identification:

Now lady bright to whom alle woful cryen,
Thow glorie of wommanhede, thow faire may,
Thow haven of refut, brighte sterre of day,
Bewe on my child, that of thy gentillesse,
Rewest on every reweful in distresse.

(lines 850-854)

Constance's prayer to the Virgin so closely parallels ABC and the Second Nun's Prologue in tone and content, that it is reasonable to suggest, as has Skeat, that the tale of Constance was in fact first written before the Canterbury Tales and afterwards revised. 62

The four poems discussed, together with a section of the *Man of Law's Tale*, represent a contribution to a new style of hymnody in the late 14th and 15th centuries. Chaucer's language in the poems is richer and more skilful, his syntax more elaborate, than that of other religious lyric poetry of the 14th century. In deriving inspiration from the more elaborate verse of the French poets and Latin liturgical poetry of the later Middle Ages, Chaucer introduced a new element of complexity into the more simply expressed poems of his contemporaries in England. The effect he obtains is reminiscent, at the fullest stage of its development, of the English metaphysical poets Donne and Herbert:

"O mooder Mayde! o mayde Mooder free!
O bussh unbrent, brennyng in Moyses sight,
That ravyshest doun fro the Deitee,
Thurgh thyn humblesse, the Goost that in th'alighte,
Of whos vertu, whan he thyn herte lighte,
Conceyved was the Fadres sapience,
Help me to telle it in thy reverence!"

FOOTNOTES

1. Brusendorff, Chaucer Tradition, p. 241.
2. Rten Brink, Canterbury Tales, London, 1894, p. xiv n.
3. A W Pollard, Canterbury Tales, (The Globe Chaucer) London, 1898.
4. Carleton Brown, "The Prologue to Chaucer's Lyf of Seint Cecile", MP, ix, (1911), 1-16.
5. Brusendorff, Chaucer Tradition, p. 48. Mersand's attempt to date the poems by
6. Robinson, Edition, p. 855. using "internal evidence" is discussed at fn. 38.
7. See Robinson Edition, p. 855. However Mustanoja in "Chaucer's Prosody" (Companion to Chaucer Studies, ed. B. Rowland, Oxford, 1968, p. 69) thinks that the decasyllable was used first by Chaucer in Pity.
8. See page 13 for a full discussion of these instances.
9. See R. Hope Robbins, "The Lyrics", in B. Rowland's Chaucer Studies.
10. G. K. Chesterton, Chaucer, London, 1959, p. 120; W. Clemen, Chaucer's Early Poetry, London, 1963, p. 176; C. Muscatine, Chaucer and the French Tradition, Berkeley, 1969, p. 268.
11. T. F. Mustanoja, "Chaucer's Prosody", in B. Rowland's Chaucer Studies.
12. This contrast can also be observed in the rhythmic patterns of the verse. E. Reiss chooses four lines (13- 16) to show the way in which "the drama that stems from the contrast between the narrator's insecurity and the Virgin's calm" is emphasised by variations in stress and sound patterns within the stanzas ("Dusting off the Cobwebs: A Look at Chaucer's Lyrics," Chaucer Review, I (1966), pp 55-65).
13. Ibid., p. 62.
14. D. Everett, Essays on Middle English Literature, Oxford, 1955, p. 143, attributes these "accidental echoes" to Chaucer's reading of earlier literature; the alliterative metre in The Man of Law's Tale recalling Early English poetry, and the rhythm of the Parliament of Fowls being due to his reading of Dante. There is no alliteration in the prosaic rendering of de Deguilleville and its absence in the French "ballade" tradition which Chaucer superimposes on his original suggests the presence of "accidental echoes" of Early English poetry here.
15. For a full discussion of Dante's use of hendecasyllables, see P. Boyde, Dante's Style in his Lyric Poetry, Cambridge, 1971, p. 209 f. Comparison with Chaucer's lyrics and the principles apparently governing his style suggest that Dante as well as Machaut influenced the writing of ABC despite the fact that the Italian journey is said to have taken place after it was written.

16. C. S. Lewis, "The 15th Century Heroic Line," Essays & Studies, xxiv (1938) pp 28-41, argues that Chaucer's five-stress line went back to a variant of Old English four-stressed lines as found in some Anglo-Norman poetry. Robinson (Edition, p. 520) suggests that the persistent use of this form in Chaucer is largely due to the endecasillabi of his Italian masters.
17. See M Masui, Rhyme Words, Introduction.
18. In later poems, Chaucer was to confess his reluctance to depart from the English language; cf. Lenvoy, The Complaint to Venus:
- And eke to me it ys a gret penaunce,
Syth rym in Englissh hath such skarsete,
To folowe word by word the curiosite
Of Graunson, flour of hem that make in Fraunce. (lines 79-82)
- See also The Legend of Good Women, lines 66-67:
- Allas, that I ne had Englyssh, ryme or prose,
Suffisant this flour to preyse aryght!
19. This phrase is taken from an essay "One Relation of Rhyme to Reason" by W K Wimsatt (The Verbal Icon, London, 1970). The point which the author makes is similar to the idea behind the above paragraph: "that verse in general and more particularly rhyme, make their special contribution to poetic structure in virtue of a studiously and accurately semantic character. They impose upon the logical pattern of expressed argument a kind of fixative counterpattern of alogical implication" (p. 153). It is perhaps significant that the author's study of the meaning of rhyme words in relation to their position in the poem centres upon a comparison of rhyme words in Chaucer and Pope.
20. P. F. Baum, Chaucer's Verse, Durham, N.C., 1961, pp 18-19. For recent opinions see also: J G Southworth, "Chaucer's Final -e in Rhyme", PMLA, lxii (1947), pp 910-935; E. T. Donaldson, "Chaucer's Final -e", PMLA, lxiii (1948), pp 1101-1124, followed by reply, PMLA, lxiv (1949), pp 601-610. For a full discussion of scribal tendencies and procedure regarding final -e in this edition of ABC see page 66.
21. Edition, p. 520.
22. W. Clemen, Early Poetry, p. 175.
23. T. Wolpers, "Geschichte der englischen Marienlyrik im Mittelalter", Anglia, 69, 1950, p. 32.
24. G. K. Chesterton, Chaucer, London, 1959, p. 121 f.
25. The convention of "florum flos" is of course not Chaucer's invention; see my Notes to line 4 for examples.

26. See my Notes to line 7.
27. The alternation of styles has been described by E. Auerbach thus:
 "In antique theory, the sublime and elevated style was called sermo gravis or sublimis; the low style was sermo remissus or humilis; the two had to be kept strictly separated. In the world of Christianity, on the other hand, the two are merged, especially in Christ's Incarnation and Passion, which realize and combine sublimitas and humilitas in overwhelming measure". (Mimesis, Princeton, N.J., 1953, p. 151)
28. W. Clemen, Early Poetry, p. 176.
29. J. Mersand, Romance Vocabulary, p. 62.
30. M. Masui, Rhyme Words, p. 15.
31. See my Note 140.
32. See my Note 163.
33. See my Note 56.
34. W. Clemen, Early Poetry, p. 176, n. 2, lists six examples of such phrases in Chaucer as compared with only two in de Deguilleville.
35. R. Woolf, Religious Lyric, p. 286.
36. Ibid, p. 286.
37. C. Muscatine, Chaucer and the French Tradition, Berkeley, 1957, p. 268 has described ABC as "a convenient index of his religious imagery", and claims that the metaphor "nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita" from Dante was well known to Chaucer even at this stage. He also advances an interesting theory relating to the pilgrimage metaphor. It concerns "the tension between phenomenal and ideal, mundane and divine, that informs the art and thought of the period. The variety of pilgrims and tales [sc. in the Canterbury Tales] is thus ordered between traditionally opposed values ... The pilgrimage frame, with the prologue and links that define it, is likewise ambivalent; it is both realistic and symbolic. This ambivalence is in the symbolic conception of life as a pilgrimage alongside the concrete existence of the Canterbury road, in the generally symbolic character of Chaucer's later naturalism next to his "good ear" and his keen reportorial eye. It is also in various conventionalizations of form and style which stand in an artistically effective relationship to this naturalism" (pp 168-169). The beginnings of this aesthetic duality can be traced in the style of ABC, an example being its alternately distant and colloquial tone. Cf footnote 27 above.

38. J. Mersand bases his thesis, on the possibility of dating the poems by means of "internal" evidence, on a comparison of the number of Romance words in each poem. He contends that the number of such words increased as Chaucer's verse developed - the early poems containing more words of Anglo-Saxon origin than the later (Romance Vocabulary, p. 91). In attempting to justify the fairly high proportion of Romance words (35.05%) in ABC (and Book of the Duchess) - both early poems - he asserts "those which have higher percentages have Romance sources" (Romance Vocabulary, p. 82). Though this is possibly true, it nevertheless bears out the problems envisaged by Skeat, pointing to the unreliability of "internal" evidence as a guide to dating the poems (see above footnote 5).
39. See M Lofthouse, Le Pelerinage de la Vie Humaine de G de Deguillville, unpublished MA thesis, Manchester University, Appendix II (1929).
40. The Serpent of Division, ed. H. N. MacCracken, Yale, 1911, p. 65.
41. The Regement of Princes, quoted in C. F. E. Spurgeon, Five Hundred Years of Chaucer Criticism and Allusion, Cambridge, 1925, I, 214.
42. Ed. F. J. Furnivall, EETS, III, p. 34.
43. G. Kane, Middle English Literature, London, 1951, p. 150.
44. Ibid., p. 150.
45. quoted in F. A. Patterson, Penitential Lyric, p. 44.
46. quoted by G. Kane, Middle English Literature, London, 1951, p. 152.
47. the phrase is Patterson's (Penitential Lyric, p. 44); see R Woolf, Religious Lyric, p. 286; W. Clemen, Early Poetry, p. 175 f.
48. W. Mackay Mackenzie, The Poems of William Dunbar, London, 1932, p xii, attributes to Chaucer this "infusion of a Latin vocabulary transformed through French", which gave rise to the development of "aureate" poetry in England. The statistics quoted by J Mersand are on pages 75-77 of Romance Vocabulary.
49. Ibid., p. 87.
50. The high percentage of nouns in the earlier poems has been noted by Mersand (Romance Vocabulary, p. 68) though he does not say whether these are mainly rhyme-words. Noun-percentages range from 77.77% (Mars) to 40% (Pity) in these works; ABC has 55.55%.
51. See Patterson, Penitential Lyric, p. 163, n. 59; p. 174, n. 58.
52. Ibid., p. 180, n. 4.
53. Ibid., p. 177, n. 50.
54. Ibid., p. 170, n. 3; p. 180, n. 30.

55. The phrase "unworthy sone of Eve" in the Second Nun's Prologue has been held up as evidence that the Prologue was written to be spoken by a male character in the Canterbury Tales (see in this connection, Brusendorff, Chaucer Tradition, p. 131). However, J. P. MacManus (unpublished dissertation) is quoted by D. D. Griffith (A Bibliography of Chaucer, Seattle, 1926, p. 240), as explaining away the "sone of Eve" as a phrase of the liturgy regularly sung by the nuns.
56. Carleton Brown, "The Prologue to Chaucer's Lyf of Seint Cecile", Modern Philology, ix (1911), pp 1-16.
57. The ABC and Second Nun's Tale are definitely translations; the Second Nun's Prologue is probably so. The Prioress' Prologue consists of a translation of several passages in the Office of the Virgin, the Psalms and Dante (for details of these passages see Robinson, Edition, pp 734-5). For a suggestion that Chaucer followed in part his own translation of the Second Nun's Prologue in composing the Prioress' Tale, see R A Pratt, "Chaucer borrowing from himself," MLQ, vii, (1946), p. 259 f.
58. See Robinson, Edition, pp. 734-5 for examples.
59. See R Woolf, Religious Lyric, p. 286.
60. J. Lawlor, Chaucer, London, 1968, p. 130.
61. G. L. Kittredge, Chaucer and his Poetry, Cambridge, Mass., 1915, p 10.
62. See W. Skeat, Works, vol. v, notes to Man of Law's Tale. Mersand (Romance Vocabulary, pp 72-3) suggests that the Man of Law's Tale was originally written at a time when ABC and the Second Nun's Tale were either in the mind of the poet or had been recently completed. This suggestion is based on the similarity in Romance vocabulary percentages between these works.

I. THE MANUSCRIPTS & VERSIONS

Chaucer's ABC exists in twelve manuscripts, of which one - Pepys 2006 (P) - contains two copies. In addition, the first two verses have recently been discovered in a manuscript now in the Durham Library.¹ It first appeared in print in Speght's second edition of the Works (1602) which was copied from manuscript Gg 4 27 and has been used in the present edition for variant readings.

Referring specifically to Merciles Beaute, another of the works in manuscript P, Skeat asserts that the manuscript contains several other of Chaucer's "genuine poems". Further: "The critics who brush aside such a statement as this should learn to look at manuscripts for themselves. The make-up of the manuscript shows that it is essentially a Chaucer-Lydgate manuscript; and Merciles Beauty is not Lydgate's."² Similarly, a careful examination of the twelve manuscripts in which ABC appears yields various important results.

In dating the manuscripts, two authorities - Furnivall and Brusendorff - have been referred to, as well as the orthographic testimony of the manuscripts themselves. In some cases, Furnivall omits the date and in others he precedes the date with a question mark to indicate that the decision can only be estimated within 10 years. On the other hand, since Brusendorff's treatment is confined to the "independent" manuscripts (that is, manuscripts made up of a number of poems of which ABC is one) he obviously does not include the "integral" or "pilgrimage" manuscripts (that is, manuscripts of the English prose version of de Deguilleville in which ABC appears as an integral part). Where they agree with the present editor's views, Furnivall's dates have often been preferred, since Brusendorff's estimates are more general and are based on the make-up of individual manuscripts rather than handwriting. Where possible, however, further details relating to the basis of each writer's opinion are outlined in the footnotes.

Doubts as to the authorship of ABC have persisted even after Skeat and Furnivall, in the late nineteenth century, offered apparent proof that Chaucer wrote the lyric, possibly as early as 1369.

The following manuscripts contain written evidence to support their view:

- (1) Sion College paper manuscript (S), Archives $\frac{L.40.2}{E.44}$, about 1440³, John Shirley's manuscript. Shirley, who died at the age of 90 about 1456, almost certainly knew Chaucer and definitely took pains not only to preserve but to attribute to Chaucer those poems which he copied in manuscript form. Appearing in a prose translation of de Deguilleville's lyf of Man at ff. 79-81 v the poem is headed:
- (from margin) "Chaucer. Devotissima oracio ad Mariam. pro omni tentacione tribulacione necess[itate] augustia".

- (2) Pepys 2006 (P1,P2). Two fragments of 60 lines each in Magdalene College Cambridge, paper, about 1450.⁴ In five hands (A B C D E), the first ABC being in hand B at page 88, the second, in hand E at page 386. Described in both places as a "Pryer A nostre Dame _____ per Chaucer", the manuscript has 291 pages and contains other poems by Chaucer, notably Complaint to his Purse, the unique copy of Merciles Beaute, part of the Legend of Good Women, the House of Fame, Mars and Venus, Fortune and the Parliament of Fowls; also, poems by Lydgate and a translation of parts of Cato, interspersed with the Prologue and Tale of Melibee, The Parson's Tale, Anelida and Arcite, ABC again, Complaint to his Purse and Truth.

In the following manuscripts containing ABC, the scribe does not specifically ascribe the poem to Chaucer. The manuscripts do however contain other works which acknowledge him as author.

- (3) Fairfax 16 (F), Bodleian Library f. 188 v, vellum, about 1450.⁵
 Contains 16 minor poems of which both Truth and Complaint to his Purse have "Chaucer" written at the end. The spelling resembles that of the Ellesmere manuscript of the Canterbury Tales, except that many final e's are added or dropped arbitrarily and the scribe uses y in place of i (that is: "hyt is" stands for "hit is"). The manuscript also contains fair copies of poems by Hoccleve and Lydgate.
- (4) Manuscript Gg 4 27 (Gg) University Library Cambridge, f. 5 (ff 1-4 missing), vellum, 1430-60.⁶ Contains an excellent copy of the Canterbury Tales, Troilus and Criseyde, the Legend of Good Women, the Parliament of Fowls, and Lydgate's Temple of Glas. At the beginning of the Parliament of Fowls is the title: "Litera directa de Scogan per G.C."

The following manuscripts do not mention Chaucer at all but do contain ABC, together with several other of his minor poems:

- (5) Bodleian 638 (B) f. 204, paper, about 1475⁷. Contains seven minor poems and poems by Hoccleve and Lydgate. This manuscript is very closely related to manuscript F, and Furnivall suggests that both drew from a common source.
- (6) Harleian 2251 (H2) British Museum, f. 49, paper, late fifteenth century.⁸
 A second copy of Shirley's manuscript, but contaminated. Contains Prioress' Tale, Fortune, Gentillesse, Complaint to his Purse and poems by Lydgate.
- (7) Harleian 7578 (H1), British Museum, f. 20 v, paper, late fifteenth century.⁹
 One page, six stanzas only. Contains Pity, Gentillesse, Stedfastnesse, Against Women Unconstant, and Lydgate's Proverbs.

If authorship is proved by the testimony of the Sion and Pepys manuscripts and suggested by the remainder, it is also attested, curiously enough, by a manuscript from which the poem is notably absent. Thus, in his verse translation of the Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine, Lydgate distinctly attributes the poem to Chaucer:

"My mayster Chaucer in hys tyme,
After the Frenche he dyde yt ryme".¹⁰

He says that instead of translating the prayer himself, he will quote Chaucer - and then leaves a blank. Presumably, the poem was to be copied from another manuscript, which was not to hand, and owing to an oversight was finally omitted.

Finally, turning to the printed works, Speght's second edition of 1602, f. 347 contains the title "Chaucer's ABC....called La Priere de nostre Dame: made, as some say, at the request of Blanch, Duchesse of Lancaster, as a praier for her privat use, being a woman in her religion very devout". Of this, Furnivall notes: "suppos'd to be Stowe's heading in imitation of Shirley". But Speght copied Gg, the earliest independent manuscript, and not S (Shirley's manuscript). Since Gg was copied c. 1430, and Shirley died c. 1456, it could be suggested that Gg was also copied by Shirley. This would explain the scribe's comment at the beginning of the Parliament of Fowls, in manuscript Gg: "Litera directa de Scogan per G.C." However, it is here that the limitations of manuscript evidence become apparent. Variant readings (notably in line 5 where Shirley alone of all the scribes writes "crye" for "flee") indicate that the manuscripts are unrelated.

II. PLACING OF THE POEM IN THE MANUSCRIPTS

The placement of the poem enables us to divide the manuscripts into two important categories:

- a) Independent, appearing as an independent poem either alone or in a collection of other independent poems (H2 A Sp P1 P2 H1 F Gg B); to this group belongs:
 - (8) Manuscript A - the former Bedford Library manuscript, now in the British Museum (Additional 36983). Copied on paper, the manuscript contains no other poem by Chaucer. It is dated January 1st, 1442 at the end of the Three Kings of Coleyn, f. 16 v. ABC occurs at f. 176 with the following title: "Incipit carmen secundum Litterarum Alphabeti".

- b) Integral, part of a prose translation of G. de Deguilleville's Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine, wherein it comes as a prayer to the Virgin Mary (manuscripts Ff, G, L, J, S).
- (9) Ff v 30, Cambridge University Library f. 112 v (Ff), vellum. About 1425.¹¹
- (10) Q 2 25 Hunterian Museum, Glasgow (G). First half of the 15th century.¹² The manuscript is on vellum, and has a modern title of "The Romaunce of the Monk, or The Pilgrimage of the Lyfe of Manhood".
- (11) Laud 740, f. 103 v. (L). Vellum, c. 1450-60.¹³ Bodleian Library.
- (12) G 21 St Johns College Library, Cambridge; vellum, about 1460¹⁴ (J), f. 108 v. - sign. oiiij, quire xiiij.

In each of the five "integral" manuscripts the poem is preceded by the following paragraphs:

"Cap^m lv^m And þanne of þe clowde a scripture she kaste me, and seide me þus, // Loo heere how þow shuldest preye hire, boþe at this neede: and alwey when þou shalt have semblable need. and whan in swiche olde hondes þou shalt bee. Now rede it anon apertliche. and biseeche hire devowtliche. and with verrey herte bihoote hire: "bat þou wolt be good pilgrime. and þat þou wolt nevere go bi wey. þere bou weenest to fynde shrewede paas.

Cap^m lvj^m Now j telle yow þe scripture j undide. and unplytete it, and redde it. and maade at all poyntes my preyere. in þe foorme and in þe maneere þat þe same scripture conteenede. and as grace dieu hadde seyde it / þe forme of þe scripture ye shule heere. If A.b.c. wel ye kunne: wite it ye mown lightliche. for to sey it if it be needed....."

and it is followed by :

"Cap^m lviiij^m Whan þus j hadde maad my preyere to hire þat is dispensere to grace: hy j heef myn hand & drowh my bordoun to me. Grace as j haue told you of hire goodshipe rauhte it me. Whan j hadde it: to grace j seide. As me þinketh: riht now j fynde..."¹⁵

It would of course be a mistake to assume that the prose manuscripts are of later date than the independent ones. As Furnivall notes:

"Probably the manuscript of no independent text is earlier than the first prose manuscript (Ff v 30) which can hardly differ more than ten years, if at all, in date from the earliest independent manuscript, Gg 4 27."¹⁶ So the possibility that Chaucer translated the whole Pèlerinage cannot be discounted on these grounds. Further,

the poem comes in as a prayer, as if it were the work of the translator of the French manuscript, and not an insertion of another author's work. But it must be assumed (if only because of Shirley's note "Chaucer" at the side of the prayer) that, like Lydgate, an unknown translator deliberately sought out Chaucer's translation rather than insert his own. Because of its appearance in the five prose translations of de Deguilleville which are recorded in the 15th century it is evident that Chaucer's poem was very well known at the time.

CONCLUSIONS

Some of the benefits - and hazards - of studying closely the extant manuscripts of the poem have been stated in the above descriptions. Two other points - collation and handwriting - remain to be discussed.

Brusendorff in his account of the manuscripts in which the Minor Poems appears has this to say regarding collation:

"it appears to have been a common publishers' custom during the latter half of the 15th century to make one or more scribes copy a number of short poems in separate quires and to write these very much at random, merely with a view to get up such collections as would command a good price and a quick sale."¹⁷

Quoting manuscript Cambridge University Library Hh 4 12 which is all written in the same hand, he continues:

"while the quires section 1 and 3 are in the right order, the sections themselves were originally independent and not intended to be arranged as here.... [this] clearly makes it possible and even probable that the origins of the two Chaucerian poems here were widely different."¹⁸

Handwriting and collation alone, then, cannot be used as a reliable basis of determining relationships between manuscripts. It is only when such similarities agree with the variant readings that such evidence can be admitted. Take the relationship between the two manuscripts containing ABC: manuscript F and manuscript B. That Bodley was not copied from Fairfax has been asserted by Furnivall and Koch¹⁹ on the basis of variant readings. It can be corroborated moreover by the state of the manuscript:

"It is true that B may be traced back to a codex similar to F.... and it is quite probable that these two volumes had a common ancestor, resembling both but the order is quite different."²⁰

Brusendorff's next suggestion, however, is more hazardous. He notes that French titles to poems in manuscripts F and B occur also in manuscripts P1 and P2 and suggests this as partial evidence for inferring that a set of booklets containing among others the "Priere a nostre Dame par Chaucer" formed a textual unit. Further:

"Since the French headings were also found in manuscript Li they must have been present in the ultimate original of both groups; this was probably Chaucer's own draft...."²¹

This "probability" is a slender hypothesis, though a possible one. But it is certainly not sufficient evidence for refuting Koch, Skeat and Heath in their preferred reading of the "Pilgrimage" variants.²² On this evidence, too, Brusendorff favours Tyrwhitt's base text: manuscript F, linking this up with P1 and P2. Manuscript Gg which also has a French title is also admitted to the group and offered as further "proof" that "the French titles are no doubt ultimately.... due to the poet."²³ Of course, it is possible, as can be seen from Koch's comments, that the above group (F B H1, P1, P2, Gg and Sp) form a separate branch from the group (S A Ff G L J), and variants in each group support this view.²⁴ But Brusendorff's implication that a French title proves the use of an original manuscript, therefore indicating that the "Tyrwhitt group is superior, is untenable because such evidence, however interesting it may be, cannot be admitted without the superiority of variant readings in the group.

THE PRINTED EDITIONS

The first comprehensive edition of Chaucer's Works was published in 1532 by Thynne, but neither this nor Speght's first edition (1598) included a copy of ABC. It first appeared in Speght's 1602 copy of the Works and has been more or less consistently attributed to Chaucer ever since. Printed editions containing this poem can conveniently be classified as follows: 1) Early printed editions of Chaucer's Works containing ABC; 2) Later editions containing ABC which are of interest from a textual point of view; 3) collections of Minor Poems containing helpful notes; 4) editions of ABC. As with the manuscripts, these editions have been closely studied for the present edition, and relevant findings have been recorded systematically, both below and in the Textual Notes.

EARLY EDITIONS of Chaucer's Works which contain ABC:

- 1602 Speght added ABC in his second edition - the first to include ABC. Base text used: manuscript Gg.
- 1687 Speght's edition reprinted with slight additions but no alterations to 1602 versions.
- 1721 Speght's edition reprinted with additions and alterations by Urry. According to Skeat, this edition was "the worst that appeared". It followed Dryden in amending Chaucer to contemporary tastes - though without Dryden's avowed purpose of "translation". Base text: Gg after Speght.
- 1775 An entirely new edition edited by T. Tyrwhitt after Speght. Base texts Gg & F.
- 1854 Bell's edition. Base text: Gg after Speght "from Urry's edition" of Poems.

LATER EDITIONS containing ABC, which are of interest:

- 1872 Morris, Works, vol v. Base text: Speght and a close following of manuscript F. No modern spelling. No textual notes.
- 1870-80 Furnivall, Works. All 14 versions of ABC copied, together with any alterations to the manuscripts. This parallel text edition, published for the Chaucer Society in three volumes, also contains other Chaucer poems. The volumes make up part of the Collected Works.

In a textual note, Furnivall suggests: "The Bedford manuscript Copy [Manuscript A] (and Shirley's one....) should be specially compared with that from the Cambridge University Library Ff v 30".²⁵

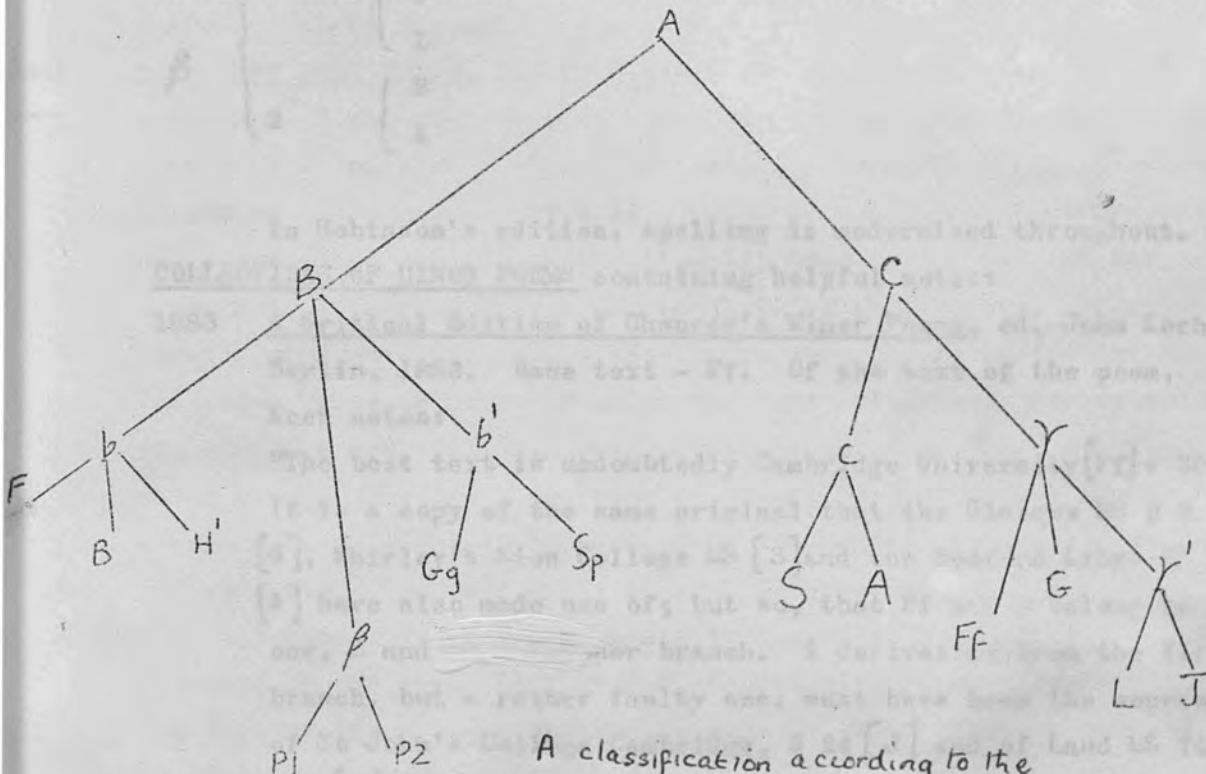
The versions are grouped in the three volumes as follows:

- I) the four manuscripts which appear in the prose versions of the Pèlerinage: Ff, G, J, L, with two "independent" versions: Gg, F.
- II) three complete copies - H2, A, Sp; three fragments: P1, P2, H1, all from independent manuscripts.
- III) two versions - S, B \bar{y} in which B is headed by Furnivall's comment: "lines 70, 135-6, 168, show that this ABC was not copied from that in Fairfax 16."

Of these, Group (I) offers the better texts, as opposed to the unreliable or contaminated texts of group (II); group (III) were printed at a later date as Odd Texts, as manuscript S (Shirley's) was not identified by Furnivall until after (I) went to press.

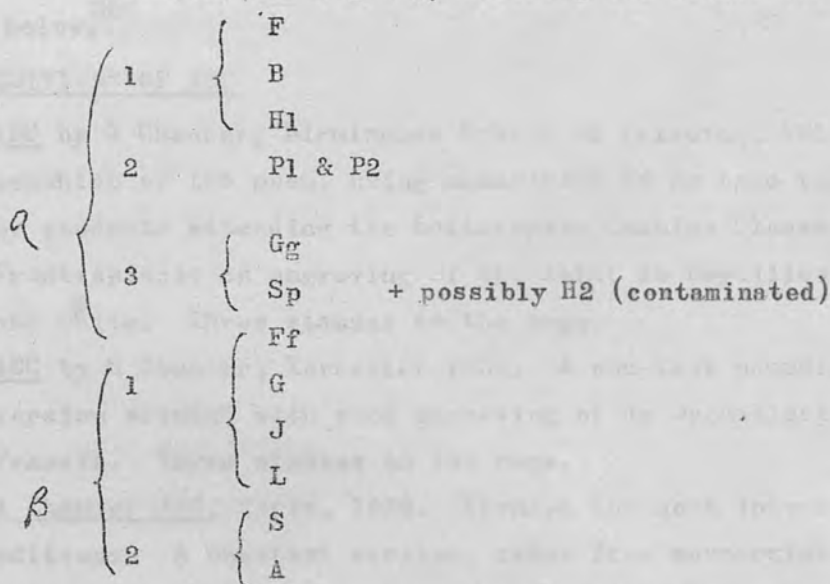
Furnivall, in another volume, also published a one-text edition of the French original.²⁶

1890 Globe edition of Works. Base text: Ff. Manuscripts are classified as follows, group C being the basis of the Globe edition, in agreement with Koch's classification: (S, A, Ff, G, L, J):



A classification according to the Globe Edition

- 1894 Skeat, Works, vol. 1. Base text: Ff. On classification, Skeat comments: "we may roughly divide the better manuscripts in two sets thus:
- a) Ff, G, L, J.
b) F, B, Gg.
- The rest I have not collated".²⁷ A parallel text of the French original is also included.
- 1933 Robinson, Works. Base Text: Ff. Manuscripts are classified as follows ("group β offers the better text"):²⁸



In Robinson's edition, spelling is modernised throughout.

COLLECTIONS OF MINOR POEMS containing helpful notes:

- 1883 A Critical Edition of Chaucer's Minor Poems, ed. John Koch, Berlin, 1883. Base text - Ff. Of the text of the poem, Koch notes:
- "The best text is undoubtedly Cambridge University [Ff] v 30. It is a copy of the same original that the Glasgow MS Q 2 25 [G], Shirley's Sion College MS [S] and the Bedford Libr. MS [A] have also made use of; but so, that Ff and G belong to one, S and A to another branch. A derivation from the first branch, but a rather faulty one, must have been the source of St John's College Cambridge, G 24 [J] and of Laud MS 740 [L] which are still more degenerated. The other group of MSS is formed by the Cambr. Univ. MS Gg 4 27 [Gg] of which Speght's edition [Sp] of 1602 is a very close reprint, by the Fairfax MS 16 [F], the Bodl. 638 [B], the Harleian 7578 [H1] - these being copies from the same branch - and the two hands of the Pepys MS 2006. [P1, P2] which must have been

taken from one common source. They are not complete, though, ending with a spurious 60th line: H1 breaks off even before - its last is line 48. Finally, there is the Harleian MS 2251 [H2] which however is so bad that I might have entirely neglected it".

As was seen above, the Globe editor followed Koch's findings and later editors including Robinson have found no cause to deviate from the above classifications.²⁹ Various helpful textual notes and explanations which Koch points out are added, where relevant, below.³⁰

EDITIONS OF ABC

- 1933 ABC by G Chaucer, Birmingham School of Printing, 1933. A one-text pamphlet of the poem, using manuscript Ff as base text, was printed "by students attending the Letterpress Machine Classes" at the BSP. Frontispiece: an engraving of the Abbot de Deguilleville in black and white. Three stanzas to the page.
- 1934 ABC by G Chaucer, Worcester 1934. A one-text pamphlet of the Ff version printed with wood engraving of de Deguilleville by Joyce Francis. Three stanzas to the page.
- 1936 A Chaucer ABC, Paris, 1936. Perhaps the most interesting of the editions. A one-text version, taken from manuscript Ff, and printed with an introduction by L Gillet (Academie Francaise) and illustrated by Lucia Joyce. Each page contains one stanza together with one illuminated capital of the alphabet executed in pen and ink, in various colours. Unlike the capitals which decorate, for example, manuscript G, these drawings attempt to suggest the content of the following verse by means of their form and colouring. For example, the image of the stairs is built into the curve of the C drawing, while ornate jewels - blue, Mary's colour; purple, symbol of royalty, - combine with a jewel emblem to form the design of A which stands for almighty. The colours in which M is sketched recall the burning bush - subject of the stanza which begins with "M" - while V is executed in the shape of a vessel adorned with purple jewels. The illustrations are a remarkable example of an artistic extension to literary criticism.
- 1965 Prayer to the Virgin Mary, modernised by D O Pitches, Cambridge, 1965. A 23 page pamphlet containing two versions of the poem, each page having one stanza of the original text, with a modernised version printed underneath. The version used for the base text is that used by Robinson: Ff.

CONCLUSIONS

The printed editions fall naturally into groups as follows: (1) those printed for Chaucerian scholars, whose interest is mainly editorial; and (2) those intended as religious pamphlets whose authorship, while interesting, is of secondary importance. Somewhat surprisingly, it is those editions printed in the 20th century (with the exception of Robinson) which fall into category (2), and which bear the following points of similarity with the 15th century manuscripts. They indicate the importance of the poem as a devotional lyric - the interest being religious rather than "Chaucerian". The text is issued in pamphlet form by printers of devotional texts, no single edition having yet been published with full notes, glossary and criticism. Alternatively, the interest is artistic: ABC, as the scribes bore witness in the 15th century manuscripts, lends itself to illumination and embellishment. Finally, in the latter group, the original text is often stressed, with Chaucer represented merely as an intermediary. Thus, the Abbé de Deguilleville regains his importance in these later editions, both in his own right and also as the author of the prose version of the Pèlerinage from whom possibly Bunyan drew inspiration.³¹

FOOTNOTES

1. see A I Doyle, "Unrecorded Chaucer Manuscript", Durham Philobiblon, I (1953), pp 54-55. In Cosin Ms. V. I. 9, which is a late 14th century or early 15th century copy of Book I of Giles de Rome, Le Livre du gouvernement dez rois et des princes, an early or mid-15th century hand has copied the first and second stanzas of ABC. According to Doyle, the Cosin text is corrupt and incomplete, a final couplet being added by the scribe.

Doyle's text, reproduced literally, is as follows:

Alle myghty and alle mercyable gwene
 To qwome alle thys werlde fleethe for socoure
 To have relees of syghe of sorwe of tene
 O gloryous vyrgyne of alle floures floure
 Helpe and releef O goodly debonnayre
 Helpe welle of pete of mercy the merowre
 For venquischyd me hathe my cruel adversayre

Bounte so fyxe hathe in thine herte hys tente
 That weel I wot thou wete my socoure be
 Thou wylt not refusyn hym that with goode entente
 The mercy askyth thine herte is ay so fre
 Thowe art haboundawnce rote of pleyne felecite
 Havene of refute of quyete & of reste
 Lo houghe theyfys sevene chasyn me
 Helpe ladye er thanne my schyppe to breste

Thenkyth on hym that this wrote
 Qwanne ye seen hym not.

2. Edition, Section 28, n.2.
3. Brusendorff, Chaucer Tradition, pp 212-3, dates the manuscript second half of the fifteenth century, while Furnivall's estimate of 1440 is more specific (Minor Poems, I, p. 123).
4. Furnivall (Ibid, p. 123) estimates mid-fifteenth century for both P1 and P2, but Brusendorff is more helpful here (Chaucer Tradition, pp. 193-4); he dates the first manuscript in the volume (P1) about 1450, pointing out that it belongs to the first half of the manuscript, the second part containing P2 being added in the late fifteenth century.
5. No date given in Furnivall but Brusendorff (Chaucer Tradition, p.183) dates the manuscript about 1450.
6. Furnivall's date (Minor Poems I, p. 125); Brusendorff (Chaucer Tradition, p. 201) estimates early fifteenth century.
7. Brusendorff's date (Ibid., p. 183); no date given by Furnivall.
8. Brusendorff's date (Ibid., pp. 181-2); no date given by Furnivall.
9. From handwriting. No date given by Furnivall or Brusendorff, but the latter, referring to this fragment, suggests that it bears traces of Shirley's work (Chaucer Tradition, p. 228).

10. Manuscript Cotton Vitellius cxiii, f. 256.
11. Furnivall's date (Minor Poems I, p. 124). He notes (p. 123) that manuscript Ff "can hardly differ more than ten years, if at all, in date from the earliest independent manuscript, Gg." This and the following "pilgrimage" manuscripts are not dated by Brusendorff.
12. Furnivall's date (Minor Poems I, p. 124).
13. Furnivall's date: Ibid., p. 123.
14. Furnivall's date: Ibid., p. 124.
15. This version is taken from manuscript Ff v 30 - herein used as the Base Text.
16. Furnivall, Minor Poems, page 123.
17. Brusendorff, Chaucer Tradition, p. 179 (italics mine).
18. Ibid., p. 180.
19. See Furnivall Minor Poems III, p. 67; Koch, Edition, n. 79.
20. Brusendorff, Chaucer Tradition, p. 186.
21. Ibid., p. 200.
22. Ibid., p. 240.
23. Ibid., p. 200.
24. See below page 38 for Koch's comments.
25. Minor Poems I, p. 123.
26. see below page 135.
27. Skeat, Edition, p. 61.
28. Robinson, Edition, p. 915.
29. But two critics - ten Brink and later Brusendorff - favour the Tyrwhit group. For a discussion of their views see Brusendorff, Chaucer Tradition, p. 240 f., and on specific points, see below, textual notes to line 35.
30. See below, textual notes.
31. see L. Gillet, Introduction to the 1936 edition of A Chaucer ABC, and N. Hill, Le Pèlerinage de l'Homme compared with the Pilgrim's Progress of John Bunyan, London, 1858.

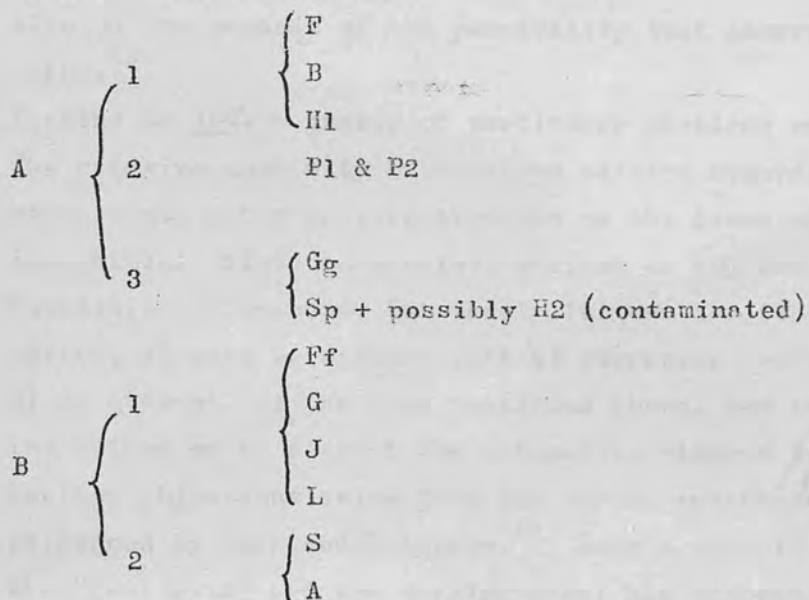
II. CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS

The four most recent editions of ABC - those of Koch, Heath, Skeat and Robinson¹ - agree on the following points:

- 1) That all the preserved manuscripts derive from one copy of the original.² This view, shared by Brusendorff, is based mainly on
 - a) the addition, common to all manuscripts, of "suffred" at line 163;
 - b) the error - again common to all - by which "pighte" appears at 163 where "prighte" is required;
 - c) the general confusion which arises at 79 over the French word "entame" where the "best texts" are incorrect;
 - d) the omission, in all manuscripts but Gg, of "bryghte" at 181;
 - e) the deficiency in one syllable, of 181, 183.

Furthermore, items (c) and (e) indicate that this common source was already a faulty one.³

- 2) that a hierarchy of manuscripts can be established whose relationship can be shown as follows:⁴



Each editor has used the traditional method of editing known as recension - "the systematic application of knowledge about the genetic history of the manuscripts to the rejection of unoriginal readings."⁵

The arguments against recension are well-known. They are, briefly:

1. The difficulty of recovering a genetic history of manuscripts;
2. the problem of controlling the subjective factor involved in the process;
3. the large amount of coincident variation (two or more scribes independently making similar substitutions), conflation (contamination by memory or correction) and lateral transmission which often obscures and precludes any inference of genetic relationship between the manuscripts.

Various attempts have been made to control the subjective element involved. Despite the postponement of the editor's judgment, in Greg's The Calculus of Variants, "judgments concerning the originality of readings which are incapable of logical proof" play an essential part in the application of the calculus.⁶ Manly and Rickert's method, whereby decisions were based on the persistence of agreements in the manuscripts of the Canterbury Tales, relies on a large number of manuscripts being available and so may not be applied to such editions as, for example, Susannah where only five manuscripts are to hand.⁷ George Kane, challenging Knott's method of selecting "significant errors," objects to the assumed reliability of "striking" variants as evidence of genetic relation, on the grounds that conflation may be confined to some of the most striking variants;⁸ while Greg's alternative - of seeking for the genetic source among the "herd of dull commonplace readings" - is rejected as equally unreliable because of "an inherent probability of coincident variation".⁹ Again, Kane objects to the inference that one kind of variant such as omission is evidence of genetic relation, also on the grounds of the possibility that convergent variation might occur.¹⁰

Turning to ABC, a number of particular problems can be seen to emerge. The relative unanimity of previous editors regarding a hierarchy of manuscripts makes an investigation on the lines of George Kane's Edition impossible: Since no previous edition of ABC contains a detailed exposition of methods, but merely follows the findings of a preceding editor, it must be assumed that a) recension was the method used; b) no attempt, of the kind mentioned above, has been made to question the method or to correct the subjective element involved.

Further objections arise from the strict adherence to the Base Text evidenced by Koch and Robinson.¹¹ Koch's note 79 also implies that the "best texts" are the earlier ones; his procedure at 39 - in selecting S's variant rather than that of the more reliable F reflects this prejudice.¹² Both of these objections - strict adherence to the Base Text and assumption that age is a guarantee of superiority - can be used to indicate a further danger resulting from recension. The manuscripts, it is generally agreed, divide neatly into two groups (A and B); Group A consists of manuscripts F B H1 P1 P2 Gg Sp, while group B is made up of Ff G J L S A. While group A is made the basis of earlier editions (Speght, Tyrwhitt) and favoured by both Brusendorff and ten Brink¹³, later editors have preferred the readings of group B. Koch's preference, at line 39, for the reading of S and his assertion at 79 that the "best

texts" are A S Ff, indicate a dependence upon genetic relationship which can be shown to be unreliable. By adhering too closely to these two groups he has been liable to the error of preferring an easier reading at line 39, and elsewhere.

The discovery of well-defined tendencies of variation such as those found in ABC and set out in the next chapter must reduce the possibility of clearly distinguishing between "genetic groups, groups produced by conflation, and those produced by coincident variation," and the genealogy produced by previous editors must be regarded as untrustworthy when used for recension.¹⁴ I therefore followed Kane in turning to the study of the variant readings as types of substitution, for:

"Clearly, if tendencies of variation could be established, the knowledge of those tendencies would afford means of distinguishing original from unoriginal variants where originality might not otherwise be immediately apparent. The text could now be fixed by a direct method, in effect by applying widely and with some confidence the second of the principles described by Greg for determining originality without recourse to recension: 'To show that a reading is original two main lines of argument are available: that the reading is itself satisfactory, and that it explains the origin of the erroneous alternative'."¹⁵

An analysis of the variant groups of the manuscripts of ABC in relation to a text determined by means of information about scribal tendencies of substitution, as well as other considerations, such as metrical criteria and the durior lectio principle, is presented below.¹⁶

The presentation which follows is alphabetical; Speght's edition (a copy of Gg) is not included. I have followed Kane in excluding "all variants involving no addition or substitution of words, or change of meaning, or metrical change, or error of copying, in fact all certainly orthographical and dialectal variants".¹⁷

VARIATIONAL GROUPS OF TWO MANUSCRIPTS

1a. Manuscript A in 3 agreements with H2:

26. that ... n'art) pat pou art. 30. of (2)) om. 128. might) may.

1b. Manuscript A in 3 agreements with S:

31. god) om. 152 almost) om. smert so) Smertith me so.

2a. Manuscript B in 5 agreements with F:

88 on) in. 119 ther) ther as. 141 governeresse) gouvernesse.

149 0) I. 172 a) om.

2b. Manuscript B in 2 agreements with L:

103. for (2)) for so. 136 eche) euegych.

3. Manuscript Gg in 3 agreements with H2:

6 thou) al. 53 not him) hym not. 163 eek) sufferede ek.

4a. Manuscript H2 in 11 agreements with J:

17 yow) the. 30 justice) riȝtwisnes). 38 shall ... founde)
in me than shal be founde. 48 my) the. 64 his) theyr.

71 thee lovith) t~~p~~. 134 ye) þou. 135 you) the.

147 you) the. 175 ye) þou. 177 yow) the.

4b. Manuscript H2 in 3 agreements with L:

24 nere) ne were. 145 ther) where. 154 into) unto.

4c. Manuscript H2 in 2 agreements with P2:

24 blisful) blessed. 28 blisful) blessed.

5a. Manuscript J in 30 agreements with L:

57 tel him) om. as was) as it was. 59 And) om. 63 Thanne)

That. 67 a soule) we. 68 him) us. 69 Thanne) So.

his (1)) oure. his (2)) oure. 78 for my) as for my.

94 in) a. 97 haddest) ȝit had. 99 That ... thou) Thow erte.

119 as ... oughte) om. 132 is his) it es þat. 133 is ... haboundinge)

I putte myne habidyngge. 139 but it) bot ȝif it. un) om.

141 eek) also. 150 acursed) cursed. 154 ledest) led. 157 in (2))

om. 160 that) om. 164 adoun) downe. 166 And (1)) om.

eek) also. 170 fer forth) fferforth to. 171 ne) om. 172 list ... lamb)

as a lambe list (forL). 177 clepeth) calleȝ.

5b. Manuscript J in 3 agreements with P1:

15 that) om. 27 vouched sauf) vouche saff. 40 werk) werkes.

6. Manuscript L in 2 agreements with S:

118 us) om. 154 the) þyn.

VARIATIONAL GROUPS OF THREE MANUSCRIPTS

1a. Manuscripts A Ff S in 2 agreements:

39 correcte me) me (we)S) chastyse. 141 this) þe.

1b. Manuscripts A H2 J in 2 agreements:

77 that) þe. 90 ther) om.

1c. Manuscripts A J L in 2 agreements:

13 pleyn) ell. 44 0 ... yit) AA. yit helpe.

2. Manuscripts B F Gg in 3 agreements:

137 God) he. 154 And) That. 158 court) contre.

3. Manuscripts G J L in 2 agreements:

55 if) om. 154 And) om.

4. Manuscripts H2 J L in 6 agreements:

106 lust) rest. 108 to) om. 112 ne) om.

137 is) it es. ne) om. 152 it) I.

5. Manuscripts J L S in 3 agreements:

9 his) om. 79 no ... wounde) my wounde na mare.
127 on) of.

VARIATIONAL GROUPS OF FOUR MANUSCRIPTS

Manuscripts B F G g H2 in 2 agreements:

159 0) of. 162 the) a.

VARIATIONAL GROUPS OF SEVEN MANUSCRIPTS

Manuscripts B F Gg H1 H2 P1 P2 in 4 agreements:

25 thou) om. 33 been ... thee) yn the be . 35 Hast ... me)
Vnto mercy hastow receyuid me. 45 wil) witte.

RESULTS:Groups of 2 manuscripts in agreement:

<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>Gg</u>	<u>H2</u>	<u>J</u>	<u>L</u>
A H2 - 3	<u>B F - 5</u>	Gg H2-3	<u>H2 J - 11</u>	<u>J L - 30</u>	L S - 2
A S 3	B L 2		H2 L 3	J P1 3	
			H2 P2 2		

Groups of 3 manuscripts in agreement:

<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>H2</u>	<u>J</u>
	B F Gg - 3	G J L - 2	<u>H2 J L - 6</u>	J L S - 3
A Ff S 2				
A H2 J 2				
A J L 2				

Groups of 4 manuscripts in agreement: B F Gg H 2 - 2.

Groups of 7 manuscripts in agreement: B F Gg H1 H2 P1 P2 - 4.

===== = persistent groups

----- = less persistent, but
notable, groups

CONCLUSIONS

The above investigation showed that:

1. Only three groups were at all persistent;
2. a number of relatively persistent groups were often in conflict among themselves or with groups in (1); these could not be ignored.
3. a substantial amount of random groups indicated occurrence of conflation or coincident variation;
4. evidence for the division of the manuscripts into two genetic groups could not be established;
5. no stemma of the manuscripts could be reconstructed.

In the variational groups of two manuscripts, two groups appeared to be persistent: H2 J (11) and J L (30). Less persistent was B F (5). But even the most strongly attested group J L cannot be convincingly established, since the two manuscripts appear frequently in conflicting groups. Thus, against group J L must be set: 2 groups in which J appears with another manuscript, and 3 in which L appears with another manuscript - a total of 21 agreements. The group H2 J, resting on 11 agreements, is qualified by 33 agreements of J with another manuscript, and 11 of H2 with another manuscript. The variational groups shown above do not, of course, indicate the full extent of random agreement; manuscript J appears either singly or in larger groups of variants at least 50 times. Such figures must be taken into account in assessing the amount of convergent variation that occurred in the transmission of ABC. As Kane comments: "Inferentially the manuscripts must be in some genetic relation, but actually its character altogether fails to emerge at this stage. The majority of the variational groups of two set out above must be random".¹⁸

Among the groups of three manuscripts, H2 J L alone appear to be persistent, and comparison with the above findings (H2 J - 11; J L - 30) suggests the existence of a genetic group. But H2 is visibly corrupt and as such has been rejected by two previous editors.¹⁹ Further, the above analysis shows that these six agreements are qualified by nine agreements with other manuscripts among the variational groups of three alone. Finally, as Kane points out, such a hypothesis could infer reference to copying from different exemplars in different parts, or to conflation - references which would not be useful for recension.²⁰

There remain to be discussed the four agreements between one group of manuscripts: B F Gg H1 H2 P1 P2 referred to above as group A. Since two previous editors (Speght and Tyrwhitt) have based their texts on this group it may appear reasonable to infer a relationship between them. But it was seen above that H2 is a corrupt manuscript and moreover shares several agreements with the "group B" manuscripts: J and L. The relationship between B and F (five agreements) may appear a more encouraging example, until some 30 instances where the manuscripts appear either singly or in other groups are taken into account. A further three manuscripts: H1 (48 lines), P1, P2 (60 lines) are fragmentary. This leaves only Gg. If the manuscripts B F Gg H1 H2 P1 P2 are descended from a common ancestor, this descent is so obscured that it is impossible to rely on it for the purposes of recension.

Finally, the assumption that all manuscripts are descended from an exclusive common ancestor cannot be based merely on the slender evidence given at the beginning of this chapter - that is: one omission, one error, one instance of confusion, an omission in all but one manuscript, the deficiency in one syllable of two lines. Further, it was suggested that the instance of confusion and the deficiency in one syllable of two lines indicate that this common source was faulty. The confusion no doubt arose over the unfamiliar French word "entame" and, far from being general, was restricted to four manuscripts; line 181 is not deficient in one syllable in all manuscripts. Since it is impossible to prove a genetic relationship between the manuscripts of ABC, the method of recension must be rejected. In order to determine which are the original readings it is necessary to follow George Kane in turning to the classification of variant readings:

"The sole source of authority is the variants themselves, and among them, authority, that is originality, will probably be determined most often by identification of the variant likeliest to have given rise to the others."²¹

FOOTNOTES

1. see, for details, above pages 37-39. .
2. see textual notes 163, 79, 181-3, below.
3. see Koch's comments, textual notes 79, 181-3.
4. Robinson's version: Edition, p. 915.
5. Kane, Edition, p. 53.
6. W. W. Greg, The Calculus of Variants, Oxford, 1927, pp 47-8.
7. Manly, J. M. and E. Rickert, The Text of the Canterbury Tales, ii, Classification of the Manuscripts, Chicago, 1940, Susannah, ed. A. Miskimin, New Haven, 1969.
8. see Kane, Edition, p. 59 and footnotes p. 59 for bibliographical references.
9. Ibid., p. 59, footnote 4.
10. Ibid., p. 60.
11. see, for example, textual note 39 below.
12. see textual note 39; for Brusendorff's remarks see textual note 5.
13. see Brusendorff, The Chaucer Tradition, p. 240; see also textual note 35.
14. Kane, Edition, p. 62.
15. Ibid., p. 62.
16. see below pages 51-62.
17. see Kane, Edition, p. 68.
18. Ibid., p. 82.
19. Koch and Skeat; see above pages 38, 39.
20. Kane, Edition, p. 90.
21. Ibid., p. 115.

III. EDITORIAL RESOURCES & METHODS

CLASSIFICATION OF VARIANTS

Several characteristics of the poem ABC seem to confirm the initial impression that, as a copy-text, it offers little temptation to alter or embellish. The absence of alliteration and the clearly-defined structure of the 8-line stanza with its decasyllabic metre and regular rhyme scheme appear rather to discourage any adornment or alteration on the part of the scribe. But despite the discipline imposed by the style, substitutions are frequent. It is the subject of the poem - a prayer to the Virgin - which appeals to the scribe, often leading him to ignore the metre in favour of emphasising the import of his copy or else simplifying apparently awkward constructions to ensure that the reader will understand the meaning. In many ways, the fifteenth century scribe mirrors the fifteenth century poet whose tendency to embellish his model led to such over-enthusiastic aureation as is found in late Middle English religious lyrics.¹ A further parallel can be drawn. Just as the poet Chaucer sought to reduce and amend his original - to translate his authority into his own framework of experience - so in a smaller way the scribe becomes a participator in his copy; he becomes - for himself at any rate - momentarily the poet. In attempting to recover the original readings, the editor of a medieval text has two main criteria at his disposal:

a) a knowledge of metre and rhyme and of Chaucer's literary and stylistic habits can help in determining "(1) whether the original reading is one that can reasonably be attributed to the author, and (2) whether the later reading is one that the author can reasonably be supposed to have substituted for the former".²

b) the procedure of selecting from the variants the durior lectio or probable direction of variation from it. The rationale of this principle is made clear by Moore:

"If a word or expression be strange or unfamiliar, either in itself or in the sense implied in the passage - if the form of a word be unusual or archaic - if the order of the words be apparently unnatural or uneuphonious - if the construction of the sentence be long, complicated, or grammatically anomalous - in all these and other similar cases that might be added, there is a natural tendency to substitute simpler, more obvious, more familiar words, inflexions and constructions."³

In cases of difficulty, the editor of this particular poem has an added point of reference:

c) the French original. That de Deguilleville's work was widely known in England is borne out by the existence of an English prose version, in four copies of which ABC appears integrally. The possibility that a scribe may have had a copy of the French original beside him is suggested particularly by the substitution at line 38 of "good" in place of "fruit"—the French at this point has "bien"—and by the occasional preference of French rather than English spelling:

9. Bountee) Bonte P2.

Two further considerations remain:

d) the evidence of majority readings can in absence of all other considerations be taken into account in determining originality.⁴

e) scribal tendencies. As a final means of determining originality the knowledge of repeated and similar reactions of scribes to copy can be of assistance at points of difficulty.⁵

Knowledge of the above criteria suggests that the readings set out below are unoriginal.

In classifying the variants of ABC, I have followed the same principles as those set out by Alice Miskimin in her edition of Susannah:

"minor spelling and dialect variations that do not affect alliteration or rhyme, and alternations such as þe and the, & and and, were ignored, but every substantive discrepancy from the provisionally edited text, by addition, omission, or substitution, was recorded. That is, every substantive variant which deviates from the presumed original so as to affect the grammar or meaning of the poem, and every dialect spelling which alters the metrical pattern or changes the rhyme, is recorded as a scribal error."⁶

The approach and method of classification follows closely that suggested by George Kane: to define tendencies of error which recurred so often as to be presumed typical of the scribal errors involved in the transmission of any medieval text.⁷ His findings can be usefully applied to the variants of ABC which can be classified as follows.

I. MECHANICAL ERRORS involving accidental miscopying of the text arise mainly from inattention through tiredness, distractions or verbal associations. They can be grouped as follows.

A. simple aberrations:

2. this) the H1. 7. on) of F Gg J L Sp. my) me A.
 10 wolt) wit Gg. 19 oughten) ough P2. 20. take on)
 take of A; takyn of L. greevous) geuous Gg. 37 we) that H1.
 43 you) þan A. 47 tak) takys L. heede) hide J.
 49 nevere) euer S. 50 neither) none H2. 51 But) both L;
 that H2. 60 as) a H2. 61 in) of A. 63 Thanne) That JL.
 thou) om. L. 64 of) or B. 70 bringest) bring A.
 74 lighted) lyghtened H2. 75 righte) redy H2. 77 that)
 þe A H2 J Sp. 88 on) in B F. 89 with) of Gg. 94 in) a JL.
 104 an) on Gg. 105 that) þo Gg Sp.
 111 on) in L. 120 Doo) To A. 121 bithinke) thinke B.
 127 on) of J L S. 132 is his) it is A Ff G S. 132 rightful)
 rihtful Ff. 136 eche) euerych B L. 141 this) þe A Ff S.
 143 therefore) therof H2. 145 Temple) Temperall A.
 149 o) I B F. 158 unto) on Gg Sp. thi) the H2.
 161 alighte) lith J. 164 blood) bloody H2. 166 and (2))
 an G. 175 and) or Sp. 179 ought) awe L; out Gg Sp.
 184 penitentes) penitent L.

B. repetition of copy:

15. that) that that G.

C. the transposition of letters in a word:

32 thurgh) þour Gg. 34 For) From H2. 48 poynt) ponyte H1.
 50 bitter) bettir A H2 J L. 75 right) rit; J. 109 From)
 ffor A. 146 Fro) for Sp. 153 court) contre B F Gg Sp.
 174 mesured) sured me Sp.

or of words in a line:

48 me to chace) to me chace P2.

D. visual errors involving the mechanical substitution of a word of

similar shape-(* precedes the type of variant which suggested the error):

34 many) mane Gg. 41 Fleeinge) *Ffleynge) Flying Sp.
 45 wil) wytte B F Gg H1 H2 P1 P2. 68 haleth) helith H2.
 80 hele) help H2. 84 bobounce) bostaunce Sp. 86 Convict)
Committe J. 88 Continue) *Contenue) Contene L. 89 flawmes)
 floures H2. 90 stikke) qwist J; stroke S. 106 distresse)
 disease H2. 116 to werre) to wery L. 118 save) haue S.

121 yit) right Sp. 123 sinke) stynke B. 127 reuthe) *rewthe)
 rewte J. 150 full) fell L. yore) sore H2 Sp. 155 wisse)
 wiche Gg. 157 filthe) fyghte L. 159 bench) benke; bouche L.
 163 prighte) pighte - all manuscripts. 165 this) thus L.
 168 This) Than H2. socour) sauour H2. 174 his) is A F L S; es J.
 178 To wasshe) þe whiche Gg. 183 palais) place H2 J L. bilt)
 bryghte L.

E. paleographic errors - arising through the similar appearance in
 fifteenth century handwriting of various letters in a word:

confusion of e and o:

159. fresh) frosche Gg.

confusion of b and v:

10 thou) you P2. 117 sithen) seyn J; syne L.

confusions involving w:

77 Now) Norise H2. 97 Noble) Now H2.

confusion of f and s: 6. releve) *releeff G S) relees L; relese J

91 signe) figure H2. 169 figure) signe B.

confusion of b and l:

50 bitter) letter S. 110 beede) lede L.

confusion of b and k:

84 bobounce) bokaunce J.

confusion of b and v:

84 bobounce) bovanns A.

confusion of ss and d:

13 largesse) larged L. (see textual note 13)

confusion of h and l:

159 cleped) cheped Gg.

F. difficulty with minims:

142 represseth) empresse J. 154 into) unto H2 L.

G. confusion over contractions or suspensions:

14 of (1)) and Gg H1 H2 Sp. 21 and) of H2.

66 Thou) That B. 74 that) yt Sp. 90 ther) þat S.

106 of) and J. 107 of) and H2. 112 nevere) neue Gg.

126 that) þou L. 141 governeresse) governesse BF.

H. wrong word-division:

174 mesured) me seured Gg. 184 merci able) Merciable A.

I. attraction to a word or letter previously copied:

6. thou) al Gg H2 Sp. 9 thin) myn Gg; my Sp. 10 my) his S.
 22 mighten wel) may righte wel L. 25 misericorde) misericordie Pl.
 44this) that H2. 45 and deede) and in deede G. 47 myn) my H1. lady)
 yit lady S. 53 him ysee) speke A. 59 the bille) a precious bille H2.
 76 not drede) nat dare drede H2. 88 pitous) pitisous J.
 90 brende) pere brende Gg. 106 lust) reste H2 J L. 107 0) 0 verray A.
 122 him) thyn H2. 154 And) that B F Gg Sp. 163 eek) eke Suffrid
 A B F Ff G S Sp; also suffred L; sufferede ek Gg H2 Sp; suffered J.
 171 That) So ferre that H2.

J. anticipation of copy:

- 8 Venquished) Venqueysheth Pl. 16 bright) deere H2. 20 han)
 *han taken) haven Pl. 26 grace and) om H1. 27 vouched sauf) fouchis
 saufe L. 29 þe) om J. 47 enemy) enemyn P2. 50 neither) nor F Gg Pl
 P2 Sp. 73 enlumyned) illunynde J. 76 Him) The H2. thar) dar G.
 80 into) al into H2. 90 ther) then Sp. 95 defende) fende H2.
 98 in us bee) be in vs it comes þorow þe J; in us be it cometh of þe L.
 101 in oure) of in H2. 102 wole and dar) dare þanne S. 116 to verre)
 the wers H2. 124 may) schal Gg Sp. 132 rightful) fulle Gg Sp.
 135 is ... haboundinge) is pitee yow biseche F. 146 deprived) priued J.L.
 154 hye toure) hie paradis toure J; hygh tour of paradyce L.
 159 0) of B F Gg H2 Sp; of a J. 174 his) is A F L S; es J.

K. the following errors are likely to have arisen from dictation:

- 35 Hast thou) as thou L. 46 clothe) close Gg Sp.
 83 peynes) penaunce S. 87 ground) crowned L.

II BORDER-LINE ERRORS

Between the two main types of scribal error - those which occur mechanically and those which are the result of intentional substitution - can be found a number of "borderline" errors comprising those variants which resist positive analysis into either main group. Examples are:
 A. minor alterations such as "the presence or absence of: the conjunction but before an object clause; and, within a line or at its head; an article; a possessive adjective or demonstrative adjective where the reference is not in doubt; the resumptive object pronoun; a conjunctive or prepositional element in a second or third parallel construction."⁸

One such instance occurs at line 2:

"To whom that al this world fleeth for socour"

The majority reading omits "that" probably because the metre might be called difficult and the scribes took the apparent insertion of "that" to be unmetrical⁹; or through a rejection of the syntactical construction "whom that".¹⁰ Alternatively, since "that" is neither metrically nor

grammatically essential, the omission may equally probably have arisen through mechanical error.

However the variant arose - mechanically or intentionally through the smoothing or "pruning" of unessential words - it is more important to determine which is the error: the omission or the addition of "that"; the decision must be a personal one. Presumption of originality can rest on the testimony of a majority reading only in absence of all other considerations; "whom that" appears to be the harder reading here; so the version of the base text is retained.

Another such difficulty arises in line 3: "of sinne of sorwe and teene". As Koch points out, such monosyllables as "of" and "and" look suspicious, since fifteenth century scribes who did not pronounce final -e tended to insert them to fill up the metre.¹¹ Since there is no way of ascertaining which was the original reading, the base text is adhered to.

B. Attempts to assimilate a scribe's dialect or other variants into the metre of his copy often cause confusion:

"Where neither an occasion of mechanical inaccuracy nor a possible motive for substitution can be recovered the editor is powerless ... [as in the case of] variants of dialect, construction, tense, mood or number, word order and vocabulary equivalents, which do not materially alter the substance of the communication in any way now determinable."¹² For instance at line 26: That thou n'art) pat pou art A H2; but pou art L; that ne pou erte J.

Here the subjunctive case gives rise to alternative constructions according to dialect and individual habits. /

Another case is 24. nere merci of you) ne were thy mercy thy H2; ware ne mercy ware of the J.

In the absence of other information, it is necessary to consider scribal habits. H2 (and L) probably attempted to clarify "nere" by expanding to "ne were", contracting "of you" to "thy" so as to compensate the metre. "You" is often substituted by "the" in H2. The second "thy" appears to occur from retention of copy.

J's "ware ne" appears to arise from a similar tendency to clarify, although it too could arise from variants of dialect or construction. Again, retention of copy causes the second "ware"; "the" replaces "you" in accordance with J's usual procedure.

C. Omission of phrases, clauses or whole lines may occur intermediately in a lost copy so that detection of the cause of omission may be impossible because of the possibility of further variation.¹³

For instance:

26. grace and) om. H1.

70. of ... strete) of drede B; om. F. (metrical inadequacy suggests that B's copy was also blank here)

D. In this particular poem, the manuscripts occasionally divide neatly into two groups (A and B).¹⁴ Where the reading is not necessarily harder in either case, and the meaning is not substantially altered, the version of the base text (group B) is adhered to. Thus at

33 been in thee) yn the be - group A.

58 to have) as for - group A

162 the) a, group A

III INTENTIONAL SUBSTITUTIONS

A. Substitutions intended to compensate for a previous error. This error may have occurred in an exemplar or else through the scribe's own mistake. The two cases cannot always be distinguished and are illustrated by the following examples:

29 bent) y belte y bent H1 (repetition after n/l confusion)

46 clothe with) close in with Gg Sp (addition of "in" to assimilate auditory error into the meaning of the text; addition of "owene" later in the line gives "close in with þyn owene grace").

50. were bitter) was neuer youre letter S. (after miscopying: nevere) euer - at previous line end; subsequent confusion of b/l results in "letter").¹⁵

59. the bille) the blyful bille F P2; þat blisful bille Gg P1 Sp; a precious Lille H2, (after omission of "precious" earlier in line).

99 That ... thou) Thow erte J L (after anticipation of copy at previous line end).

120 Doo ... have) Us aghte to penitence go and mercy hafe L (padding after omission of the interjection "as us oughte" from previous line end).

122 have) om. H2 (pruning after addition earlier in line).

132 is his) it is A Ff G S; it is þe S; it es þat J L (attempt to correct error in exemplar).

136 To ... biseeche) Off petee of whilke I the be seche J (after miscopying in line 135 the scribe attempts to assimilate that material into the contents of the next line).

152 smert so) Smertith Me So A S (addition after omission of "almost" earlier in line).

155 Of ... counsaile) Thou me wysse lady and counsayle L; pou wisse me lady and me counsayle J (after anticipatory error in previous line, scribes pad out the material remaining in 155).

170 wolde) wil H2 (to avoid repetition after earlier substitution).

171 nothing) om. H2 (compensation for addition through retention of copy).

B. the attempt to make the copy more explicit indicates the tendency towards involvement with the content and leads to: attribution of (1) more precise designation; (2) an attempt to make an event appear more immediate and impending:

6. thou) me pou J. 15 chasen) now chasen H2 P1.

29 the) pi L P2. 36 at the) atte by J.

39 me) my folise J. * 45 alle) alle way J. 53 thou) to him H2.

for I) for euer I, S. 58 Bicomme ... alliaunce) becom man heere for us in alliaunce H2. 82 the cros) thy Sone crose J. 104 helpen)

helpist us H2. 112 nevere) neuer here H2. 123 for) downe H2.

145 hath) ches Gg Sp. 148 me) me now H2. 152 it) I, H2 J L.

154 And ledest) lede L; led J. the) pyn L S. 183 that) thy J L.

* though this may arise through an attempt to maintain rhyming consistency: cf. Note 39.

C. whether for his own or for his reader's benefit, the scribe will occasionally supply translation, gloss, or near gloss often replacing a word not likely to have caused difficulty with one of similar meaning:

30. justice) riȝtwisnes H2 J. 108 humblesse) mekenesse J;

96 eternalli) endelesly J. 146 misbileeved) heretikes H2.

D. a similar type of substitution results in attempts to improve the original, either to avoid repetition, or by substituting a word which appeared to the scribe to be more apposite.

5 flee) crye S. 33 Evere) Ende S. 50 were bitter) was better H2.

49 Glorious) Gracyouse Gg Sp. 75 to yow) with þe Gg Sp.

133 merci) ioye Gg Sp. 175 and seye) softly J.

E. In his eagerness to be understood, the scribe will often attempt to clarify his copy by one of the following methods:

(1) addition or substitution of a word or phrase:

11 with) in H2. 12 thin ... is) thow art H2. 13 pleyn) all A J L.
 19 appeere) to spere L; for to a pere Gg Sp. 22 mighten wel) may wele J;
 may it wele H2. 38 fruit) good B F H1; goodnesse J. 40 my ...
 confounde) it will My werke confounde A. 41 to) on to P2.
 43 Biseeching ... absente) Besechynge the lady be nat absent H2.
 48 Unto) That un to Pl. my) the H2 J. 63 Thanne) So H2. 69 Thanne)
 So J L. 78 for my) as for my J L. 82 ne his) nor the H2. 84 alder)
 old L. 86 Convict) Convicted H2. 88 Continue) Open J. 92 on which)
 in whom H2. 96 dure) endure J. 101 in oure) of in H2. 103 for (2))
 for so B L; for as Gg Sp. 109 From) And of H2. 118 Thanne) So H2.
 119 ther) ther as B F; whan H2. 122 agilt have) hafe offended J.
 139 noon) nat H2. but it)botzif it J L. 145 ther) where H2 L;
 where in J. 148 I) for I Gg Sp. 157 All ... I) For I have H2.
 159 cleped) called J. 160 Ther as) Thare whare J; wher that thy H2.
 163 herte) hert to H2. 164 to) for to J. 166 eek) also J L.
 168 This) Than H2. 170 That ... forth) In that he wold H2. fer forth)
 fferforth to J L. 171 to) for to H2. 176 That ... targe) Ageyne
 veniance. that thow art ay his targe H2. 177 clepeth) callez J;
 callys L. 178 To ... gilt) The whylk of synful sowlys excusys pe
 gilte L. 179 Therefore) Wherefor H2. 180 nere) ware nocht J.
 weren) were but H2. 183 to) unto H2. 183 Bring) And bringe J; So
 bring S. 184 ben ... able) to thy mercy ar able J.

(2) omission of (a) a word which may cause difficulty or (b) an interjection:

24. hevene) om. G Gg H2 J L. 38 fruit) om. G L. 40 Of verrey right)
 om. L. 57 tel him) om. J L. 63 bothe) om. Gg H2 J Sp. 83 bothes) om. H2.
 119 as us oughte) om. J L.

(3) transposition of words in a phrase¹⁶:

38. shall ... founde) in me than shalbe founde H2 J.
 44 0 help yit) AA. yit helpe J; 0 yitt help A L; yit helpe H2.
 48 my ... is) the deed es in poynte J. 53 not him) hym not Gg H2.
 62 thou ... us) for us pou J. 69 Thanne ... thou) Thow makest than H2.
 71 thee loveth) loves the J; lovith thee H2. 79 no ... wounde)
 my wounde na mare J L S. 96 eternalli shal) shalle endelesly J.
 102 advocat noon) nanne advoket J. 122 agilt have) have agylt L.
 125 Who ... sone) wha to thy sone schalle J. 126 that ... pitee)
 pat of pitee ert J. 144 thee crowned) crowned pe J. 151 I am so)
 I so am J, 153 art ... noble) so noble es J. 160 evere shal)
 schall euere (more H2 J) H2 J L. 165 And ... this) And all pis was A Gg
 H2 Sp; So was it al S. 166 I ... am) To him I am J. 172 list ...
 lamb) as a lambe list J; as lambe lyst for L. 173 Now ... preye)
 Now I pray the lady fulle of mercy J.

F. There is also a tendency to add emphasis:

3 relees) relecesse J. 17 is) nys Pl. 31 The) That H2. no) pas J.
 36 at the) at that H2. 37 the) that H2. 38 So) To S. 39 werk)
 werkes J Pl. 42 from) fro pe Pl. tempeste) tempestes J.
 46 thi grace) byn owene grace Gg Sp. 50 nor in see) ne in the see J;
 ne yit in see H2. 54 the) pat J. 55 certes) certaynly J.
 64 oure ... to) oure faes to J; the fiendis alle to H2. his) pair J;
 theyr H2. 67 in errour) into errour H2; in any errour J. 81 kan I)
 ne cane I S. 90 a) oon S. 95 the) that H2. 97 haddest) yit had J L.
 99 cristes) cristis awyn J. 100 or glee) nor glee H2; ne gle Gg Sp;
 no opere glee J; ne none oper gle L. 111 awaiteth) hase waite J.
 112 nevere) neuere na J. 122 bothe him) boope offt him S. 129 and me)
 & ek me Gg Sp; and powe me S. 132 rightful) rewfulle J L. 137 is)
 it es H2 J L. 142 he) erth J. 144 wise) a wise J S. 148 can) ne
 cane S. 151 I am so) I am soore S. 168 socour) savour H2. 173 preye) biseech Gg.
 174 mesured) measured hath H2. 178 To ... gilt) To wassh the synful
 soulis out of ther gilt H2. 181 and) and eeke S.

G. Because the poem is in form of a prayer it is not surprising that the following attempts to embellish the copy are to be found: 4 Glorious)0 Glorious H2. 63 stinte) stynt & cease H2. 137 Soth) Soth & trowthe H2. 156 How) On whate wise J; of what wyse L. 173 Now ... preye) For us now blessed lady I the prey H2.

H. Scribal involvement in the prayer is also indicated by the use of familiar, more intimate forms of address or a widening of scope so as to include the reader (as 68. him) us J L). This in turn often leads to alteration of pronouns as a matter of course so that the effect is rather one of formality (138 thee) you L). Generally, it is pronouns which are affected: ¹⁷

7. my) oure H2. 17 yow) the H2 J. yow ... deere) yow my lady dere P2.
 43 yow) þe J. ye) þou J. you) the J. 62 bright) deere H2. us)
 me H2. 67 a soule) we J L. 68 him ayein) us agayne J.L. 69 his (1))
 oure J L. his (2)) oure J L. 70. him) us J. 84 this) us L.
 135 you) the H2 J. is ... haboundinge) I putte myne habidyng J L.
 136 you) the H2. 138 thee) you L. 146 these) this B. 147 you) the H2 J.
 151 ye) þou J. 165 my) oure H2. 166 I ... am) we to hym ben H2.
 167 my) oure H2. 168 I yow) I the J; we the H2. 175 ye) þou H2 J.
 176 ye) þou J. 177 yow) the H2 J.

I. "Bowdlerization" - a further indication that scribes probably regarded themselves as responsible for what they wrote - represents the following examples of censorship :

28. Crystes) om. A. 31 god) lorde H2; om. A S. 56 To ... eterne)
 To lastande Paine J. 137 God) he B F Gg Sp.

J. Homoeographs have been defined by Kane¹⁸ as "readings which preserve something of the shape of the supplanted, original words or phrases, but little or nothing of their meaning or relation to the context."

Only three examples can be confidently identified in ABC and probably arise from unfamiliarity with the verb "entame", a French word:

79 entame) vntame Ff S; attayne H2; untayne A.

The above survey shows that the poem ABC is well preserved in manuscript tradition. In most cases, errors can be traced to scribal tendencies of simple substitution; relatively few occurrences necessitate reference to the durior lectio principle. There are only three examples of homoeographs,¹⁹ and only twice does conjectural emendation become necessary (see textual note :163), occasioning the necessity to emend further where all variants are wrong and the archetype is likely to have been contaminated.

Even allowing for these points, however, there are dangers in strict adherence to a basic text, where alternative readings are more apposite. Thus, Greg: "It is impossible to exclude individual judgement from editorial procedure... The true theory is... that the copy-text should govern generally in the matter of accidentals, but that the choice between substantive readings belongs to the general theory of textual criticism and lies altogether beyond the narrow principle of the copy-text".²⁰

This survey has produced the following observations on scribal habits in this manuscript tradition:

CLASSIFICATION OF VARIANTS IN 12 MANUSCRIPTS & ONE PRINTED EDITION OF ABC

V A R I A N T S

I. MECHANICAL ERRORS

aberrations	repetition	transposition	visual	paleographic	difficulty wrong with minims word contractions division	retention of copy	anticipation of copy	auditory
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II. BORDERLINE variants - capable of being analysed into either: intentional or mechanical groupings

minor additions or omissions	dialect - attempt to assimilate this into copy	omissions	manuscripts divide into 2 groups of which neither is manifestly superior
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III. INTENTIONAL SUBSTITUTIONS

compensatory	explicitness	gloss	improve original	clarification	emphasis	embellishment	familiarity	bowdlerisation	homoeographs
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THE BASE TEXT

The base manuscript or copy-text is Ff, (Cambridge University Library, manuscript Ff v 30) and was chosen for the following reasons. It is a very fair manuscript of the early 15th century with few omissions or physical imperfections and the spelling of the scribe is mainly consistent. Of the 14 texts used, three: H1, P1, P2, are fragmentary; three: H2, J, L, make serious alterations and omissions; one: B, is blotted or faded in places; one: Sp, is a printed edition based on Gg, itself a careless copy; of the four remaining manuscripts, three: A, G, S, contain recurrent errors of spelling and omission and are inconsistently spelt. This leaves the two fairest copies: F and Ff. The spelling of F resembles closely that of the Ellesmere manuscript except that many final 'e's are added or dropped arbitrarily and the scribe uses 'y' in place of 'i'. But this manuscript F, though in general an excellent copy, contains several errors including the omission of a whole line. There appears to be no reason to prefer F, the fairest text of the "Tyrwhitt" group (B, F, P1, P2, Gg, joined by H1, H2) as did Ten Brink and Brusendorff.²¹ Ff, the best text of the prose or "pilgrimage" manuscripts, has been preferred by Koch, Skeat, Heath and Robinson.²²

THE PRESENTATION OF TEXT AND CRITICAL APPARATUS

I have used the following procedure in transcribing the text:

1. Base Text. One stanza of the Base Text appears on each page.

As does the scribe in most cases, I have treated initial letters of the line as capitals. Capitals which occur within the line are transcribed after the manner of Ff, for example capital O at line 44:

"pouh j be wikke O help yit at þis neede" but in the same line, as does Ff, I have transcribed "j" in lower case letters and do so throughout.

Suspensions and contractions are expanded, this being indicated by underlining thus: merci; the sole exception was at line 161 where the form Xpc is retained but is expanded to Kristus in the edited text opposite. Since Ff follows a consistent pattern there was no need to assess and apply "the common value of the suspension or contraction"²³ as it appeared elsewhere. Where Ff's uncontracted spellings suggest that a superior letter indicates contraction, as in þ^u, þ^t, expansion is shown thus: þou, þat. The Latin words which occur are underlined. Simple word divisions, such as un to, al mihti, are preserved.

2. Significant Variants.

Beneath the Base Text, is a critical apparatus to support the text.

This records:

"all substantive variants from the text, all morphological variants which may possibly be substantive, the majority of grammatical variants, the majority of dialect variants, and a great many orthographical variants."²⁴

The apparatus is set out as follows:

The lemma, which corresponds to the reading of the edited text, is closed by a bracket thus:) and is followed by its variant readings.

The authority for these is shown by the sigils after them; distinct variants are set off by semi-colons and the variants for any lemma by a full stop. When the text in the lemma follows the reading of Ff,

no sigils are shown in support of it, indicating that the reading of the lemma is found in Ff and in any manuscript whose sigil does not appear among the variants. Where a whole line differs from the version found in Ff or is omitted, this is indicated before the individual word variants are listed. When an emendation has been made to the Base Text, the lemma (taken from the edited text) is followed by the variant of Ff found in the Base Text which appears as a variant. Thus:

163. eek) eek suffred A B F Ff G S Sp.

Sigils of manuscripts supporting a variant are cited as follows:

A B F Ff G Gg H1 H2 J L P1 P2 S Sp. No authority is implied by this order which is alphabetically arranged. Where a variant is supported by several sigils, its spelling corresponds to that of the manuscript denoted by the first sigil cited. Again, no authority is implied by this procedure. Because of this "impossibility of citing all variants of all kinds",²⁵ minor spelling and dialect variants must occasionally be omitted. But in a case such as that of Gg, where "thy" almost invariably appears as "thyn", "my" as "myn", each instance is recorded so as to emphasise occasional exceptions to the rule. From time to time, the same word recurs within the line as at line 14:

"Haven of refut, of quiete, and of reste" . Where a variant occurs, the lemma is numbered according to its order in the line: thus - of (1)) and Gg H1 Sp. of (2)) om. L.

Variants are arranged after the lemma according to their relation to the reading adopted in the text and shown in that lemma so that:

"This practice serves the main purpose of the apparatus, namely to give the evidence for determining originality with the greatest clarity possible. At the same time it makes easier a more rapid use of the large apparatus; the reader will, I think, easily distinguish substantive variants from accidentals, and recognize the points where only the former are recorded."²⁶

Transcription of variants follows the practice used in the transcription of Ff. Thus, contractions or suspensions are underlined where expanded, initial capitals are used at the commencement of each line, and so on. Capitals which occur within the line in manuscripts other than Ff, as well as in Ff, are reproduced.

3. Edited Text. On the opposite page, facing its corresponding stanza, is the edited text. In editing the text of ABC, Robinson's maxim has been observed as far as possible; that is:

"The present text ... follows the spelling of the scribe where it is not absolutely incorrect".²⁷

Recurrent instances of deviation from this rule are as follows:

a) the addition or omission of final -e. Superficially, this -e is of two kinds:

- i) historical, that is, either inflectional or descended from an unaccented vowel in Old English or in French loan words, for example "name" from Old English "nama" (line 74); line 50 "erthe" from Old English "eorthe"; 91 "sygne", from Old French "sygne". As well as nouns, certain adjectives conform to this rule, as at line 56 "eterne" (Old French); pronouns which are plural possessives also take final -e as at line 84 "oure"; line 83 "youre"; so also do some adjectiys such as "hevene" at line 24; and certain verbs of both strong and weak conjugation: "singe and seye" (line 175).

Conversely, some words ending in final -e are known as unhistoric or inorganic. That is, where the -e is grammatically or etymologically not required. It is used to indicate either a stressed monosyllable: as line 3 "sinne" (from Old English "synn") or the long quality of a preceding vowel, as line 6: "releeve". "Unhistoric" -e is also added to indicate a caesura (line 41: "Fleeinge") or the end of a line. Some rhyme words such as Old French "resygne" at line 80 and Old French "entente" at line 11 are also derivative, and Chaucer was fairly consistent in choosing rhyme words where the final -e is grammatically correct, as for example the rhyme words for "goodnesse" in stanza 18. Occasionally, the use of two forms can be noted, as with "wol" (line 102) and "wole" (line 40); "wil" (line 45), "wille" (line 57). Here, however, the use of "wille" can probably be explained by the need to rhyme with "bille" at line 59.

- ii) scribal tendencies, that is, an -e gratuitously added or omitted by fifteenth century copyists. At the end of the Troilus Chaucer warned against faulty spelling or careless copying on the part of future scribes:

"So prey I God that non myswrite the,
Ne the mys metre for defaute of tonge". (lines 1795-6)

For the modern editor of a fifteenth century manuscript the case for omission or addition of final -e must rest both on the historical (grammatical or etymological) information to hand, and his knowledge of the poet's techniques.²⁸ Thus, the spelling "hise" (his, its) is often found with a plural noun in the manuscript but the -e appears not

to have been sounded and has been omitted in this text (for example, at line 85). Elision has resulted in further omissions from Base Text: "heven(e)" at line 110; "wepen(e)" at line 118.

b) In verbs where the ending -en or -e is optional, the form -e has been consistently adhered to: line 58 "Bicome(n)"; line 119 "dide(n)".

c) minor alterations such as the substitution of u for v, f/ff, th/þ, h/gh, i/j, u/o.

d) In spacing, modern usage has been followed. Thus, un to, in to, become unto, into, and participial compounds with y- and for- are printed without spacing or hyphen although less clearly recognised combinations such as "heer-biforn", "but if", are either hyphenated or separated entirely.

e) Modern punctuation has been supplied. As Kane has remarked:

"Since ... I have reached many decisions about originality on grounds of meaning, I am obliged to indicate my interpretation of the poem in the conventional manner by punctuation."²⁹

Substitutions or additions to the text of Ff, or omissions of one or several letters of a word in Ff, are shown by means of a square bracket. Minor spelling alterations such as those listed in 3 (c) above are however not indicated. Omissions of whole words from Ff are not shown in this way since "typographical experiments failed to produce any satisfactory means of showing them"³⁰; they appear both in the apparatus and under Emendations. The two such omissions of words occur at lines 115 and 163. As far as possible all additions or substitutions conform to the spelling and grammar of Ff.

4. Emendations to Base Text. In listing the emendations, the following minor points are omitted: u/v, f/ff, th/þ, h/gh, together with such spacing alterations as are listed in 3 (d) above. All other emendations, including the addition or omission of final -e are noted.

5. Textual Notes. These are intended to amplify the Significant Variants where necessary. The variants are set out in a similar manner to those printed opposite, although only those variants under discussion are included, and are then followed by the appropriate explanation. In the case of substantive variants where no note is given, further information can be found under "Classification of Variants".

FOOTNOTES

1. for examples see Kane, Middle English Literature, London, 1951, p 152 f.
2. W. W. Gregg, Collected Papers, Oxford, 1966, p. 387.
3. E. Moore, Contributions to the Textual Criticism of the Divina Commedia, Cambridge, 1889, p. xxxvi.
4. Kane, Edition, p. 148 comments: "Identification of originality in such cases rests on relative probability only. For practical purposes it must obviously be accepted, but it cannot be regarded as sure, since the degree of difference of probability is not very great, and the operation of probability may have been disturbed by circumstances unknown to the editor. Where, then, the choice is between perfectly equivalent, or equally good readings, the limited character of the authority^{by} conferred majority support is to be appreciated."
5. cf. Kane, Edition, p. 149.
6. A. Miskimin, Susannah, New Haven, 1969, p. 33.
7. see Kane, Edition, p. 115 f.
8. Ibid., p. 122.
9. cf. Ibid., p. 140.
10. Although this is unlikely since the construction was common; cf. Mosse, Handbook, S. 161.
11. See textual note to line 3.
12. Kane, Edition, p. 125.
13. cf. Ibid., p. 124.
14. Group A includes: B F Gg H1 P1 P2 Sp H2, three of which are fragmentary H1 ends at 48; P1, P2 at 60.
15. Compare this confusion, arising from the effort of correction, with the following instance: 47 thin enemy and myn ladi tak heede. Difficulty in following the sense of the passage may cause later errors, as in this case, where an interjection is involved: myn) my H1 (confusion of possessive pronoun); tak) takys L (confusion of tense); heede) hide J (confusion of meaning); lady) yit lady S (addition to make more explicit); Unto) That un to P1 (continuing into the next line); me to chace) to me chace P2 (error of transposition).
16. See A. Miskimin, Susannah, New Haven, (1969), p. 47, for this classification. Compare also Mossé, Handbook, S. 182 for comments on the "emphatic position" whereby "an element was frequently displaced and put at the head of a sentence for emphasis". Although this

classification may include inversions of this type it is more likely that they occurred through a desire to clarify or further explain the copy text.

Two cases are not included in this group since there is no apparent reason for transposition: 3. of ... teene) of sorow and syn and tene A. 49 mayde and mooder) modir and mayden A.

17. See Kane, Edition, p. 131 who has: "48 þe) ovr" under "more explicit reference." The unusual amount of such alterations in the manuscripts of ABC however and the tendency to include the reader in the prayer warrant a separate category.
18. Kane, Edition, p. 132.
19. Kane points out how the identification of the variant likeliest to have given rise to the remainder of variants is identified more easily by means of homoeographs: "The variants with the appearance of homoeographs suggest a hypothesis of originality; those which seem to be glosses (often they are unmetrical) help to support it. If on such a hypothesis all the variants at a crux can be explained, originality is regarded as determined to the limit of certainty possible in textual criticism." (Edition, p. 163). Recourse to this method is not required by variants in the text of ABC.
20. W. W. Gregg, Collected Papers, Oxford, 1966.
21. A. Brusendorff, The Chaucer Tradition, p. 240, appears to base his preference mainly on the evidence of one line. See below, textual note 35.
22. for details, see preceding chapter.
23. Kane, Edition, p. 166. See also Kane's note, p. 166: "Contractions and suspensions are sources of corruption in transmission and sources of error in editorial transcription"; which reflects the importance to the editor of such contractions and suspensions.
24. Ibid., p 170.
25. Ibid., p 171.
26. Ibid., p 172.
27. Robinson, Edition, p. xliii.
28. For a discussion on the problems of versification, e.g. elision, see above page 9.
29. Kane, Edition, p 170.
30. Ibid., p 168.

A B C : - PRIERE A NOSTRE DAME

BY

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

For convenience, the Base and Edited
Texts are printed on facing pages

Al mihty and al merciabile queene
 To whom þat al þis world fleeth for socour
 To haue relees of sinne of sorwe and teene 3
 Gloriewse virgine of alle floures flour
 To þee j flee confounded in errour
 Help and relceue þou mihti debonayre. 6
 Haue mercy on my perilous langour
 Venquissed me hath my cruelle aduersaire

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

1. al merciabile) al merciabele Gg.
2. that) om. B F Gg J L P1 P2 Sp. this) the H1. world) werlde J;wordle G.
3. relees) release S; relese A H2; reles G Gg P1 H1; release Sp; relecesse J.
 of ... teene) of synne of sorow of tene G Gg P2 Sp; of synne and
 sorowe and teene S; of synne sorwe and tene B H2 J L; of synne
 sorwe of teene F; of sinne of sorwe and of teene P1; of sorow and
 syn and tene A.
4. Glorious) Gloriewse B F Ff Gg H1; O glorious H2.
5. flee) ffile A B Gg L P2; crye S. confounded) conffoundid A B Gg H2;
 confounde P2.
6. relceue) releue A B F Gg H1 H2 P1 P2; releeff G S; relees L; relesse J.
 thou) me þou J; al Gg H2 Sp; om P1. mihty debonayre) Mighty &
 Debonaire A H1 L.
7. on) of F Gg J L Sp. my) myne Gg Sp; me A; oure H2.
perilous) perylous A L; perillous Sp; perylouse B H1; parayllous S;
 perlious Gg.
8. Venquissed) Venquysshid B; Venquyst Gg; Vnquessed H1; Vnquessht P2;
 Nenquished A; When-cused L; Venqueysheth P1. cruel) cruell
 A B L P2; cruelle Ff J; cruwel S; cruwell G; crewel Gg; cruall P1.
 aduersaire) adversair J; adversarie G Gg H1 L P1 P2.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 1

Almighty and al merciable queene
 To whom that al this world fleeth for socour,
 To have relees of sinne, of sorwe, and teene, 3
 Glorious] virgine, of alle floures flour,
 To thee I flee, confounded in errour.
 Help and releeve, thou mighti debonayre, 6
 Have mercy on my perilous langour.
 Venquissed me hath my crue[1] adversaire.

EMENDATIONS TO BASE TEXT : 4. Glorious) Gloriowse

8. cruel) cruelle

TEXTUAL NOTES

2. that) om. B F Gg J L P1 P2 Sp. Relative or conjunctive subordinants were often re-enforced by "that" or "as" (Mossé, Handbook, 3.161). Compare the construction "whom that" with "which that" at 49 below, where emphatic language is also appropriate.
 this) the H1. Although both versions are apt (NED v. world, 1.a.), the majority reading "this" is more specific; compare the phrase "al this world" with "in this world" at 74.
 wordle G. an alternative spelling of "world", this version is consistently preferred by G - compare 74 below.
3. of ... teene. The Base Text is printed unaltered here, although Koch's note in his Edition may be valid: "of sinne, sorwe and tene. Ff and other MSS put "of" between sinne and sorwe; but such monosyllables look suspicious, as scribes of the 15th century who did not pronounce the final e are often inclined to put a syllable in where, according to Chaucer's pronunciation, none is wanted; cfr. Fortune l. 51, Truth l. 9, Purse l. 25."
 of sorow and syn and tene A. A's tendency towards arbitrary transposition of words in a phrase has been noted above (page 69 fn.16); compare 49 mayde and mooder) modir and mayden A, where again transposition occurs for no apparent reason.
5. flee) crye S. Substitution because of the sense of the following lines, which are cries for help. For a comment on Shirley's tendency towards arbitrary changes, see Brusendorff, The Chaucer Tradition, pp 226 and 231.
7. my) myne Gg Sp. Gg has "myn(e)" for "my", "thyn" for "thy" throughout. perilous Gg. Not a case of transposition but a variant of "perilous" - a syncopated form of "perilous" (NED v. parlous).
8. adversarie G Gg H1 L P1 P2. Although "adversaire" is preferred here so as to rhyme with "debonayre", its use is exceptional. According to

Taflock (Concordance v. adversarie), "adversarie" appears nine times in Chaucer, "adversaire" only once - in ABC.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 2

Bountee so fix hath in þin herte his tente 9
 þat wel j wot thou wolt my socour bee
 þou const not warne him þat with good entente
 Axeth þin helpe, þin herte is ay so free 12
 þou art largesse of pleyn felicitee
 Hauene of refute of quiete and of reste.
 Loo how þat theeves sevene chasen mee 15
 Help lady briht er þat my ship to breste

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

9. Bountee) Bounte B G Gg H1 H2 J L; Bountie Sp; Bonte P2.
 so) se A. fix) fixe L Sp; fixe S; fixt P1; fixed H2.
 hath) has J . thin) myn Gg; my Sp. his) om. J L S.
10. thou) you P2. wolt) wit Gg. my) myn Gg; his S.
11. warne) werne G. him) om. Gg Sp. with) in H2.
12. Axeth) Axeþe S; Axith Gg Sp H1; Askith H2; Askyth B; Askys L;
 Asches J. thin ... is) thow art H2. ay) om. A.
13. largesse) larges A P1; larged L. pleyn) pleyne H1 S;
 playn H2 P1; plaine Sp; all A J L.
14. of (1)) and Gg H1 H2 Sp. of (2)) om. L.
15. that) that that G; om. J P1. chasen) now chasen H2 P1; chases J.
16. bright) deere H2. er) or G Gg L P1 P2 Sp; ar J. that)
 om. B P2. my) myn Gg. to breste) þbreste J.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 2

Bountee so fix hath in thin herte his tente, 9
 That wel I wot thou wolt my socour bee;
 Thou canst not warne him that with good entente
 Axeth thin helpe, thin herte is ay so free. 12
 Thou art largesse of pleyn félicitee,
 Havenⁿ] of refut, of quiet, and of reste.
 Loo, how that theeves sevene chasen mee! 15
 Help, lady bright, er that my ship tobreste!

EMENDATIONS: 14. quiet) quiete

TEXTUAL NOTES

9. Bonte P2. P2 follows OF. spelling and probably corresponds here to original manuscript (for Brusendorff's conjectures on the French headings and their relevance see The Chaucer Tradition, p. 192).
13. largesse) larged L. This copy error may have arisen through confusion of signs for "sse" and "d" (see Furnivall, Edition, marginal note to L Manuscript, Minor Poems I).
14. of (2)) om. L. Koch, comparing this omission with those at line 3, notes: "The case however is quite another at line 14 where, after the eventual omission of the second of, the third could not remain either, which would entirely spoil the metre".
16. tobreste) breste J. The prefix "to" here means "apart" and is used to intensify the impact of "breste" (Mossé, Handbook, glossary, v. T0- for explanation and examples). Since J tends rather to take every opportunity to emphasise, the omission suggests that the error was probably inadvertent.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 3

Comfort is noon but in yow ladi deere
 ffor loo my sinne and my confusioun 18
 Which ouhten not in þi presence appeere
 Han take on me a greevous accioun
 Of verrey riht and desperacioun
 And as bi riht þei mihten wel susteene.
 þat j were wurpi my dampnacioun
 Nere merci of you blisful heuene queene 24

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

17. is) nys P1. yow) the H2 J. yow ladi deere) yow my lady dere P2.
 19. which) whilke J. ouhte.) ouzte Gg; ought B F H1 Sp; owght A G;
 ouhten Ff; aughten S; aught H2 P1; aght J; aghte L; ough P2.
 thi) þin Gg. appeere) to apere L; for to a pere Gg Sp.
 20. han) haue A S; has J L; haven P1. take on) taken on G Gg S Sp;
 take of A; takyn of L. greevous) grevous A B G H2 J L P2 P2 S;
 grevouse F H1; geuous Gg.
 21. and) of H2.
 22. mighten wel) Mighten wele A; might well B; may wele J;
 may it wele H2; may righte wele L.
 23. were) ware J. wurthi) wordi P2; worth H1.
 24. nere ... you) ne were thy mercy thy H2; ware ne mercy ware of the J.
 nere) ner S; ne were H2 L; ne F; ware ne J. blisful)
 blesful P1; blessydfull L; blessed H2 P2. hevene) heuen A;
 heuenys B F P1 P2; om. G Gg H2 J L.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 3

Comfort is noon but in yow, ladi deere,
 For, loo, my sinne and my confusioun, 18
 Which ought[e] not in thi presence appeere,
 Han take on me a greevous accioun
 Of verrey right and desperacioun; 21
 And, as bi right, thei mighten wel susteene
 That I were wurthi my dampnacioun,
 Nere merci of you, blisful hevene queene! 24

EMENDATIONS: 19. oughte) ouhten

TEXTUAL NOTES:

17. is) nys P1. Double or even triple negatives were common in Middle English. See Mossé Handbook S. 149 (4) who quotes several examples.
22. mighten wel) Mighten wele A; might well B; may wele J; may it wele H2; may righte wele L. Confusion of present and past tenses; the grammar requires a preterite here.
24. nere ... you) ne were thy mercy thy H2; ware ne mercy ware of the J. nere) ner S; ne were H2 L; ne F; ware ne J. Mossé, Handbook, S. 149 (2) has: "For sentence-negation there was the adverb ne, na which might agglutinate with certain verbs (nil, nam, not, nabbe, etc.) or other adverbs (nevere) or conjunctions (nawber, neythir, nebeles, etc.)" and explains the origins of this procedure. This "agglutination" has given rise to the "nere" of Ff but the "ne were" of H2 L and "ware ne mercy ware of the" of J point to the difficulty of (1) assimilating dialect differences into the metrical pattern and (2) the confusion to which an unfamiliar construction or else the effort of assimilation can give rise. Compare the variants of "n'art" at 26, of "nolde" at 31 and cf. "nys" at 17 above, where the purpose is to add emphasis.
- blisful) blisful P1; blessydfull L; blessed H2 P2. MED (v. blessed) shows how these variants of "blisful" developed; the variants at 28 indicate that the spellings of L and H2P2 respectively are consistent.
- hevene) heuen A; heuenys B F P1 P2; om. G Gg H2 J L.
- OE. genitive plural "heofena cwen" gives rise to the expression "hevene queene"; compare Canon's Yeoman's Tale 1089: "by the hevenes queene" with the variant of B F P1 P2. Omission may have been caused by confusion arising from the "agglutination" earlier in the line, noted above; more likely it caused some difficulty (cf. p. 59, E (2) above).

BASE TEXT

STANZA 4

Dowte is þer noon þou queen of misericorde
 þat þou nart cause of grace and merci heere
 God vouched saf thoruh þee with us to accorde 27
 ffor certes crystes blisful mooder deere
 Were now þe bowe bent in swich maneere
 As it was first of justice and of jre. 30
 þe rihtful god nolde of no mercy heere
 But thoruh þee han we grace as we desire

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

25. is) om. P1. thou) þowe S; om. B F Gg H1 H2 P1 P2 Sp.
 misericorde) mysericorde J; miserycorde B; misericord A Gg L Sp;
 misericordie P1.
26. that ... nart) þat þou art A H2; but þou art L; that ne þou erte J.
 grace and) om. H1.
27. vouchede sauf^{H2P2}vouchede sauffe A; wouchede-sawfe F; vouchede saf Ff;
 vouchede saf G Gg; vouchedsafe Sp; vouche saff J; voweche saf P1;
 fouchis-saufe L. thee) om H1. to accorde) tacorde B G F H1 P2.
 thee) om. H1.
28. Crystes) om. A. blisful) blissefulle J; blyssedfull L; blessed H2 P2
29. were) weer S; ware J. the) þi L P2; om J. swich) such B G L S;
 swilke J. bent) I-bent B F G H2 P1; y belte y bent H1.
30. justice) rihtwisnes H2 J. of (2)) om. A H2. first) furst G;
 firste J L; fyrest Gg.
31. The) that H2. rihtful) rithfulle J. god) lorde H2; om. A S.
 nolde) nold P1 P2; noolde S; wolde Gg H2; walde J; wold L;
 would Sp. no) þas J. heere) here A B F G Gg H1 H2 J L P1 P2 Sp.
32. thurgh) þour Gg.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 4

Dowte is ther noon, thou queen of misericorde,
 That thou n'art cause of grace and merci heere;
 God vouched sa[uf] th[urgh] thee with us to accorde. 27
 For, certes, Crystes blisful mooder deere,
 Were now the bowe bent in swich maneere
 As it was first, of justice and of ire, 30
 The rightful God nolde of no mercy heere;
 But th[urgh] thee han we grace, as we desire.

EMENDATIONS:

27 sauf) saf thurgh) thoruh
~~sauf~~ 32 thurgh) thoruh

TEXTUAL NOTES

26. grace and) om. H1. A deterioration in quality of H1 begins here.
 27. vouched sauf. As with "venquysshed" in line 8, there is a notable variation of spellings. Robinson in his glossary notes that "vouchen" meaning to call or declare, was used only by Chaucer in the phrase "vouchen sauf", participle "vouched sauf", meaning to grant or permit, so that the version of H2 P2 is preferred here.
 29. bent) I-bent B F G H2 P1; y belte y bent H1. The use of a familiar Middle English construction "i-" was no doubt a result of the omission of final -e in the previous word "bowe". After realizing his copy error H1 corrects by means of simple repetition.
 30. justice) riȝtwisnes H2 J. There appears to be no explanation of this error. Since both scribes copy "justice" correctly in line 37 it can only be a deliberate transposition.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 5

Euere hath myn hope of refuit been in þee 33
 ffor heer biforn ful ofte in many a wyse
 Hast þou to misericorde resceyued me
 But merci ladi at þe grete assyse 36
 Whan we shule come bifore þe hye iustyse
 So litel fruit shal þanne in me be founde.
 þat but þou er þat day me chastyse 39
 Of verrey riht my werk me wole confounde

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

33. Euere) Ever H2 L P1 P2 Sp; Euyr A B; Ende S. refut)
 refute F H1 J L Sp; refuit Ff G; Reffuite A.
 been ... thee) yn the be B F Gg H1 H2 P1 P2 Sp.
34. For) from H2; om. L. many) mane Gg. ofte in) often in F.
 a) om. B F H2.
35. Hast ... me) Vnto mercy hastow receyuid me B F Gg H1 H2 P1 P2 Sp.
 Hast thou) Hastow B F G S; Hase þou J; Haue yow A; as thou L.
36. at the)atte þy J; atte G; at that H2. the) om. P2.
37. we) that H1. bifore) a for P1. the) that H2.
38. So) To S. fruit) fruyt S; fruyte H2; ffrute A P1 P2;
 freut Gg Sp; good B F H1; goodnesse J; om. G L. shall ... founde)
 in me than shalbe founde H2 J.
39. that (1)) om. J. correcte me B F G Gg H1 H2 J L P1 P2 Sp) me (we) chastyse A F S me) my
 folise J
40. Of ... confounde) My werkys wyll me þan confounde L. Of) thurth J;
 O H1. my ... confounde) it will My werke confounde A. werk)
 werke A B F H1 Sp; werkes J P1. me wole) wull me B F Gg H1 H2 J L
 P1 P2 S Sp.
- 40a. Merci to haue ther by helle grownde G.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 5

Evere hath myn hope of refut^[] been in thee, 33
 For heer-biforn ful ofte, in many a wyse,
 Hast thou to misericorde receyved me.
 But merci, ladi, at the grete assyse, 36
 Whan we shule come bifore the hye justyse!
 So litel fruit shal thanne in me be founde
 That, but thou er that day [correcte me] 39
 Of verrey right my werk me wole confounde.

EMENDATIONS

33. refut) refuit. 35 receyved) resceyued
 39. correcte me) me chastyse

TEXTUAL NOTES

33. been ... thee) yn the be B F Gg H1 H2 P1 P2 Sp. In this stanza especially and at cruces elsewhere in the poem's manuscripts, versions fall into two groups: A and B. Occasionally, as here, the meaning is not altered, whichever version is chosen (see also lines 40, 58, 162), and the base text (group B) is adhered to.
35. Hast ... me) Vnto mercy hastow receyuid me B F Gg H1 H2 P1 P2 Sp. Again, manuscripts divide into two groups. The A version: "Vnto... me", is much closer to the French original "Quant a merci m'as receu", and Brusendorf? (The Chaucer Tradition, p 240) uses this crux to argue, after Ten Brink, in favour of the Tyrwhitt group - that is, with manuscript Gg as the base text. However, group A's "mercy" would involve an unusual repetition (see line 36); the syntactical inversion and use of "misericorde" make group B's version the durior lectio here; "misericorde" occurs above at line 25 and is therefore not unique in the poem; finally, Chaucer's was a fairly loose translation, so that while the French version is important as a reference, a decision as to originality cannot be based entirely on this similarity.
38. fruit) good B F H1; goodnesse J; om. G L. The French version has "bien" at this point (line 58) and it is possible that scribes also had the French version before them. More likely, "good" is a gloss of the familiar image (see Note 38 below).
39. correcte me (my folise J). The majority of manuscripts (11 including Speght) have "correcte me", and "me chastyse" in Ff stands over an erasure, so that Koch's preference of S's version: "me wel chastyse" is rather improbable. Robinson, while allowing his version to agree with that of Koch, admits that "correcte me" is probably the original reading. Furthermore, Severs has convincingly defended the change of rhyme scheme involved, comparing The Former Age, stanza 6. (see below Note 39 for details of his comments).
- 40a. Scribe G inserts spurious line 41.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 6

Fleeinge j flee for socour to þi tente
 Me for to hide from tempeste ful of dreede 42
 Biseeching yow þat ye you not absente
 þouh j be wikke O help yit at þis neede
 Al haue j ben a beste in wil and deede 45
 Yit ladi þou me cloþe with þi grace.
 þin enemy and myn ladi tak heede
 Un to my deth in poynt is me to chace 48

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

41. Fleeinge) Ffleyngge B G Gg H1 P2; Fleyng A F H2 L P1 S;
 Flying Sp; ffleande J. to) on to P2. thi) thyn Gg H2.
42. from) fro þe P1; for L. tempeste) tempest A B F G Gg H1 H2
 L P1 P2 S Sp; tempestes J.
43. Biseeching ... absente) Besechyngge the lady be nat absent H2.
 Biseeching) Besekyng F G Gg L; Besekande J. yow) þe J.
 ye) þou. J. you) the J; þan A. not) om. P2.
44. O help yit) AA. yit helpe J; O þitt help A L; yit helpe H2.
 this) that H2.
45. al) alle waye J. a) om. H1. wil) witte B F Gg H1 H2;
 P1 P2 Sp. and deede) and in deede G.
46. thou) om. H2. clothe) cloth H2 P1 P2; clooþe S; clethe J;
 close in Gg Sp. thi) om. J. thi grace) þyn owene grace Gg Sp.
47. enemy) enmy H2 L; enemyn P2. myn) my H1. lady) yit lady S. tak) takys L.
 heede) hede A B F Gg H2 L P1 P2 Sp; hide J.
48. Unto) that un to P1. my) myn Gg; the H2J. my ... is)
 the deed es in poynte J. poynt) ponyte H1. me to chace)
 to me chace P2.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 6

Fleeinge, I flee for socour to thi tente
 Me for to hide from tempeste ful of dreede, 42
 Biseeching yow that ye you not absente
 Thoub I be wikke. O help yit at this neede!
 Al have I ben a beste in wil and deede, 45
 Yit, ladi, thou me clothe with thi grace.
 Thin enemy and myn - ladi, tak heede! -
 Unto my deth in poynt is me to chace! 48

EMENDATIONS: NoneTEXTUAL NOTES

41. ffleande J. This northern form of the present participle is used by J throughout - compare, for example, 43 "Besekande" below.
43. yow) þe J. Ff and others use pronouns "thou" and "you" arbitrarily, and while J and sometimes H2 or L use second person singular there seems to be no pattern of consistency. See above page 61 under the classification "familiar, more intimate forms of address", where it is also made clear that some scribes altered pronouns apparently as a matter of course, while others attempted to widen the scope so as to include the reader as at 68. him) us.
44. O help yit) AA. yit helpe J; O zitt help A L; yit helpe H2. Scribes J L H2 and sometimes A employ inversion so as to emphasise their copy. Mossé, Handbook, S. 182 describes this as "the Emphatic Position" whereby "an element was frequently displaced or put at the head of the sentence for emphasis."
45. wil) witte B F Gg H1 H2 P1 P2 Sp. Probably a visual error accounts for this discrepancy - compare 10. wolt) wit Gg. Again, the variants fall neatly into two groups: Group A record "witte" while B have "wil" which makes better sense here, though "witte" can be interpreted as "thought" as in "for I have sinned in thought and word and deed".
46. clothe) close in Gg Sp. Realizing his error, Gg seeks to compensate for "close" by adding "in". It is also possible however that Ur-Gg had "thou me close with thin owen grace".
47. heede) hide J. "hide" is not an alternative spelling of "heede" (MED v. heede); but, since "heede" is an alternative spelling of "hide", meaning concealment, refuge (MED v. hide (3)), and the sense is appropriate here, this is no doubt how the error arose. MED records the use of "in hide" but not "tak hide" however (v. hiden). Compare 103 hire) her J.
48. The fragmentary manuscript H1 ends here. Compare Ff's initial capital, here transcribed U, with those, transcribed V, at lines 8, 60, 82, 101, 162; it appears, from its resemblance to lower case u/v, that the scribe erroneously copied "u" for "V".

BASE TEXT

STANZA 7

Gloriows mayde and mooder which pat neuere
 Were bitter neiber in eerpe nor in see
 But ful of swetnesse & of merci euere 51
 Help pat my fader be not wroth with me
 Spek hou for j ne dar not him ysee
 So haue j doon in eerpe allas per while. 54
pat certes but if hou my socour bee
 To stink eterne he wole my gost exile

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

49. Glorious) Glorouse F G; Gracyouse Gg Sp. mayde and mooder)
 modir and mayden A. mayde) maid Sp; maiden J. that) per L.
 nevere) never A B F H2 L P1 Sp; euer S.
50. were bitter) was better H2; was neuer youre letter S. bitter)
 bittir Gg; bittre B; bettir A H2 J L. neither) nowpere J;
 nor F Gg P1 P2 Sp; none H2; om. L. nor in see) ne in see L;
 ne in the see J; ne yit in see H2.
51. But) both L; that H2. of (2)) om. H2.
52. with me) om. P2.
53. thou) om. J; to him H2. for I) for euer I, S. ne) om. H2 J L P1.
 not) om. P2. not him) hym not Gg H2. him) om. A. ysee)
 se Gg H2 J L S P1; speke A.
54. the) per A Ff G; pat J.
55. certes) certis B Gg H2 L; sertes G; certaynly J. if) that J.
 B F P1 P2; om. G J L. my) myn Gg.
56. To eterne) To lastande Paine J. gost) goste B P2;
 gooste F L S; ghost Sp; gaste J.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 7

Glorious mayde and mooder, which that nevere
 Were bitter, neither in e[~~er~~the nor in see,
 Dut ful of swetnesse and of merci evere, 51
 Help that my Fader be not wroth with me.
 Spek thou, for I ne dar not him ysee,
 So have I doon in erthe, allas th[e] while! 54
 That certes, but if thou my socour bee.
 To stink eterne he wole my gost exile.

EMENDATIONS:

50. erthe) eerpe

54. the) þer

TEXTUAL NOTES

- 49 Glorious) Gracyouse Gg Sp. "Glorious" concurs with the French source at this point. For Gg's tendency towards arbitrary changes compare 133 merci) ioye; 75 to yow) with þe.
50. was neuer youre letter S. Attempting to correct his error at the previous line end, S alters the meaning and in his confusion mistakes b for l. His preoccupation appears to continue on into 53 where he has "for euer I" for "for I".
54. the) þer A Ff G. Since the dative is inappropriate here, the base text is altered.
56. To stink eterne) To lastande Paine J. Distaste for the expression may have caused J to depart so far from his original, although this is curious since no other scribe has found it necessary to alter the text. The "contemptusmundi" tradition in medieval penitential lyrice often led to such extravagant expressions as "stink eterne", a form of "realism" not contained in the original French version - see Note 56 below. Three other instances of "bowdlerization" occur at 28, 31, 137, none of them involving J so that the possibility of responsibility lying with an intermediary cannot be ruled out.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 8

He vouched saaf tel him as was his wille 57
 Bicomen a man to haue oure alliaunce
 And with his precious blood he wrot þe bille
 Vp on þe crois as general acquitaunce 60
 To euery Penitent in ful criaunce
 And berfore ladi briht þou for us praye.
 þanne shalt þou boþe stinte al his greuaunce 63
 And make oure foo to failen of his praye

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

57. vouched sauf) vouched Sauffe A; wowchedsauff S; fouched saufe L; vouchid sauf B; vouched saaf Ff; vouched Saffe J; vouchid saf P1; vouchede saf G Gg; vouched safe Sp; vouche sauf P2. tel him) om. J L. as was) as it was J L.
58. Bicomme ... alliaunce) Becom man heere for us in alliaunce H2; Bicomme a man) Bicommen à man Ff; Be come man J; To become man L. to haue) as for B F Gg P1 P2 Sp. alliaunce) alliance Gg L; aliaunce P1 P2; allaunce J.
59. And ... bille) And wyth his blod put that in his remembrance * he wrot þe blisful bille P2. And) om. J L. precious) om. B F Gg H2 P1 P2 Sp. the bille) the blysfyl bille F; þat blisful bille Gg P1 Sp; a precious bille H2.
60. Upon ... aquitaunce) of mercy put that in his remembrance P1 P2. as) a H2.
61. in) of A. creaunce) criaunce Ff Gg Sp.
62. bright) deere H2. thou ... us) for us þou J. us) me H2.
63. Thanne) That J L; So H2. thou) om. L. Both) om. Gg H2 J Sp. stinte) stynt & cease H2. his) om. B F G.
64. make) maken F Gg. oure ... to) oure faes to J; the fiendis alle to H2. to) om. A. faylen) fayle A H2 L. of) or B; om. H2. his) þair J; theyr H2.

* "put that in his remembrance" is underlined in the manuscript (to be omitted).

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 8

He vouched sa[uf], tel him, as was his wille 57
 Bicom[e] a man, to have oure alliaunce,
 And with his precious blood he wrot the bille
 Upon the crois, as general acquitaunce, 60
 To every penitent in ful cr[ea]unce;
 And therefore, ladi bright, thou for us praye,
 Thanne shalt thou bothe stinte al his grevaunce, 63
 And make oure foo to failen of his praye.

EMENDATIONS:

57 sauf) saaf 58 Bicom[e]) Bicomen 61 creaunce) criaunce

TEXTUAL NOTES

57. tel him) om. J L. The pruning of interjection or aside by J L is notable - compare 119 as us oughte) om. and see textual note 119.
58. Bicom[e] a man. This is the version of the majority of manuscripts; Ff's "Bicomen" adds an extra syllable since final -e on "Bicom[e]" would normally be elided before the article.
 to have) as for B F Gg P1 P2 Sp. Although "as for" is the harder reading it is likely that the scribe of an ancestral manuscript retained "as" from the previous line, "as was" to be followed by "as for"; but the sense is: "He vouched sauf ... to have oure alliaunce", with "tel him, as was his wille" as interjection and aside.
59. Group A manuscripts omit "precious" and F Gg P1 Sp compensate by adding "blisful" later in the line. This suggests that omission was erroneous rather than a version of the original since alliteration is not a feature of the verse; "blysfyl bille" is an easier reading and the emphasis it produces suggests that scribes were covering up for an earlier error; another scribe of the A group, B, omits both "precious" and "blisful", so that the metre is spoiled; H2's "a precious bille" is retention of copy. In view of this, the base text version is adhered to.
60. Of mercy put that in his remembraunce P1 P2. With this unrelated line, manuscripts P1 P2 end here.
61. criaunce Ff Gg Sp. An alternative spelling of "creaunce", this form is rare (MED v. creaunce) and does not appear elsewhere in Chaucer. Of the four instances where the word occurs in Chaucer it is spelt "creance" three times and creaunce once - in ABC (Concordance v. creance: Tatlock bases his findings on the text of the Globe Chaucer).

BASE TEXT

STANZA 9

I wot it wel þou wolt ben oure socour
 þou art so ful of bowntee in certeyn 66
 ffor when a soule falleth in errour
 bi pitee goth & haleth him ayein
 þanne makest þou his pees with his souereyn 69
 And bringest him out of þe crooked strete
 Who so þee loueth he shal not loue in veyn
 þat shal he fynde as he þe lyf shal lete 72

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

65. it) om. A Gg Sp. wolt) om. L. ben) been G Sp; beon S; be L.
 66. Thou) That B.
 67. a soule) we J L. falleth) falle J L. in errour) into
 errour H2; in any errour J.
 68. haleth) helith H2. him ayein) us agayne J L.
 69. Thanne) So J L; Thow H2. thou) then H2. his (1)) oure J L.
 his (2)) oure J L.
 70. bringest) bringys J L; bring A. him) us J. of ... strete)
 of drede B; om.F.
 71. Who) Ho Gg. thee loveth) lovith thee H2; loves the J; he lovys L.
 he) om. G.
 72. as) when B F J L.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 9

I wot it wel, thou wolt ben oure socour,
 Thou art so ful of bowntee, in certeyn. 66
 For, whan a soule falleth in errour,
 Thi pitee goth and haleth him ayein.
 Thanne makest thou his pees with his sovereyn, 69
 And bringest him out of the crooked strete.
 Whoso thee loveth, he shal not love in veyn;
 That shal he fynde, as he the lyf shal lete. 72

EMENDATIONS: NoneTEXTUAL NOTES:

67. a soule) we J L. Inclusion of the reader and a desire to make the reference more immediate and explicit cause many alterations of this kind - compare Classification of Variants page 61 above.
68. haleth) helith H2. Halen, to haul, raise up, can be used figuratively as here and in Boece, 2. pr. 8. 32: "haleth hem ayen" (MED. v. halen l b. where ABC is also quoted in this connection). Helen, to recover, get better, has another meaning: to reform, as in The Pardoner's Tale, line 366: "it heeleth jalousie", and from this connotation the version of H2 could have arisen.
- him ayein) us agayne J L. Compare 67 above for a similar instance; and 69. his) oure.
69. sovereyn. Base manuscript has two obiose suspensions on the u and the y of "sovereyn".
70. of ... strete) of drede B; om. F. Furnivall (Minor Poems III p 67) asserts that 70. proves B was not copying F, and Koch corroborates this. That both copied from an Ur-B F manuscript is possible and it could be suggested that B, seeking to fill the blank left by his original, attempted to find a rhyme for "lete" in 72, and supplied "drede" - hence "out of drede". In any case, the scribe shows little thought for scansion.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 10

Kalendeeres enlumyned ben þei

þat in þis world ben lighted with bi name

And who so goth to yow þe rihte wey

75

Him thar not drede in soule to be lame

Now queen of comfort sithe þou art þat same

To whom j seeche for my medicyne.

78

Lat not my foo no more my wounde vntame

Myn hele in to þin hand al j resyne

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

73. enlumyned) illunynde J. ben) beon S; beeth G; beth B F;
ar J L.
74. That) Yt Sp. world) worlde A B F S; werlde J; world L; wordle G.
ben) been G; beon S; beth B; ar L; er J. lighted) lithned J;
lyghtned H2.
75. to yow) with þe Gg Sp. rihte) Right A B F G L S Sp; rit; J; redy H2.
76. Him) The H2. thar) dar G. not drede) nat dare drede H2.
77. Now) Norise H2. that)þe A H2 J Sp.
78. for my) as for my J L. my) myn Gg; om. H2.
79. no ... wounde) my wounde na mare J L S. my) myn Gg. entame B F G Gg
J L Sp) vntame Ff S; attayne H2; untayne A.
80. hele) heele A S; help H2. into) al into H2.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 10

Kalenderes enlumyned ben thei

That in this world ben lighted with thi name;

And whoso goth to yow the righte wey,

75

Him thar not drede in soule to be lame.

Now, queen of comfort, sith^[h] thou art that same

To whom I seeche for my medicyne,

78

Lat not my foo no more my wounde ^[e]ntame;Myn hele into thin hand al I resy^[g]gne.EMENDATIONS:

77. sith) sithe 79. entame) vntame 80. resygne) resyne

TEXTUAL NOTES:

77. Now) Norise H2. Possibly an elaboration of the medical metaphor, this could be intended either as a noun (meaning nurse - cf. Parsons Tale, 874: "norise of vices") or a verb (meaning to strengthen - cf. Boece, III met. vi, line 13: "if he nor^yssche his corage unto vices"). Given H2's tendency towards paleographic errors however it is more probably a confusion over w (compare 97 Noble) Now H2), the error arising thus: Now) *Nowe * Nowrise) Norise. (nowrise was an alternative spelling of norise, v. NED, norice).

79. entame) vntame Ff S; attayne H2; untayne A. Koch has: "'Untame' can only be a miswriting for 'entame' (Fr. 'entame') which isto be found in most of the other manuscripts, and the French". Robinson supports this view in his text. The word clearly caused difficulty and the variants cited come into the category of homoeographs as defined by George Kane (see above page 61).

Koch uses this example to support the contention that, the best texts being in error, the common source was faulty - compare Brusendorff's comments: textual note 163; Koch again, textual note 181 below.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 11

Ladi þi sorwe kan j not portreye 81
 Vnder þe cros; ne his grevous penaunce
 But for youre bobes peynes j yow preye
 Lat not oure alder foo make his bobaunce 84
 þat he hath in hise lystes of mischaunce
 Conuict þat ye bobbe haue bouht so deere.
 As j seide erst þou ground of oure substaunce 87
 Continue on us þi pitous eyen cleere

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

81. thi) þyn Gg; kan I) ne cane I S.
 82. the cros) thy Some crosse J. ne his) nor the H2.
 83. bothes) boopes S; bothis Gg; bothe F; both B L; bather J; om. H2.
 peynes) peynges G; peynis A L; paynes H2 J; peyne Gg Sp;
 penaunce S.
 84. alder) aldir Gg; aldres S; alþere H2 J; aller B F; old L.
 his) us L. bobaunce) bokaunce J; abovanns A; bostaunce Sp.
 85. of) with Gg. lystes) lestis Gg Sp; lustes H2.
 86. Convict) Convicted H2; Committe J. bought) bouth J.
 87. erst) ar J. ground) crowned L. oure) om. Gg Sp.
 88. Continue) Contineu A B F Gg; Contene L; Open J. on) in B F.
 thi) thynne Gg. pitous) petous Gg; pitouse B; pitisous J;
 pitevous A. eyen) eyne Gg; yen A B.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 11

Ladi, thi sorwe kan I not portreye 81
 Under the cros, ne his greevous penaunce.
 But for youre bothes peynes I yow preye,
 Lat not oure alder foo make his bobaunce 84
 That he hath in hi[s] lystes of mischaunce
 Convict that ye bothe have bought so deere.
 As I seide erst, thou ground of oure substaunce, 87
 Continue on us thi pitous eyen cleere!

EMENDATIONS:

85. his) hise

TEXTUAL NOTES:

83. bothes) boopes S; bothis Gg; bothe F; both B L; bather J; om. H2.

Robinson suggests the following explanation: "'youre bothes', though supported by good manuscripts, is a strange construction. Perhaps the reading should be 'youre bother' (supported by J) as in Tr. iv 168". But MED (v. bothe l a.) records that "bothes" accompanying a personal pronoun and qualifying a plural noun is correct. The sense here is "both of your suffering(s)"; compare "ye bothe" at 86 below.

84. bobaunce) bokaunce J; bovanns A; bostaunce Sp. These are paleographic errors, the scribes misreading k for b, v for b, st for b respectively, rather than homoeographs as may at first appear.

86. Convict) Convicted H2; Committe J. Both "convict" and "convicted" are past participles and J's visual error probably arose from the appearance of another alternative spelling "convit" (MED v. convicte(n)); although the sense (committed for trial) is not entirely inappropriate.

87. ground) crowned. Auditory errors occur rarely in these manuscripts; compare peynes) penaunce S at line 83, above.

88. Continue) Continew A B F Gg; Contene L; Open J. L's "contene" probably derives from "contenen"(to contain), and is a visual error. For J's tendency towards altering his copy compare 13 pleyn) all , 122 agilt have) hafe offended and page 59 above.

pitous) petous Gg; pitouse B; pitisous J; pitevous A. J's "pitisous" is probably retention of copy, as is A's error (derived from "petous"); both indicate confusion over their copy.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 12

Moises bat sauh þe bush with flawmes rede
 Brenninge, of which þer neuer a stikke brende 90
 Was signe of þin vnwemmed maidenhede
 þou art þe bush on which þer gan descende
 þe holigost. þe which bat moyses wende 93
 Had ben a fyir and þis was in figure.
 Now ladi from þe fyir þou us deufende
 Which þat in helle eternalli shal dure 96

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

89. bush) busch A; bosch Gg; buske-J. with) of Gg.
 flawmes) flaumes G S; flambes B F; flambis Gg Sp; floures H2.
90. ther) then Sp; þat S; om. A H2 J. a) oon S. stikke)
 sticke Sp; stike H2; stik A B F L; qwist J; stroke S.
 brende) þere brende Gg; I-brent H2.
91. signe) figure H2.
92. on which) in whom H2. gan) can Sp. descende) discende A B F;
 desende G; descend J L Sp; dessendyn Gg.
93. the) om. B Gg Sp.
94. a-fyr) a fiur G; A fire B F J L; a fuyre H2; on ffyre A Gg S Sp.
 in) a J L.
95. thou) om. Gg J Sp. the) that H2. defende) deufende Ff;
 defend Sp; fende H2.
96. which) om. J. eternalli shal) schalle endelesly J.
 dure) endure J.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 12

Moises, that saugh the bush with flawmes rede,
 Brenninge, of which ther never a stikke brende, 90
 Was signe of thin unwemmed maidenhede,
 Thou art the bush on which ther gan descende
 The Holi Gost, the which that Moyses wende 93
 Had ben a-fyr; and this was in figure.
 Now, ladi, from the fyr thou us deffende
 Which that in helle eternalli shal dure. 96

EMENDATIONS:

- 94 a-fyr) a fyir
 95 defende) deufende

TEXTUAL NOTES:

89. floures H2. A visual error probably arising from confusion over "w" - compare note 77 above.
90. ther) om. A H2 J. Minor omissions such as this occur throughout the text; for a full outline of reasons and further comments, see above p.55. stikke) qvist J; stroke S. Visual errors; "kk" resembling "w" causes confusion
91. Compare this paleographic error with 169:figure) signe B.
95. fende H2. Probably anticipation of copy; H2's variant nevertheless derives from "fenden", meaning to defend (MED v. fenden). Compare 96 dure) endure J; 146 deprived) priued J L, where originality is also indicated by metrical considerations.
96. eternalli shal) schalle endelesly J. For J's tendencies towards inversion and ~~alteration~~ ^{textual} see, respectively, notes 44 and 108.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 13

Noble princesse þat neuere haddeþt peere
 Certes if any comfort in us bee
 þat cometh of þee þou cristes mooder deere 99
 We han noon ooper melodye or glee
 Vs to reioyse in oure aduersitee
 Ne aduocat noon þat wol & dar so preye. 102
 ffor us. and þat for litel hire as yee
 þat helpen for an Aue marie or tweye

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

- 97 Noble) now H2. haddeþt) haddist Gg; ʒit had J L.
 98 certes) om. L. in ... bee) in us be it cometh of þe L;
 be in vs it comes þorow þe J.
 99 That ... thou) Thow erte J L. thou) om. B F G Gg Sp.
 cristes) cristis awyn J.
 100 or glee) nor glee H2; ne gle Gg Sp; no opere glee J; ne
 none oper gle L.
 101 in oure) of in H2.
 102 advocat noon) nanne advoket J. that) om. H2. wole and dar)
 wole and can H2; dare þanne S. so) om. S. preye) prey B F Sp;
 praye H2; pray A; prayne J L.
 103 for(2)for so B L; for as Gg Sp. hire) her J; here Gg.
 104 helpen) helps J L; helpist us H2. an) on Gg; om. H2.
 Marie) Maria A. tweye) twayne J L.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 13

Noble princesse, that nevere haddest peere,
 Certes, if any comfort in us bee,
 That cometh of thee, thou Cristes mooder deere. 99
 We han noon oother melodye or glee
 Us to rejoyse in oure adversitee,
 Ne advocat noon that wol and dar so preye 102
 For us, and that for litel hire as yee,
 That helpen for an Ave-Marie or tweye.

EMENDATIONS: NoneTEXTUAL NOTES:

- 98 in ... bee) in us be it cometh of þe L; be in vs it comes þorow
 þe J. Anticipation of copy in line 99 possibly encouraged the
 rhyming of "bee" (end of 98) with "þee" (caesura, line 99).
- 99 That ... thou) Thow erte J L. Compensation for earlier anticipation
 of copy. cristes) cristis awyn J. J attempts to pad out the copy
 after omission earlier in the line.
- 100 or glee) nor glee H2; ne gle Gg Sp; no opere glee J; ne none
 ober gle L. For scribal habits connected with double negative,
 see above note 17. J L repeat "opere" either mechanically or,
 probably, in an attempt to elaborate, with little regard for scansion.
- 102 prayne J L. A copy error which scribes seek to assimilate by altering rhyme
 i-word: "tweye" to "twayne" in 104 below.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 14

O verrey light of eyen þat þe blynde 105
 O verrey lust of labour and distresse
 O tresorcere of bountee to mankynde
 þee whom god ches to mooder for humblesse 108
 ffrom his ancille he made þe maistresse
 Of heuene & erþe. oure bille up for to beede
 þis world awaiteth euere on þi goodnesse 111
 ffor þou ne failest neuere wight at neede

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

- 105 eyen) Yen A B; ey³yn Gg; eyeghen S. that) þo Gg Sp.
 þe) been Sp; beon S; ar L; er J.
- 106 lust of) reste of H2L; reste and J. distresse) Distres A;
 destresse Sp; of distresse J; disease H2.
- 107 O) O verray A. of) and H2.
- 108 Thee) þou J; om. H2. god) god hir H2. to) om. H2/J L.
 mooder) om. H2. humblesse) humlesse G; umblesse Gg;
 humbles A; humblenesse L; verray humblenesse H2; mekenesse J.
- 109 From) ffor A; And of H2. he) om. J. the) yowe S.
- 110 up) om. A. for) om. Gg S Sp. beede) bede A B Gg H2 J Sp;
 lede L.
- 111 awaiteth) awayteþe S; awaytys L; hase waite J. on) in L.
 thi) þyn Gg.
- 112 ne) om. H2 J L. failest) ffaylist A; fayles J; faylis L;
 fayledist Gg. neuere) neuer A B F H2 L S Sp; neue Gg;
 neuere na J; neuer here H2.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 14

O verrey light of eyen that ben blynde, 105
 O verrey lust of labour and distresse,
 O tresoreere of bountee to mankynde,
 Thee whom God ches to mooder for humblesse! 108
 From his ancille he made the maistresse
 Of hevenⁿ] and [erthe, our bille up for to beede.
 This world awaiteth evere on thi goodnesse, 111
 For thou ne failest nevere wight at neede.

EMENDATIONS:

110 heven) heuene. erthe) eerpe

TEXTUAL NOTES

106 lust) reste H2 J L. Possibly an intermediary copy read "leste" and retention of copy or visual error resulted in "rest"; alternatively, retention of copy from "light" above could have caused "lust" - again assuming an intermediate copy to read "lest(e)". In this case, where either is a possibility, it is necessary to have final recourse to the majority verdict: "lust", besides which H2 J L frequently err and are therefore unreliable. distresse) disease H2. visual error; cf. note 77.

108 humblesse) mekenesse J. Another example of J's tendency to gloss his copy - compare p. 58 C - by substituting a word of similar meaning.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 15

Purpos I haue sum time for to enquere
 Wherefore and whi þe holi gost þee souhte 114
 Whan gabrielles vois cam vn to þin ere
 He not to werre us swich a wunder wrouhte
 But for to saue us þat he sithen bouhte 117
 þanne needeth us no wepene us for to saue.
 But oonly þer we diden not as us ouhte
 Doo penitence and merci axe and haue 120

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

- 113 Purpos) Purpose H2 J Sp; Pourpose S; Porpoos G; purposed A.
 for) om. L. to enquere) tenquere B F Gg Sp.
- 114 and whi) om. L.
115. Gabrielles) Gabriell A J. to) vn to A Ff H2 P1 P2 S.
- 116 to werre) to very L; the wers H2. wroughte) wrought B F H2 S;
 wroght Sp; wroth J.
- 117 sithen) seyn J; syne L. boughte) boghte L; bought B F H2 Sp;
 boght A; bouth J.
- 118 Thanne) So H2. us) us, than H2; om. L S. for) om. B Gg H2 J Sp.
 save) haue S.
- 119 ther) ther as B F; when H2. diden) did B G Gg J L S Sp; do H2.
 as ... oughte) om. J L.
- 120 Doo ... have) To penitence ga and mercy haue J;
 Us aghte to penitence go and mercy haue L. Doo) To A.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 15

Purpos I have sum time for to enquire
 Wherefore and whi the Holi Gost thee soughte, 114
 Whan Gabrielles vois cam to thin ere.
 He not to werre us swich a w^hnder wroughte,
 But for to save us that he sithen boughte; 117
 Thanne needeth us no wepeⁿ us for to save,
 But oonly ther we did^e not, as us oughte,
 Doo penitence, and merci axe and have. 120

EMENDATIONS:

115 un) om.
 118 wepen) wepene 119 dide) diden

TEXTUAL NOTES

- 115 to) vn to A Ff H2 P1 P2 S. The insertion of "un" alters the metre unless final -e on "Gabrielles" remains unsounded. Since the majority of manuscripts omit "un" - even, as in J, when writing "Gabriel" - it is not included here; the stress pattern is as follows:
 Whán Gabriélles voís cam to thin ére
116. to werre) to wery L; the wers H2. Visual error; in the case of L the meanings are similar: "werreyen" means to make war, oppose; "weryen", to strangle, worry. H2's error appears to have arisen from anticipation of copy. "To werre" is not an infinitive - cf. Fr. "pour guerre" but means "from hostility"; see Note 116 below.
- 119 as ... oughte) om J L. See note 57 above for a similar example of omission by J and L; scribes attempt to set this right in the next line, J by further pruning, L by incorporating "as us oughte" into his copy.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 16

Queen of comfort yit whan j me bithinke
 þat j agilt haue boþe him and þee

And þat my soule is wurthi for to sinke

123

Allas j caityf whider may I flee

Who shal vn to þi sone my mene bee

Who but þi self þat art of pitee welle

126

þou hast more reuthe on oure aduersitee

þan in þis world miht any tunge telle

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

121 yit) right Sp. bithinke) bethinke F G Gg H2 J L Sp;

be þink A; bethenke G; bethenk S; thinke B.

122 That I.) That day I H2. agilt have) have agylt L; agylted H2;

hafe offended J. have) om. H2. bothe him) boobe offt him S;

both thyn H2.

123 my) myn Gg. for) downe H2. sinke) stynke B.

124 may) schal Gg Sp.

125 Who ... sone) wha to thy sonne schalle. J. Who) Ho Gg.

un) om. L. thi) thyn Gg. my) myn Gg.

126 thi) thyn Gg. that ... pitee) þat of pitee ert J. that) þou L.

pitee) pitie Sp; pite B L S; pete A Gg.

127 reuthe) rewthe A; rowthe G H2; routh B F Gg S Sp; rew J.

on) of J L S.

128 might) myghte G Gg L; may A H2.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 16

Queen of comfort, yit whan I me bithinke
 That I agilt have bothe him and thee,
 And that my soule is w[er]thi for to sinke,
 Allas! I caityf, whider may I flee?

123

Who shal unto thi Sone my mene bee?
 Who, but thiself, that art of pitee welle?
 Thou hast more reuthe on oure adversitee
 Than in this world might any tonge telle.

126

EMENDATIONS: -TEXTUAL NOTES:

- 121 bithinke) thinke B. B's variant "thinke" lacks the emphasis of the reflexive verb "bithinke", meaning to reflect, concern oneself with something.
- 123 sinke) stynke B. Unless influenced by 56 - "stynke eterne" - this is a straightforward copy error.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 17

Redresse me, mooder, and me chastise,
 129
 For certeynly my Faderes chastisinge,
 That dar I nought abiden in no wise,
 So hidous is his rightful rekenynge. 132
 Mooder, of whom ourg merci gan to springe,
 Beth ye my juge and eek my soules leche;
 For evere in you is pitee haboundinge 135
 To ec[h] that wole of pitee you biseeche.

EMENDATIONS:

132 is his rightful) it is rihful

136 ech) eche

TEXTUAL NOTES:

130. faderes) fader J. J's version is an example of a "genitive with zero ending" (Hossé, Handbook, S. 1102) which is probably correct - compare General Prologue 695: "Oure Lady veyl", Book of the Duchess 372: "the forest syde"; J (and A) uses the same form above at line 115: Gabrielles) Gabriell. However, since J is a poor manuscript and this version is unsupported the majority version stands.
132. is his) it is A Ff G S; it is þe S; it es þat J L. Koch's conjectural emendation. Ff's "it is rihful rekenynge" is corrected into "hys" by a later hand in the margin. Koch notes: "The reading of the 1 group of MSS 'it is' is senseless; the other group seems to be in order with its 'is his', but a comparison with the French text (l. 196: son chastoy si fiert a hie) shows how the error of the first clause must have originated; the copyist of the MS which became the common source for the MSS belonging to it, apparently took 'hit his' only for a bad spelling of 'it is', and corrected these words, in his opinion, but spoilt the sense entirely; whilst another scribe, whose work became the original for the second group, altered this nonsense but did not hit upon the right reading". See Koch, Edition, 132 n.
- 135 is ... haboundinge) I putte myne habidyngge J L; is pitee yow biseche F. Given J L's tendencies towards clarification (see above page 59 for examples) this may fall into that category; alternatively, a gap in an intermediary copy could have caused the error, or it could even arise from 1) the tendency towards inversion 2) confusion arising from this effort 3) visual error involving "pitee/putte," "haboundinge/habidyngge".
- Although there is no gap in F, the next words after "is pitee" are "you biseeche", no doubt because the eye caught "pitee you biseeche" immediately beneath in line 136.

DASE TEXT

STANZA 18

Soth is þat god ne granteth no pitee 137
 With oute þee. for god of his goodnesse
 fforyiveth noon but it like vn to þee
 He hath þee maked vicair & maistresse 140
 Of al þe world. and eek gouernowresse
 Of heuene. and he represseth his iustise.
 After þi wil. and þefore in witesse 143
 He hath þee crowned in so rial wise

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

- 137 soth) sooth G Sp; Soþe A; sooþe S; soth & trowthe H2.
 is) it es H2 J L. that) om. H2 Sp. God) he B F Gg Sp.
 ne) om. H2 J L. granteth) grantes J L.
- 138 thee) you L.
- 139 foryiveth) ffor giffes J L. noon) nat H2. but it) bot
 }if it J L. un) om. J L.
- 140 hath ... maked) hase made the J. maked) Made A B H2.
- 141 this) the A Ff S. eek) also J L.
governeresse) gouernowresse A Ff J L; gouernesse B F.
- 142 he) erth J; om. Gg Sp. represseth) empresse J.
- 143 thi) thyn Gg. therefore) therof H2.
- 144 thee crowned) crowned þe J. crowned) korovned G;
 crowned H2 L Sp; crounyd Gg; crownid A. wise) a wise J S.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 18

Soth is that God ne granteth no pitee
 Withoute thee; for God, of his goodnesse, 138
 Foryiveth noon, but it like unto thee.
 He hath thee maked vicair[e] and maistresse
 Of al th[is] world, and eek govern[er]resse 141
 Of hevене, and he represseth his justise
 After thi wil; and therefore in witnesse
 He hath thee crowned in so rial wise. 144

EMENDATIONS:

140 vicaire) vicair

141 this) the 141 governeresse) gouernowresse

TEXTUAL NOTES:

137 soth) soth & trowthe H2. Embellishment of copy; compare 173
 below for another example in H2, and page 60 above for examples
 by this and other scribes.

141 this) the A Ff S. The expression "al this world" occurs earlier
 in the poem; compare note 2 above.

governeresse) gouernowresse A Ff J L; gouernesse B F. Koch, Edition,
 amends to "governeresse" in accordance with the French at line 214.
 Robinson however leaves "gouvernouresse". Koch's version has been
 preferred here, consistent with "entame" (see note 79 above),
 since "gouvernouresse" is a possible anglicization on the part of
 the scribe (compare NED:gouvernouresse). B F's "gouernesse"
 probably arose through confusion over a contraction.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 19

Temple deuout ber god hath his woninge
 ffro which pese misbileeued depruied been
 To you my soule penitent j bringe 147
 Resceyue me. I can no ferbere fleen
 With thornes venymous O heuene queen
 ffor which be eerbe acursed was ful yore. 150
 I am wounded as ye may wel seen
 bat j am lost almost it smert so sore

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

- 145 Temple) Temperall A. ther) bere A B Gg; where H2 L; where in J.
 hath) hat H2; has J; ches Gg Sp. his) om. J.
 146 Fro) ffra J; for Sp. these) this B. misbileeved) mysbeleeuede G;
 mysbileuande J; heretikes H2. deprived) pryuied J L. been) be H2.
 147 you) the H2 J. I) om. H2.
 148 me) me now H2. I) forIGg Sp. can) ne cane S.
 149 O) A J; I B F; om. Gg Sp. hevene) heuyn A B J S; heaven Sp.
 150 acursed) cursed J L. was) om. L. full) fell L. yore) sore H2 Sp.
 151 I am so) I so am J; I am soore S. so) om. A Ff. ye) hou J.
 152 almost) om. A S. it) I H2 J L. smert so) Smertith Me So A S.
 sore) soore S; sare J.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 19

Temple devout, ther God hath his woninge,
 Fro which these misbileeved deprived been
 To you my soule penitent I bringe.

147

Receyve me - I can no ferther fleen!
 With thornes venymous, O hevене queen,
 For which the eert~~he~~ acursed was ful yore,
 I am [so] wounded, as ye may wel seen,
 That I am lost almost, it smert so sore.

150

EMENDATIONS:

151 so) om.

TEXTUAL NOTES:

145 Temple) Temperall A. A may have had in mind "attempre" - temperate, modest, discreet - or "tempren" - to control, moderate, but it is more likely to have occurred through miscopying.

146 deprived) priued J L. Compare note 95 above, and 150 acursed)cursed JL

151 so) om. A Ff. The majority of good manuscripts insert "so" here; S's "soore", while being the harder reading here, may be due to anticipation of rhyme-word "sore" at 152; or to emphasis (for S's tendency towards emphasis cf. p. 60 F).

BASE TEXT

STANZA 20

Virgine þat art so noble of apparaile 153
 And ledest us in to þe hye tour
 Of Paradys. þou me wisse and counsaile
 How j may haue þi grace & þi socour 156
 All haue j ben in filthe and in er[r]dur
 Ladi vn to þat court þou me aiourne
 þat cleped is þi bench. O fresh flour 159
 þer as þat merci euere shall sojourne

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

- 153 art ... noble) so noble es J. art) is L.
 154 And) that B F Gg Sp; om. G J L. ledest) ledist A B Gg H2;
 ledest Sp; lede L; led J. into) unto H2 L. the) þyn L S.
 hye tour) highest toure H2; hie paradis toure J; hygh
 tour of paradyce L.
 155 Of ... counsaile) Thou me wysse lady and counsayle L;
 þou wisse me lady and me counsayle J. wisse) wiche Gg; wish Sp.
 156 How) on whate wise J; of what wyse L. thi (1)) þyn Gg.
 thi (2)) þyn Gg.
 157 All ... I) For I have H2. in (2)) om. J L. filthe)
 filth B H2 Sp; fullthe G; fyghte L.
 158 unto) on Gg Sp. court) contre B F Gg Sp.
 159 cleped) clepid H2; cleaped Sp; called J; cheped Gg. thi)
 þyn Gg; the H2; om. L. bench) benche F H2 S; benke J; bouche L.
 O) of B F Gg H2 Sp; of a J. freshe) frosche Gg.
 160 Ther as) There where J; wher that thy H2. that) om. J L.
 euere shal) shall euere (more H2 J) L. sojourne)
 Suggourne J.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 20

Virgine, that art so noble of apparaile,

153

And ledest us into the hye tour

Of Paradys, thou me wisse and coun[sai]le

How I may have thi grace and thi sq[co]ur,

156

All have I ben in filthe and in er[r]our.

Ladi, unto that court thou me ajourn[e]

That cleped is thi bench, O fresh[e] flour!

159

Ther as that merci evere shal sojourne.EMENDATIONS:

159 freshe) fresh

TEXTUAL NOTES:

154 tour. Furnivall has "toure"; it is possible that a final -e occurred but the base manuscript is rather smudged at this point.

155-8. Damage to manuscript Ff has made the final word in each of these lines unclear.

159 O) of B F Gg H2 Sp; of a J. It is likely that J's original also read "of", an error which J attempts to set right, altering to "thy benke of a fresch flour". L, after omitting "thi" has become totally confused; his "bouche" is evidently a visual error.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 21

Xpc þi some þæt in þis world alighte
 Vn on þe cros to suffre his passioun 162
 And eek suffred þæt longius his herte pighte
 And made his herte blood to renne adoun
 And al was þis for my saluacioun 165
 And j to him am fals and eek vnkynde
 And yit he wole not my dampnacioun
 þis thanke j yow socour of al mankynde 168

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

- 161 Xristus) Chryste L; Xpist H2; Xpus F; Xpc B Ff G Gg S Sp; Xps A.
 thi) byn Gg. alighte) alight A F' G Gg H2 Sp; lith J.
- 162 the) a B F Gg H2 Sp; om. G.
- 163 eek) eke Suffrid A B F Ff G S Sp; also suffred L;
 sufferede ek Gg H2 Sp; suffered J. herte) hert B F;
 hert to H2. prighte) pighte - editor's emendation (see
 note opposite).
- 164 herte) hert B F H2. blood) blody H2. to) for to J; om. Gg Sp.
 adoun) downe J L.
- 165 And ... this) And all þis was A Gg H2 Sp. So was it al S.
 this) thus L. my) myn Gg; oure H2. saluacioun) sauacioun G Gg.
- 166 And (1)) om. J L. I ... am) To him I am J; we to hym ben H2.
 and (2)) an G. eek) also J L.
- 167 my) myn Gg; oure H2.
- 168 This) Then H2. I yow) I the J; we the H2. socour) socoure B;
 sauour H2.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 21

X[ristus], thi sone, that in this world aligh^t
 Upon the cros to suffre his passioun, 162
 And eek that Longius his herte p[ri]ghte,
 And made his herte blood to renne adoun,
 And al was this for my salvacioun; 165
 And I to him am fals and eek unkynde,
 And yit he wole not my dampnacioun -
 This thanke I yow, socour of al mankynde! 168

EMENDATIONS:

161 Xristus) Xpc. alight) alighte
 163 And eek that) and eek suffred that. prighte) pighte.

TEXTUAL NOTES:

163. And eek that. All manuscripts insert "suffred", apparently as repetition of line 162.

prighte. All manuscripts have "pighte", a version which Robinson retains, while conceding that "prighte" may be correct. Brusendorff at page 241 of The Chaucer Tradition comments: "... the last word is a clear scribal error for 'prighte', and this certainly seems to indicate that all the preserved manuscripts are derived from the same copy of the original". "Pichen" has two meanings: 1) to pitch a tent; 2) to furnish with a pike (NED v. pichen). "Prichen" from which "prighte" is derived is more appropriate here, since it means to pierce.

168. socour) sauour H2. Meaning "saviour", H2's variant is probably intended to add emphasis.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 22

Ysaac was figure of his deth certeyn
 bat so fer forth his fader wolde obeye
 bat him ne rouhte no thing to be slayn 171
 Riht soo þi sone lust as a lamb to deye
 Now ladi ful of merci j yow preye
 Sithe he his merci mesured so large. 174
 Be ye not skant. for alle we singe & seye
 þat ye ben from vengeaunce ay oure targe

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

- 169 figure) fygur L; figeur Gg; signe B. deth) death Sp; dethe F;
 deepe S; dede J.
- 170 That ... fer forth) In that he wold H2. fer forth) fferforth to J.L.
 wolde) wil H2.
- 171 That) So ferre that H2. him) he J. ne) om. J L. nothing)
 om. H2. to) for to H2.
- 172 soo) om. L. thy) byn Gg. list ... lamb) as a lambe list J;
 as lambe lyst for L. a) om. B F. to) om. J.
- 173 Now ... preye) Now I pray the lady ffule of mercy J;
 For us now blessed lady I the prey H2. preye) biseech Gg.
- 174 Sith) Sithe Ff Gg; sen J L. his) is A F L S; es J.
 mesured) measured hath H2; me seured Gg; sured me Sp.
- 175 ye) þou H2 J. and seye) softly J. and) or Sp.
- 176 That ... targe) Ageyne veniance. that thow art ay his targe H2.
 ye) þou J. ben) been F G Sp; beon S; erte J; ar L.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 22

Ysaac was figure of his deth, certeyn,
 That so fer forth his fader wolde obeye
 That him ne roughete nothing to be slayn; 171
 Right soo thi Sone list, as a lamb, to deye.
 Now, ladi ful of merci, I yow preye,
 Sith he his merci mesured so large, 174
 Be ye not skant; for alle we singe and seye
 That ye ben from vengeaunce ay oure targe.

EMENDATIONS:

172 list) lust

174 sith) sithe

TEXTUAL NOTES:

173 preye) biseech Gg. Sp, who evidently copied Gg, alters his text to rhyme with "deye", independently of Gg's manuscript and thus achieves the correct majority reading "preye".

174 mesured) me seured Gg; sured me Sp. Sp attempts to set right Gg's error which arises from false word-division.

BASE TEXT

STANZA 23

Zacharie yow clepeth þe opene welle 177
 To wasshe sinful soule out of his gilt
 þefor þis lessoun ouht j wel to telle
 þat nere þi tender herte we weren spilt 180
 Now ladi sithe þou canst and wilt
 Ben to þe seed of Adam merciabile.
 Bring us to þat palais þat is bilt 183
 To penitentes þat ben to merci able Amen

SIGNIFICANT VARIANTS

- 177 yow) the H2 J. clepeth) clepith A B Gg H2 Sp; clepeþe S;
 callez J; callys L.
- 178 To ... gilt) To wassh the synful soulis out of ther gilt H2;
 The whylk of synful sowlys excusys þe gilte L.
 To wasshe) þe whiche Gg; that wisht Sp.
- 179 Therefore) þefor. Ff ; tharfore J; Wherefor H2.
 ought) awe L; out Gg Sp.
- 180 nere) ne were L; ware noght J. thi) þyn Gg. weren)
 were B F Gg Sp; wer L; war J; were but H2.
- 181 bryghte) om. all manuscripts save Gg Sp. sith.) sithe Ff;
 sen J L. thou) thou both H2. and) and eeke S.
- 182 seed) sed B Gg; sede A F L; seede H2 S.
- 183 Bring) Bringe B F Gg H2; and brynge J; so bring S.
 to) unto H2. that) thy J L. palais) place H2 J L.
 bilt) bryghte L.
- 184 penitentes) penitendis B F Gg; penytentz G; penitence J;
 penitent L. ben ... able) to thy mercy ar able J.
 merci able) Merciable A. able) abele Gg; Abull B.

EDITED TEXT

STANZA 23

Zacharie yow clepeth the open^[e] welle 177

To wasshe sinful soule out of his gilt.

Therefore^[e] this lessoun oughte I wel to telle,That, nere thi tender herte, we wer^[e] spilt. 180Now, lady ^[bryghte], sith^[h] thou canst and wilt

Ben to the seed of Adam merciabile,

Bring us to that palais that is bilt 183

To penitentes that ben to merci able. Amen

EMENDATIONS:

177 open) opene 179 Therefore) þeþor

180 were) weren 181 bryghte - inserted. sithe) sith

TEXTUAL NOTES:

179 Therefore) þeþor. Ff makes an alteration by subpuncting.

181 bryghte. Omitted in all manuscripts save Gg Sp, "bryghte" is inserted here by previous editors. On lines 181 and 183, Koch comments: " They are deficient in one syllable, according to the best manuscripts. In the first case, Gg and Sp make a very good suggestion with their 'lady bryght', which phrase also occurs in lines 16 and 62 in all manuscripts; in the second perhaps H2 has by chance the best reading with its 'unto', instead of 'to'; perhaps 'bilt' is to be altered into 'ybilt'. If the best texts seem to prove that no such addition is necessary, one ought to bear in mind that their common source must already have been a faulty one, as is clearly shown by my remarks to l. 79 ... so that omissions in the last line would not at all be unlikely".

NOTES

4. of alle floures flour. the best, the most excellent. A familiar phrase in medieval English and Latin Lyrics (where it appears as "florum flos") dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. See R. Woolf, Religious Lyric, p 276. The description is used by Chaucer to address the daisy in the Prologue to the Legend of Good Women (line 185). Compare also The Parson's Tale, line 288: "For in the flour is hope of fruyt in tyme cominge". This brings out the sense of potential and promise of achievement implicit in the epithet "flour", a phrase not used in de Deguilleville, but echoed by Chaucer at line 159 of ABC and reinforced by the harvest associations later in the poem (see n. 38 below).

For a discussion of the phrase "florum flos" see P Dronke, Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love Lyric, i, Oxford, 1965, pp 181-92. The virgin was also addressed as "flos est puellarum" - "Flower of all maidens" (see Medieval Latin Lyrics, ed. H. Waddell, New York, 1933, p. 224).

6. debonayre. Gracious lady. Occurring in the French at line 11, "debonayre" is frequently found in contemporary English lyrics to the Virgin modelled on the secular tradition. See C. Brown, Lyrics, nos 16, 17.

7. langour. This word indicates the spiritual sickness caused by the poet's "adversaire", the devil (cf. lines 79, 84-5, 151). An interesting parallel can be drawn with the use of "languunghwīl" in the Old English poem The Dream of the Rood. Glossed by editors as "time of weariness of spirit", a comparison is made with the meaning of the word "accidia" - "a spiritual disease peculiarly incident to the cloister" (The Dream of the Rood, ed. Dickins & Ross, 5 edition, London, 1963, line 126 n. See also Additional Notes, p. 35). But a further conceit is probably intended here. In view of the sensuous tone of the complaint to the Virgin and the secular connotations implied in the word "langour" it can be assumed that the poet is also suffering from the lover's malady or "hereos". For the word "langour" had its place in both religious and secular love poetry. The text "amore languet" was much quoted by mystical writers, such as Richard of St Victor, in reference to the wound of love. It appears in several medieval English lyrics, notably in the refrain of "In a tabernacle of a Toure" (see R T Davies, Lyrics, p. 148). Though in secular usage, it refers to the langour of love ("I languysch for lufe") its use in religious literature was always a sign of the ecstatic view of love, and the violence of

its effect (see P Rousselot, Pour l'histoire du problème de l'amour au moyen âge, Münster, 1908, pp 56-87). The history of the "wound of love" image has been traced by R Woolf (Religious Lyric, pp. 164-5), from its origin in the classical idea of Cupid shooting with his bow. She contrasts this with the Old Testament, where arrows are symbols of God's anger. A similar contrast can be made in ABC, between the wound incurred by the poet and the Old Testament reference at ll 29-30 where the bow is bent not in love but in anger - "as it was first". The reference to the wound in the Song of Songs, iv. 9: "Thou has wounded my heart, my sister", possibly inspired Chaucer here. It was associated in the Middle Ages both with the amore langueo text, and with the wound of the lance that pierced Christ's side. This could explain Chaucer's reference to Longinus the centurion at line 163; like "langour", "Longius" does not appear anywhere in de Deguilleville's poem.

11. Warne. reject, refuse to hear. Skeat quotes Piers Plowman, C version xxiii. 12: "whanne men hym werneth", meaning "when men refuse to give him what he asks for".

12. Free. liberal. It should be noted that "free" echoes the theme of the poem: bounty, or generosity, which is referred to three times in this stanza ("Bountee", "free", "largesse"). De Deguilleville has: "Quar tu es de salu porte".

13. see 96 of the French for a similar reference to "largesse": "habondance".

14. Robinson refers us specifically to The Man of Law's Tale, 852, and lines 850-54 are worth quoting here, for Constance's prayer to the Virgin closely parallels ABC in tone and content:

"Now, lady bright, to whom alle woful cryen,
Thow glorie of wommanhede, thow faire may,
Thow haven of refut, bright sterre of day,
Reve on my child, that of thy gentillesse,
Rewest on every reweful in distresse."

Skeat's comment that the tale of Constance was first written before the Canterbury period and afterwards revised has been rejected by most critics, but the above passage goes some way towards supporting his view, cf. page 23 above.

15. theeves sevene. Seven Deadly Sins. The original has "Par sept larrons, pechies mortez", line 17, and a note in manuscript S has "i. seven dedly synnes" (see Furnivall's Parallel Text version of the Sion College manuscript, Minor Poems III p66). The seven robbers who here threaten to rob the sinner of his "bountee" were a common theme in Old French and Middle English alike and are treated of at length in Chaucer's Parson's Tale and in Piers Plowman. See M W Bloomfield, The Seven Deadly Sins, Michigan, 1952, p. 393, n. 29; here, the sins are described as thieves attacking various parts of the body; cf. n. 7 (langour) above for the similar effect produced.
16. er that my ship tobreste. Not in the French, this phrase introduces what was a key image in Middle English religious literature. Owst (Literature and Pulpit, pp 68-76) provides an index of sea imagery, commenting that "the 14th century songster and the 15th century homilist are alike in their debt to this typical product of sacred allegory". Curtius (European Literature, p. 128 f.) traces the ship image back to the Latin sources. While Chaucer is here amplifying the epithet "haven" in line 14, and continues the conceit at line 42 ("tempeste ful of dreede"), it is possible that an allusion to the poet's dilemma is also intended. The "boat of the poet's mind" is a rhetorical device used by Dante in the Convivio, Book 2. See also Purgatorio, I, ii, as well as Paradiso, II, i-xv: "O voi che siete in piccioletta barca..." cf. Troilus and Criseyde II 3-4 ("the boot...Of my connyng").
20. accioun. legal action, accusation. An unusually close translation of the original at line 25: "Contre moi font une accion." Robinson notes: "For the idea of the stanza, comparison has been suggested with 1 John iii, 20-21". J Mersand (Romance Vocabulary, p 62) has counted this among the five words in the poem which Chaucer "naturalized as citizens of English speech and used in his translation". The words, used probably for the first time in English, are: accioun, desperacion, enlumyned, governeresse, resigne.
21. right and desperacion. Again, Chaucer closely parallels the French: "raisons et desperacion", of Meyer's version (line 29 n.).
22. susteene. to maintain or sustain an action. Again, a direct translation of de Deguilleville's "maintenir". This is a legal term, "susteene" here meaning to "sustain the plea".

26. n'art. After verbs with a negative implication such as "doubt", "forbid", it was common in Middle English to repeat the negative idea, usually by the particle "ne", in a dependent clause. Robinson, in a note on Troilus II, 716, quotes several examples of this in Chaucer and Layamon, as well as in Anglo-Saxon. Compare the use of the subjunctive case, following "ne" in a dependant clause, still extant in modern French. See textual note to line 24 for a discussion of other examples of "agglutination" which occur in the poem.

28. Crystes blisful mooder deere. In addition to the general tribute to the Virgin given here, R. A. Klinefelter suggests that Chaucer also alluded to the allegory of the four Daughters of God ("Chaucer's An ABC, lines 25-32," Explicator, xxiv (1965) item 5): "This theme, otherwise known as 'The Reconciliation of the Heavenly Virtues' or 'The Parliament of Heaven'. is an extension of Psalm lxxxiv, 11: 'Misericordia et veritas obviauerunt sibi; iusticia et pax osculatae sunt'.

After Adam's fall, four virtues of God - Justice, Mercy, Peace, and Truth - quarreled concerning the ultimate destiny of sinful man, God's Justice and Truth demanded satisfaction; His Mercy and Peace urged forgiveness. An actual debate took place before God's throne. The reconciliation of these opposing principles was accomplished when the Son of God offered Himself as a redeeming sacrifice and Gabriel was dispatched to break the news of the Incarnation to Mary". According to Klinefelter, this legend accounts for Chaucer's allusions in these lines to God's vouchsafing "with us to accorde" and Mary's being the "cause of grace and merci", and also for the reference in line 31: "that God would not hear of mercy because of 'justice and of ire' until the redemption through the Incarnation". He suggests that there is an echo also of the allegory later in the poem at line 115: "When Gabrielles vois cam to thin ere". The parallel, though interesting, can more easily be explained by biblical reference - see n. 29 below.

29. "Were the bow of justice and of wrath now bent". cf. the expressions of the French: "l'arc de justice", line 42 and "S'encore fust l'arc encorde", line 47; the image of the rainbow is borrowed from Genesis 9.13, and Revelations 10. 1 where it refers to the last judgment - a theme which runs throughout the poem (cf. n. 36). The implication is that the Virgin as intercessor will deflect the wrath of God "as it was first" (in the Old Testament) thus obtaining the mercy which Christ's passion made possible "as general acquittance" (l.60) on the day of Judgment.

36. assyse. Last Judgment. References to the "great assyse" or "last assyse" are common in Middle English literature, and particularly in poems to the Virgin. Her position as intercessor on two important occasions - the day of death and the Last Judgment - became firmly established in late 14th century lyrics. (See R Woolf, Religious Lyric, p. 276).

38. fruit. Robinson notes: "The biblical figure of fruit is added by Chaucer - cf. Romans vii. 4". But rearrangement, not alteration, is a feature of Chaucer's translation here. As ten Brink comments "the imitation is rather free....there are often deviations in the arrangements of the thoughts" (English Literature, tr. W. Clarke Robinson, London 1893, vol. 2, p. 60). Images are thus transposed from one part of the poem to another. An obvious example is Chaucer's "tente" in line 9, not found in de Deguilleville until line 61. Here, the case is more complex. Sturzinger's variant readings at line 3 are: *refui*) *le frui*, a *ϕ*. If Chaucer had used manuscripts a *ϕ*, his deferment of the "fruit" image could explain the absence of any effort to translate de Deguilleville's first line - an unusual circumstance even in Chaucer's style of imitatio. However, it is more likely that the meaning of "gaine" - autumnal fruit - in line 118 of the French influenced Chaucer here. Old French *gayn*, *gaigne*, *gaine*, *weyn*, *wains*, had harvest associations which were especially appropriate in the context of the Last Judgment (for a list of examples, see Godefroi, "gaine"). This impression is emphasised by the use of "foysonne", line 205, "dessaisonne", line 213, and "afruite", line 190, where "bien" is also implied. "Gaine" is of course used in the sense of modern "gain", and this accords with the word that Chaucer's "fruit" replaces, which is "bien". It is interesting to note here that some manuscripts of Chaucer's ABC have "good" instead of "fruit" (see textual notes, line 38), suggesting that the scribe may have had a copy of the French original by him.

Perhaps the most famous occurrence in Chaucer of the word "fruit" is The Nun's Priest's Tale, line 3443 where it also refers to a harvest: "Taketh the fruyt and let the chaf be stille".

The image of fruit is also referred to in 14th century Passion lyrics; for example, the grapes which poured forth the blood of Christ - an image from Numbers xiii - are referred to in Lydgate's Erly on Morwe (see R. Woolf, Religious Lyric, pp. 200-201).

39. That but thou er that day correcte me. J Burke Severs has suggested that the line preferred by most scribes is the correct one: "That but thou er that day correcte me". Although it shows a deviation from the rhyme scheme turning it into ababbcac, instead of the regular ababbcbc, Severs quotes a similarly irregular rhyme "galles" in the sixth stanza of Former Age over which the manuscripts are unanimous. He finds that "since 'correcte me' is the reading of the two main groups of manuscripts it must have been the reading of the archetype. Readings ending in 'folise' or 'chastyse' must be regarded as merely scribal efforts to regularize the rhyme scheme" (J Burke Severs, "Two Irregular Chaucerian Stanzas", MLN, lxiv, (1949), pp 306-9). He alleges that it also makes better sense to have "correcte" - since the poet is asking for help to reform before the day of judgment. It is also the harder reading - see textual n.39 above. (It is however difficult to agree with Severs' suggestion that Chaucer here made a careless slip or that he wrote the irregular rhyme on purpose).

48. in poynt. is ready. It is also possible that a "poynte" or type of epigram is intended here. Thus, an acrostic on the name "Chaucer" could be conjectured from the line "Unto my deth in poynt is me to chace". De Deguilleville's taste for acrostics in his Latin poems, as a means of perpetuating his name has been noted by M Lofthouse (Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine de Guillaume de Deguilleville, unpublished MA thesis of the University of Manchester, 1929, App. II, p I ff). Comparison with the French at this point does not support such a conjecture, and the absence of other acrostics in Chaucer's poetry makes the surmise unlikely, but the arrangement of the poem - in abcdical verse form - and the reference to a "lessoun" in line 179, could be used to support this view. For a discussion of epigrammatic tendencies in the Middle Ages, see Curtius, European Literature, p. 292 - "Epigram and the style of 'pointes'".

50. bitter. French "amere". An allusion to the association of "Maria", the name, with Hebrew "mārāh", bitterness; see Exodus, xv, 23.

56. Variants indicate that French "oste chaucement d'ordure", at line 144, was less widespread in Old French than was Chaucer's "to stink eterne" in Middle English. Robinson notes: "The conception of hell as a place of stench recurs in HF, 1654. Cf Dante, Inf. vi, 12; vii, 127; xi, 5". Other examples are cited by T. Spenser, "Chaucer's Hell", Speculum, II (1927) pp 177-200. The stench of the devil himself is also referred to in Mactacio Abel: "It stank like the dwill in helle" (The Wakefield Pageants in the Towneley Cycle, EETS, ES lxxi, 1.283). In a note on "eterne" Mersand has: "Eterne, 56 f., is a new word [in the English language] but it has no equivalent in the original" (Chaucer's Romance Vocabulary, New York, 1937, p. 62).

59. wrot the bille. cf. 110 - "our bille up for to beede". The image of a bill or charter emanated from the series of complaints relating to the Charter of Christ (See M C Spalding, The Middle English Charters of Christ, Bryn Mawr, 1914). The charter, endowing man with the kingdom of heaven, was written on the parchment of Christ's skin, the pen being lance and nails, the ink the blood, the letters the wounds, and the seal His heart. See, for example, William Herebert's The Devout Man Prays to his Relations, an early 14th century lyric, lines 23-4:

For Love the chartre wrot,
And the enke orn of his wounde.

printed in R T Davies, Lyrics, on p. 96 and discussed, in Notes, on p. 319.

R. Woolf, pointing to a connection between legal and wound images in the Passion lyrics, comments: "To the extent that the Charters of Christ are Passion complaints they need no further comment, but the legal image at their centre requires elucidation. The application of legal terminology to the doctrine of the Redemption begins with St Paul and seems first to have been applied to historical events by St Ambrose, who described the committing of the Virgin and St John to one another as a part of Christ's testamentum. Christ's promise to his disciples, 'Pacem relinquo

vobis', also suggested by its form a testamentary disposition. This may be illustrated from the Pèlerinage de la vie humaine of Guillaume de Guilleville, where in the earlier text Christ bequeaths only His peace, whilst in the second the bequest is extended to include Christ's body to the sepulchre, and thereafter to all Christians, His mother to St John, His blood to those who feel compassion for His sufferings, etc. Similar lists may be found in a variety of works, both homiletic, such as the Legenda Aurea, and literary, such as the Stanzaic Life of Christ and Lydgate's A Saying of the Nightingale" (Religious Lyric, p. 211): Ms. Woolf also discusses the concept of a lover's "bille" or complaint in poems addressed to the Virgin (Religious Lyric, p. 280).

68 haleth. Although Skeat glosses "draws back" and manuscript H2 has "heleth", MED indicates that the two meanings are compatible. For both originate in Old English "hāelan" which has several meanings, all of which can be found in Chaucer. They are: 1) to cure, heal, which is used of both physical sickness and of "hereos", the disease brought on by love (see Knight's Tale, 1220f, Troilus, I, 1086f.). 2) to reform, save, preserve from death or damnation, as in Pardoner's Tale, 366: "And sires also it heeleth jalousie". 3) to draw somebody up from one condition to another, to uplift (the heart). Thus, Boece II, pr. 8.30: "The contrarious Fortune ledeth ofte folk ayen to sothfast goodes, and haleth hem ayen as with an hook". It is the third category to which our example specifically belongs and it is quoted in MED in this connection (v. halen, 1 b). But all three meanings fit in with the theme and imagery of the poem.

"Haleth" also means to draw up, or rein in, the bridle. Thus, Malory (Works, p. 238/6) "Than they heled up their brydyls and began to walop". Compare the note on rebellion signified by de Deguilleville's "colier", the French equivalent of "haleth" in Textual Notes 127 of Appendix below.

70. crooked strete. One of several pilgrimage metaphors in the poem, cf. line 75: "the righte wey". De Deguilleville (105) has "et remes en droite voie" which Chaucer reverses to mean "brings him out of the wrong road".

73. Kalenderes. An allusion to the custom of writing the high festivals of the Church in red or illuminated letters. For a list of instances where Mary appears in calendars, see Skeat, Edition, 73 n.

76. him thar not drede. he need not dread.

78. medicyne. A direct translation from the French, and a familiar title of the Virgin (see R T Davies, Lyrics, p. 375 for other examples in Middle English literature).

A close parallel exists between the theme of the healing power of the Virgin and the secular theme of love as a disease and the lady as physician - cf. Book of the Duchess, lines 36-40. On the other hand, R. Woolf (Religious Lyric, p. 129) points out the connection with the ancient religious metaphor of sin as a disease and Christ the Redeemer as physician. She also quotes Anselm's prayer to the Virgin: "To you, o source of life and mother of health, O temple of pity and mercy, to you my wretched soul tries to come: it is weak from the diseases of sin, rent by the wounds of evil deeds, corrupt with the ulcers of shameful actions: as much as it is possible for one at the point of death, it endeavours to beseech you that you condescend to heal by your powerful merits and your holy prayers O lady, I desire to ask you that you heal the wounds and ulcers of my sins with the glance of your compassion".

80. resygne. One of the five Romance Words which Mersand claims are used for the first time in English, "resygne" refers back to line 112 of the original - "resine".

81. Koch, Edition, 8ln., notes that it is clear Chaucer's copy had "douleur" here, in place of the "douceur" of the French. But since none of Sturzinger's 76 variants has "douleur" it is possible a misreading occurred. More probably, Chaucer altered his copy to include a reference to the "mater dolorosa" here.

84-6. Robinson's explanation makes the passage clearer: "Let not the foe of us all make his boast that he has, by his wiles of misfortune, convicted (the soul) that you have so dearly purchased".

85. lystes of mischaunce. Chaucer's translation of French "mestrait" alters the meaning from "misdeed" to "misfortune". For the traditional personification of "mesfait" in Old French literature see Textual Note 127 in Appendix below.

90 . The type of the burning bush signifying the Virgin birth was a common theme in Middle English lyrics, the image occurring in Exodus iii,2. For examples, see R T Davies, Lyrics, p. 371; The Early English Carols, ed. R L Greene, Oxford, 1935, p. 147 and p. 148; B. Woolf, Religious Lyric, p.286.

100. melodve or glee. French "tirelire". The word has two meanings; that indicated in de Deguilleville is "moneybox" which echoes the recurrent theme of bounty or generosity. Alternatively, a "tirelire" was a musical instrument or refrain. Clair Olson ("Chaucer and the Music of the Fourteenth Century", Speculum, xvi (1941), 64-91) lists "turelure", "turelurette" under "the chief instruments used in fourteenth century England and France."

A reed instrument, the word was usually associated with shepherds (cf. Primum Pastorum, EETS, ES lxxi, "tyr" at ll. 113-4; Carols, p.27: Middle English "tooraloora"). An interesting combination of the two meanings is found in a "tirelire" or nonsense refrain which appears in one Old French Pastourelle:

L'autrier chivachoie
 Leis un boix ki verdoie.
 Trovai pastoure aignaus gardant
 Et jolivement chantant:
 'Tirelire un don'.

(See Godefroi for further examples).

Here also "tirelire" implies generosity as well as music. This connection is perhaps explained by the familiar figure of the minstrel who sang for money at the medieval court (see P. Dronke, The Medieval Lyric, London 1968, p.20 f.). Chaucer's word "glee" while meaning song may also be interpreted as "minstrelsy" (MED v. glee) so that it cannot be alleged, as has Skeat (Edition, n.100) that Chaucer made a mistake in translation here.

An interesting development arises in the later poem Complaint to his Purse where Chaucer begs money from his "Queen of comfort" (his empty purse) - a phrase also used in ABC (line 77) relating to the Virgin. "Tresorer" also appears in both poems. This burlesquing of the love-complaint was perhaps modelled on Deschamps' ballade to Charles V, or on Froissart. Compare also Hoccleve's Complaint to Lady Moneye.

109. Ancille. a female servant, cf. Luke i. 38 - "Ecce ancilla Domini".

110. Our bille up for to beede. to offer up a petition on our behalf. For the familiar expression "putte vp a bylle" see Piers Plowman, C. Pass. v. 45; Paston Letters i. 151, 153. (ed. J. Gairdner, London 1904) Compare also Pity, line 44.

116. to werre. (French "pour guerre"): it was not from hostility that he wrought such a miracle for us. "Werre" is not a verb: the verb form is "werryen", see Squires Tale, line 10; The Former Age, line 25 ("to werreye").

120. cf. Mark i.4; Matthew vii.7.

124. caityf. Emotive epithets such as this frequently occur in Middle English penitential lyrics (see F A Patterson, The Middle English Penitential Lyric, New York, 1911, intro). Compare, in Chaucer, the Second Nun's Prologue, line 58: "flemed wrecche"

125. mene. Mediator, intermediary. Cf Piers Plowman, B Pass. vii. 196: "And Marie his moder be owre mene bitwene." On Mary's role as intercessor, R. Woolf comments: "in the new devotional temper an appeal to Mary was a sign of sincere remorse, for, once the idea of a hierarchy of appeal had been accepted a direct and immediate invocation of Christ might suggest a presumptuous unawareness of one's own sinfulness rather than a theologically correct recourse to the only and ultimate source of forgiveness. This idea of a proper fear, preventing a direct plea to Christ, underlies all the Marian penitential lyrics" (Religious Lyric, p. 119). For examples see F P Patterson, Penitential Lyric, nos 7, 13, 19, 62 and Carleton Brown, Lyrics, XIII, 55, p. 113. The mercy of the Virgin was especially implored for the hour of death and at the Last Judgment - see n. 78 above.

132. For Koch's comment on the uncertain interpretation of this passage see Textual Notes, 1. 132 above.

140. vicaire. Deputy, to rule in His place. Not in the French, but compare "vicaire" used as an epithet of Nature, Physician's Tale, l. 20; Parliament of Fowls, l. 379; The Romaunt of the Rose, lines 16782, 19505 ff. This term was probably

taken originally from Alanus, De Planctu Naturae, where it occurs three times in relation to Nature (see Robinson, Edition, p 727 20n.). It is possible that Chaucer took the term from Roman de la Rose, line 16970f, but more likely that both Chaucer and Jean de Meung took it from Alanus. It is only in ABC that Chaucer used "vicaire" in relation to Mary.

141. governeresse. A new word in English, according to J Mersand. cf. Pity, line 80. Masui notes: "Words [ending] in -esse as in -nesse seem to have provided the poet with a convenient means of rhyming through which he could create or coin the necessary rhyme words as the occasion arose... Sometimes the English translator borrows the original rhyme words bodily, at other times he adapts the English words corresponding to the French words, especially by the help of the suffixes -esse and -nesse". (see M. Masui, Rhyme Words, p. 15). For a discussion of Chaucer's adaptation of the French, see Textual Note 141 above).

144. Suggested by Revelations xii, 1, the expression "Regina celi, veni coronaberis" or "Hail, crowned queene", occurred frequently in Middle English poems and hymns to the Virgin. See for example Political Religious and Love Poems, ed. F J Furnivall, EETS, lxx, p. 147 and R T Davies, Lyrics, no. 62, line 3.

145. cf. the Second Nun's Prologue line 43: "Withinne the cloistre blisful of thy sydis". Carleton Brown uses this and other similarities to claim that ABC and the Second Nun's Prologue were written at about the same time: 1370 ("The Prologue to Chaucer's Lyf of St Cecile", MP, vol. ix, 1911). But the figure of the Virgin as a tabernacle was familiar. See William of Shoreham's A Song to Mary (R T Davies, Lyrics, no. 34, line 2).

149-50. cf. Genesis iii, 18. Thorns here mean sins - compare the French, line 224: "Des espines de l'iniquite".

154. tour. Although the figure of the new Jerusalem is from Revelations xxi, it also continues the conceit of Mary as tabernacle. Thus, Luke x, 38: "Intravit Jesus in castellum" where the word "castellum" or "tour" gave rise to the medieval figure (cf. The Castel of Love, a 14th century English version, ed. R F Weymouth, Philological Society Publication, vol. 48 (1862-3). Myrc's "Sermon on the Assumption" in his Festial tells how this Fortress of the Blessed Virgin had for its moat her meekness, filled with the water of her compassion (EETS, ES xcvi, pp 228-230).

158. French "Ou tu a la court m'ajournes"; it means "fix a day for me to appear at thy court".

159. Not in the French. Chaucer introduces the English term "bench" as in Common Bench, King's Bench. Skeat compares Wycliff Works, ed. Arnold, iii, 215.

161. Xristus, Christus, written Xpc̄ in several manuscripts. Skeat notes that de Deguilleville was unable to find a French word beginning with X, so he substituted for it the Greek "chi" which resembled it in form.

163-4. cf lines 243, 247 of the French, meaning "For me He had His side pierced....For me His blood was shed". There is no mention of Longinus, the blind centurion who pierced the side of Christ with a lance, in the French. A suggested explanation for Chaucer's allusion has been made above, in connection with the "wound of love" motif (see n. 7 above). But in any case the situation makes its use appropriate at this point. The name Longinus is most likely derived from the Greek word meaning lance, as used in John xix, 34, and the legend gradually developed from St John's narrative. The name Longinus first appeared in the Apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus. It arises in chapter xlvii of the Legenda Aurea and in several Middle English Mystery Plays. See also C. Brown, Lyrics, 55, 21. In a note on the "mater dolorosa" in French religious art, Mâle writes: "Art had not yet dared to express this poignant grief, though here and there some isolated window shows the symbolic sword piercing her heart as she stands at the foot of the Cross, or some carved ivory shows the lance reaching from the side of Christ to the heart of His mother" (italics mine). See E. Mâle, Religious Art in France of the 13th century, 1910, repr. London, 1961, p.237, tr. D. Nussey under the title The Gothic Image. Cf. my n. 81 above for another possible reference to the "mater dolorosa" which was not to be found in the French.

164. Herte blood. Middle English "herte" was derived from Old English "heortan", or "heart's". The phrase occurs again in Chaucer in The Pardoner's Tale, line 902.

169-171. cf. Genesis xxii; Hebrews xi, 19. Chaucer translates close to the French (at lines 253-5).

177. cf. Zechariah, xiii, 1. The words of Zechariah are usually applied to the blood of Christ, as in Revelations, i, 5.

184. palais. Possibly not only the new Jerusalem, the city described in Revelations, but the "castle of virtue" in which Mary herself was believed to have lived (see Manuscript Bodleian 649; Grossetete, Homily, Manuscript Bodleian 830, f. 43). Cf. the court mentioned in lines 158-9 of ABC.

merci able. fit to obtain mercy - cf. Prologue, Canterbury Tales, line 167.

APPENDIX 1 - THE FRENCH VERSION

BY G. DE DEGUILLEVILLE

1. THE FRENCH ORIGINAL

The large number of manuscripts which exist in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris bears witness to the widespread popularity of Deguilleville's Pèlerinage - particularly in the fifteenth century. Moreover, the work was made into prose c. 1465¹ and translated into English both in verse form, by Lydgate, and into prose form, by an unknown author. English authors who have utilized the work include Chaucer, Lydgate and almost certainly Bunyan.² The first printed edition of the poem was published in 1511; while this version is illustrated with wood-cuts, several of the manuscripts are likewise beautifully illuminated with scenes from the pilgrim's life. Written c. 1330 and revised some 25 years later, the poem is divided into three parts: 1. le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine; 2. le Pèlerinage de l'Ame, 3. le Pèlerinage de Jesus Christ. It is part (1) which concerns us here, for lines 10894-11168 were translated c. 1369 by Chaucer. Before the prayer, the following preamble addressed by Gracedieu to the pilgrim appears in the manuscripts:

"Or vous di que l'escrit ouvri
Et le desploiai et le vi.
De touz poins fis ma priere
En le fourme et (en la) maniere
Que contenoit le dit escrit
Et si com Grace l'avoit dit.
La forme de l'escrit orrez,
Et se vostre a.b.c. (ne) savez,
Savoir le pourrez de legier
Pour dire le, s'il est mestier".

Two final stanzas of the prayer, not translated by Chaucer, conclude Gracedieu's speech:

Ethiques s'avoie leu,
Tout recorde et tout sceu
Et aprez rien n'en ouvrasse,
Du tout seroie deceu
Aussi com cil qui est cheu
En sa rois et en sa nasse.
Virge, m'ame je claim lasse,
Quar en toi priant se lasse,
Et si ne fait point son deu.
Pou: vaut chose que j'amasse,
Ma priere n'est que casse,
S'a bien je ne sui esmeu.

Contre moi dont que ne prie
 Ou qu'en vain merci ne crie.
 Je te promet amendement;
 Et pour ce que je ne nie
 Ma promesse, je t'en lie
 L'ame de moi en gagement;
 Puis si te pri finablement,
 Tu ne me defailles mie.
 Pour moi soies au jugement,
 A fin que heritablement
 J'aie pardurable vie.

2. THE MANUSCRIPTS

A detailed examination of all the manuscripts, besides being beyond the scope of this thesis, would prove almost impossible since many are difficult of access. For example, manuscript P was in St Petersburg, manuscript M in Munich, and the Base Text manuscript - manuscript t - was in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, when Sturzinger collated them in 1893.³

The relevant question here must be: which manuscript (or manuscripts) indicates closest relationship with ABC? The following is a list of variants which show correspondences with the English poem at points where other manuscripts differ from it.⁴

Line no. in Deguilleville	Variants	MS.	Chaucer's Line no.	Chaucer's translation
53	ravive) recoye P; receu B ^x	P B ^x	35	receyved
61	Fuiant m'en vieng) Suiant m'en fui - o.	o	41	Fleeinge I flee
107	line om.	P	71	Chaucer's text differs from all French manuscripts: Whoso thee loveth, he shal not love in veyn, / That shal he fynde, as he the lyf shal lete.
108	line om.	D ^x	72	
127	mestrait) mesfait - Meyer, o A A1 L A4 A7 G2	t T M1 M P H1 H	85	mischaunce
218	herite) heretique	A1 L A7	146	misbilleevd

From the above chart (page 132) it appears that the following manuscripts or their derivatives could have been used by Chaucer: P o D^x t T M1 M P H1 H A1 L A7. However, a close examination of the total variant readings shows the unreliability of such conjecture. Thus, at line 53, manuscript P's "recoye" agrees with Chaucer's "receyved"; but P's text is unreliable and his alterations arbitrary. The similarity may therefore be a coincidence. His lines 214/5, 217, are examples of the irregular copying which is a feature of the manuscript; further, at line 112, P has "reffuige" while Chaucer has "resyne" after the more general "resine" of other manuscripts. An interesting comparison arises at line 61, where manuscript o bears closest relation to Chaucer: his "Fleeinge I flee" resembles o's "Suiant m'en fui" rather than the "Fuiant m'en vieng" of the other manuscripts - "Suiant" being a scribal error for "Fuiant". Either this was corrected in translation by Chaucer, or as is more probable he worked from an Ur-o manuscript. With regard to lines 107/8, Chaucer's poem differs markedly from the original French texts at this point. Although a loose translation, ABC does not appear to depart very far from the majority of manuscripts and it could be suggested that his copy may have been left blank here, in view of this. The difference in shades of meaning between "mestrait" and "mesfait" are discussed below, in the Textual Notes to line 127 of the Pèlerinage. Chaucer's "mischaunce" resembles "mestrait" rather than "mesfait", the variant which Meyer prefers. However, as with manuscript D^x at line 108 and B^x at line 53, the manuscripts which show "mestrait" offer no other reason for supporting any conjecture that Chaucer may have used them.

Apart from the above method, there is one other way of suggesting which manuscripts represent Chaucer's original. That is, by working backwards from Chaucer to de Deguilleville. The following process of elimination indicates instances where Chaucer did not use a particular manuscript.

Words - French version	Line reference in Deg./Chaucer	MSS.	Chaucer's translation
croi) voy	13/10	A ^x	wot
de) et	29/21	t B ^x	and
quar) quant	50/34	o Meyer	for
resine) reffuige	112/80	P	resygne
oignement) longuement	203/134	a G2 B ^x A7	leche

Words : Fr. version	Line reference in Deg./Chaucer	MSS.	Chaucer's translation
on te prie) te deprie; je crie	204/136	M P; A4 H G2	biseeche
herite) heretique	218/146	all save A1 L A7.	misbileeved

From this scanty evidence it is impossible to assert the superiority of a particular manuscript in relation to Chaucer's poem. Only two variants - "Suiant m'en fui" at l. 61, "heretique" at 218 - indicate that Chaucer probably used a derivative or most probably an ancestor of several manuscripts now available. The existence of an Ur-(o, A1, L, A7) seems, in my opinion, a plausible conjecture.

3. THE PRINTED VERSIONS

Of the printed versions of de Deguilleville, the following are of particular interest:

1. Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine, ed. J. J. Sturzinger, London, 1893. (Roxburghe Club, vol. 124)

In this illustrated edition, the editor points out the existence of two "recensions" by de Deguilleville, the first being the subject of his edition. The number of manuscripts being so great - 73 were available - he selected the following: L t A G H B M M1, and collated them with the remainder. A complete list of manuscripts is to be found in the introduction to his volume. Clearly, the first part of the trilogy - Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine - was the most popular: Sturzinger records that of the 73 manuscripts containing one or more part, 44 contained the first (Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine); 36 contained the second (Le Pèlerinage de l'Ame) and 21 the third (Le Pèlerinage de Jesus Christ). Of the 44 "Vie Humaine" manuscripts, only eight were copies of the second recension. In common with the first prose translator into English and with Lydgate, Chaucer made use of the first recension. The Base Text used by Sturzinger was manuscript t - a 14th century manuscript, in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (fonds francais no. 1818). It was chosen by him because it resembled de Deguilleville's language - that of Calais - more closely than any of the others.

2. Paul Meyer, edition in Furnivall's One-text print of Chaucer's Minor Poems, London, 1870. Edited from four manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale, manuscript 1645 (A), manuscript 1649 (B), manuscript 376 (C) and 377 (D), the poem first appeared in a letter to the Chaucer Society, printed in Trial Forewords to the Minor Poems, ed. Furnivall (2nd series no. 6), London, 1871, page 100. Meyer comments that the manuscripts differ much more than usual in the 14th century for two principal reasons. First, the language of de Deguilleville, which he describes as "recherché", caused difficulty and was therefore subject to alteration. Secondly, the octosyllabic verses differ from the general rule. "Feminine verses are just equal in the number of syllables to the masculine verses.... [they] are one syllable shorter than the masculine, these latter having the accent on the eighth syllable and the feminine on the seventh syllable (you know that in any octosyllabic poem...the accent is always on the eighth syllable, feminine verses having one syllable more after the accent)".⁵ Claiming that the first instance of this system in French was found in troubadour poetry in the late 13th century, Meyer suggests that copyists, shocked by this novelty, tried to alter it, usually adding useless monosyllabic words. Thus, manuscript 823) manuscript 1139, at line 10: "N'est mie luite necessaire") "N'est pas tel livre". But it should not be assumed that Deguilleville was continuing a troubadour (and therefore secular) tradition; Sturzinger has shown that the genre existed in several old French poems, for example, the Anglo-Norman St Brendan's Legend, St Patrick's Purgatory, and Everart's Distiche Catonis.

4. THE BASE TEXT

Sturzinger's text has been used in this edition for the following reasons:

1. While Meyer's version was compiled from four manuscripts, and, as he admits, written in haste from the nearest available documents, Sturzinger's selection - from 73 manuscripts - was the more representative.
2. Sturzinger's edition forms part of a unified whole, whereas Meyer's is merely an extract from the poem.

3. As Sturzinger himself points out, manuscript t was written in the Calais dialect of the 14th century and is therefore probably more approximate to the original than any other. But in the light of modern knowledge of philology it must be pointed out that this aspect is the least reliable form of evidence.

4. Manuscript t was the earliest 14th century manuscript in fair order and therefore most likely to reflect the original.

5. THE TEXT

In the following edition, only those variants which appear to (1) alter substantially the meaning of the text, (2) show discrepancies between Meyer and Sturzinger's texts and (3) indicate possible usage by Chaucer, are noted here. Meyer's manuscripts, where recorded individually, will be marked ^x, for example, A^x, B^x. Occasions where the editions of Meyer and Sturzinger differ are noted and commented upon in the Textual Notes, as are alterations to the Base Text. Variants which suggest that Chaucer used a certain manuscript will be preferred, for example "croi" in line 13. For this text is printed primarily to illustrate Chaucer's translation rather than for its own sake, and no attempt will be made to discover a possible hierarchy of manuscripts, except where this may relate to Chaucer's copy text(s).

The critical apparatus is set out as follows. Alterations to Base Text are indicated by square brackets, as for example at line 24; omissions from Base Text are noted under "Alterations to Base Text" below. In cases such as that explained at line 3 (Textual Notes below) where Sturzinger and Meyer record, but prefer to omit, a word from their texts so as to preserve scansion, the omission is recorded thus: Quar) om. The lemma, corresponding to the Base Text, quoted above the Textual Notes, is followed by a bracket thus) and then the variants, whose sigils are quoted in the same order as set out in the Introduction to Sturzinger's Edition. Distinct variants are set off by semi-colons, and the variants from any lemma by a full stop. Where one or more of Meyer's variants agree with Sturzinger's, they are shown after these and indicated with an ^x as at line 6: mon adversaire) mon grant adversaire T M1 A4 G2 P A7 A^x. The word "Meyer", printed alongside the variant, signifies that this is his version, in contrast to Sturzinger's. Spelling, punctuation and spacing are in accordance with Sturzinger's procedure.

FOOTNOTES

1. This prose version was mistakenly ascribed to Jean Gallopes. R. Tuve (Allegorical Imagery, Princeton, 1966, page 148) comments: "because Gallopes's prose de l'Ame was well known, the prose Vie was ascribed to him also, and still sometimes is, despite the fact that we now know it to have been begun as late as 1464/5, in Angers, at the request of Jeanne de Laval, the wife of Rene d'Anjou. This error was not disentangled until 1946 by Faral, and we must therefore ascribe [it] to Anonymous of Angers." Pollard edited the French prose version in 1912, and W. A. Wright edited the English 15th century prose version in 1869.
2. For a comparison of de Deguilleville's poem, and the Pilgrim's Progress, see: N. Hill, Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine compared with the Pilgrim's Progress of John Bunyan, London, 1858. Owst however is cautious regarding Hill's contention that Bunyan had read de Deguilleville (Literature and the Pulpit in Medieval England, Oxford 1933). He argues (page 58) that even Jusserand, Bunyan's biographer, "was actually compelled to reject the idea of his tinker hero's acquaintance with any of the medieval versions of the Pilgrimage of Man, in spite of its resemblances. Nothing appeared to bridge the chasm". But Owst admits in a fuller discussion (pp. 97-104) that Bunyan could have heard of de Deguilleville's characters indirectly through his reading of The Plain Man's Way to Heaven.
3. See M Lofthouse, Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine de Guillaume de Deguilleville (M.A. thesis, Manchester, 1929), for a more recent list of manuscripts. Based largely on Sturzinger, this list also gives some of the prose manuscripts and some Oxford manuscripts of the Vie. R. Tuve (Allegorical Imagery, Princeton, 1966, page 147 note 2) adds Bodleian Add. C. 29: v², incomplete at the beginning, AJ; and BM Add. 38120.E Faral (Histoire Littéraire de la France, vol. 39 (1952) pages 1-132) gives a comparison of the two author's redactions, showing clearly the superiority of the earlier (1331) version and dealing fully with biographical information, topical allusions and a complete analysis of the text.
4. Abbreviations relate to the two texts discussed in Section 3 on pages 134/5. For details of these and other abbreviations used throughout the textual notes, see Sturzinger, Introduction to Edition, where he lists all works used. Meyer's manuscripts are listed as

A^xB^xC^xD^x - the ^x being used to to differentiate between his manuscripts ABCD and Sturzinger's.

5. See Furnivall, Trial Forewords to the Minor Poems, London, 1871, pages 13-15.

I toi ne tiang, e toi e'apui.

Believe not, sbatu sui.

Vainon e's non adversaire.

Plus qu'on toi ont tant renaitre,

Dien ne toi vers toi renaitre,

Avant que j'ais plus e'ennai.

N'est pas laite necessaire

J'oui, se te de'vonnait

Ne se sennent e'oi e'ennai.

ALTERATIONS TO THE ORIGINAL

TEXTUAL NOTES

- 1. e'apui) is true ad
- 3. (sar)on, before not, Sturzinger (A B A L C N 47 H I W) and Meyer (A) e'apui, but prefer to edit, "quer", no doubt so preserve occasion. But as in other cases Sturzinger inserts it in brackets in his text - a procedure not followed here.
- 5. sbatu) sbatu 4.
- 6. non adversaire) non grand adversaire (H I W G 2 3 47 A
- 10. laite) laite 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60.

STANZA ONE

A toi du monde le refui,
 Virge glorieuse m'en fui
 Tout confuz ne puis miex faire. 3
 A toi me tieng, a toi m'apui.
 Relieve moi, abatu sui,
 Vaincu m'a mon adversaire. 6
 Puis qu'en toi ont tous repaire,
 Bien me doi vers toi retraire,
 Avant que j'aie plus d'ennui. 9
 N'est pas luite necessaire
 A moi, se tu debonnaire
 Ne me sequeurs com a autrui. 12

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT: none

TEXTUAL NOTES:

1. refui) le frui aó
3. Quar)om. before ne. Sturzinger (A B A1 L G M A7 H1 H) and Meyer (A^x) record, but prefer to omit, "quar", no doubt to preserve scansion. But as in other cases Sturzinger inserts it in brackets in his text - a procedure not followed here.
5. abatu) quabatu P.
6. mon adversaire) mon grant adversaire T M1 A4 G2 P A7 A^x.
10. luite) luytte A4 G2. ta grasce A7. tel lite A^x.

STANZA TWO

Bien croi que par toi confortes
 Sera mon cuer desconfortes,
 Quar tu es de salut porte. 15
 Se je me sui mal tresportes
 Par sept larrons, pechiez mortes,
 Et erre par voie torte, 18
 Esperance me conforte
 Qui a toi hui me raporte,
 A ce que soie deportez. 21
 Ma povre ame je t'apporte,
 Sauve la, ne vaut que morte;
 En li sont touz bier[s][avortez]. 24

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT

24. biens) bien . avortez) enortez.

TEXTUAL NOTES

13. croi) voy A^x.
14. mon cuer) mes cuers A^x. As "tresportes", line 16, "confortes" and "desconfortes" do not call for a singular substantive here.
15. la) om. Both Meyer (A^xC^xD^x) and Sturzinger (T,M1) record "(la) porte", but both omit this from base texts.
16. mal tresportes) tres mal portes A⁴r; mal transportes T A1 L A7 P H1 H D^x; mal portes A.
18. erre) chemine A4 G2; forvoyez P; tourne A1 L. These examples of scribal alteration of copy indicate an emphasis of the pilgrimage metaphor. But this substitution alters the sense of sin derived from "erre", a word evidently carefully chosen as heavily laden with meaning, for it also implies: loiter. la) om. Again, Meyer (A^x) and Sturzinger (T.M M1 A4 P) record "(la) voie".
19. conforte) reconforte T M1 A4 G2 A^x.
21. soie deportez) soie supportez A4; soie supporte G2; soie conforte P; sache deporter B^x.
22. povre) dolente A4 G2; chetive P. t'apporte) om. H1; te raporte A^x.
23. vaut que) vaut miex que o A^x; vaut moiz que g; vaut plus que G D^x; que ne morte M. Sauve ... morte) Sauve le moy ne vaut que mort H1; Sauve le elle vaut que morte A7; Sauve la car elle vaut morte A4 G2; Sauve la ou elle est morte A1 L. This is evidently one of the

STANZA TWO

TEXTUAL NOTES (Continued)

many cases, as for example in lines 15, 18, noted by Meyer, where the unusual metre causes later scribes to alter their Base Text in an attempt to re-establish the "masculine" and traditional stress pattern.

24. biens) bien t A^x. avortez) enortez t; evorte G2; maus arrives H1. From among the various spellings of "avortez", Sturzinger alters his Base Text (t) to agree with the majority reading: o T A A4 A7 B A1 L G M1 M H.

STANZA THREE

Contre moi font une acc []] ion	
Ma vergoigne et confusion	
Que devant toi ne doi venir	27
Pour ma tresgrant transgression,	
Raisons de desperation	
Contre moi veulent maintenir;	30
Mes pour ce que veul plait fenir,	
Devant toi les fas convenir	
En faisant replica []] dion.	33
C'est que je di appartenir	
A toi du tout et convenir	
Pitie et misera []] dion.	36

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT

25. accion) action
 33. replicacion) replication
 37. miseracion) miseration

TEXTUAL NOTES

- 25 accion) action t; confusion A7. Base Text altered consistent with Sturzinger's "desperacion" in line 29; thus the suffix "cion" is used again here, as it is also in Meyer.
- 26 vergoigne) grant honte L.
- 29 de) et o A4 P A1 L A^x C^x D^x. desperation) desesperacion A4.
- 32 fas) fay A7; fait H1; faix G2; fes A^x.
- 33 replicacion) replica[]]dion) replication t.
- 36 miseracion) miseration t.

STANZA FOUR

Dame es de misericorde
 Par qui Diex bien se recorde
 A sa gent estre racorde. 39
 Par toi vint pais et concorde,
 Et fu pour oster d[i]scorede
 L'arc de justice descorde. 42
 Et pour ce me sui acorde
 Toi mercier et concorde
 Pour ce que ostas la corde. 45
 Quar, ainsi com j'ai recorde,
 S'encore fust l'arc encorde,
 Compare l'eust ma vie orde. 48.

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT:

41. discorde) descorde.

TEXTUAL NOTES

38. Meyer notes of his manuscript A: "A se si racorde, the second word being added between the lines".
41. discorde) descorde t; de corde A4 G2.
42. L'arc) lac B; de larc P.
43. Meyer notes - "43, 44 - A. accordes, concordes, which reading more conforms to the OFr. grammar, but spoils the rhyme".
45. ostas) ouste as B^x.
46. recorde) acorde o.
47. recorde) acorde o.
47. encorde) en corde A4.
48. vie orde) viez corde P.

STANZA FIVE

En toi ai [m'] esperance eu,
 Quar a merci m'as receu
 Autre foys en mainte guise. 51
 Du bien qui u ciel fu creu
 As ravive et repeu
 M'ame qui estait occise. 54
 Las! mes quant la grant assise
 Sera, se n'i es assise
 Pour moi, mal i serai veu. 57
 De bien n'ai nulle reprise.
 Las m'en clain, quant bien m'avise,
 Souvent en doi dire heu.

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT:

49. m'esperance) esperance

TEXTUAL NOTES

49. m'esperance) esperance t B G M.

50. Quar) Quant o A^xC^xD^x; car a B^x.

51. en) et en P H1 B^x.

53. ravive) abruue A; recoye P; resuscite A4; receu B^x.

Variants P and B^x are of interest, since they correspond to Chaucer's "resceyved me" (his line 35).

STANZA SIX

Fuiant m'en vieng a ta tente
 Moi mucier pour la tormente
 Qui u monde me tempeste. 63
 Pour mon pechie ne t'absente!
 A moi garder met[t]entente!
 A mon besoing soies preste! 66
 Se lonc temps j'ai este beste,
 A ce, Virge, je m'arreste
 Que de ta grace me sente. 69
 Si te fais aussi requeste
 Que ta pitie nu me veste,
 Quar je n'ai nulle autre rente. 72

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT:

65. t'entente) entente.

TEXTUAL NOTES

61. Fuiant m'en vieng) Suiant men fui, o.

65. t'entente) entente t A^xC^xD^x.

STANZA SEVEN

Glorieuse virge mere
 Qui a nul onques amere
 Ne fus en terre ne en mer, 75
 Ta douceur ore m'apere
 Et ne sueffres que mon pere
 De devant li me gete puer. 78
 Se devant li tout vuit j'apper
 Et par moi ne puis eschaper,
 Que ma faute ne compere, 81
 Tu devant li pour moi t'aper
 En li moustrant que s'a li per
 Ne sui, si est il mon frere. 84

TEXTUAL NOTES

73. virge) pucelle P.

STANZA EIGHT

Homme vout par sa plaisance
 Devenir pour aliance
 Avoir a humain lignage 87
 Avec li crut des enfance
 Pitie dont j'ai esperance
 Avoir en a mon usage 90
 Elle fu mise a forage
 Quant au cuer li vint message
 Du cruel fer de la lance. 93
 Ne puet estre, se sui sage,
 Que je n'en aie avantage,
 Se tu veus, et habondance. 96

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT: None

TEXTUAL NOTES

90. en a) en en - Meyer.

107. en. P.

108. en. P.

STANZA NINE

Je ne truis par nulle voie	
Ou mon salut si bien voie	
Com, apres Dieu, en toi le voi.	99
Quar, quant aucun se desvoie,	
A ce que tost se ravoie,	
De ta pitie li fais convoi.	102
Tu li fais laisser son desroi	
Et li refais sa pais au roy	
Et remes en droite voie.	105
Mont est donc cil en bon arroi,	
En bon atour, en bon conroi	
Que ta grace si conroie.	108

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT: NoneTEXTUAL NOTES:

103. laisser) lessier - Meyer; cesser A4 G2.

107. om. P.

108. om. D.^x

STANZA 10

Kalendrier sont enlumine
 Et autre livre enterine,
 Quant ton non les enlumine. 111
 A tout meschief ont resine
 Ceuz qui se sont achemine
 A toi pour leur medicine. 114
 A moi donc, Virge, t'encline,
 Quar a toi je m'achemine
 Pour estre bien medicine. 117
 Ne sueffres que de gaine
 Isse justice divine
 Par quoi je soie exterminé. 120

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT: None

TEXTUAL NOTES

110. enterine) entrine Al L; en trinite P.
 112. resine) resigne - o M A^x; reffuige P.
 118. (sa)gaine. - Both Stürzinger and Meyer (C^x) record "(sa)" - cf. note to l. 3.
 119. divine) devine - Meyer.

131. Contact with a new edition.

*For references, see Stürzinger.

STANZA 11

La douceur de toi pourtraire
 Je ne puis, a cui retraire
 Doit ton fil de ton sanc estrait 123
 Pour ce' a toi m'ai voulu traire,
 A fin que contre moi traire
 Ne le sueuffres[nul cruel trait. 126
 Je reconnois bien mon mestrait
 Et qu'au colier j'ai souvent trait
 Dont on me devoit detraite. 129
 Mes, se tu veus, tu as l'entrait
 Par quoi [tantost sera]rentrait
 Le melhaing qui m'est contraire. 132

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT:126.sueuffres) sueuffre.131tantost sera)sera tantost.

TEXTUAL NOTES

123. ton fil) com cil P. 126. sueuffres) sueuffre. t A^x.

127. mestrait) mesfait - Meyer. "mestrait" accords better with the other rhymes in the stanza. "Mestrait", meaning betrayal, trickery, appears in Jean Bodel's Li Jus de St Nicholas.*

"Je n'en serai a nul fourfait
 Ne du vendre ne du mestrait,"

and while the less common "mesfait" (crime) matches the legal imagery in the poem, it is well know that authors of Old French texts tended to personify "mestrait", mischief, into the Devil. Thus, Huon de Mery, in his Tournoiement de la'antichrist:*

"Et abati sans loberie
 Rapine et mesconte et mestret."

The same effect is achieved here, supported by the use of "trait" in the next line, signifying both bridle and lance in Old French, and in the same line "colier", meaning the toss of the horse's head when the reins are drawn up - a suggestion of rebellion.

131. tantost sera) sera tantost t a & B G M.

*for references and further examples, see Godefroy - "mestrait".

STANZA 12

Moises vit en figure
 Que tu virge nete et pure
 Jhesu, le fil Dieu, conceus. 135
 Un buisson contre nature
 Vit qu[i] ardoit sans arsure.
 C'es tu, n'en sui point deceus. 138
 Diex est li feus qu'en toi eus
 Et tu buisson des recreus
 Es pour temprrer leur ardure. 141
 A ce veoir, Virge, veus
 Soie par toi et receus,
 Oste chaucement d'ordure. 144

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT:

137. qui) quil.

TEXTUAL NOTES: 137. qui) quil t o.

144. Oste ... d'ordure) en moi ostant de laidure A4; depechie
 l'ordure G2; de celestijel peuture H1. chaucement) leschauffement P;
 chargement A; chaussement Meyer.

STANZA 13

Noble princesse du monde	
Qui n'as ne per ne seconde	
En reaume n'en empire,	147
De toi vient, de toi redunde	
Toutle bien qui nous habonde;	
N'avons autre tirlire.	150
En toi tout povre homme espire	
Et de toi son salut tire	
Et en toi seule se fonde.	153
Ne puet nul penser ne dire,	
Nul pourtraire ne escrire	
Ta bonte comm'est parfonde.	156

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT: NoneTEXTUAL NOTES148. redunde) redonde - Meyer; redoubte o, A^x.157. *[faint text]*

158. Et du tout a tout agreant) et confort a tout agreant -

Meyer; of Et confort a tout agreant A7, Meyer's
manuscripts B and C agree with Starklinger's version,
and the Base Text is not altered here.

STANZA 14

O lumiere des non voians
 Et vrai repos des recreans
 Et de tout bien tresoriere, 159
 A toi sont toute gent beans
 Qui en la foi sont bien creans
 Et en toi ont foy entiere. 162
 A nul onques ne fus fiere,
 Ains toi deis chamberiere,
 Quant en toi vint li grant geans. 165
 Or es de Dieu chanceliere
 Et de graces aumosniere
 Et du tout a touz agreans. 168

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT: None

TEXTUAL NOTES

162 foy) fionche A7

167 aumosniere) chanceliere A4 G2.

168 Et du tout a touz agreans) et confort a tous recreans -

Meyer; o; Et confort a tous mescheans A7. Meyer's
 manuscripts B and C agree with Sturzinger's version,
 and the Base Text is not altered here.

STANZA 15

Pris m'est volente d'enquere
 Pour savoir que Diex vint querre,
 Quant en toi se vint enserrer. 171
 En toi devint ver de terre;
 Ne cuit pas que fust pour guerre
 Ne pour moi tout jus aterrer. 174
 Virge, se ne me sens errer,
 D'armes ne me faut point ferrer
 Fors sans plus de li requerre. 177
 Quant pour moi se vint enterrer,
 Se il ne se veut deterrer,
 Encor puis s'amour aquerre. 180

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT: None

TEXTUAL NOTES:

- 172 ver de terre) veus en terrer H1; vaisseau de terre A4 G2;
 veir de ta terre A. ver) vers - Meyer; voir A1.
177. Fors ... requerre) Mais mercy du cueur luy requerre A4;
 Mais du cueur mercy luy requerre G2.

STANZA 16

Quant pour pense aprez me sui
 Qu'ai offendu et toi et lui
 Et qu'a mal est m'ame duite, 183
 Que fors pechie en moi n'estui
 Et que mal hier et pis m'est hui,
 Tost apres si me ranvite; 186
 Virge douce, se pren fuite,
 Se je fui a la poursuite,
 On fuirai qu'a mon refui? 189
 S'a nul bien je ne m'afruite
 Et mas sui, avant que luite,
 Plus grief encor on est l'ennui. 192

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT: None

TEXTUAL NOTES:

181 sui) fin M.

186 Tost... ranvite) Et tousiours a mal suis reduyte A4;

Et en chou ie naye refuite H1; tantoust apres si me
 ravite B^x. ranvite) ravive o A^x; ravite D^x; renyure A;
 remise P.

188. Meyer records that lines 188-9 are omitted in his manuscript A.

189 refui) reffrain P.

190 m'afruite) maffreuit P; me fruitte A; maffuy G2.

STANZA 17

Repren moi, mere, et chastie,
 Quar mon pere n'ose mie
 Attendre a mon chastement. 195
 Son chastoi si fiert a hie,
 Rien n'ataint que tout n'esmie,
 Quant il veut penre vengeance, 198
 Mere, bien doi tel batement
 Doubter, quar en empirement
 A touz jours este ma vie. 201
 A toi dont soit le jugement,
 Quar de pitie as l'oiignement
 Mes que merci on te prie. 204

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT: None

TEXTUAL NOTES

203 oiignement) longument a o G2 B^x; longement H1; Longement A7;
 largement A4.

204 on te prie) l'en te prie - Meyer; te deprie M P; merci
 jou te prie H1; je crie A4 H G2.

STANZA 18

Sans toi nul bien ne foisonne
 Et sans toi Diex rien ne donne,
 Quar de tout t'a fait mestresse. 207
 Quant tu veuz, trestout pardonne
 Et par toi est mise bonne
 A Justice, la mairesse. 210
 N'est roine ne princesse
 Pour qui nul ainsi se cesse
 Et de droit se dessaisonne. 213
 Du monde es gouvernerresse
 Et du ciel ordenerresse,
 Sans raison n'as pas couronne. 216

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT: NoneTEXTUAL NOTES

205 foisonne) faisonne M B A7; fousesonne L; safuissonne H1.

207 mestresse) maistresse - Meyer; mestraisse o, A^x.212 pour qui) par quoy B^x. A7: *Quant tu veuz, trestout pardonne.*

214 gouvernerresse) royne es et commanderresse P.

215 ordenerresse) du monde et gouvernerresse P.

216 raison) reson - Meyer. - L. Meyer's version is preferred

here: cf. l. 50: "Las n'en clain.." in both Meyer and Starninger.

In a note on variants, Meyer writes: "the verse is the first in

A7G; read 'las en'."

STANZA 19

Temple saint ou Dieu habite	
Dont prive sont li herite	219
Et a touz jours desherite,	219
A toi vieng, de toi me herite,	
Recoif moi par ta merite,	
Quar de toi n'ai point hesite.	222
Et se je me sui herite	
Des espines d'iniquite,	225
Pour quoi terre fu maudite,	225
Las je m'en clain ^[n] en verite,	
Quar a ce fait m'a excite	
L'ame qui n'en est pas quite.	228

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT

226 m'en clain) m'en claim

TEXTUAL NOTES

217 Dieu) Jhesus M; Tres clere estoille de mer P.

218 herite) heretique A1 L A7; Blanche colombe sans amer P.

222 hesite) herite o A7 A^x.

223 herite) hesite A.

226 m'en clain) m'en claim - t. Meyer's version is preferred

here: cf. l. 59: "Las m'en clain.." in both Meyer and Sturzinger.

In a note on scansion, Meyer writes: "the verse is too short in

ABCD; read 'me en'?"

STANZA 20

Virge de noble et haut atour
 Qui au chastel et a la tour
 De paradis nous atournes, 231
 Atourne moi ens et entour
 De tel atour que au retour
 De ta grace me retournes. 234
 Se vil sui, si me raournes.
 A toi vieng, ne te destournes,
 Quar au besoing es mon destour. 237
 Sequeur moi, point ne sejournes
 Ou tu a la court m'ajournes
 Ou ta pitie fait son sejour. 240

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT: None

TEXTUAL NOTES

234. grace ... retournes) grasse soi recouvres H1.

231 qui) quid - B.

233 et) eust B; et H; et-u B E, (A).

237 espendu) despendu - u T H; espendu - Herzer, who notes

"Troy G: 'la son sanc fu despendu' B, 'son sanc fu despendu' C,

'son corps fut despendu'".

233 rent) reus - Herzer. 233 B.

STANZA 21

Xpc, ton fil qui] escendi
 En terre et en la crois pendi
 Ot pour moy le coste fendu. 243
 Sa grant rigueur il destendi,
 Quant pour moi l'esperit rendi.
 Son corps pendant et estendu, 246
 Pour moi son sanc fu espendu.
 Se ce ci j'ai bien entendu,
 A mon salut bien entendu; sur a; 249
 Et pour ce, se l'ai offendu,
 Et il ne le m'a pas rendu,
 Mercis t'en rent, graces l'en di. 252

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT

241 qui) quid

TEXTUAL NOTES

241 qui) quid - t.

243 ot) eust A4; eut H1; et-o B P, (ACD)^x.

247 espendu) despendu - o T M; expandu - Meyer, who notes:

"From C: 'A son sanc fu despendu'; B, one step farther,

'son corps fut despendu'".

252 rent) rens - Meyer.

STANZA 22

Ysaac le prefigura

Qui de sa mort rien ne cura

En obeissant au pere. 255

Comme i aignel tout endura,

En endurent tout espura

Par crueuse mort amere. 258

O tres douce vierge mere,

Par ce fait fai que se pere

Par pleur l'ame qui cuer dur a; 261

Fai que grace si m'apere

Et n'en soies pas avere,

Quar largement la mesura. 264

ALTERATIONS TO BASE TEXT: NoneTEXTUAL NOTES

261 pleur) plour - Meyer, Al L.

GLOSSARY

Abbreviations : see general list page 171 f.

Notes: 1. Variants are glossed where necessary; they appear after the derivation of the word glossed if the meaning is similar - e.g. "dure inf. continue 96 OFr durer. V endure" and are indicated by the sign V. If of different meaning, variant readings are glossed separately in alphabetical order e.g. V ende (variant of ever at 33). Where a word appears more than once (i.e. does not appear only as a variant reading) V is placed before the appropriate line number thus: "stink inf. stink 56, V 123" (stink is found in the Edited Text at 56; as a variant at 123).

2. Derivations are not given for proper nouns. Verbal infinitive derivations only are shown except in cases of interest.

A

abiden. inf. abide, stay 131
OE. abidan.

absente. 3 sg. pres. ind.
absent, stay away 43.
OFr. absentir.

accioun. n. action, accusation
(of lawsuit) 20. OFr. action.

acorde. inf. reconcile, agree 27.
OFr. acorder.

acquittance. n. release; deed of
release. 60. OFr. acquittance.

acursed. p part. cursed 150.
V cursed. from OE cursian.

adoun. adv. down 164. OE adūne.

adversaire. n. adversary 8.
V adversarie. OFr. adversarie.

adversitee n. adversity, trouble.
101, 127. OFr. adversité.

advocat n. advocate, intercessor.
102. OFr. avocat.

after. prep. according to 143.
OE. aefter.

a-fyr. see fyr.

acilt. p. part. offended 122.
OE. gylt.

ajourne. 2 sg. imp. adjourn (my
case) 158. OFr. ajurner.

al, alle. adj. all, every 1,2,4,
etc; adv. entirely 45,80,157;
pron. everything 175; alder.
gen. pl. of us all 84. OE. al(1).

alichte. 3 sg. pret.
alighted 161. OE. alīhtan.

alliance. n. alliance, kindred.
58 OFr. aliance.

ancille. n. handmaiden 109.
Lat. ancilla.

apparaile. n. apparel, ornament.
153. OFr. appareille.

appeere. inf. appear 19. OFr. apareir.

axe. inf. ask 120; axeth 3 sg. pres.
ind. asks 12. OE āxian.

assyse. m. assise, session, judgment 36.
OFr. assise.

Ave^dMarie Ave Maria (prayer) 104(Lat.).

ay. adv. ever, always 12, 176. ON. ei.

aycin. adv. again 68. OE ongægn.

B

be(e). inf. be 10 etc. ben pres. pl. are
105, 184. (ben. - inf. before vowel
or h be 65). beth imp sg. be 134.
OE. bēon.

beede. inf. offer, tell, direct 110.
OE. bēodon.

beste. n. beast 45. OFr. beste.

bicome inf. become 58. OE. becuman.

bifore. prep. before, in front of 37.
OE. beforan.

bille. n. bill, petition, writ
59, 110. OFr. bulle.

bilt. p. part. built 183. OE byldan.

biseeche inf. beseech 136. OE bisēcan.

bithinke. 1 sg. pres. ind. (refl.)
think of, consider (something) 121.
from OE þyncan. V thinke.

blisful adj. joyous, blessed 24,28.
OE. bliss + ful. V blessydfull ;
blessed.

blynde adj. dim 105. OE blīnd.

bobounce n. boast, presumption 84.
OFr. bobance.

bothe adv. both 63,122; bothe(s) adj.(pl).
both 83,86. ON. báðir.

bouchte 3 sg. pret. redeemed 117.
OE bycgan.

bountee, bowntee. n. goodness, kindness, generosity 9,66,107. OFr bonté. V bonte.
howe n. bow 29 OE boga.
brenninge. pr. part. burning 90; brende 3 sing. pret. burned 90. ON brenna.
bringe. 1 sg. pres. ind. bring 147. OE bríngan.
bright. adj. bright, shining, lovely. 16,62, 181. OE byrht.
but. conj. unless. 39,55,139. OE buton.

C

caityf. n. captive, wretch 124. OFr. chaityf.
cam. 3 sg. pret. 115. OE cumen.
canst. v. aux. can 11. OE. cann.
certes, certeyn, certevnly adv. = certainly 28, 55, 98, 169; in certeyn - certainly 66. OFr. certes, certain.
chasen. 3 pl. pres. ind. chase 15. OFr. chacier.
chastyse. inf. chastise, rebuke, restrain. 39, 129; chastisince n. rebuke 130. OFr. chastiser.
ches. 3 sg. pret. chose 108. OE. cēosan.
cleere adj. clear, bright 88. OFr. cler.
cleped. p part. called 159; cleneth 3 sg. pres. calls 177. OE cleopian.
V. close 2 sg pres. ind. surround 46. from OFr. enclos -apart.
clothe. 2 sg. pres. ind. clothe 46. OE. clāþian.
confounded. p. part. confounded, confused, subdued 5; confounde inf. 40. OFr. confondre.
confusioun n. confusion, embarrassment 18. OFr. confusion.
continue 2 sg. imp. follow (with your eyes) 88. OFr. continuer.
V. contene. 2 sg. imp. contain 88. OFr. contenir.

convict. contr. p. part. overcome 86. from Lat. convictus.
corowned. p. part. crowned 144. OFr. coroner.
correcte. inf. correct, rebuke 39. from Lat. correctus.
counsaile. 2 sg. imp. advise 155. OFr. consailler.
creaunce. n. credence, belief 61. OFr. creance.
crois, cros n. cross 60,82,162. ON. kross.
Crystes Poss. adj. Christ's 28,99. Kristus n. Christ. 161 OE Crist. (K" is Gk. chi not X)

D

dampnacioun n. damnation 23,167. OFr. damnation.
dar. inf. dare 102; 1 sg. pres. ind. 131. OE. dearr.
debonayre n. (lit. - of good disposition) gentle, gracious lady 6. OFr. debonaire.
deere adj. noble, glorious 17 28 86 99. OE. dēore.
defende. 2 sg. imp. defend, protect 95. OFr. defendre. V fende.
deprived p. part. excluded 146. OFr. depriver. V priued.
descende inf. descend 92. OFr. descendre.
desperacioun n. desperation 21. OFr. desperation.
deth(e) n. death 48,169; deve inf. die 172; OE. dēap, ON. deyja.
distresse n. distress 106. OFr. destresse.
doo inf. do. 120. doon p. part. done 54. did(e) 3 pl pret. did 119. OE. dōn.
dowte n. doubt. 25. OFr. doute.
drede n. dread 42. from OE. drēdan.
dure. inf. continue 96. OFr. durer. V endure.

E

- ech adj. each 136. OE aēlc.
eek adv. also 134,141,163,166.
 OE ēac.
 V empresse n. empress 142.
 OFr. emperesse.
 V ende p.part. finished 33 OE endian.
enlumned p.part.illuminated 73.
 OFr. enluminer.
enquere inf. inquire 113.
 OFr. enquerre.
entame inf. cut open 79.
 OFr. entamer. V untame
entente n. intent, will, purpose
 11. OFr. entent.
er adv. before 16,39; erst adv.
 before, at first 87. OE aēr.
errour n. error, wrongdoing 5,67,
 157. OFr. errour.
erthe n. earth 50,54,110. OE eorþe.
eterne adj. eternal 56; eternalli
 adv. eternally 96. OFr. eterne.
evere adv. always 33, 51,160. OE.
aefre.
even n.pl. eyes 88, 105. OE. ēge.

F

- fader n. father 52; faderes poss.adj.
 130. OE faeder.
failen inf. to fail of, to lack 64.
 OFr. faillir.
fals adj. false 166. OE fals; OFr fals.
felicitee n. felicity, happiness 13.
 OFr felicité.
fer forth adv. continually 170.
 OE feorr + forþ.
ferther adv. further 148 OE forþor
 infl. by feorr.
figure n. symbol, sign 169; in
figure - symbolic 94. OFr. figure.
filthe n. shame, disgrace 157
 OE fylþ.
first adv. in the beginning, first 30.
 OE fyrst.
fix. adj. fr. p.part. fixed 9.
 OE fixan ultimately Lat fixus/-are.

- flawmes n.pl. flames 89.
 OFr. flaumbes.
fleen inf. flee 148; 1 sg. pres.
 ind. 5, 41; 3 sg. pres. ind. 2.
 fleeing pr.part. 41. OE flēon.
flour n. flower 4,159. floures n.pl.
 4. OFr. flour.
foo n. foe, enemy 64,79,84.
 OE fā(h).
for to prep. in order to 42. OE:
 for tō.
forviveth 3 sg. pres ind.
 forgives 139. OE forgifan.
free adj. free, noble, generous
 12. OE. frēo.
freshe adj. blooming, gay 159.
 OFr. freis-fem: fresche. OE fersc.
fro prep. from 146. ON frá.
fruit n. fruit, essence 38. OFr. fruit.
fynde inf. find 72;
founde p.part. found 38.
 OE fíndan.
fyr. n. fire 95. a-fyr. adj.
 afire, on fire. 94. OE fyr.
ful. adv. very 34, 42; adj. full
 51,61, 65, 173. ful yore -
 for a very long time 150.
 OE full.

G

- Gabrielles possessive adj.
 Gabriel's 115.
gan. 3 sg. pret. began 92,133. from
 OE -ginnan.
gilt n. guilt 178. OE gylt.
glee n. joy, song 100. OE glēo.
goodnesse n. goodness 111, 138.
 OE gōdnes.
gost n. soul, spirit. 56. OE gāst.
goth 3 sg. pres. ind. goes 68.
 OE gān.
governeresse n. governor - fem.
 141. OFr. governeresse. V governesse
 V gracvouse adj. gracious 49.
 OFr. gracious.
grevaunce n. grievance, cause
 for grief 63; greevous adj.
 grievous 20, 82. OFr grevance, -ous.
crete. adj. great 36. OE grēat.
ground n. foundation 87 OE grúnd.

H

haboundinge adj. (lit.-abounding)
abundant, plentiful 135.
OFr. abondir(V habidyng n. dwelling)

haleth 2 sg. pres ind draw,
attract 68. OE hāelan.

have inf. 3 etc: han pres pl.
have 20, 32; haddest 2 sg.
pret. 97; as aux.: hast 33,
hath: 8. OE. habban.

haven n. haven 14. OE. hæfene.

heede n. heed, notice 47.
fr. OE. hēdan.

heere. adv. here 26. OE. hēr.

heer-biforn prep. before now 34.
OE. hēr + beforan.

hele n. health; well-being 80.
OE hāelu.

helle n. hell 96. OE. hell.

helpen 3 pl. pres. ind. help 104.
OE. helpan.

herte n. heart 9, 12; gen. sg:
heart's 164. OE heorte.

heven(e) n. 110, 142; gen. sg: heaven's
24, 149. OE. heofen(a).

hidous adj. hideous 132. OFr.
hidous.

him. pron. pleonastic: he 76, 171.
OE. him.

hire n. payment, reward. 103.
OE hȳr.

Holi-gost n. Holy Ghost 93, 114.
OE hālig + gāst.

humblesse n. humility, meekness 108.
OFr. humblesse.

hve adj. high, exalted, noble 37;
lofty 154. OE. hēh.

I

I, pron. I 5, etc; my poss. adj. my
7, 18, etc. (my before h or vowel:
33); me(e) acc./dat. 20, etc; me
refl. myself, 121. OE ic, mē, mīn.

ire n. anger 30 OFr. ire.

J

justice, justyse n. judge, justice.
30 37, 142. OFr. justice

K

Kalenderes n.pl. calenders 73.
Lat. calendarium.

L

ladi n. lady (of rank) 17, 36, 46, 47,
81, 95, 173, 181. OE hlǣfdige.

langour n. sorrow, languishing, sick-
ness 7. OFr. langour.

large adv. generously 174 OFr. large.

largesse n. bounty, liberality 13.
OFr. largesse.

V lastande adj. lasting, eternal 56.
fr. OE læstan.

lat imp. let, allow 79, 84. OE lētan.

lete inf. yield, leave, abandon 72.
OE. lētan.

like(unto) 2 sg. pres. impers. pleases 139.
OE līcian.

litel adj. little 38, 103. OE lytel.

Longius n. Longinus 163.

loo excl. lo! 15, 18. OE lā.

lust n. wish, desire 106. OE lust.

lyf n. life 72. OE līf.

lystes n. lists (of tournament), wiles,
devices 85. OFr. lices.

M

made p. part ^Mmade 109 (maked 140). OE macian.

maidenhede n. maidenhead, chastity 91.
OE. maegden + M.E. hede.

maistresse n. mistress 109, 140 OFr. maitresse.
maneere n. manner, way 29. OFr. maniere.

mankynde n. mankind 107, 168 OE mancynn.

mayde n. maiden 49. OE maegden.

medycyne n. medicine, remedy 76 OFr. medicine

melodye n. melody 100 OFr. melodie

V mekenesse n. humility 108 fr. ON. mjúkr.

mene n. mediator 125. OFr. moien.

merci n. mercy 7, 24, 26, 31, 36, 51, 120,
133, 160, 173, 174, 184. OFr. merci.

merciabile adj. merciful 1, 182;

merci able - fit to obtain mercy 184.
OFr. merciabile.

mesured 3 sg. pret. measured, meted out
174. OFr. mesurer.

mighti adj. mighty 6. OE mihtig.
michten 3 pl. pret. might 22 OE mihte.
misbilleved n. heretics 146 V heretikes.
 mis + OE belæfde.
mischaunce n. misfortune, disaster 85.
 OFr. mischaunce.
misericorde n. mercy, pity 25,35. OFr.
 misericorde.
mooder n. mother 28, 49, 99, 108, 129,
 133. OE. mōdor.
Moyses n. Moses 93.
my(n) see I.

N

n'art contr. of ne art: 2 sg pres ind.
 are not 26. (OE ne + OE eart).
ne adv. not V24, 53, 137, 171; conj.
 nor 82. OE ne.
neede n. need 44. OE nēd.
ne contr. of ne were: 3 sg. pres ind.
 were not, were it not for 24,180. OE
 ne+wēron.
never(e) adv. never 49,90,97. OE nāefre.
no contr. of ne wolde: 3 sg. pret.
 would not 31 OE ne + wolde.
noon adj. none 17, 25, 100,102.
 OE. nān.
V norise n. or v? nurse/nourish 77.
 OFr. norice(r).
nouht adv. not (at all), by no means
 131. OE noht.

O

obeye inf. obey 170. OFr. obeir.
ofte adv. often 34. OE oft.
oonly adv. only 119 from OE ānlic, adj.
oother adj. other 100 OE ōþer.
oughte 3 sg. pret. ought 19;
ouchte 3 pl. pret. ought 119.
 OE āhte.
oure poss. adj. our 64,65, etc.
 OE ūre.

P

palais n. palace 183 OFr palais.
paradys n. paradise, heaven 155.
 OFr paradis.

passioun n. passion 162 OFr passion.
peere n. equal 97 OFr per.
pees n. peace 69 OFr pais, pes.
penaunce n. penance 82, V83.
 OFr. peneance.
penitentes n.pl. penitents 184.
 OFr penitants.
perilous adj. perilous 7; V perlious.
 OFr perillous.
peynes n.pl. pains, grief, trouble
 83. OFr peines.
V pighte 3 sg pret. pitched (a tent),
 furnished with a pike 163
 OE piccan, past tense pihte.
pitee n. pity 68,126,135;136,137;
pitous adj. pitious 88.
 OFr pité; pitous.

pleyn adj. complete 13 OFrpbain.
portreye inf. portray, describe
 81. OFr portraire.
poyn - in poynt: is ready 48.
 OFr point.
praye n. prize (won in contest)
 64. OFr. pæie.
preye inf. pray 102;
prave 2 sg. imp. 62; preye 1 sg.
 pres ind 83,173. OFr pæier.
prichte 3 sg. pret. pierced 163.
 OE prician.
purpos p.part. purposed, intended
 113. OFr purpos.

Q

queen(e) n. queen 1,24,25,149.
 OE cwēn.

R

receyve 2 sg. imp. receive 148;
receyved p.part. received 35.
 OFr. recevoir.
rede adj. red 89 OE rēad.
redresse 2 sg. imp. amend, reform
 129. OFr redrecier.
refut n. refuge 14,33.
rejoyse inf. rejoice, cheer 101.
 rejoissir/rejoïr.
rekenynge n. reckoning 132.
 OE recenian.

relees n. release, relief,
pardon 3. OFr releas.

releeve 2 sg. imp. relieve 6.
OFr. relever.

renne inf. run 164 OE rinnan.

represseth 3 sg. pres ind.
represses, restrains 142.
OFr represser.

reste n. rest 14, V106. OE restan.

resygne 1 sg. pres ind. yield up,
resign 80. OFr. resigner.

reuthe n. pity, compassion 127;
V rewfulle adj. piteous 132.
OE hrēow + b; hrēow + ful.

right n. right, justice 21;
bi right: through justification, 22;
V rihtwisnes n. righteousness 30;
rightful adj. rightful 31, 132;
right soo adverbial: even so 172.
from: OE riht.

rial adj. royal 144. OFr. rial.

roughte 3 sg. pret. recked, cared,
heeded 171. OE wyrcaan.

S

salvacioun n. salvation 165.
OFr sauvation.

V sauour n. saviour 168. OFr saveour.

see n. sea 50. OE sǣ.

seeche 1 sg. pres ind. resort to 78;
soughte 3 sg pret. sought 114.
OE sēcan; pret: sōhte.

seen inf. see 151; saugh 3 sg. pret.
saw 89. OE sēon.

seide 1 sg pret. said 87; seye 3 pl.
pres ind. say 175. OE secgan.

sevene num. adj. seven 15 OE seofan.

shal 3 sg. pres ind. shall 38, 125.
shule 3 pl. pres ind. shall, will
37. OE scal.

signe n. sign 91 OFr signe.

singe 3 pl pres ind. 175. OE sīngan.

sinke inf. sink 123 OE sīncan.

sinne n. sin 3, 18. OE synn.

sithen adv. thereupon 117; sith
conj. since 77, 174, 181.
OE sibban.

skent adj. sparing, niggardly 175.
fr. ON. skent.

smert 3 sg. pres ind. smarts, hurts
152. MLG, M. Du. smertan.

socour n. help, aid 2, 10, 41, 55, 65,
156, 167. OFr socours.

sojourne inf. stay, remain 160.
OFr sojourner.

son n. son 125, 161, 172. OE sunu.

sore adv. sorely, badly 152 OE sǣre.

sorwe n. sorrow 3, 81. OE sorg.

soth n. truth 137 OE soþ.

soule n. soul 67, 76, 123, 134, 147, 178.
OE sǣwel.

sovereyn n. sovereign, lord 69.
OFr souverain.

spek 2 sg. imp. speak 53. OE sp(r)ecan.

spilt p. part. killed, perished 180.
OE spillan.

springe inf. spring up, spread (n.-a
lively dance) 133. OE sprīngan.

stikke n. stick, branch 90 OE sticca.

stink inf. stink 56, V 123. OE stīncan.

stinte inf. stay, restrain 63.
OE styntan.

strete n. way, path 70. OE strēt.

V stroke n. blow 90. probably reproduced
from unrecorded OE strác.

substance n. substance, essence
87. OFr substance.

suffre inf. suffer 162. OFr suffrir.

sum adj. some 113. OE sum

susteene inf. maintain, uphold 22.
OFr sustenir.

swetnesse n. sweetness 51. OE swētness.

swich adj. such 29, 116. OE swylc.

T

tak 2 sg imp. take 47; take p. part.
brought (fig.) 20. ON. taka.

targe n. shield, protection 176. OE targe;
OFr targe

teene n. grief, sorrow 3. OE tēona.

tel(le) inf. tell, learn 128, 179.
OE tellan.

tempeste n. tempest 42. OFr tempeste.

tente n. tent 9, 41. OFr. tente.

thanke 1 sg. pres ind. thank 168.
OE þāncian.

thane adv. then 38,63,69,118.

OE þanne.

thar 3 sg. pres ind. need 76.

OE þearf.

thee pron. thee 5 etc; thi(n) poss.

adj. thy 9,19 etc. OE þē, þīn.

theeves n.pl. thieves 15. OE þēof.

thei pron. they 22,73. ON. þeir.

ther adv. rel. where 119,145; ther

adv. there 25,90; ther as

where 160. OE þēr.

thouh conj. though 44. ON. þāh.

thornes n.pl. thorns 149. OE þorn.

thurch prep. through 32 etc. OE þurh.

tobreste 3 sg. pres ind. bursts

apart, breaks in pieces 16.

V breste. fr. OE brēost.

tonge n. tongue 128. OE tūnge.

tour n. tower 154 OE tūr, OFr tur.

tresorere n. treasurer 107

OFr tresorer.

tweve adj. two 104. V twayne

OE twā.

U

unkynde adj. unnatural, ungrateful

166. OE uncynde.

unwemmed adj. unspotted 91. fr. OE

wemman.

V

vengeaunce n. vengeance 176.

OFr. vengeance.

venquished p. part. vanquished,

defeated 8. OFr. veintre, pret.

venquis.

veyn adj. in: in veyn, to no purpose

71. OFr vein.

venymous adj. venomous 149.

OFr venimeus.

verrey adj. true 21,40,105,106.

OFr versai.

vicaire n. vicar (fem.) 140.

OFr vicaire.

virgine n. virgin 4,153. OFr virgine.

vois n. voice 115. OFr vois.

vouches sauf 3 sg. pret. vouchsafed,

declared 27,57. OFr voucher sauf.

W

warne inf. to refuse, deny 11.

OE warenian.

wasshe inf. wash, cleanse 178.

OE wascan.

wel adv. well 10,22,65,151 OE wel.

welle n. spring 126 OE well(a).

wende 3 sg. pret. ...thought 93.

OE wendan.

wepen n. weapon 118 OE wēpn.

were pret. subj. pl. would be 180.

OE wēron.

werk n. work 40. OE werc.

werre :to werre from hostility. 116.

OFr pour guerre V wery inf. strangle,

worry OE wýrgan.

wey n. way, course 75. OE weg.

whan adv. when 37,67,115,121,etc.

OE hwanne.

whi adv. interrog. why 114 OE hwī.

whider adv. whither, where 124.

OE widran.

while (the while) adv. formerly 54 OE hwīle

whoso pron. whoever 71,75. OE hwa+swā.

wight n. man, creature 112. OE wiga.

wikke adj. wicked, sinful 44 (origin
obscure)

wil(le) n. intention, wish 45,57,143.

OE willa

wisse 2 sg imp. teach, guide 155.

OE wissian.

withoute prep. without 138 OE wipūtan.

V wit(te) n. thought 45 OE witt.

wolt 2 sg. pres ind. will 10; wole

3 sg. pres. wills 167; wilt aux. will 181;

wolde 3 sg. pret. would 170.

OE wil(l)e; pret. wólde.

woninre n. dwelling-place 145.

OE wunian.

world n. world 2,74,123 - OE woruld.

wot 1 sg. pres ind. know 10,65. OE wāt.

wounde n. wound 79. OE wúnd.

wrot 3 sg pret. wrote 59. OE
writan.

wroth adj. angry 52. OE wrāþ

wroughte 3 sg. pret. worked 116
OE wyrcan; pret. worhte.

wurthi, worthi adj. worthy
23,123. OE wyrþig.

wyse, wise n. way, manner 34,144. ysee inf. see 53 OE sēon.
OE wīse.

X

Xristus. see Crvstes.

Y

yt adv. still 46,121,167. OE gīt.

yore - see ful yore.

yow, you pron (acc./dat.) you 17 etc; yow
refl. yourself 43; ye you 176;
youre poss.adj. your 83. OE ēow, gē,
ēower.

Ysaac n. Isaac 169.

Z

Zacharie n. Zacharias 177.

ABBREVIATIONS

Carleton Brown, Lyrics	<u>Religious Lyrics of the 14th Century</u> , 2nd ed. revised by G V Smithers, Oxford, 1957.
Carols	R. L. Greene, ed. <u>The Early English Carols</u> , Oxford, 1935.
Chaucer Studies	B. Rowland, <u>Companion to Chaucer Studies</u> , Oxford, 1968.
Chaucer Tradition	A. Brusendorff, <u>The Chaucer Tradition</u> , Oxford, 1925.
Complaint to his Purse	The Complaint of Chaucer to his Purse
Concordance	Tatlock, J. S. P. & Kennedy, A. G., <u>A Concordance to the Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer and to the Romaunt of the Rose</u> , Washington, 1927.
Davies, Lyrics	R. T. Davies, ed. <u>Medieval English Lyrics</u> , London, 1963.
Early Poetry	W. Clemen, <u>Chaucer's Early Poetry</u> , tr. C. A. M. Sym, London, 1963.
EETS	Early English Text Society, ordinary series
EETS (ES)	Early English Text Society, extra series
European Literature	E. R. Curtius, <u>European Literature in the Latin Middle Ages</u> , tr. W. R. Trask, London, 1953.
Godefroi	<u>Dictionnaires de l'ancien langue française</u> , ed. Godefroi, Paris, 1881-1902.
Handbook	F. Mosse, <u>A Handbook of Middle English</u> , tr. J. A. Walker, Baltimore, 1952.
Kane, Edition	G. Kane, <u>Piers Plowman: The A Version</u> , London, 1960.
Koch, Edition	J. Koch, <u>A Critical Edition of Chaucer's Minor Poems</u> , Berlin, 1883.
Lat.	Latin
Literature and Pulpit	G. R. Owst, <u>Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England</u> , Oxford, 1933.
Malory, Works	E. Vinaver, ed. <u>The Works of Sir Thomas Malory</u> , 2nd ed., Oxford, 1967.
Mars	The Complaint of Mars
M.E.D.	<u>Middle English Dictionary</u> , ed. H. Kurath & S. M. Kuhn, Michigan 1952 ---.
Medieval Lyric	P. Dronke, <u>The Medieval Lyric</u> , London, 1968.
Meyer, Edition	P. Meyer, ed. of <u>ABC</u> , printed in <u>Minor Poems</u> , IV.
M. Du.	Middle Dutch.

- Minor Poems I A Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part II, ed. F. J. Furnivall (Chaucer Society 1st Series) London 1878, pp 123-135.
- Minor Poems II Supplementary Parallel-Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, part II, ed. F. J. Furnivall (Chaucer Society 1st Series), London 1880, pp 28-36.
- Minor Poems III Odd-Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part II, ed. F. J. Furnivall (Chaucer Society 1st series), London, 1880, pp 66-77.
- Minor Poems IV A One-Text Print of Chaucer's Minor poems, Part I, ed. F. J. Furnivall (Chaucer Society 1st Series) London, 1870, pp 84-100.
- M.L.G. Middle Low German
- MLN Modern Language Notes
- MLQ Modern Language Quarterly
- MP Modern Philology
- N.E.D. New English Dictionary, ed. J. A. H. Murray, Oxford, 1888.
- OE. Old English
- OFr. Old French
- ON. Old Norse
- Penitential Lyric F. A. Patterson, The Middle English Penitential Lyric, New York, 1911.
-
- Pity The Complaint unto Pity
-
- PMLA Publications of the Modern Language Association
- Religious Lyric R. Woolf, English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages, Oxford, 1968.
- Robinson, Edition F. N. Robinson, ed., The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, 2nd edn, Oxford, 1957.
- Romance Vocabulary J. Mersand, Chaucer's Romance Vocabulary, New York, 1937.
- Ryme Words M. Masui, The Structure of Chaucer's Ryme Words, Tokyo, 1964.
- SATF Societe des anciens textes francais
- Skeat, Edition W. W. Skeat, ed. Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, vol. i, Oxford, 1894.
- Skeat, Works W. W. Skeat, ed. Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, 7 vols, Oxford, 1894-7.
- Stedfastnesse Lak of Stedfastnesse
- Sturzinger, Edition J. Sturzinger, ed. Le Pelerinage de la Vie Humaine, London, 1893.
- Venus The Complaint of Venus

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2. Pepys 2006 (P1, P2) Pepys Library, Cambridge, f. 88 and f. 386.
3. Fairfax 16 (F) Bodleian Library, f. 188 v.
4. Gg. 4. 27 (Gg) University Library, Cambridge, f. 5.
5. Bodleian 638 (B), f. 204.
6. Harleian 2251 (H2) British Museum, f. 49.
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