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\*\*\* START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK EARLY ENGLISH ALLITERATIVE POEMS \*\*\*

This e-text is based on the 1869 (second) edition of the *Alliterative Poems*. A few apparent misprints were checked against the 1864 edition, but the texts as a whole were not closely compared.

The text includes characters that will only display in UTF-8 (Unicode) text readers, primarily ȝ ȝ (yogh). There are also a few Greek words in the Index, and a handful of letters with overline or macron, such as ī. If these characters do not display properly, or if the quotation marks in this paragraph appear as garbage, you may have an incompatible browser or unavailable fonts. First, make sure that your browser's "character set" or "file encoding" is set to Unicode (UTF-8). You may also need to change the default font.

All brackets are in the original.

Typographical errors are shown with mouse-hover popups. Quotation-mark errors—especially orphaned open quotes—are similarly marked. In some cases it may be possible to guess where the missing quotation mark belongs, but it seemed safer to leave the text as printed. No quotation marks disappeared between the 1864 and 1869 editions.

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## Early English Alliterative Poems in the West-Midland Dialect of the Fourteenth Century

EDITED FROM  
THE UNIQUE MANUSCRIPT  
BRITISH MUSEUM MS. COTTON  
NERO A. x  
BY  
RICHARD MORRIS

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(added by transcriber)

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**PREFACE.**

All page references in Arabic numerals refer to the main text, located in a separate file. Parenthetical Roman numerals *do not* correspond to the editor's section headings, but the text summary is generally similar to the appropriate headnote.

THE following poems are taken from a well known manuscript in the Cottonian collection, marked Nero A. x, which also contains, in the same handwriting and dialect, a metrical romance,<sup>1</sup>

wherein the adventures of Sir Gawayne with the "Knight in Green," are most ably and interestingly described.

Unfortunately nothing can be affirmed with any certainty concerning the authorship of these most valuable and interesting compositions. The editor of "Syr Gawayn and the Green Knight" considers that Huchowne, a supposed<sup>2</sup> Scotch *maker* of the fourteenth century, has the best claims to be recognised as the author, inasmuch as he is specially referred to by Wyntown as the writer of the *Gret gest of Arthure* and the *Awntyre of Gawayne*.

vi I do not think that any certain conclusions are to be drawn from the Scotch historian's assertion. It is well known that more versifiers than one during the fourteenth century attempted romance composition in the English language, having for their theme the knightly deeds of Arthur or Sir Gawayne. These they compiled from French originals, from which they selected the most striking incidents and those best suited to an Englishman's taste for the marvellous. We are not surprised, then, at finding so many romance poems treating of the exploits of the same hero, and laying claim to be considered as original productions. In Scotland, Huchowne's works might no doubt have been regarded as the standard romances of the period, but that they were the only English *gests* is indeed very doubtful.

The Early English alliterative romance, entitled the *Morte Arthure*, published from a manuscript in Lincoln Cathedral by Mr. Halliwell,<sup>3</sup> is considered by Sir F. Madden to be the veritable *gest of Arthure* composed by Huchowne. An examination of this romance does not lead me to the same conclusion, unless Huchowne was a Midland man, for the poem is not written in the old Scotch dialect,<sup>4</sup> but seems to have been originally composed in one of the Northumbrian dialects spoken *South* of the Tweed.<sup>5</sup>

vii The manuscript from which Mr. Halliwell has taken his text is not the original copy, nor even a literal transcript of it. It exhibits certain orthographical and grammatical peculiarities unknown to the Northumbrian dialect which have been introduced by a Midland transcriber, who has here and there taken the liberty to adapt the original text to the dialect of his own locality, probably that one of the North Midland counties, where many of the Northumbrian forms of speech would be intelligible.<sup>6</sup>

A comparison of the Arthurian romance with the following poems throws no light whatever upon the authorship of the poems. The dialect of the two works is altogether different, although many of the terms employed are common to both, being well known over the whole of the North of England. The grammatical forms (the best test we can have) in the poems are quite distinct from those in the *Morte Arthure*, and of course go far to prove that they do not proceed from the pen of the same writer.

The Editor of "Syr Gawayn and the Green Knight" acknowledges that the poems in the present volume, as now preserved to us in the manuscript, are not in the Scottish dialect, but he says "there is sufficient internal evidence of their being *Northern*,<sup>7</sup> although the manuscript containing them appears to have been written by a scribe of the Midland counties, which will account for the introduction of forms differing from those used by writers beyond the Tweed."

viii Now, with regard to this subsequent transcription of the poems from the Scotch into a Midland dialect,—it cannot be said to be improbable, for we have abundant instances of the multiplication of copies by scribes of different localities, so that we are not surprised at finding the works of some of our popular Early English writers appearing in two or three forms; but, on the other hand, a comparison of the original copy with the *adapted transcriptions*, or even the reading of a transcribed copy, always shows how the author's productions have suffered by the change. Poetical works, especially those with final rhymes, of course undergo the greatest amount of transformation and depreciation. The changes incident upon the kind of transcription referred to are truly surprising, and most perplexing to those who make the subject of Early English *dialects* a matter of investigation.

But, in the present poems, the uniformity and consistency of the grammatical forms is so entire, that there is indeed no internal evidence of subsequent transcription into any other dialect than that in which they were originally written. However, the dialect and grammatical peculiarities will be considered hereafter.

ix Again, in the course of transcription into another dialect, any literary merit that the author's copy may have originally possessed would certainly be destroyed. But the poems before us are evidently the work of a man of birth and education; the productions of a true poet, and of one who had acquired a perfect mastery over that form of the English tongue spoken in his own immediate locality during the earlier part of the fourteenth century. Leaving out of consideration their great philological worth, they possess an intrinsic value of their own as literary compositions, very different from anything to be found in the works of Robert of Gloucester, Manning, and many other Early English authors, which are very important as philological records, but in the light of poetical productions, cannot be said to hold a very distinguished place in English literature. The poems in the present volume contain many passages which, as Sir F. Madden truly remarks, will bear comparison with any similar ones in the works of Douglas or Spenser.

I conclude, therefore, that these poems were not transcribed from the Scotch dialect into any other, but were written in their own West-Midland speech in which we now have them.

Mr. Donaldson, who is now editing for the Early English Text Society the Troy Book, translated from Guido di Colonna, puts forward a plea for Huchowne as its author, to whom he would also assign the *Morte Arthure* (ed. Perry) and the *Pistel of Sweet Susan*.<sup>8</sup> But Mr. Donaldson seems to

have been misled by the similarity of vocabulary, which is not at all a safe criterion in judging of works written in a Northumbrian, West or East Midland speech. The dialect, I venture to think, is a far safer test. A careful examination of the Troy Book compels me to differ in toto from Mr. Donaldson, and, instead of assigning the Troy Book to a Scotchman, say that it cannot even be claimed, in its present form, by any Northumbrian south of the Tweed; moreover, it presents no appearance of having been tampered with by one unacquainted with the dialect, though it has perhaps been slightly modernised in the course of transcription.

The work is evidently a genuine West-Midland production,<sup>9</sup> having most of the peculiarities of vocabulary and inflexions that are found in these *Alliterative Poems*.<sup>10</sup> I feel greatly inclined to claim this English Troy Book as the production of the author of the *Alliterative Poems*; for, leaving out identical and by no means common expressions, we find the same power of description,<sup>11</sup> and the same tendency to inculcate moral and religious truths on all occasions where an opportunity presents itself.<sup>12</sup> Without dwelling upon this topic, which properly falls to the Editor of the Troy Book, it may not be out of place to ask the reader to compare the following description of a storm from the Troy Book, with that selected from the present volume on pp. 14 and 18.

x

A TEMPEST ON ÞE SEE.

There a tempest *hom* toke on þe torres hegh:—  
 A *rak* and a royde wynde rose in *hor* saile,  
 A myst & a *merkenes* was mervell to se;  
 With a *routond* rayn ruthe to be-holde,  
 Thonret<sup>13</sup> full *throlly* with a thicke haile;  
 With a leuenyng light as a *low* fyre,  
 Blaset all the brode see as it bren wold.  
 The flode with a felle cours flowet on hepis,  
 Rose uppon rockes as any *ranke* hylles.  
 So wode were the waghes & þe wilde *ythes*,  
 All was like to be lost þat no lond hade  
 The ship ay shot furth o þe *shire waghes*,  
 As gwo clymbe at a clyffe, or a clent<sup>14</sup> hille.  
 Eft *dump* in the depe as all drowne wolde.  
 Was no *stightlyng* with stere ne no stithe ropes,  
 Ne no sayle, þat might serue for *unsound* wedur.  
 But all the buernes in the bote, as *hom* best liked,  
 Besoght unto sainttes & to sere goddes; (p. 65)

A STORME ON THE SE.

All the company enclinet cairyn to ship;  
 Cachyn in cables, knyht up *hor* ancre,  
 Sesit vp *hor* sailes in a sad hast;  
*Richet* þere rapes, rapit unto see.  
 Hokit out of hauyn, all the hepe somyn,  
*Hade bir at hor bake*, blawen to þe depe;  
*Sailyn* forthe *soberly*, somyn but a while,  
 Noght fyftene forlong fairly to the end.  
 . . . . .  
 When sodenly the softe aire *unsoberly* rose;  
 The cloudis overcast, *claterrit* aboute;  
 Wyndes full wodely *walt* up the ythes;  
 Wex *merke* as the mydnighte mystes full thicke:  
 Thunret in the *thestur throlly* with all;  
 With a *launchant laite* lightonyd the water;  
 And a *ropand* rayne *raiked* fro the heuyn.  
 The storme was full stithe with mony stout windes,  
 Hit *walt* up the wilde se vpon wan hilles.  
 The ffolke was so ferd, that *on flete* were,  
 All drede for to drowne with dryft of the se;  
 And in perell were put all the proude kynges.  
 —(p. 150.)

xi

The poems in the present volume, three in number, seem to have been written for the purpose of enforcing, by line upon line and precept upon precept, Resignation to the will of God; Purity of life as manifested in thought, word, and deed; Obedience to the Divine command; and Patience under affliction.

In the first poem, entitled by me "*The Pearl*", the author evidently gives expression to his own sorrow for the loss of his infant child, a girl of two years old, whom he describes as a

Perle plesaunte to prynces paye  
*Pearl pleasant to princes' pleasure,*  
 To clanly clos in golde so clere  
*Most neatly set in gold so clear.*

Of her death he says:

Allas! I leste hyr in on erbere  
*Alas! I lost her in an arbour,*  
Pur3 gresse to grounde hit fro me yot  
*Through grass to ground it from me got.* —(p. 1.)

xii

The writer then represents himself as visiting his child's grave (or arbour) in the "high season of August," and giving way to his grief (p. 2). He falls asleep, and in a dream is carried toward a forest, where he saw rich rocks gleaming gloriously, hill sides decked with crystal cliffs, and trees the leaves of which were as burnished silver. The gravel under his feet was "precious pearls of orient," and birds "of flaming hues" flew about in company, whose notes were far sweeter than those of the cytole or gittern (guitar) (p. 3). The dreamer arrives at the bank of a stream, which flows over stones (shining like stars in the welkin on a winter's night) and pebbles of emeralds, sapphires, or other precious gems, so

Pat all the lo3e lemed of ly3t  
*That all the deep gleamed of light,*  
So dere wat3 hit adubement  
*So dear was its adornment.* —(p. 4.)

Following the course of the stream, he perceives on the opposite side a crystal cliff, from which was reflected many a "royal ray" (p. 5).

At þe fote þer-of þer sete a faunt  
*At the foot thereof there sat a child,*  
A mayden of menske, ful debonere  
*A maiden of honour, full debonnaire;*  
Blysnande whyt wat3 hyr bleaunt  
*Glistening white was her robe,*  
(I knew hyr wel, I hade sen hyr ere)  
*(I knew her well, I had seen her before)*  
At glysnande golde þat man con schore  
*As shining gold that man did purify,*  
So schon þat schene an-vnder schore  
*So shone that sheen (bright one) on the opposite shore;*  
On lenghe I loked to hyr þere  
*Long I looked to her there,*  
þe lenger I knew hyr more & more  
*The longer I knew her, more and more.* —(pp. 6, 7.)

xiii

The maiden rises, and, proceeding along the bank of the stream, approaches him. He tells her that he has done nothing but mourn for the loss of his Pearl, and has been indeed a "joyless jeweller" (p. 8). However, now that he has found his Pearl, he declares that he is no longer sorrowful, but would be a "joyful jeweller" were he allowed to cross the stream (p. 8). The maiden blames her father for his rash speech, tells him that his Pearl is not lost, and that he cannot pass the stream till after death (p. 10). The dreamer is in great grief; he does not, he says, care what may happen if he is again to lose his Pearl. The maiden advises him to bear his loss patiently, and to abide God's doom (p. 11). She describes to him her blissful state in heaven, where she reigns as a queen (p. 12). She explains to him that Mary is the Empress of Heaven, and all others kings and queens (p. 13). The parable of the labourers in the vineyard<sup>15</sup> (pp. 15-18) is then rehearsed at length, to prove that "innocents" are admitted to the same privileges as are enjoyed by those who have lived longer upon the earth (p. 18). The maiden then speaks to her father of Christ and his one hundred and forty thousand brides (p. 24), and describes their blissful state (p. 26). She points out to him the heavenly Jerusalem, which was "all of bright burnished gold, gleaming like glass" (p. 29). Then the dreamer beholds a procession of virgins going to salute the Lamb, among whom he perceives his "little queen" (p. 33). On attempting to cross the stream to follow her, he is aroused from his dream (p. 35), laments his rash curiosity in seeking to know so much of God's mysteries, and declares that man ever desires more happiness than he has any right to expect (p. 35).

The second poem, entitled "*Cleanness*," is a collection of Biblical stories, in which the writer endeavours to enforce Purity of Life, by showing how greatly God is displeased at every kind of impurity, and how sudden and severe is the punishment which falls upon the sinner for every violation of the Divine law.

xiv

After commending cleanness and its "fair forms," the author relates (I.) The Parable of the Marriage Feast (p. 39); (II.) the Fall of the Angels (p. 43); (III.) The wickedness of the antediluvian world (p. 44),

He wat3 famed for fre þat fe3t loued best  
*He was famous as free that fight loved best,*  
& ay þe bigest in bale þe best wat3 halden  
*And ever the biggest in sin the best was held;* (p. 45.)

(IV.) The destruction of mankind by the Flood. When all were safely stowed in the ark,

Thenne sone com þe seuenþe day, when samned wern alle  
*Then soon came the seventh day when assembled were all,*  
& alle woned in þe whichche þe wylde & þe tame.  
*And all abode in the ark (hutch), the wild and the tame.*

Ben bolned þe abyme & bonke3 con ryse  
*Then swelled the abyss and banks did rise,*  
 Waltes out vch walle-heued, in ful wode streme3  
*Bursts out each well-head in full wild streams,*  
 Wat3 no brymme þat abod vnbrosten bylyue  
*There was no brim (stream) that abode unburst by then,*  
 Þe mukel lauande loghe to þe lyfte rered  
*The much (great) flowing deep (loch) to the loft (sky) reared.*  
 Mony clustered clowde clef alle in clowte3  
*Many a clustering cloud cleft all in clouts (pieces),*  
 To-rent vch a rayn-ryfte & rusched to þe vrþe  
*Rent was each a rain-rift and rushed to the earth;*  
 Fon neuer in forty daye3, & þen þe flod ryses  
*Failed never in forty days, and then the flood rises,*  
 Ouer-walte3 vche a wod and þe wyde felde3  
*Over-flows each wood and the wide fields;*

Water wylger ay wax, wone3 þat stryede  
*Water wildly ever waxed, abodes that destroyed,*  
 Hurlled in-to vch hous, hent þat þer dowelled  
*Hurled into each house, seized those that there dwelt.*  
 Fyrst feng to þe fly3t alle þat fle my3t  
*First took to flight all that flee might,*  
 Vuche burde with her barne þe byggyng þay leue3  
*Each bride (woman) with her bairn their abode they leave,*  
 & bowed to þe hy3 bonk þer brentest hit wern  
*And hied to the high bank where highest it were,*  
 & heterly to þe hy3e hille3 þay [h]aled on faste  
*And hastily to the high hills they rushed on fast;*  
 Bot al wat3 nedle3 her note, for neuer cowþe stynt  
*But all was needless their device, for never could stop*  
 þe ro3e raynande ryg [&] þe raykande wawe3  
*The rough raining shower and the rushing waves,*  
 Er vch þoþom wat3 brurd-ful to þe bonke3 egge3  
*Ere each bottom (valley) was brim-ful to the banks' edges,*  
 & vche a dale so depe þat demmed at þe brynke3  
*And each dale so deep that dammed at the brinks. —(pp. 47, 48).*

xv

The ark is described as “heaved on high with hurling streams.”

Kest to kyþe3 vncouþe þe clowde3 ful nere  
*Cast to kingdoms uncouth the clouds ful near,*  
 Hit waltered on the wylde flod, went as hit lyste  
*It tossed on the wild flood, went as it list,*  
 Drof vpon þe depe dam, in daunger hit semed  
*It drove upon the deep dam, in danger it seemed,*  
 With-ouen mast, oþer myke, oþer myry bawe-lyne  
*Without mast, or mike, or merry bow-line,*  
 Kable, oþer capstan to clyppe to her ankere3  
*Cable or capstan to clip to their anchors,*  
 Hurrok, oþer hande-helme hasped on roþer  
*Oar or hand-helm hooked on rudder,*  
 Oþer any sweande sayl to seche after hauen  
*Or any swinging sail to seek after haven,*  
 Bot flote forthe with þe flyt of þe felle wynde3  
*But floated forth with the force of the fell winds.*  
 Wheder-warde so þe water wafte, hit rebounde  
*Whither-ward so (as) the water waft, it rebounded,*  
 Ofte hit roled on-rounde & rered on ende  
*Oft it rolled around and reared on end,*  
 Nyf our lorde hade ben her lode3-mon hem had lumpen harde  
*Had our Lord not been their (pilot) leader hardship had befallen them. —(p. 49.)*

*mike]* See Glossary.

(V.) The Visit of Three Angels to Abraham (p. 54).

(VI.) The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (pp. 64, 65), including a description of the Dead Sea, the tarn (lake) of traitors (p. 66).

(VII.) The invasion of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (p. 71), and the captivity of Judah (p. 74).

The following is a paraphrase of the fourth and fifth verses in the twenty-fifth chapter of the second book of Kings. <sup>17</sup>

Þenne þe kyng of þe kyth a counsayl hym takes  
*Then the king of the kingdom a counsel him takes,*  
 Wyth þe best of his burnes, a blench for to make  
*With the best of his men a device for to make;*  
 Þay stel out on a styлле ny3t er any steuen rysed  
*They stole out on a still night ere any sound arose,*

xvi

& harde hurles pur3 þe oste, er ennies hit wyste  
*And hard hurled through the host, ere enemies it wist,*  
 Bot er þay at-wappe ne mozt þe wach wyth oute  
*But ere they could escape the watch without,*  
 Hi3e skelt wat3 þe askry þe skewes an-vnder  
*High scattered was the cry, the skies there under,*  
 Loude alarom vpon launde lulted was þenne  
*Loud alarm upon land sounded was then;*  
 Ryche, ruþed of her rest, ran to here wedes,  
*Rich (men) roused from their rest, ran to their weeds,*  
 Hard hattes þay hent & on hors lepes  
*Kettle hats they seized, and on horse leap;*  
 Cler claryoun crak cryed on-lofte  
*Clear clarion's crack cried aloft.*  
 By þat wat3 alle on a hepe hurlande swyþee  
*By that (time) was all on a heap, hurling fast,*  
 Fol3ande þat oþer flote, & fonde hem bilyue  
*Following that other fleet (host), and found them soon,*  
 Ouer-tok hem, as tyd, tult hem of sadeles  
*Over-took them in a trice, tilted them off saddles,*  
 Tyl vche prynce hade his per put to þe grounde  
*Till each prince had his peer put to the ground;*  
 & þer wat3 þe kyng ka3t wyth calde prynces  
*And there was the king caught with crafty princes,*  
 & alle hise gentyle for-iusted on Ierico playnes  
*And all his nobles vanquished on Jericho's plains. —(pp. 71, 72.)*

as tyd] Immediately.

xvii

(VIII.) Belshazzar's impious feast (pp. 76-80), and the handwriting upon the wall (pp. 80, 81).

In þe palays pryncipale vpon þe playn wowe  
*In the palace principal upon the plain wall,*  
 In contrary of þe candelstik þat clerest hit schyned  
*Opposite to the candlestick that clearest there shone.*  
 Þer apered a paume, with poyntel in fyngres  
*There appeared a palm with a pointel in its fingers,*  
 Þat wat3 grisly & gret, & grymly he wrytes  
*That was grisly and great, and grimly it writes,*  
 None oþer forme bot a fust faylaynde þe wryst  
*None other form but a fist failing the wrist*  
 Pared on þe parget, purtrayed lettres  
*Pared on the plaister, pourtrayed letters.*  
 When þat bolde Baltazar blusched to þat neuē  
*When that bold Belshazzar looked to that fist,*  
 Such a dasande drede dusched to his hert  
*Such a dazzling dread dashed to his heart.*  
 Þat al falewed his face & fayled þe chere  
*That all paled his face and failed the cheer;*  
 Þe stronge strok of þe stonde strayned his ioyntes  
*The strong stroke of the blow strained his joints,*  
 His cnes cachche3 to close & cluchches his hommes  
*His knees catch to close, and he clutches his hams,*  
 & he with plat-tyng his paumes displayes his lers  
*And he with striking his palms displays his fears,*  
 & romyes as a rad ryth þat rore3 for drede  
*And howls as a frightened hound that roars for dread,*  
 Ay biholdand þe honde til hit hade al grauen,  
*Ever beholding the hand till it had all graven,*  
 & rasped on þe ro3 wo3e runisch saue3  
*And rasped on the rough wall uncouth saws (words).*

lers] ? feres.

(IX.) The story of Nebuchadnezzar's pride and its punishment (pp. 84, 85), and the interpretation of the handwriting by Daniel (p. 86).

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(X.) The invasion of Babylon by the Medes (pp. 87, 88).

Baltazar in his bed wat3 beten to deþe  
*Belshazzar in his bed was beaten to death,*  
 Þat boþe his blood & his brayn blende on þe cloþes  
*That both his blood and his brains blended on the clothes;*  
 Þe kyng in his cortyn wat3 ka3t by þe heles  
*The king in his curtain was caught by the heels,*  
 Feryed out bi þe fete & fowle dispysed  
*Ferried out by the feet and foully despised;*  
 Þat wat3 so do3ty þat day & drank of þe vessayl  
*He that was so doughty that day and drank of the vessels,*  
 Now is a dogge also dere þat in a dych lygges  
*Now is as dear (valuable) as a dog that in a ditch lies. —(p. 88.)*



In conclusion, I take the present opportunity of acknowledging the kind assistance of Sir Frederic Madden and E. A. Bond, Esq., of the British Museum, who, on every occasion, were most ready to render me any help in deciphering the manuscript, in parts almost illegible, from which the poems in the present volume are printed.

xxi

## REMARKS UPON THE DIALECT AND GRAMMAR.

Higden, writing about the year A.D. 1350, affirms, distinctly, the existence of three different forms of speech or dialects, namely, Southern, Midland, and Northern; <sup>25</sup> or, as they are sometimes designated, West-Saxon, Mercian, and Northumbrian. Garnett objects to Higden's classification, and considers it certain "that there were in his (Higden's) time, and probably long before, five distinctly marked forms, which may be classed as follows:— 1. Southern or standard English, which in the fourteenth century was perhaps best spoken in Kent and Surrey by the body of the inhabitants. 2. Western English, of which traces may be found from Hampshire to Devonshire, and northward as far as the Avon. 3. Mercian, vestiges of which appear in Shropshire, Staffordshire, and South and West Derbyshire, becoming distinctly marked in Cheshire, and still more so in South Lancashire. 4. Anglian, of which there are three sub-divisions—the East Anglian of Norfolk and Suffolk; the Middle Anglian of Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and East Derbyshire; and the North Anglian of the West Riding of Yorkshire—spoken most purely in the central part of the mountainous district of Craven. 5. Northumbrian," spoken throughout the Lowlands of Scotland, Northumberland, Durham, and nearly the whole of Yorkshire.

Garnett's division is based upon peculiarities of pronunciation, which will be found well marked in the *modern* provincial dialects, and not upon any essential differences of inflexion that are to be found in our Early English manuscripts. <sup>26</sup>

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The distinction between Southern and Western English was not at all required, as the Kentish Ayenbite of Inwyt (A.D. 1340) exhibits most of the peculiarities that mark the Chronicles of Robert of Gloucester (Cottonian MS. Calig. A. xi.) as a Southern (or West-Saxon) production. The Anglian of Norfolk, Lincolnshire, and Nottinghamshire may be referred to one group with the Mercian of Lancashire, as varieties of the Midland dialect.

A careful examination of our early literature leads us to adopt Higden's classification as not only a convenient but a correct one.

There is, perhaps, no better test for distinguishing these dialects from one another than the verbal inflexions of the plural number in the present tense, indicative mood.

To state this test in the briefest manner, we may say that the Southern dialect employs *-eth*, the Midland *-en*, and the Northumbrian *-es* as the inflexion for all persons of the plural present indicative: <sup>27</sup>—

|           | Southern.         | Midland.         | Northern.                     |
|-----------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1st pers. | Hop- <i>eth</i> . | Hop- <i>en</i> . | Hop- <i>es</i> . (we) hope.   |
| 2nd „     | Hop- <i>eth</i> . | Hop- <i>en</i> . | Hop- <i>es</i> . (ye) hope.   |
| 3rd „     | Hop- <i>eth</i> . | Hop- <i>en</i> . | Hop- <i>es</i> . (they) hope. |

It is the constant and systematic employment of these inflexions, and not their occasional use that must be taken as the criterion of dialectical varieties.

In a pure specimen of the Southern dialect, we never find the Northumbrian *-es*. We do occasionally meet with the Midland *-en*, but only in those works written in localities where, from their geographical position, Southern and Midland forms would be intelligible. <sup>28</sup> We might look in vain for the Southern plural *-eth* in a pure Northumbrian production, but might be more successful in finding the Midland *-en* in the third person plural; as, "they *arn*" for "they *ar*", or "they *er*."

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In a work composed in Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, or Lancashire, we should be sure to find the occasional use of the Northumbrian plural *-es*. <sup>29</sup>

The inflexions of the verb in the singular are of value in enabling us to discriminate between the several varieties of the Midland dialect. <sup>30</sup> The Southern and Midland idioms (with the exception of the West-Midland of Lancashire, Cheshire, etc.) conjugated the verb in the singular present indicative, as follows:—

|           |                 |                |
|-----------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1st pers. | hope            | (I) hope.      |
| 2nd „     | hop- <i>est</i> | (thou) hopest. |
| 3rd „     | hop- <i>eth</i> | (he) hopes.    |

The West-Midland, corresponding to Garnett's Mercian, instead of *-est* and *-eth* employs the inflexions that are so common in the so-called Northumbrian documents of the ninth and tenth centuries:—

|           |                |                |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|
| 1st pers. | hope           | (I) hope.      |
| 2nd „     | hop- <i>es</i> | (thou) hopest. |
| 3rd „     | hop- <i>es</i> | (he) hopes.    |

The Northumbrian dialect takes *-es* in all three persons; but mostly drops it in the first person.

The peasantry of Cheshire and Lancashire still preserve the verbal inflexions which prevailed in

the fourteenth century, and conjugate their verbs in the present indicative according to the following model:—

|  |           |           |         |
|--|-----------|-----------|---------|
|  |           | Singular. | Plural. |
|  | 1st pers. | hope      | hopen.  |
|  | 2nd „     | hopes     | hopen.  |
|  | 3rd „     | hopes     | hopen.  |

xxiv

Inasmuch as the poems in the present volume exhibit the systematic use of these forms, we cannot but believe that they were originally composed in one of those counties where these verbal inflexions were well known and extensively used. We have to choose between several localities, but if we assign the poems to Lancashire we are enabled to account for the large number of Norse terms employed. It is true that the ancient examples of the Lancashire dialect contained in Mr. Robson's *Metrical Romances*,<sup>31</sup> the *Boke of Curtasye*,<sup>32</sup> and *Liber Cure Cocorum*,<sup>33</sup> present us with much broader forms, as *-us* for *-es* in the plural number and possessive case of nouns, *-un* for *-en* in the plural present indicative mood, in passive participles of irregular (or strong) verbs, *-ud* (*-ut*) for *-ed* in the past tense and passive participle of regular (or weak) verbs, and the pronominal forms *hor* (their), *hom* (them), for *her* and *hem*.<sup>34</sup>

These forms are evidence of a broad pronunciation which, at the present time, is said to be a characteristic of the northwestern division of Lancashire, but I think that there is good evidence for asserting that this strong provincialism was not confined, formerly, to the West-Midland dialect, much less to a division of any particular county. We find traces of it in Audelay's *Poems* (Shropshire), the *Romance of William and the Werwolf*,<sup>35</sup> and even in the *Wickliffite* version of the *Scriptures*.

xxv

Formerly, being influenced by these broad forms, I was led to select Cheshire or Staffordshire as the probable locality where the poems were written; but I do not, now, think that either of these counties ever employed a vocabulary containing so many Norse terms as are to be found in the Lancashire dialect. But although we may not be able to fix, with certainty, upon any one county in particular, the fact of the present poems being composed in the West-Midland dialect cannot be denied. Much may be said in favour of their Lancashire origin, and there are one or two points of resemblance between our poems, the *Lancashire Romances*, and *Liber Cure Cocorum*, that deserve especial notice.

xxvi

I. In *Sir Amadace*,<sup>36</sup> lxviii. 9, there occurs the curious form *miztus* = *miztes* = *mightst*.<sup>37</sup> As it appears only once throughout the *Romances* we might conclude that it is an error of the scribe for *miztest*, but when we find in the poems before us not only *myztez* = *myztes* (mightst), but *woldez* = *woldes* (wouldst), *couthesz* = *couthes* (couldst), *dippezez* (dippedst), *travayledez* (travelledst), etc., we are bound to consider *miztus* as a genuine form.<sup>38</sup> In no other Early English works of the fourteenth century have I been able to find this peculiarity. It is very common in *the Wohunge of Ure Lauerd* (xiiiith cent.). See O.E. *Homilies*, p. 51. The Northumbrian dialect at this period rejected the inflexion in the second person preterite singular, of regular verbs,<sup>39</sup> and in our poems we find the *-es* often dropped, so that we get two conjugations, which may be called the inflected and the uninflected form.

|  |           |            |              |                  |
|--|-----------|------------|--------------|------------------|
|  |           | Inflected. | Uninflected. |                  |
|  | 1st pers. | hopede     | hoped        | (I) hoped.       |
|  | 2nd „     | hopedes    | hoped        | (thou) hopedest. |
|  | 3rd „     | hopede     | hoped        | (he) hoped.      |

Originally the inflected form may have prevailed over the whole of the North of England, but have gradually become confined to the West-Midland dialect.

II. The next point of resemblance is the use of the verb *SCHIN* or *SCHUN* = *schal* = *shall*. It is still preserved in the modern dialect of Lancashire in combination with the adverb *not*, as *schunnot*<sup>40</sup> = *shall not*. The following examples will serve to illustrate the use of this curious form:—

- “— þay *schin* knawe sone,  
þere is no bounté in burne lyk Baltazar þewes.”<sup>41</sup>  
—(B. l. 1435.)
- “& þose þat seme arn & swete *schyn* se his face.”<sup>42</sup>  
—(*Ibid.* l. 1810.)
- “Pekokys and pertrikys perboylyd *schyn* be.”<sup>43</sup>  
—(*Liber Cure Cocorum*, p. 29.)
- “For þer bene bestes þat *schyn* be rost.”<sup>44</sup>  
—(*Ibid.* p. 34.)
- “Alle *schun* be drazun, Syr, at þo syde.”<sup>45</sup>  
—(*Ibid.* p. & 35.)
- “Seche ferlies *schyn* falle.”<sup>46</sup>  
—(Robson's *Met. Rom.* p. 12, l. 4.)

41. They *shall* know soon there is no goodness in man like Belshazzar's virtues.
42. And those that seemly are and sweet *shall* see His (God's) face.
43. Peacocks and partriches parboiled *shall* be.
44. For þer are beasts þat *shall* be roasted.
45. All *shall* be drawn (have the entrails removed), Sir, at the side.
46. Such marvels *shall* happen.

III. Nothing is more common in the present poems than the use of *hit* as a genitive = *its*, which is also found in the *Lancashire romances*.

xxvii

- “Forþy þe derk dede see hit is demed ever more,  
For *hit* dedez of deþe duren þere zet.”<sup>47</sup>  
—(Patience, l. 1021.)
- “And, as hit is corsed of kynde & *hit* coosteþ als,

47. Wherefore the dark dead sea it is called ever more.  
For *its* deeds of death endure there yet.
48. And as it is cursed of kind and *its*

Be clay bat clenges þer-by arn corsyes strong." <sup>48</sup>  
 —(*Ibid.* l. 1033.)

"For I wille speke with the sprete,  
 And of *hit* woe wille I wete,  
 Gif that I may *hit* bales bete." <sup>49</sup>  
 —(Robson's *Met. Romances*, p. 5, ll. 3, 4.)

properties also,  
 The clay that clings thereby are  
 corrosives strong.  
<sup>49.</sup> I will speak with the spirit,  
 And of *its* woe will I wit (know),  
 If that I may *its* bales (grief) abate.

The present dialect of Lancashire still retains the uninflected genitive:—

"So I geet up be strike o' dey, on seet eawt; on went ogreath tilly welly coom within two mile oth' teawn; when, os tha dule woud height, o tit wur stonning ot an ale heawse dur; on me kawve (the dule bore eawt *it* een for me) took th' tit for *it* mother, on woud seawk her." <sup>50</sup> (Tummus and Meary).

Thus much for the dialectical peculiarities of our author. The scanty material at our disposal must be a sufficient excuse for the very meagre outline which is here presented to the reader. As our materials increase, the whole question of Early English dialects will no doubt receive that attention from English philologists which the subject really demands, and editors of old English works will then be enabled to speak with greater confidence as to the language and peculiarities of their authors. Something might surely be done to help the student by a proper classification of our manuscripts both as to date and place of composition. We are sadly in want of unadulterated specimens of the Northumbrian and East-Midland idioms during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. There must surely be some records of these dialects in our university libraries which would well repay editing. <sup>51</sup>

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## GRAMMATICAL DETAILS.

### I. NOUNS.

(1) *Number*.—The plurals generally end in *-es* (*e3*), *-s*. *Y3en* (eyes), *trumpen* (trumpets), are the only plurals in *-en* that occur in the poems. In Robson's *Metrical Romances* we find *fellun* (fells, hills,), *dellun* (dells), and *eyren* (eggs), in *Liber Cure Cocorum*. The plurals of *brother*, *child*, *cow*, *do3ter* (daughter), are *brether*, *childer*, *kuy*, and *de3ter*.

(2) *Gender*.—The names of inanimate things are in the neuter gender, as in modern English. The exceptions are *deep* (fem.), *gladnes* (fem.), and *wind* (masc.).

(3) *Case*.—The genitive singular (masc. and fem.) ends in *-es* (*-e3*), *-s*, but occasionally the inflexion is dropped; as, "Balta3ar thewes," the virtues of Balshazzar. <sup>52</sup> If "*honde my3t*," "*honde werk*," "*hellen wombe*," are not compounds, we have instances of the final *-e* (*en*) which formed the genitive case of *feminine* nouns in the Southern English of the fourteenth century.

In the phrases "*besten blod*" (blood of beasts), "*blonkken bak*" (back of horses), "*chyldryn fader*" (father of children), "*nakeryn noyse*" (noise of nakers), we have a trace of the genitive plural *-ene* (A.S. *-ena*).

### II. ADJECTIVES.

(1) *Number*.—The final *e*, as a sign of the plural, is very frequently dropped. *Pover* (poor), *sturn* (strong), make the plurals *poveren* and *sturnen*. In the phrase, "þo sy3te3 so *quyke3*" <sup>53</sup> (those sights so living), the *-e3* (= *-es*) is a mark of the plural, very common in Southern writers of the fourteenth century, and employed as a plural inflexion of the adjective until a very late period in our literature.

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The Article exhibits the following forms:

| SINGULAR. |                    | PLURAL. |
|-----------|--------------------|---------|
| Masc.     | Fem.               |         |
| The.      | tho. <sup>54</sup> | tho.    |

*This* forms the plural *thise* and *thes* (*these*). *That* is always used as a demonstrative, and never as the neuter of the article; its plural is *thos* (those). <sup>55</sup> The older form, *theos* = *these*, shows that the *e* is not a sign of the plural, as many English grammarians have asserted.

(2) *Degrees of Comparison*.—The comparative degree ends in *-er*, and the superlative in *-est*.

Adjectives and adverbs terminating in the syllable *-lyche* form the comparative in *-loker* and the superlative in *-lokest*; as, positive *uglyche* (= ugly), comp. *ugloker*, superl. *uglokest*. The long vowel of the positive is often shortened in the comp. and superl., as in the modern English *late*, *latter*, *last*.

| Positive.      | Comparative. | Superlative. |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Brade (broad), | bradder,     | braddest.    |
| Dere (dear),   | derrer,      | derrest.     |
| Lyke (like),   | lykker,      | lykkest.     |
| Swete (sweet), | swetter,     | swettest.    |
| Wayke (weak),  | wakker,      | wakkest.     |
| Wode (mad),    | wodder,      | woddest.     |

The following irregular forms are occasionally met with:

| Positive.         | Comparative.   | Superlative.    |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Fer (far),        | ferre (fyrre), | ferrest.        |
| Heȝe (high),      | herre,         | heȝest (hest).  |
| Neȝe (nigh, near) | nerre,         | nerrest (nest). |
| Sare (sore),      | sarre,         | sarrest.        |
| Forme (first),    |                | formast.        |
| Mikelle (great),  | mo             | most.           |
| Yvel, ill (bad),  | wers (worre),  | werst.          |

*Numerals.*—*Twinne* and *thrinne* occur for two and three. The ordinal numbers are—

first (fyrste), the forme,  
 secunde, that other, tother,  
 thryd,  
 thrydde,  
 furȝe,  
 fyfȝe,  
 sexte,  
 sevenȝe,  
 aȝtȝe,  
 nente,  
 tenȝe,  
 tȝe.

The Northumbrian numerals corresponding to *sevenȝe*, *aȝtȝe*, *nente*, *tenȝe*, are *sevend*, *aghtend*, *neghend*, *tend*. The Southern forms end in *-the*, as *sevenȝe*, *eizȝeȝe*, *nyȝe*, *teȝe* (*type*).

### III. PRONOUNS.

In the following poems we find the pronoun *ho*, she, still keeping its ground against the Northumbrian *scho*.<sup>56</sup> *Ho* is identical with the modern Lancashire *hoo* (or *huh* as it is sometimes written), which in some parts of England has nearly the same pronunciation as the accusative *her*.

The Northumbrian *thay* (they) has displaced the older Midland *he*, corresponding to the Southern pronoun *hii*, *hi* (A.S. *hi*). *Hores* and *thayreȝ* (theirs) occasionally occur for *here*.<sup>57</sup> The genitives in *-es*, due no doubt to Scandinavian influence, are very common in Northumbrian writers of the fourteenth century, but are never found in any Southern work of the same period.

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*Hit* is frequently employed as an indefinite pronoun of all genders, and is plural as well as singular. It is, as has been previously shown, uninflected in the genitive or possessive case.

*Me* in Southern writers is used as an indefinite pronoun of the *third* person, and represents our *one*, but in the present poems it is of all persons, and seems to be placed in apposition with the subject of the sentence corresponding to our use of *myself*, *thysself*, *himself*, etc.; as,

“*He swenges me þys*,” etc. = He himself sends this, etc.<sup>58</sup>

“*Now sweȝe me þider swyftly*” = Now go (thou) thysself thither swiftly.<sup>59</sup>

“*He meteȝ me þis good man*” = He himself meets this good man.<sup>60</sup>

Sturzen-Becker (“Some Notes on the leading Grammatical Characteristics of the Principal Early English Dialects, Copenhagen, 1868”) thinks that I have been led astray with regard to this use of *me*, which he says is nothing more than the *dativus ethicus*.

The *me* in these examples may be merely an expletive, having arisen out of the general use of the dative ethicus, but the context does not satisfy me that it has the force of a dative. Dr. Guest (Proceedings of Philolog. Soc., vol. i. p. 151-153, 1842-1844) has discussed this construction at some length, and he carefully distinguishes the dative of the 1st person from the indeterminate (or indefinite) pronoun *me* = Fr. *one*. He says that in Old Frisian the indefinite pronoun has two forms, *min* and *me*, “the latter of which seems to be always used as a suffix to the verb, as *momme*, one may; *somme*, one should,” etc. The same construction was occasionally used in our own language, and it no doubt gave rise to those curious idioms which are noticed by Pegge in his “Anecdotes of the Eng. Lang.,” p. 217. This writer, whose evidence to a *fact* we may avail ourselves of, whatever we think of his criticism or his scholarship, quotes the following as forms of speech then prevalent among the Londoners: “and so says *me I*;” “well what does *me I*;” “so says *me she*;” “then away goes *me he*;” “what does *me they*?” Here it is obvious that *me* is the indeterminate pronoun, and represents the *subject*, while the personal pronoun is put in apposition to it, so that “says *me I*” is equivalent to “*one says, that is I*,”<sup>61</sup> These idioms are not unknown to our literature.

xxxix

(1) ‘But as he was by diverse principall young gentlemen, to his no small glorie, lifted up on horseback, *comes me a page* of Amphialus, etc.’ Pembr. Arcad. B. iii.

Other idioms, which have generally been confounded with those last mentioned, have the indeterminate pronoun preceded by a nominative absolute.

(2) ‘*I*, having been acquainted with the smell before, knew it was Crab, and—*goes me* to the fellow, who whips the dogs,’ etc. Two Gent. of Verona, 4. 4.

(3) 'He thrusts me himself into the company of three or four gentlemanlike dogs under the Duke's Table.' *Ib.* See B. Jons. Ev. Man in his Humour, 3, 1.

Johnson considers the *me* in examples 2 and 3 to be the oblique case of the first pers. pron., and treats it as "a ludicrous expletive." It is difficult to say how he would have parsed example 2 on such a hypothesis.

With these instances of the use of *me* (indef. or reflexive), the reader may compare the following:

(1) "Suche a touche in that tyde, *he* tazte (Gauan) hym in tene  
And *gurdes me*, Sir Gallerun, evyn grovelonges on grounde."  
(The Anturs of Arther at the Tarnewathelan, p. 22.)

(2) There at the dore he (the Fox) cast *me* downe hys pack.  
Spenser's Shep. Cal. ed. Morris, p. 460, l. 243.

Cp. *Cut me*, i. Hen. IV. Act 4. Sc. 4; *steps me*, *Ib.* Act 4, Sc. 3; *comes me*, *runs me*, *Ib.* Act 3, Sc. 1.

(3) "Juno enraged, and fretting thus,  
*Runs me* unto one Æolus."  
(Virgile Travestie, 1664.)

xxxiii

The indefinite *me* = one is not uncommon in Elizabethan writers. Cf. "*touch me* his hat;" "*touch me* hir with a pint of sack," etc.; "and *stop me* his dice you are a villaine" (Lodge's Wit's Miserie).

The following table exhibits the declension of the personal and relative pronouns:—

| SINGULAR. |               |             |                  |           |      |
|-----------|---------------|-------------|------------------|-----------|------|
| Nom.      | I,            | thou,       | <u>he</u> ,      | ho,       | hit. |
| Gen.      | My, myn,      | thy, thyn,  | his,             | hir, her, | hit. |
| Dat.      | Me,           | the,        | him,             | hir, her, | hit. |
| Acc.      | Me,           | the,        | him,             | hir, her, | hit. |
| PLURAL.   |               |             |                  |           |      |
| Nom.      | We,           | 3e,         | thay,            |           | hit. |
| Gen.      | Oure,         | yor, youre, | her (here), hor, |           | hit. |
| Dat.      | Vus (= uus),  | yow, you,   | hem, hom,        |           | hit. |
| Acc.      | Vus (= uus),  | yow, you,   | hem, hom,        |           | hit. |
| Nom.      | Who (quo).    |             |                  |           |      |
| Gen.      | Whose (quos). |             |                  |           |      |
| Dat.      | Whom,<br>Wham | (quom).     |                  |           |      |
| Acc.      | Whom,<br>Wham | (quom).     |                  |           |      |

#### IV. VERBS.

*Infinitive Mood.*—The *-en* of the infinitive is frequently dropped, without even a final *-e* to mark its omission. Infinitives in *-y*, as *louy* (love), *schony* (shun), *spotty* (spot, defile), *stiry* (stir), *wony* (dwell), occasionally occur, and probably owe their appearance to the author's acquaintance with Southern literature. <sup>62</sup>

*Indicative Mood.*—The final *e* often disappears in the first and third persons of the preterite tense, as I *loved*, he *loved*, instead of I *lovede*, he *lovede*.

xxxiv

The *-en* in the plural of the present and preterite tenses is frequently dropped. The pl. present in *-e3* occasionally occurs.

*Imperative Mood.*—The imperative plural ends in *-es* (*e3*), and not in *-eth* as in the Southern and ordinary Midland dialects.

*Participles.*—The active or imperfect participle ends in *-ande* <sup>63</sup> and never in *-ing*.

The participle passive or perfect of regular verbs terminates in *-ed*; of irregular verbs in *-en*. Occasionally we find the *n* disappearing, as *bigonn-e*, *fund-e*, *runn-e*, *wonn-e*, where perhaps it is represented by the final *-e*.

The prefix *-i* or *-y* (A.S. *-ge*) occurs twice only in the poems, in *i-chose* (chosen), and *i-brad* (extended); but, while common enough in the Southern and Midland dialects, it seems to be wholly unknown to the Northumbrian speech.

The verb in the West-Midland dialect is conjugated according to the following model:—

#### I.—CONJUGATION OF REGULAR VERBS.

##### INDICATIVE MOOD.

##### PRESENT TENSE.

| Singular.     | Plural.       |
|---------------|---------------|
| (I) hope,     | (We) hopen.   |
| (Thou) hopes, | (3e) hopen.   |
| (He) hopes,   | (Thay) hopen. |

PRETERITE TENSE.

|                                    |                 |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| (I) hopede <sup>64</sup> (hoped),  | (We) hopenen.   |
| (Thou) hopedes (hoped),            | (3e) hopenen.   |
| (He) hopede <sup>64</sup> (hoped), | (Thay) hopenen. |

IMPERATIVE MOOD.

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Hope (thou). | Hopes (3e). |
|--------------|-------------|

PARTICIPLES.

|                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Imperfect or Active. | Perfect or Passive. |
| Hopande.             | Hoped.              |

II.—CONJUGATION OF IRREGULAR VERBS.

INDICATIVE MOOD.

PRESENT TENSE.

Singular.

|                |         |         |          |
|----------------|---------|---------|----------|
| (I) kerve,     | renne,  | smite,  | stonde.  |
| (Thou) kerves, | rennes, | smites, | stondes. |
| (He) kerves,   | rennes, | smites, | stondes. |

Plural.

|              |         |         |          |
|--------------|---------|---------|----------|
| (We) kerven, | rennen, | smiten, | stonden. |
| (3e) "       | "       | "       | "        |
| (Thay) "     | "       | "       | "        |

PRETERITE TENSE.

Singular.

|               |        |        |        |
|---------------|--------|--------|--------|
| (I) carf,     | ran,   | smot,  | stod.  |
| (Thou) carve, | ranne, | smote, | stode. |
| (He) carf,    | ran,   | smot,  | stod.  |

Very frequently the *e* in the second person is dropped, <sup>65</sup> as in the Northumbrian dialect, but we never meet with such forms as carves (= carvedest), rannes (= ranst), smotes (= smotest), etc.

Plural.

|              |         |         |          |
|--------------|---------|---------|----------|
| (We) corven, | runnen, | smiten, | stonden. |
| (3e) "       | "       | "       | "        |
| (Thay) "     | "       | "       | "        |

PASSIVE PARTICIPLES.

|         |         |         |          |
|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| Corven, | runnen, | smiten, | stonden. |
|---------|---------|---------|----------|

The Northumbrian dialect does not preserve any separate form for the preterite plural, and this distinction is not always observed in the present poems.

TABLE OF VERBS.

A.—SIMPLE ORDER.

|               | Present.           | Preterite. | Passive Participle. |
|---------------|--------------------|------------|---------------------|
| Class I.      | Hate,              | hatede,    | hated.              |
| Class II. (a) | Bede (offer),      | bedde,     | bed.                |
|               | Dype (dip),        | dypte,     | dypt.               |
|               | Kythe (show),      | kydde,     | kyd.                |
|               | Lende,             | lende,     | lent.               |
|               | Rende,             | rende,     | rent.               |
|               | Sende,             | sende,     | sent.               |
| (b)           | Clothe,            | cladde,    | clad.               |
|               | Dele (deal),       | dalte,     | dalt.               |
|               | Lede,              | ladde,     | lad.                |
|               | Leve,              | lafte,     | laft.               |
|               | Rede (advise),     | radde,     | rad.                |
|               | Sprede (spread),   | spradde,   | sprad.              |
|               | Swelt (die),       | swalte,    | ---                 |
|               | Swette (sweat),    | swatte,    | ---                 |
|               | Threte (threaten), | thratte,   | thrat.              |
| Class III.    | Byye (buy),        | bozte,     | bozt                |

|                |         |        |
|----------------|---------|--------|
| Bringe,        | brozte, | brozt. |
| Cache (catch), | cazte,  | cazt.  |
| Lache (seize), | lazte,  | lazt.  |
| Reche (reck),  | rozte,  | ---    |
| Reche (reach), | razte,  | ---    |
| Selle,         | solde,  | sold.  |
| Worche (work), | wrozte, | wrozt. |

B.—COMPLEX ORDER.

DIVISION I.

|                 | Present.          | Preterite.              | Passive Participle. |       |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------|
| xxxvii          | Class I.          | Bere (bear),            | ber,                | born. |
|                 | Bete (beat),      | bet,                    | beten.              |       |
|                 | Breke (break),    | brek,                   | broken.             |       |
|                 | Chese (choose),   | ches (chos),            | chosen.             |       |
|                 | Cleve (cleave),   | clef,                   | cloven.             |       |
|                 | Ete (eat),        | ette ( <i>for et</i> ), | eten.               |       |
|                 | Forzete (forget), | forzet,                 | forzeten.           |       |
|                 | Frese (freeze),   | fres,                   | frosen.             |       |
|                 | Gife (give),      | gef,                    | given, geven.       |       |
|                 | Heve (heave),     | hef,                    | hoven.              |       |
|                 | Ligge (lie),      | lez,                    | leyen, lezen.       |       |
|                 | Lepe (leap),      | lep,                    | lopen.              |       |
|                 | Nemme (take),     | nem (nam),              | nomen.              |       |
|                 | Nimme             |                         |                     |       |
|                 | Schere (shear),   | scher,                  | schorn.             |       |
|                 | Slepe (sleep),    | slep,                   | slepen.             |       |
|                 | Speke (speak),    | spek,                   | spoken.             |       |
|                 | Stele (steal),    | stel,                   | stolen.             |       |
|                 | Swere (swear),    | swer,                   | sworen.             |       |
|                 | Wepe (weep),      | wep,                    | wopen.              |       |
| Wreke (avenge), | wrek,             | wroken.                 |                     |       |
| Class II.       | Falle,            | fell,                   | fallen.             |       |
|                 | Fonge (take),     | feng,                   | fongen.             |       |
|                 | Growe,            | grew,                   | growen.             |       |
|                 | Hange, honge,     | heng,                   | hangen, hongen.     |       |
|                 | Knowe, knawe,     | knew,                   | knawen, knowen.     |       |
|                 | Schape (make),    | schep,                  | schapen.            |       |
|                 | Walke,            | welk,                   | walken.             |       |
| Class III.      | Wasche,           | wesch,                  | waschen.            |       |
|                 | Drawe, draze,     | droz,                   | drawen, .....       |       |
|                 | Fare (go),        | for,                    | faren.              |       |
|                 | Laze (laugh),     | loz,                    | lazen.              |       |
|                 | Stande, stonde,   | stod,                   | standen.            |       |
|                 | Slaye,            | slow, slew,             | slayn.              |       |
|                 | Take,             | tok,                    | tane, tone.         |       |
| Wake,           | wok,              | waken.                  |                     |       |

DIVISION II.

|          | Present.      | Preterite.    | Passive Participle. |
|----------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Class I. | Biginne,      | bigon,        | bigonnen, bigunnen. |
|          | Breste,       | brast, borst, | brusten, bursten.   |
|          | Climbe,       | clamb, clomb, | clumben.            |
|          | Drinke,       | dronk, drank, | drunken, dronken.   |
|          | Finde,        | fand, fond,   | funden.             |
|          | Fizte,        | fazt, fezt,   | fozten.             |
|          | Helpe,        | halp,         | holpen. ....        |
|          | Kerve (cut),  | carf,         | corven.             |
|          | Melte,        | malt,         | molten.             |
|          | Renne (run),  | ran,          | runnen.             |
|          | Ringe,        | rong,         | rungen, rongen.     |
|          | Singe,        | song, sang,   | sungen.             |
|          | Steke,        | stac,         | stoken.             |
|          | Sterve (die), | starf,        | storven. ....       |

|            |                |                    |                 |
|------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
|            | Werpe (throw), | warp,              | worpen.         |
|            | Win,           | wan, won,          | wonnen, wunnen. |
|            | ȝelde (yield), | ȝald,              | ȝolden.         |
| Class II.  | Bide (abide),  | bod,               | biden.          |
|            | Bite,          | bot,               | biten.          |
|            | Drive,         | drof,              | driven.         |
|            | Fine (cease),  | fon,               | —               |
|            | Glide,         | glod,              | gliden.         |
|            | Ride,          | rod,               | riden.          |
|            | Rise,          | ros,               | risen.          |
|            | Schine,        | schon,             | —               |
|            | Slide,         | slod,              | sliden.         |
|            | Smite,         | smot,              | smiten.         |
|            | Trine (go),    | tron,              | —               |
| Class III. | Fly,           | fleȝ, flegh, flaȝ, | floweren.       |
|            | See,           | seȝ, segh, syȝ,    | seen.           |
|            | Stiȝe, steȝe,  | steȝ               | —               |

## ANOMALOUS VERBS.

|            |                     |
|------------|---------------------|
| Can,       | pret. couthe.       |
| Dare,      | „ dorste.           |
| May,       | „ miȝte.            |
| Mot,       | „ moste.            |
| Oȝe (owe), | „ oȝte.             |
| Schal,     | „ scholde, schulde. |
| Thar,      | „ thurte.           |
| Wote,      | „ wiste.            |
| Wille,     | „ wolde.            |

*Schal* (shall) in the second person singular is *schal* or *schalt*; so, too, we occasionally find *wyl* for *wylt*.

The present plural of *schal* is *schul*, *schulen*, or *schyn*.

The verb *to be* is thus conjugated:—

## INDICATIVE MOOD.

| PRESENT TENSE.       | PAST TENSE.        |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Singular.            |                    |
| (I) am.              | (I) was, watȝ.     |
| (Thou) art.          | (Thou) was, watȝ.  |
| (He) is, bes, betȝ.  | (He) was, watȝ.    |
| Plural.              |                    |
| (We) arn, are, ar.   | (We) wern, were.   |
| (ȝe) arn, are, ar.   | (ȝe) wern, were.   |
| (Thay) arn, are, ar. | (Thay) wern, were. |

The verbs *be*, *have*, *wille*, have negative forms; as, *nam* = am not; *nar* = are not; *nas* = was not; *naf* = have not; *nade* = had not; *nyl* = will not.

The following contractions are occasionally met with: *bos* = behoves; *byhod* = behoved; *ha* = have; *ma* = make; *man* = make (pl.) *matȝ* (*mas*) = makes; *ta* = take; *tatȝ* (= *tas*) = takes; *tane*, *tone* = taken.

## V. ADVERBS.

The Norse forms *hethen*, *quethen* (*whethen*),<sup>66</sup> and *thethen*, seem to have been known to the West-Midland dialect as well as the Saxon forms *hence* (*hennes*, *henne*), *whence* (*whennes*), *thence* (*thennes*), etc.<sup>A</sup> The adverbs *in-blande* (together), *in-lyche* (alike), *in-myddde* (amidst), *in-monge* (amongst), are due, perhaps, to Scandinavian influence.

## VI. PREPOSITIONS.

The preposition *from* never occurs in the following poems; it is replaced by *fro*, *fra* (Northumbrian), O.N. *frá*.

## VII. CONJUNCTIONS.

The conjunction *if* takes a negative form; as, *nif* = if not, unless.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE MANUSCRIPT USED IN THE PRESENT VOLUME. <sup>67</sup>

COTTON MS. NERO A. x. A small quarto volume, consisting of three different MSS. bound together, which originally had no connection with each other. Prefixed is an imperfect list of contents in the hand-writing of James, the Bodley Librarian.

The first portion consists of a panegyric oration in Latin by Justus de Justis, on John Chedworth, archdeacon of Lincoln, dated at Verona 16th July, 1468. It occupies thirty-six folios, written on vellum, and is the original copy presented by the author.

The second portion is that we are more immediately concerned with. It is described by James as "*Vetus poema Anglicanum, in quo sub insomnia figmento multa ad religionem et mores spectantia explicantur,*" and this account, with some slight changes, is adopted by Smith and Planta, in their catalogues; both of whom assign it to the fifteenth century. It will appear, by what follows, that no less than four distinct poems have been confounded together by these writers.

This portion of the volume extends from fol. 37 to fol. 126, inclusive, and is written by one and the same hand, in a small, sharp, irregular character, which is often, from the paleness of the ink, and the contractions used, difficult to read. There are no titles or rubrics, but the divisions are marked by large initial letters of blue, flourished with red, and several illuminations, coarsely executed, serve by way of illustration, each of which occupies a page.

1. Four of these are prefixed to the first poem. In the first the Author is represented slumbering in a meadow, by the side of a streamlet, clad in a long red gown, having falling sleeves, turned up with white, and a blue hood attached round the neck.

xlii In the second the same person appears, drawn on a larger scale, and standing by the stream. In the third he occurs nearly in the same position, with his hands raised, and on the opposite side a lady dressed in white, in the costume of Richard the Second's and Henry the Fourth's time, buttoned tight up to the neck, with long hanging sleeves. Her hair is plaited on each side, and on her head is a crown. In the fourth we see the author kneeling by the water, and beyond the stream is depicted a castle or palace, on the embattled wall of which appears the same lady, with her arm extended towards him.

The poem commences on fol. 39, and consists of one hundred and one twelve-line stanzas, <sup>68</sup> every five of which conclude with the same line, and are connected by the iteration of a leading expression. It concludes on fol. 55*b*.

2. Then follow two more illuminations; in the first of which Noah and his family are represented in the ark; in the second the prophet Daniel expounding the writing on the wall to the affrighted Belshazzar and his queen. These serve as illustrations to the second poem, which begins at fol. 57, and is written in long alliterative lines. It concludes on fol. 82.

3. Two illuminations precede, as before; one of which represents the sailors throwing the prophet Jonas into the sea, the other depicts the prophet in the attitude of preaching to the people of Nineveh. The poem is in the same metre as the last, and commences at fol. 83.

It is occupied wholly with the story of Jonas, as applicable to the praise of meekness and patience; and ends on fol. 90.

4. The Romance intitled *Sir Gawayne and the Grene Knyzt* follows, fol. 91. Prefixed is an illumination of a headless knight on horseback, carrying his head by its hair in his right hand, and looking benignly at an odd-eyed bill-man before him; while from a raised structure above, a king armed with a knife, his queen, an attendant with a sabre, and another bill-man scowling looks on. Here and elsewhere the only colours used are green, red, blue, and yellow. It ends on fol. 124*b*., and at the conclusion, in a later hand, is written "Hony soit q̄ mal penc," which may, perhaps, allude to the illumination on the opposite page, fol. 125, representing the stolen interview between the wife of the Grene Knyzt and Sir Gawayne. Above the lady's head is written:

xliiii  
Mi mind is mukel on on, þat wil me nozt amende,  
Sum time was trewe as ston, & fro schame coupe hir defende.

It does not appear very clearly how these lines apply to the painting. Two additional illuminations follow; in the first of which Gawayne is seen approaching the *Grene Chapel*, whilst his enemy appears above, wielding his huge axe; and in the second Sir Gawayne, fully equipped in armour, is represented in the presence of king Arthur and queen Guenever, after his return to the court.

The third and concluding portion of the Cotton volume extends from fol. 127 to fol. 140*b*, inclusive, and consists of theological excerpts, in Latin, written in a hand of the end of the thirteenth century. At the conclusion is added *Epitaphium de Ranulfo, abbate Ramesiensi*, who was abbot from the year 1231 to 1253, and who is erroneously called *Ralph* in the *Monasticon*, vol. ii. p. 548, new ed.

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The letters A. B. C. refer severally to the poems, entitled by me, "The Pearl," "Cleanness," and "Patience."

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| A.S.          | Anglo-Saxon.  |
| Dan.          | Danish.   |
| Du.           | Dutch.  |
| E.            | English.  |
| O.E.          | Old English.  |
| Prov.E.       | Provincial English.   |
| N.Prov.E.     | North Provincial English.                                       |
| N.P.E.        |   |
| Fr.           | French.   |
| O.Fr.         | Old French.   |
| Prov. Fr.     | Provincial French.  |
| Fris.         | Frisian.  |
| G. Doug.      | Gawin Douglas's Æneid, published by the Bannatyne Club, 2 vols. |
| Ger.          | German.   |
| Goth.         | Gothic.   |
| Icel.         | Icelandic.  |
| Jam.          | Jamieson's Scottish Dictionary.                                 |
| K. Alex.      | King Alexander, Romance of (Ed. Stevenson).                     |
| Met. Hom.     | Metrical Homilies (Ed. Small).                                  |
| O.N.          | Old Norse.  |
| O.S.          | Old Saxon.  |
| Prompt. Parv. | Promptorium Parvulorum (Ed. Way).                               |
| Sc.           | Scotch.   |
| O.Sc.         | Old Scotch.   |
| S.Sax.        | Semi-Saxon.   |
| Sw.           | Swedish.  |
| O.Sw.         | Old Swedish.  |
| Town. Myst.   | Townley Mysteries.  |
| T. B.         | Troy Book (Ed. Donaldson).                                      |

Gaps in numbering represent notes that were shown inline, with or without visible numbers.

1. Edited by Sir Frederic Madden for the Bannatyne Club, under the title of "Syr Gawayn and the Grene Knyȝt," and by me for the Early English Text Soc., 1865.
2. Wyntown nowhere asserts that Huchowne is a Scotchman.
3. Edited for E. E. T. Soc. by Rev. G. G. Perry, M.A.
4. This is evident from the following particulars:—
  - I. In old Scotch manuscripts we find the guttural *gh* (or *ȝ*) represented by *ch*; thus, *aght*, *laght*, *saght*, *wight*, are the English forms which, in the Scotch orthography, become *aucht* (owed), *laucht* (seized), *saucht* (peace), *wicht* (active). It is the former orthography, however, that prevails in the *Morte Arthure*.
  - II. We miss the Scotch use of (1) *-is* or *-ys*, for *-es* or *-s*, in the plural number, and of possessive cases of nouns, and in the person endings of the present tense indicative mood of verbs; (2) *-it* or *-yt*, for *-ed* or *-d*, in the preterites or passive participles of regular verbs.
  - III. There is a total absence of the well-known Scotch forms *begouth* (began), *sa* (so), *sic* (such), *throuch*, *thorow* (through). Instead of these *bigan*, *so*, *syche*, *thrughe* (*thurgh*) are employed. See Preface to Hampole's *Pricke of Conscience*, pp. vii, viii.
5. This is shown by the frequent employment of *-es* as the person ending of the verb in the present tense, plural number. The corresponding Southern verbal inflexion *-eth never* occurs; while the Midland *-en* is only occasionally met with in the third person plural present, and has been introduced by a later copyist. There are other characteristics, such as the predominance of words containing the A.S. long *a*; as *hame* (home), *stane* (stone), *thra* (bold), *walde* (would), etc.; the frequent use of *thir* (these), *tha* (the, those), etc.
6. The peculiarities referred to do not appear to be owing to the copyist of the Lincoln manuscript (Robert de Thornton, a native of Oswaldkirk in Yorkshire), who, being a Northumbrian, would probably have restored the original readings. The non-Northumbrian forms in the *Morte Arthure* are— 1. The change of *a* into *o*, as *bolde* for *balde*, *bote* for *bate*, *one* for *ane*, *honde* for *hande*, *londe* for *lande*; 2. *they*, *theyre*, *them*, *theym*, for *thay*, *thaire*, *tham*; 3. *gayliche*, *kindliche*, *semlyche*, etc., for *gayly*, *kindly*, *seemly*, etc. (the termination *lich*, *liche*, was wholly unknown to the Northumbrian dialect, being represented by *ly* or *like*); 4. *churle*, *churche*, *iche*, *mache*, *myche*, *syche*, *wyrche*, etc., for *carle*, *kirke*, *ilk*, *make*, *mykelle*, *swilk*, *wyrk*, etc.; 5. infinitives in *-en*, as *drenschēn*, *schewenne*, *wacchēne*, etc.; 6. the use of *eke*, *thos*, for *als* (*alswa*), *thas*; 7. the employment of *aye* for *egg*. The former word *never* occurs in

- any pure Northumbrian work, while the latter is seldom met with in any Southern production.
7. The poems are *Northern* in contradistinction to *Southern*, but they are not Northern or Northumbrian in contradistinction to *Midland*.
8. Printed by Mr. D. Laing in his "Inedited Pieces," from a MS. of Mr. Heber's. Other copies are in the Vernon MS., and Cotton Calig. A. ii.; the latter imperfect.
9. Other specimens of this dialect will doubtless turn up. Mr. Brock has found a MS. in British Museum (Harl. 3909) with most of the peculiarities pointed out by me in the preface to the present work, and I believe that this dialect was probably a flourishing one in the 13th century. See O.E. Homilies, p. li.
10. (1) *en* as the inflexion of the pres. tense pl., indic. mood of verbs; (2) *s* in the second and third pers. sing. of verbs; (3) *ho* = she; (4) *hit* = its; (5) *tow* = two; (6) *deẏter* = daughters, etc.
11. See p. 36, ll. 1052-1066; p. 37, ll. 1074-1089; pp. 161-162, ll. 4956-4975.
12. See pp. 25, 26 (Jason's unfaithfulness); pp. 74, 75, ll. 2241-2255; p. 75, ll. 2256-2263; p. 69, ll. 2267-2081; p. 158, ll. 4839-4850; p. 189, ll. 4881-4885; p. 165, ll. 5078-5086, etc.
13. In the Harl. MS. 3909, nearly all the p. part. and preterites end in *-et* (*-ut* and *-et* occur in Romances ed. by Robson).
14. This seems to furnish an etymology for *Clent* Hills, Worcestershire—*brent* is the term employed in Alliterative.
15. Matthew, chapter xx.
17. "4. And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which is by the king's garden: (now the Chaldees were against the city round about:) and the king went the way toward the plain.  
"5. And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him."
22. History of English Rhythms, vol. i. p. 159.
23. Syr Gawayn, ed. Madden, p. 302.
24. Wherever the Text has been altered, the reading of the MS. will be found in a foot-note.
25. Polychronicon R. Higdeni, ap. Gale, p. 210, 211. See Garnett's Philological Essays, p. 43, and Specimens of Early English, p. 338.
26. It is to be regretted that Garnett did not enter upon details, and give his readers some tests by which to distinguish the "five distinctly marked forms."
27. In English works of the fourteenth century the *-en* of the Midland, and the *-es* of the Northumbrian is frequently dropped, thus gradually approximating to our modern conjugation.
28. We are here speaking of works written in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.
29. Robert of Brunne, in his "Handlyng Synne," often employs it instead of *-en*, but only for the sake of the rhyme.
30. The Midland dialect is a very difficult one to deal with, as it presents us with no uniform type; and, moreover, works written in this idiom are marked by Northern or Southern peculiarities, which have led many of our editors altogether astray in determining the locality of their composition.
31. Published by the Camden Society, 1842.
32. Edited by Mr. Halliwell for the Percy Society.
33. Edited by me for the Philological Society, 1862.
34. *-us* and *-ud* for *-es* and *-ed*, as well as *hom*, *hor*, do occasionally occur in the MS. containing our poems.
35. The Romance of William and the Werwolf is written in the West-Midland dialect as spoken probably in Shropshire.
36. Robson's Metrical Romances, p. 54, l. 9.
37. *Woldus* = *woldes* = *wouldst*, appears in Audelay's poems (in the Shropshire dialect of the fifteenth century), p. 32, l. 6.
38. The so-called Northumbrian records of the ninth and tenth centuries frequently use *-es* instead of *-est*, in the 2nd pers. preterite of regular verbs, e.g.,  
*ðu forcerdes usic on-bec* = Thou turnedst us hindward. —(Ps. xliii. 11.)  
*ðu saldes usic* = Thou gavest us. —(Ps. xliii. 12.)  
*ðu bi-bohtes folc ðin butan weorðe* = Thou soldest thy folk without price. —(Ps. xliii. 12.)  
*ðu ge-hiowades me & settes ofer me hond ðine* = Thou madest me and settest over me thy hand. —(Ps. cxxxviii. 5.)  
*ðu ðreades ða ofer-hygdan* = Thou hast rebuked the proud. —(Ps. cxviii. 21.)  
*Ic ondeto ðe fader drihten heofnes forðon ðu gedeigeldes ðas ilco from snotrum & hogum & ædeaudes ða ðæm lytlum* = I thank thee, O father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. —(Matt. xi. 25).
39. *Þou torned us hindward*. —(Early English Nn. Psalter, xliii. 11.)  
*Þou salde þi folk*. —(*Ibid.* xliii. 12.)  
*Þou meked us*. —(*Ibid.* xliii. 20.)  
*Þou made me and set þi hand over me*. —(*Ibid.* cxxxviii. 5.)

Pou *sniibed* proude. —(*Ibid.* cxviii. 21.)

40. I am informed by a Shropshire friend that it prevails in his county under the form *shinneh*.

*Win* = will, in *winnot*, *wunnot* = will not, is still heard in the West-Midland districts. It is found in Robson's Romances and in Liber Cure Cocorum.

50. So I got up by break of day and set out; and went straight till I well nigh came within two miles of the town, when, as the devil would have it, a horse was standing at an ale-house door; and my calf (the devil bore out *its* eyes for me) took the horse for *its* mother, and would suck her.

51. Three specimens of the East-Midland dialect have come to light since writing the above. Harl. MS. 3909; Troy Book, ed. Donaldson, E. E. T. Soc.; The Lay-folks Mass-Book, ed. Simpson, E. E. T. Soc.

52. In the romance of "Syr Gawayn and the Grene Knyzt" we find "*blonk* (horse) sadele," "*fox felle*" (skin). In *blonk* an *e* has probably been dropped.

53. The feminine form is seldom employed.

54. The Northumbrian plural article is *tha*.

55. The Northumbrian corresponding form is *thas*.

56. *Scho* occurs *once* in the present poems.

57. *Yowrez* (yours) sometimes takes the place of *youre* in the romance of "Sir Gawayne and the Grene Knyzt."

58. Page 92, l. 108.

59. Page 91, l. 72.

60. Syr Gawayn, l. 1932.

61. I would say that *says me I* = I myself say. —R. M.

62. *Schonied* occurs for *schoned*. No Southern writer would retain, I think, the *i* in the preterite.

63. Garnett asserts that the present participle in *-ande* is "a *certain criterion* of a Northern dialect subsequent to the thirteenth century." It is never found in any Southern writer, but is common to many Midland dialects. Capgrave employs it frequently in his Chronicles. It is, however, no safe criterion by itself.

64. The final *e* is often dropped.

65. In *The Wohunge of Ure Lauerd* the *e* is constantly omitted.

66. "Syr Gawayn and the Grene Knyzt."

67. Taken with some few alterations from Sir F. Madden's "Syr Gawayn."

68. A line, however, is missing from the MS. on fol. 55*b*. See page 15.

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## Collected Sidenotes

This section was added by the transcriber. It contains the editor's summaries as given in his sidenotes, and can be read as a condensed version of the full text. Headings in Roman numerals link to sections of the poem.

[The Pearl](#)  
[Cleanness](#)  
[Patience](#)

### *The Pearl*: Sidenotes

#### I.

Description of a lost pearl (*i.e.* a beloved child).

The father laments the loss of his pearl.

He often visits the spot where his pearl disappeared, and hears a sweet song.

Where the pearl was buried there he found lovely flowers.

Each blade of grass springs from a dead grain.

In the high season of August the parent visits the grave of his lost child.

Beautiful flowers covered the grave.

From them came a delicious odour.

The bereaved father wrings his hands for sorrow, falls asleep upon the flowery plot, and dreams.

#### II.

In spirit he is carried to an unknown region, where the rocks and cliffs gleamed gloriously.

The hill sides were decked with crystal cliffs.

The leaves of the trees were like burnished silver.

The gravel consisted of precious pearls.  
The father forgets his sorrow.  
He sees birds of the most beautiful hues, and hears their sweet melody.  
No tongue could describe the beauty of the forest.  
All shone like gold.  
The dreamer arrives at the bank of a river, which gave forth sweet sounds.  
In it, stones glittered like stars in the welkin on a winter night.

### III.

His grief abates, and he follows the course of the stream.  
No one could describe his great joy.  
He thought that Paradise was on the opposite bank.  
The stream was not fordable.  
More and more he desires to see what is beyond the brook.  
But the way seemed difficult.  
The dreamer finds new marvels.  
He sees a crystal cliff, at the foot of which, sits a maiden clothed in glistening white.  
He knows that he has seen her before.  
He desires to call her but is afraid, at finding her in such a strange place.

### IV.

So he stands still, like a well trained hawk.  
He fears lest she should escape before he could speak to her.  
His long lost one is dressed in royal array—decked with precious pearls.  
She comes along the stream towards him.  
Her kirtle is composed of 'sute,' ornamented with pearls.  
She wore a crown of pearls.  
Her hair hung down about her.  
Her colour was whiter than whalebone.  
Her hair shone as gold.  
The trimming of her robe consisted of precious pearls.  
A wonderful pearl was set in her breast.  
No man from here to Greece, was so glad as the father, when he saw his pearl on the bank of the stream.  
The maiden salutes him.

### V.

The father enquires of the maiden whether she is his long-lost pearl, and longs to know who has deprived him of his treasure.  
The maiden tells him that his pearl is not really lost.  
She is in a garden of delight, where sin and mourning are unknown.  
The rose that he had lost is become a pearl of price.  
The pearl blames his rash speech.  
The father begs the maiden to excuse his speech, for he really thought his pearl was wholly lost to him.  
The maiden tells her father that he has spoken three words without knowing the meaning of one.  
The first word. The second. The third.

### VI.

He is little to be praised who loves what he sees.  
To love nothing but what one sees is great presumption.  
To live in this kingdom (*i.e.* heaven) leave must be asked.  
This stream must be passed over by death.  
The father asks his pearl whether she is about to doom him to sorrow again.  
If he loses his pearl he does not care what happens to him.  
The maiden tells her father to suffer patiently.  
Though he may dance as any doe, yet he must abide God's doom.  
He must cease to strive.  
All lies in God's power to make men joyful or sad.

### VII.

The father beseeches the pearl to have pity upon him.  
He says that she has been both his bale and bliss.  
And when he lost her, he knew not what had become of her.  
And now that he sees her in bliss, she takes little heed of his sorrow.  
He desires to know what life she leads.  
The maiden tells him that he may walk and abide with her, now that he is humble.

All are meek that dwell in the abode of bliss.  
All lead a blissful life.  
She reminds her father that she was very young when she died.  
Now she is crowned a queen in heaven.

### VIII.

The father of the maiden does not fully understand her.  
Mary, he says, is the queen of heaven.  
No one is able to remove the crown from her.  
The maiden addresses the Virgin.  
She then explains to her father that each has his place in heaven.  
The court of God has a property in its own being.  
Each one in it is a king or queen.  
The mother of Christ holds the chief place.  
We are all members of Christ's body.  
Look that each limb be perfect.  
The father replies that he cannot understand how his pearl can be a queen.  
He desires to know what greater honour she can have.

### IX.

She was only two years old when she died, and could do nothing to please God.  
She might be a countess or some great lady but not a queen.  
The maiden informs her father that there is no limit to God's power.  
The parable of the labourers in the vineyard.  
The lord of the vineyard hires workmen for a penny a day.  
At noon the lord hires other men standing idle in the market place.  
He commands them to go into his vineyard, and he will give them what is right.  
At an hour before the sun went down the lord sees other men standing idle.  
Tells them to go into the vineyard.

### X.

As soon as the sun was gone down the "reeve" was told to pay the workmen.  
To give each a penny.  
The first began to complain.  
Having borne the heat of the day he thinks that he deserves more.  
The lord tells him that he agreed only to give him a penny.  
The last shall be first, and the first last.  
The maiden applies the parable to herself.  
She came to the vine in eventide, and yet received more than others who had lived longer.  
The father says that his daughter's tale is unreasonable.

### XI.

In heaven, the maiden says, each man is paid alike.  
God is no niggard.  
The grace of God is sufficient for all.  
Those who live long on the earth often forfeit heaven by sinning.  
Innocents are saved by baptism.  
Why should not God allow their labour.  
Our first father lost heaven by eating an apple.  
And all are damned for the sin of Adam.  
But there came one who paid the penalty of our sins.  
The water that came from the pierced side of Christ was baptism.

### XII.

Repentance must be sought by prayer with sorrow and affliction.  
The guilty may be saved by contrition.  
Two sorts of people are saved, the *righteous* and the *innocent*.  
The words of David.  
The innocent is saved by right.  
The words of Solomon.  
David says no man living is justified.  
Pray to be saved by innocence and not by right.  
When Jesus was on earth, little children were brought unto him.  
The disciples rebuked the parents.  
Christ said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," etc.

### XIII.

No one can win heaven except he be meek as a child.  
The pearl of price is like the kingdom of heaven, pure and clean.  
Forsake the mad world and purchase the spotless pearl.  
The father of the maiden desires to know who formed her figure and wrought her garments.  
Her beauty, he says, is not natural.  
Her colour passes the fleur-de-lis.  
The maiden explains to her father that she is a bride of Christ.  
She is without spot or blemish.  
Her weeds are washed in the blood of Christ.  
The father asks the nature of the Lamb that has chosen his daughter, and why she is selected as a bride.

### XIV.

The Lamb has one hundred and forty thousand brides.  
St. John saw them on the hill of Zion in a dream, in the new city of Jerusalem.  
Isaiah speaks of Christ or the Lamb.  
He says that He was led as a lamb to the slaughter.  
In Jerusalem was Christ slain.  
With buffets was His face flayed.  
He endured all patiently as a lamb.  
For us He died in Jerusalem.  
The declaration of St. John, "Behold the Lamb of God," etc.  
Who can reckon His generation, that died in Jerusalem?  
In the New Jerusalem St. John saw the Lamb sitting upon the throne.

### XV.

The Lamb is without blemish.  
Every spotless soul is a worthy bride for the Lamb.  
No strife or envy among the brides.  
None can have less bliss than another.  
Our death leads us to bliss.  
What St. John saw upon the Mount of Zion.  
About the Lamb he saw one hundred and forty thousand maidens.  
He heard a voice from heaven, like many floods.  
He heard the maiden sing a new song.  
So did the four beasts and the elders "so sad of cheer."  
This assembly was like the Lamb, spotless and pure.  
The father replies to the maiden.  
He says he is but dust and ashes.  
He wishes to ask one question, whether the brides have their abode in castle-walls or in manor.

### XVI.

Jerusalem, he says, in Judea.  
But the dwelling of the brides should be perfect.  
For such "a comely pack" a great castle would be required.  
The city in Judæa, answers the maiden, is where Christ suffered, and is the Old Jerusalem.  
The New Jerusalem is where the Lamb has assembled his brides.  
Jerusalem means the city of God.  
In the Old city our peace was made at one.  
In the New city is eternal peace.

### XVII.

The father prays his daughter to bring him to the blissful bower.  
His daughter tells him that he shall see the outside, but not a foot may he put in the city.

### XVIII.

The maiden then tells her father to go along the bank till he comes to a hill.  
He reaches the hill, and beholds the heavenly city.  
As St. John saw it, so he beheld it.  
The city was of burnished gold.  
Pitched upon gems, the foundation composed of twelve stones.  
The names of the precious stones.  
i. Jasper.  
ii. Sapphire.  
iii. Chalcedony.

- iv. Emerald.
- v. Sardonyx.
- vi. Ruby.
- vii. Chrysolite.
- viii. Beryl.
- ix. Topaz.
- x. Chrysoprasus.
- xi. Jacinth.
- xii. Amethyst.

The city was square.

The wall was of jasper.

Twelve thousand furlongs in length and breadth.

### XIX.

Each "pane" had three gates.

Each gate adorned with a pearl.

Such light gleamed in all the streets, that there was no need of the sun or moon.

God was the light of those in the city.

The high throne might be seen, upon which the "high God" sat.

A river ran out of the throne; it flowed through each street.

No church was seen.

God was the church; Christ the sacrifice.

The gates were ever open.

There is no night in the city.

The planets, and the sun itself, are dim compared to the divine light.

Trees there renew their fruit every month.

The beholder of this fair city stood still as a "dazed quail."

### XX.

As the moon began to rise he was aware of a procession of virgins crowned with pearls, in white robes, with a pearl in their breast.

As they went along they shone as glass.

The Lamb went before them.

There was no pressing.

The "alder men" fell groveling at the feet of the Lamb.

All sang in praise of the Lamb.

The Lamb wore white weeds.

A wide wound was seen near his breast.

Joy was in his looks.

The father perceives his little queen.

### XIX.

Great delight takes possession of his mind.

He attempts to cross the stream.

It was not pleasing to the Lord.

The dreamer awakes, and is in great sorrow.

He addresses his pearl; laments his rash curiosity.

Men desire more than they have any right to expect.

The good Christian knows how to make peace with God.

God give us grace to be his servants!

## *Cleanness: Sidenotes*

### I.

Cleanness discloses fair forms.

God is angry with the unclean worshipper, and with false priests.

The pure worshipper receives great reward.

The impure will bring upon them the anger of God, Who is pure and holy.

It would be a marvel if God did not hate evil.

Christ showed us that himself.

St. Matthew records the discourse.

The clean of heart shall look on our Lord.

What earthly noble, when seated at table above dukes, would like to see a lad badly attired approach the table with "rent cockers," his coat torn and his toes out?

For any one of these he would be turned out with a "big buffet," and be forbidden to re-enter, and thus be ruined through his vile clothes.

The parable of the "Marriage of the King's Son."

The king's invitation.  
Those invited begin to make excuses.  
One had bought an estate and must go to see it.  
Another had purchased some oxen and wished to see them "pull in the plough."  
A third had married a wife and could not come.  
The Lord was greatly displeased, and commanded his servants to invite the wayfaring, both men and women, the better and the worse, that his palace might be full.  
The servants brought in bachelors and squires.  
When they came to the court they were well entertained.  
The servants tell their lord that they have done his behest, and there is still room for more guests.  
The Lord commands them to go out into the fields, and bring in the halt, blind, and "one-eyed."  
For those who denied shall not taste "one sup" to save them from death.  
The palace soon became full of "people of all plights."  
They were not all one wife's sons, nor had they all one father.  
The "brightest attired" had the best place.  
Below sat those with "poor weeds."  
All are well entertained "with meat and minstrelsy."  
Each with his "mate" made him at ease.

## II.

The lord of the feast goes among his guests.  
Bids them be merry.  
On the floor he finds one not arrayed for a holyday.  
Asks him how he obtained entrance, and how he was so bold as to appear in such rags.  
Does he take him to be a harlot?  
The man becomes discomfited.  
He is unable to reply.  
The lord commands him to be bound, and cast into a deep dungeon.  
This feast is likened to the kingdom of heaven, to which all are invited.  
See that thy weeds are clean.  
Thy weeds are thy works that thou hast wrought.  
For many faults may a man forfeit bliss.  
For sloth and pride he is thrust into the devil's throat.  
He is ruined by covetousness, perjury, murder, theft, and strife.  
For robbery and ribaldry, for preventing marriages, and supporting the wicked, for treason, treachery, and tyranny, man may lose eternal bliss.

## III.

The high Prince of all is displeased with those who work wickedly.  
For the first fault the devil committed, he felt God's vengeance.  
He, the fairest of all angels, forsook his sovereign, and boasted that his throne should be as high as God's.  
For these words he was cast down to hell.  
The fiends fell from heaven, like the thick snow, for forty days.  
From heaven to hell the shower lasted.  
The devil would not make peace with God.  
Affliction makes him none the better.  
For the fault of one, vengeance alighted upon all men.  
Adam was ordained to live in bliss.  
Through Eve he ate an apple.  
Thus all his descendants became poisoned.  
A maiden brought a remedy for mankind.

## IV.

Malice was merciless.  
A race of men came into the world, the fairest, the merriest, and the strongest that ever were created.  
They were sons of Adam.  
No law was laid upon them.  
Nevertheless they acted unnaturally.  
The "*fiends*" beheld how fair were the daughters of these mighty men, and made fellowship with them and begat a race of giants.  
The greatest fighter was reckoned the most famous.  
The Creator of all becomes exceedingly wroth.  
Fell anger touches His heart.  
It repents Him that He has made man.  
He declares that all flesh shall be destroyed, both man and beast.  
There was at this time living on the earth a very righteous man: Noah was his name.

Three bold sons he had.  
God in great anger speaks to Noah.  
Declares that He will destroy all "that life has."  
Commands him to make "a mansion" with dwellings for wild and tame.  
To let the ark be three hundred cubits in length, and fifty in breadth, and thirty in height, and a window in it a cubit square.  
Also a good shutting door in the side, together with halls, recesses, bushes, and bowers, and well-formed pens.  
For all flesh shall be destroyed, except Noah and his family.  
Noah is told to take into the ark seven pairs of every clean beast, and one of unclean kind, and to furnish the ark with proper food.  
Noah fills the ark.

## V.

God asks Noah whether all is ready.  
Noah replies that all is fully prepared.  
He is commanded to enter the ark, for God tells him that he will send a rain to destroy all flesh.  
Noah stows all safely in the ark.  
Seven days are passed.  
The deep begins to swell, banks are broken down, and the clouds burst.  
It rains for forty days, and the flood rises, and flows over the woods and fields.  
All must drown.  
The water enters the houses.  
Each woman with her bairns flees to the hills.  
The rain never ceases.  
The valleys are filled.  
People flock to the mountains.  
Some swim for their lives.  
Others roar for fear.  
Animals of all kinds run to the hills.  
All pray for mercy.  
God's mercy is passed from them.  
Each sees that he must sink.  
Friends take leave of one another.  
Forty days have gone by, and all are destroyed.  
All rot in the mud, except Noah and his family, who are safe in the ark.  
The ark is lifted as high as the clouds, and is driven about, without mast, bowline, cables, anchors, or sail to guide its course.  
At the mercy of the winds.  
Oft it rolled around and reared on end.  
The age of the patriarch Noah.  
Duration of the flood.  
The completeness of the destruction.  
God remembers those in the ark.  
He causes a wind to blow, and closes the lakes and wells, and the great deep.  
The ark settles on Mount Ararat.  
Noah beholds the bare earth.  
He opens his window and sends out the raven to seek dry land.  
The raven "croaks for comfort" on finding carrion.  
He fills his belly with the foul flesh.  
The lord of the ark curses the raven, and sends out the dove.  
The bird wanders about the whole day.  
Finding no rest, she returns about eventide to Noah.  
Noah again sends out the dove.

## VI.

The dove returns with an olive branch in her beak.  
This was a token of peace and reconciliation.  
Joy reigns in the ark.  
The people therein laugh and look thereout.  
God permits Noah and his sons to leave the ark.  
Noah offers sacrifice to God.  
It is pleasing to Him that "all speeds or spoils."  
God declares that He will never destroy the world for the sin of man.  
That summer and winter shall never cease.  
Nor night nor day, nor the new years.

God blesses every beast.  
Each fowl takes its flight.  
Each fish goes to the flood.  
Each beast makes for the plain.  
Wild worms wriggle to their abodes in the earth.  
The fox goes to the woods.  
Harts to the heath, and hares to the gorse.  
Lions and leopards go to the lakes.  
Eagles and hawks to the high rocks.  
The four 'frekes' take the empire.  
Behold what woe God brought on mankind for their hateful deeds!  
Beware of the filth of the flesh.  
"One speck of a spot" will ruin us in the sight of God.  
The beryl is clean and sound,—it has no seam.

## VII.

When God repented that he had made man, he destroyed all flesh.  
But afterwards He was sorry, and made a covenant with mankind that He would not again destroy all the living.  
For the filth of the flesh God destroyed a rich city.  
God hates the wicked as "hell that stinks."  
Especially harlotry and blasphemy.  
Nothing is hidden from God.  
God is the ground of all deeds.  
He honours the man that is honest and whole.  
But for deeds of shame He destroys the mighty ones.

## VIII.

Abraham is sitting before his house-door under a green oak.  
He sees three men coming along, and goes toward them.  
He entreats them to rest awhile, that he may wash their feet, and bring them a morsel of bread.  
Abraham commands Sarah to make some cakes quickly, and tells his servant to seethe a tender kid.  
Abraham appears bare-headed before his guests.  
He casts a clean cloth on the green, and sets before them cakes, butter, milk, and pottage.  
God praises his friend's feast, and after the meat is removed, He tells Abraham that Sarah shall bear him a son.  
Sarah, who is behind the door, laughs in unbelief.  
God tells Abraham that Sarah laughs at His words.  
Sarah denies that she laughed.  
Abraham's guests set out towards Sodom, two miles from Mamre.  
The patriarch accompanies them.  
God determines to reveal to Abraham his secret purposes.

## IX.

He informs him of the destruction about to fall upon the cities of the plain, for their great wickedness, in abusing the gifts bestowed upon them.  
The ordinance of marriage had been made for them, but they foully set it at nought.  
The flame of love.  
Therefore shall they be destroyed as an example to all men for ever.  
Abraham is full of fear, and asks God whether the "sinful and the sinless" are to suffer together.  
Whether he will spare the cities provided fifty righteous are found in them?  
For the sake of fifty the cities shall be spared.  
The patriarch beseeches God to spare the city for the sake of forty-five righteous.  
For the lack of five the cities shall not be destroyed.  
For forty the cities shall be spared.  
Abraham entreats God's forbearance for his speech.  
Thirty righteous, found in the cities, shall save them from destruction.  
For the sake of twenty guiltless ones God will release the rest.  
Or if ten only should be found pure.  
The patriarch intercedes for Lot.  
Beseeches Him to "temper His ire," and then departs weeping for sorrow.

## X.

God's messengers go to Sodom.  
Lot is sitting alone at the "door of his lodge."  
Staring into the street he sees two men.  
Beardless chins they had, and hair like raw silk.

Beautifully white were their weeds.  
Lot runs to meet them.  
Invites them to remain awhile in his house, and in the morning they may take their way.  
Lot invites them so long that at last they comply.  
The wife and daughters of Lot welcome their visitors.  
Lot admonishes his men to prepare the meat, and to serve no salt with it.  
Lot's wife disregards the injunction.  
The guests are well entertained.  
But before they go to rest the city is up in arms.  
With "keen clubs" the folk clatter on the walls, and demand that Lot should deliver up his guests.  
The wind yet stinks with their filthy speech.  
Lot is in great trouble.  
He leaves his guests and addresses the Sodomites.  
He offers to give up to them his two daughters.  
The rebels raise a great noise, and ask who made him a justice to judge their deeds, who was but a boy when he came to Sodom.  
The young men bring Lot within doors, and smite those outside with blindness.  
In vain they try to find the door of Lot's house.

## XI.

Early in the morning the angels command Lot to depart from Sodom, with his wife and two daughters, and to look straight before him, for Sodom and Gomorrah shall be destroyed.  
Lot asks what is best to be done, that he may escape.  
He is told to choose himself a dwelling which shall be saved from destruction.  
He chooses Zoar.  
The angels command Lot to depart quickly.  
He wakes his wife and daughters.  
All four are hastened on by the angels, who "preach to them the peril" of delay.  
Before daylight Lot comes to a hill.  
God aloft raises a storm.  
A rain falls thick of fire and sulphur.  
Upon the four cities it comes, and frightens all folks therein.  
The great bars of the abyss do burst.  
Cliffs cleave asunder.  
The cities sink to hell.  
Such a cry arises that the clouds clatter again.  
Lot and his companions are frightened, but continue to follow their face.  
Lot's wife looks behind her, and is turned to a stiff stone "as salt as any sea."  
Her companions do not miss her till they reach Zoar.  
By this time all were drowned.  
The people of Zoar, for dread, rush into the sea and are destroyed.  
Only Zoar with three therein (Lot and his daughters) are saved.  
Lot's wife is an image of salt for two faults:  
1. She served salt before the Lord at supper.  
2. She looked behind her.  
Abraham is up full early on the morn.  
He looks towards Sodom, now only a pit filled with pitch, from which rise smoke, ashes and cinders, as from a furnace.  
A sea now occupies the place of the four cities.  
It is a stinking pool, and is called the Dead Sea.  
Nothing may live in it.  
Lead floats on its surface.  
A feather sinks to the bottom of it.  
Lands, watered by this sea, never bear grass or weed.  
A man cannot be drowned in it.  
The clay clinging to it is corrosive, as alum, alkanar, sulphur, etc., which fret the flesh and fester the bones.  
On the shores of this lake grow trees bearing fair fruits, which, when broken or bitten, taste like ashes.  
All these are tokens of wickedness and vengeance.  
God loves the pure in heart.  
Strive to be clean.  
Jean de Meun tells how a lady is to be loved.  
By doing what pleases her best.  
Love thy Lord!  
Conform to Christ, who is polished as a pearl.  
By how comely a contrivance did he enter the womb of the virgin!

In what purity did he part from her!  
No abode was better than his.  
The sorrow of childbirth was turned to joy.  
Angels solaced the virgin with organs and pipes.  
The child Christ was so clean that ox and ass worshipped him.  
He hated wickedness, and would never touch ought that was vile.  
Yet there came to him lazars and lepers, lame and blind.  
Dry and dropsical folk.  
He healed all with kind speech.  
His handling was so good, that he needed no knife to cut or carve with.  
The bread he broke more perfectly than could all the tools of Toulouse.  
How can we approach his court except we be clean?  
God is merciful.  
Through penance we may shine as a pearl.  
Why is the pearl so prized?  
She becomes none the worse for wear.  
If she should become dim, wash her in wine.  
She then becomes clearer than before.  
So may the sinner polish him by penance.  
Beware of returning to sin.  
For then God is more displeased than ever.  
The reconciled soul God holds as His own.  
Ill deeds rob Him of it.  
God forbids us to defile any vessels used in His service.  
In Belshazzar's time, the defiling of God's vessels brought wrath upon the king.

## XII.

Daniel in his prophecies tells of the destruction of the Jews.  
For their unfaithfulness in following other gods, God allowed the heathen to destroy them, in the reign  
of Zedekiah, who practised idolatry.  
Nebuchadnezzar becomes his foe.  
He besieges Jerusalem, and surrounds the walls.  
The city is stuffed full of men.  
Brisk is the skirmish.  
Seven times a day are the gates assailed.  
For two years the fight goes on, yet the city is not taken.  
The folk within are in want of food.  
Meager they become.  
For so shut up are they that escape seems impossible.  
But on a quiet night they steal out, and rush through the host.  
They are discovered by the enemy.  
A loud alarm is given.  
They are pursued and overtaken.  
Their king is made prisoner.  
His chief men are presented as prisoners to Nebuchadnezzar.  
His sons are slain.  
His own eyes are put out.  
He is placed in a dungeon in Babylon.  
All for his "bad bearing" against the Lord, who might otherwise have been his friend.  
Nebuchadnezzar ceased not until he had destroyed Jerusalem.  
Nebuzaradan was "chief of the chivalry."  
The best men were taken out of the city.  
Nevertheless Nebuzaradan spared not those left.  
Brains of bairns were spilt.  
Priests pressed to death.  
Wives and wenches foully killed.  
All that escaped the sword were taken to Babylon, and were made to drag the cart or milk the kine.  
Nebuzaradan burst open the temple, and slew those therein.  
Priests, pulled by the poll, were slain along with deacons, clerks, and maidens.  
The enemy pillages the temple of its pillars of brass, and the golden candlestick from off the altar.  
Goblets, basins, golden dishes, all are taken by Nebuzaradan, and hampered together.  
Solomon had made them with much labour.  
The temple he beats down, and returns to Babylon.  
Presents the prisoners to the king, among whom were Daniel and his three companions.  
Nebuchadnezzar has great joy, because his enemies are slain.  
Great was his wonder when he saw the sacred jewelry.

He praises the God of Israel.  
Such vessels never before came to Chaldea.  
They are thrust into the treasury.  
Nebuchadnezzar reigns as emperor of all the earth, through the "doom of Daniel," who gave him good counsel.  
Nebuchadnezzar dies and is buried.  
Belshazzar succeeds him.  
He holds himself the biggest in heaven or on earth.  
He honours not God, but worships false phantoms.  
He promises them rewards if good fortune befall.  
If they vex him he knocks them in pieces.  
He has a wife, and many concubines.  
The mind of the king was fixed upon new meats and other vain things.

### XIII.

Belshazzar, to exhibit his vainglory, proclaims throughout Babylon, that all the great ones should assemble on a set day, at the Sultan's feast.  
Kings, dukes, and lords were commanded to attend the court.  
To do the king honour many nobles came to Babylon.  
It would take too long to name the number.  
The city of Babylon is broad and big.  
It is situated on a plain, surrounded by seven streams, a high wall, and towers.  
The palace was long and large, each side being seven miles in length.  
High houses were within the walls.  
The time of the feast has come.  
Belshazzar sits upon his throne: the hall floor is covered with knights.  
When all are seated, service begins.  
Trumpets sound everywhere.  
Bread is served upon silver dishes.  
All sorts of musical instruments are heard in the hall.  
The king, surrounded by his loves, drinks copiously of wine.  
It gets into his head and stupifies him.  
A cursed thought takes possession of him.  
He commands his marshal to bring him the vessels taken from the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, and to fill them with wine.  
The marshal opens the chests.  
Covers the cupboard with vessels.  
The Jewels of Jerusalem deck the sides of the hall.  
The altar and crown, blessed by bishop's hands, and anointed with the blood of beasts, are set before the bold Belshazzar.  
Upon this altar were noble vessels curiously carved, basins of gold, cups arrayed like castles with battlements, and towers with lofty pinnacles.  
Upon them were portrayed branches and leaves, the flowers of which were white pearls, and the fruit flaming gems.  
The goblets were ornamented with flowers of gold.  
The candlestick was brought in, with its pillars of brass, and ornamental boughs, upon which sat birds of various hues.  
Lights shone bright from the candlestick, which once stood before the "Holy of Holies."  
The pollution of the sacred vessels is displeasing to God.  
For "a boaster on bench" drinks from them till he is as "drunken as the devil."  
God is very angry.  
Before harming the revellers He sends them a warning.  
Belshazzar commands the sacred vessels to be filled with wine.  
The cups and bowls are soon filled.  
Music of all kind is heard in the hall.  
Dukes, princes, concubines, and knights, all are merry.  
Drinking of the sweet liquors they ask favours of their gods, who, although dumb, are as highly praised "as if heaven were theirs."  
A marvel befalls the feasters.  
The king first saw it.  
Upon the plain wall, "a palm with pointed fingers" is seen writing.  
The bold Belshazzar becomes frightened.  
His knees knock together.  
He roars for dread, still beholding the hand, as it wrote on the rough wall.  
The hand vanishes but the letters remain.  
The king recovers his speech and sends for the "book-learned;" but none of the scholars were wise enough to read it.

Belshazzar is nearly mad.  
Commands the city to be searched throughout for the "wise of witchcraft."  
He who expounds the strange letters, shall be clothed in "gowns of purple."  
A collar of gold shall encircle his throat.  
He shall be the third lord in the realm.  
As soon as this cry was upcast, to the hall came clerks out of Chaldea, witches and diviners, sorcerers and exorcists.  
But after looking on the letters they were as ignorant as if they had looked into the leather of the left boot.  
The king curses them all and calls them churls.  
He orders the harlots to be hanged.  
The queen hears the king chide.  
She inquires the cause.  
Goes to the king, kneels before him, and asks why he has rent his robes for grief, when there is one that has the Spirit of God, the counsellor of Nebuchadnezzar, the interpreter of his dreams, through the holy Spirit of God.  
The name of this man is Daniel, who was brought a captive from Judæa.  
The queen tells the king to send for Daniel.  
Her counsel is accepted.  
Daniel comes before Belshazzar.  
The king tells him that he has heard of his wisdom, and his power to discover hidden things, and that he wants to know the meaning of the writing on the wall.  
Promises him, if he can explain the text of the letters and their interpretation, to clothe him in purple and pall, and put a ring about his neck, and to make him "a baron upon bench."  
Daniel addresses the king, and reminds him how that God supported his father, and gave him power to exalt or abase whomsoever he pleased.  
Nebuchadnezzar was established on account of his faith in God.  
So long as he remained true, no man was greater.  
But at last pride touches his heart.  
He forgets the power of God, and blasphemes His name.  
He says that he is "god of the ground," and the builder of Babylon.  
Hardly had Nebuchadnezzar spoken, when God's voice is heard, saying, "Thy principality is departed. Thou, removed from men, must abide on the moor, and walk with wild beasts, eat herbs, and dwell with wolves and asses."  
For his pride he becomes an outcast.  
He believes himself to be a bull or an ox.  
Goes "on all fours," like a cow, for seven summers.  
His thighs grew thick.  
His hair became matted and thick, from the shoulders to the toes.  
His beard touched the earth.  
His brows were like briars.  
His eyes were hollow, and grey as the kite's.  
Eagle-hued he was.  
At last he recovered his "wit," and believed in God.  
Then soon was he restored to his seat.  
But thou, Belshazzar, hast disregarded these signs, and hast blasphemed the Lord, defiled his vessels, filling them with wine for thy wenches, and praising thy lifeless gods.  
For this sin God has sent thee this strange sight, the fist with the fingers writing on the wall.  
These are the words: "Mene, Tekel, Peres.  
Mene.— God has counted thy kingdom and finished it.  
Tekel.—Thy reign is weighed and is found wanting in deeds of faith.  
Peres.— Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Persians.  
The Medes shall be masters here."  
The king commands Daniel to be clothed in a frock of fine cloth.  
Soon is he arrayed in purple, with a chain about his neck.  
A decree is made, that all should bow to him, as the third lord that followed Belshazzar.  
The decree was made known, and all were glad.  
The day, however, past.  
Night came on.  
Before another day dawned, Daniel's words were fulfilled.  
The feast lasts till the sun falls.  
The skies become dark.  
Each noble hies home to his supper.  
Belshazzar is carried to bed, but never rises from it, for his foes are seeking to destroy his land, and are assembled suddenly.  
The enemy is Darius, leader of the Medes.  
He has legions of armed men.  
Under cover of the darkness, they cross the river.

By means of ladders they get upon the walls, and within an hour enter the city, without disturbing any of the watch.

They run into the palace, and raise a great cry.

Men are slain in their beds.

Belshazzar is beaten to death, and caught by the heels, is foully cast into a ditch.

Darius is crowned king, and makes peace with the barons.

Thus the land was lost for the king's sin.

He was cursed for his uncleanness, and deprived of his honour, as well as of the joys of heaven.

Thus in three ways has it been shown, that uncleanness makes God angry.

Cleanness is His comfort.

The seemly shall see his face.

God give us grace to serve in His sight!

## *Patience: Sidenotes*

### **I.**

Patience is often displeasing, but it assuages heavy hearts, and quenches malice.

Happiness follows sorrow.

It is better to suffer than to be angry.

Matthew tells us of the promises made by Christ: Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall "wield the world."

Blessed are the mourners, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the hungry, for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for mercy shall be their reward.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see the Saviour.

Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called God's sons.

Blessed are they that live aright, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

These blessings are promised to those who follow poverty, pity, penance, meekness, mercy, chastity, peace and patience.

Poverty and patience are to be treated together.

They are "fettled in one form," and have one meed.

Poverty will dwell where she lists, and man must needs suffer.

Poverty and patience are play-fellows.

What avails impatience, if God send affliction?

Patience is best.

Did not Jonah incur danger by his folly?

### **II.**

Jonah was a prophet of the gentiles.

God's word came to him, saying, "Rise quickly, take the way to Nineveh.

Say that which I shall put in thine heart.

Wickedness dwells in that city.

Go swiftly and carry my message."

Jonah is full of wrath.

He is afraid that the shrews will put him in the stocks, or put out his eyes.

He thinks that God desires his death.

He determines not to go near the city, but fly to Tarshish.

Grumbling, he goes to port Joppa.

He says that God will not be able to protect him.

Jonah reaches the port, finds a ship ready to sail.

The seamen catch up the cross-sail, fasten the cables, weigh their anchors, and spread sail.

A gentle wind wafts the ship along.

Was never a Jew so joyful as was Jonah then.

He has, however, put himself in peril, in fleeing from God.

The words of David.

Does He not hear, who made all ears?

He is not blind that formed each eye.

Jonah is now in no dread.

He is, however, soon overtaken.

The wielder of all things has devices at will.

He commands Eurus and Aquilo to blow.

The winds blow obedient to His word.

Out of the north-east the noise begins.

Storms arose, winds wrestled together, the waves rolled high, and never rested.

Then was Jonah joyless.  
The boat reeled around.  
The gear became out of order.  
Ropes and mast were broken.  
A loud cry is raised, Many a lad labours to lighten the ship.  
They throw overboard their bags and feather beds.  
But still the wind rages, and the waves become wilder.  
Each man calls upon his god.  
Some called upon Vernagu, Diana, and Neptune, to the sun and to the moon.  
Then said one of the sailors: "Some lawless wretch, that has grieved his God, is in the ship.  
I advise that we lay lots upon each man.  
When the guilty is gone the tempest may cease."  
This is agreed to.  
All are assembled, from all corners of the ship, save Jonah the Jew, who had fled into the bottom of the boat.  
There he falls asleep.  
Soon he is aroused, and brought on board.  
Full roughly is he questioned.  
The lot falls upon Jonah.  
Then quickly they said: "What the devil hast thou done, doted wretch?  
What seekest thou on the sea?  
Hast thou no God to call upon?  
Of what land art thou?  
Thou art doomed for thy ill deeds."  
Jonah says: "I am a Hebrew, a worshipper of the world's Creator.  
All this mischief is caused by me, therefore cast me overboard."  
He proves to them that he was guilty.  
The mariners are exceedingly frightened.  
They try to make way with their oars, but their endeavours are useless.  
Jonah must be doomed to death.  
They pray to God, that they may not shed innocent blood.  
Jonah is cast overboard.  
The tempest ceases and the sea settles.  
The stiff streams drive the ship about.  
At last they reach a bank.  
The seamen thank God, and perform solemn vows.  
Jonah is in great dread.

### III.

Jonah is shoved from the ship.  
A wild whale swims by the boat.  
He opens his swallow, and seizes the prophet.  
It is not to be wondered at that Jonah suffered woe.  
The prophet is without hope.  
Cold was his comfort.  
Jonah was only a mote in the whale's jaws.  
He entered in by the gills, and by means of one of the intestines of the fish, came into a space as large as a hall.  
The prophet fixes his feet firmly in the belly of the whale.  
He searches into every nook of its navel.  
The prophet calls upon God.  
He cries for mercy.  
He sits safely in a recess, in a bowel of the beast, for three days and three nights.  
The whale passes through many a rough region.  
Jonah makes the whale feel sick.  
The prophet prays to God in this wise:

### IV.

"Lord! to thee have I cried out of hell's womb.  
Thou dippedst me in the sea.  
Thy great floods passed over me.  
The streams drive over me.  
I am cast out from thy sight.  
The abyss binds me.  
The rushing waves play on my head.  
Thou possessest my life.

In my anguish I remembered my God, and besought His pity.  
When I am delivered from this danger, I will obey thy commands.”  
God speaks fiercely to the whale, and he vomits out the prophet on a dry space.  
Jonah has need to wash his clothes.  
God’s word comes to the prophet.  
He is told to preach in Nineveh.  
By night Jonah reaches the city.  
Nineveh was a very great city.  
Jonah delivers his message; “Yet forty days and Nineveh shall come to an end.  
It shall be turned upside down, and swallowed quickly by the black earth.”  
This speech spreads throughout the city.  
Great fear seizes all.  
The people mourn secretly, clothe themselves in sackcloth, and cast ashes upon their heads.  
The message reaches the ears of the king.  
He rends his robes, clothes himself in sackcloth, and mourns in the dust.  
He issues a decree, that all in the city, men, beasts, women and children, prince, priest, and prelates,  
should fast for their sins.  
Children are to be weaned from the breast.  
The ox is to have no hay, nor the horse any water.  
Who can tell if God will have mercy?  
Though He is mighty, He is merciful, and may forgive us our guilt.  
All believed and repented.  
God forgave them through his goodness.

#### V.

Much sorrow settles upon Jonah.  
He becomes very angry.  
He prays to God and says: “Was not this my saying, when Thy message reached me in my own country?  
I knew Thy great goodness, Thy long-suffering, and Thy mercy.  
I knew these men might make their peace with Thee, therefore I fled unto Tarshish.  
Take my life from me, O Lord!  
It is better for me to die than live.”  
God upbraids Jonah, saying: “Is this right to be so wroth?”  
Jonah, jangling, uprises, and makes himself a bower, of hay and ever-fern, to shield him from the sun.  
He slept heavily all night.  
God prepared a woodbine.  
Jonah awakes, and is exceedingly glad of the bower.  
The prophet, under its gracious leaves, is protected from the sun’s rays.  
Jonah wishes he had such a lodge in his own country.  
God prepared a worm, that made the woodbine wither.  
Jonah awakes and finds his woodbine destroyed.  
The leaves were all faded.  
The sun beat upon the head of Jonah.  
He is exceedingly angry, and prays God that he may die.  
God rebukes the prophet.  
“Dost thou well,” He says, “to be angry for the gourd?”  
Jonah replies, “I would I were dead.”  
God asks if it is to be wondered at that He should help His handy work.  
Is not Jonah angry that his woodbine is destroyed, which cost him no labour?  
God is not to be blamed for taking pity upon people that He made.  
Should He destroy Nineveh the sorrow of such a sweet place would sink to His heart.  
In the city there are little bairns who have done no wrong.  
And there are others who cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand.  
There are also dumb beasts in the city incapable of sinning.  
Judgment must be tempered with mercy.  
He that is too hasty to rend his clothes must afterwards sit with worse ones to sew them together.  
Poverty and pain must be endured.  
Patience is a noble point, though it displeases oft.

#### Text and Layout

The text is intended to replicate the layout of the printed book as closely as possible.

**Headnotes**, printed at the top of each page, have been moved to the most appropriate sentence break. Some shorter headnote pairs may be merged into one. **Sidenotes** giving plot summary are placed close to their original location.

The **Notes** were originally printed as a short (12 pages) section before the Glossarial Index. For this e-text

they have been distributed among their respective texts. Links to the Notes are intended to be visible but not distracting.

**Text-Critical Notes** such as variant readings have been handled differently than in the printed book, where they appeared either as footnotes (numbered) or sidenotes (sometimes but not always marked). Here, the word they refer to is underlined if necessary, and the note itself will generally have this form:

*leak*] the *t* of the MS. has a *k* over it.

Where a single word has both an endnote and a marginal note, the link to the endnote is shown.

A. An unusual typographical error, shown with beginnings of adjoining lines:

the Saxon forms  
*thennes*), etct The  
*in-mydde* (amidst),

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