Lydgate's

Siege of Thebes.

EDITED
FROM ALL THE KNOWN MANUSCRIPTS AND THE TWO OLDEST EDITIONS,

BY
AXEL ERDMANN, Ph.D.
LATE PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH IN THE UNIVERSITY OF UPSALA.

PART I.—THE TEXT.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY
BY KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRÜBNER & CO., Ltd.,
DRYDEN HOUSE, 43 GERRARD STREET, SOHO, W.
AND BY HENRY FROWDE, OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS,
AMEN CORNER, E.C., AND IN NEW YORK.
1911, for the Issue of 1906.
To do honour to Chaucer, and to let the lovers and students of him see how far the best unprinted Manuscripts of his works differ from the printed texts, this Society was founded in 1868. There were then, and are still, many questions of metre, pronunciation, orthography, and etymology yet to be settled, for which more prints of Manuscripts were and are wanted; and it is hardly too much to say that every line of Chaucer contains points that need reconsideration. The founder (Dr Furnivall) began with The Canterbury Tales, and has given them (in parallel columns in Royal 4to) of the best unprinted MSS. The first six MSS printed have been: the Ellesmere (by leave of the Earl of Ellesmere); the Hengwrt (by leave of W. W. E. Wynne, Esq.); the Camb. Univ. Libr., MS Gg. 4. 27; the Corpus, Oxford; the Petworth (by leave of Lord Leconfield); and the Lansdowne 851 (Brit. Mus.). The Harleian 7334 has followed, and the Cambridge Dd., completed by Egerton 2726 (the Haistwell MS.) Specimens of all accessible MSS of the Tales are now nearly completed, edited by the late Prof. Zupitza, Ph.D., and Prof. John Koch, Ph.D. Lady Cardigan will not allow her MS to be seen.

Of Chaucer's Minor Poems,—the MSS of which are generally later than the best MSS of the Canterbury Tales,—all the available MSS have been printed, so as to secure all the existing evidence for the true text.

Of Troilus, Parallel-Texts from the 6 best MSS have been issued (the Campsall MS also separately), and a 7th MS text of it with the English Boccaceio Comparison. Autotypes of most of the best Chaucer MSS have been published.

Dr. E. Fligel is editing the Chaucer Concordance.

The Society's publications are issued in two Series, of which the first contains the different texts of Chaucer's works; and the second, such originals of and essays on these as can be procured, with other illustrative treatises, and Supplementary Tales.

The yearly subscription, which constitutes Membership, is 2 guineas, beginning with January 1, 1868, and ending with 1910. All the Society's Publications can still be had—except First Series XLVIII.

The Society's Hon. Secs. for America are, Prof. Kittredge, of Harvard College, Cambridge, Mass., for the North and East, and Prof. Bright, of Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, for the South and West.

FIRST SERIES.

The Society's issue for 1868, in the First Series, is,

1. The Prologue and Knight's Tale, of the Canterbury Tales, in 6 parallel Texts (from the 6 MSS named below), together with Tables, showing the Groups of the Tales, and their varying order in 38 MSS of the Tales, and in 5 old printed editions, and also Specimens from several MSS of the "Moveable Prologues" of the Canterbury Tales.—The Shipman's Prologue, and Franklin's Prologue,—when moved from their right places, and of the Substitutes for them. (The Six-Text, Part I.)

11—VII. The Prologue and Knight's Tale from the Ellesmere MS, Part 1; IIII. Hengwrt MS, 154, Pt 1; IV. Cambridge MS Gg. 4. 27; Pt 1; V. Corpus MS, Oxford, Pt 1; VI. Petworth MS, Pt 1; VII. Lansdowne MS, 851, Pt 1. (separate issues of the Texts forming Part I of the Six-Text edition.)

The issue for 1869, in the First Series, is,

VIII—XIII. VIII. The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cook's Tales: Ellesmere MS, Part II; IX. Hengwrt MS, Pt II; X. Cambridge MS, Pt II; XI. Corpus MS, Pt II; XII. Petworth MS, Pt II; XIII. Lansdowne MS, Pt II, with an Appendix of "Gamelyn" from six MSS.

(separate issues of the Texts forming the Six-Text, Part II, No. XIV.)

The issue for 1870, in the First Series, is,

XIV. The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cook's Tales, with an Appendix of the Spurious Tale of Gamelyn, in 6 parallel Texts. (Six-Text, Part II.)

The issue for 1871, in the First Series, is,

XV. The Man of Law's, Shipman's, and Prioress's Tales, with Chaucer's own Tale of Sir Thopas, in 6 parallel Texts from the MSS above named, and 10 coloured drawings of Tellers of Tales, after the originals in the Ellesmere MS.

(Six-Text, Part III.)

XVI. The Man of Law's Tale, from the Ellesmere MS. Part III.

XVII. " " " " " " Cambridge MS. Part III.

XVIII. " " " " " Corpus MS. Part III.

XIX. The Shipman's, Prioress's, and Man of Law's Tales, from the Petworth MS. Part III.
XX. The Man of Law's Tale, from the Lansdowne MS. Part III. (each with woodcuts of fourteen drawings of Tellers of Tales in the Ellesmere MS.)

XXI. A Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part I:—1. 'The Dethe of Blanche the Duchesse,' from Thynne's ed. of 1532, the Fairfax MS 16. and Tanner MS 346; 2. 'the Compleynt to Pite,' 3. 'the Parlament of Foules,' and 4. 'the Compleynt of Mars,' each from six MSS.

XXII. Supplementary Parallel-Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part I, containing 1. 'The Parlament of Foules,' from three MSS. [Reprinted in LIX, First Series.]

XXIII. Odd Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part I, containing 1, two MS fragments of 'The Parlament of Foules; 2. the two differing versions of 'The Prologue to the Legende of Good Women,' arranged so as to show their differences; 3. an Appendix of Poems attributed to Chaucer. i. 'The Balade of Pitee by Chaucier;' ii. 'The Cronycle made by Chaucer,' both from MSS written by Shirley, Chaucer's contemporary.


The issue for 1872, in the First Series, is,

XXV. Chaucer's Tale of Melibe, the Monk's, Nun's-Priest's, Doctor's, Pardoner's, Wife of Bath's, Friar's, and Summoner's Tales, in 6 parallel Texts from the MSS above named, with the remaining 13 coloured drawings of Tellers of Tales, after the originals in the Ellesmere MS, and with Specimens of the Variations of 30 MSS in the Doctor-Pardoner Link. (Six-Text, Part IV.)

XXVI. The Wife's, Friar's, and Summoner's Tales, from the Ellesmere MS, with 9 woodcuts of Tale-Tellers. (Part IV.)

XXVII. The Wife's, Friar's, Summoner's, Monk's, and Nun's-Priest's Tales, from the Hengwrt MS, with 23 woodcuts of the Tellers of the Tales. (Part III.)

XXVIII. The Wife's, Friar's, and Summoner's Tales, from the Cambridge MS, with 9 woodcuts of Tale-Tellers. (Part IV.)


The issue for 1873, in the First Series, is,

XXX. The Six-Text Canterbury Tales, Part V, containing the Clerk's and Merchant's Tales.

The issue for 1874, in the First Series, is,

XXXI. The Six-Text, Part VI, containing the Squire's and Franklin's Tales

XXXII. The Clerk's, Merchant's, Squire's, Franklin's, Doctor's, Pardoner's, Shipman's, Priore's Tales, Sir Thopas, Melibeus, Monk's, Nun's-Priest's, Second Nun's Tales, Ellesmere MS, Part V.

XXXIII. The Clerk's, Merchant's, Squire's, Franklin's, Doctor's, Pardoner's, Shipman's, Priore's Tales, Sir Thopas, Melibeus, Monk's, Nun's-Priest's, Second Nun's Tales, Cambridge MS, Part V.

XXXIV. Squire's, Wife of Bath's, Friar's, Summoner's, Clerk's, Merchant's, Franklin's Tales, Corpus MS, Part IV.

XXXV. Squire's, Merchant's, Wife of Bath's, Friar's, Summoner's, Clerk's, Franklin's, Second Nun's Tales, Petworth MS, Part IV.

XXXVI. Squire's, Wife of Bath's, Friar's, Summoner's, Clerk's, Merchant's, Franklin's Tales, Lansdowne MS, Part IV.

The issue for 1875, in the First Series, is,

XXXVII. The Six-Text, Part VII, the Second Nun's, Canon's-Yeoman's, and Manciple's Tales, with the Blank-Parson Link

XXXVIII. Second Nun's, Canon's-Yeoman's, Manciple's Tales, Ellesmere MS, Part VI.

XXXIX. Manciple's, Man of Law's, Squire's, Merchant's, Franklin's, Second Nun's, Clerk's, Doctor's, Pardoner's, Shipman's, Priore's Tales, Sir Thopas, Melibeus Tales, Hengwrt MS, Part IV.

XL. Second Nun's, Canon's-Yeoman's, Manciple's Tales, Cambridge MS, Part VI.

XLI. Second Nun's, Canon's-Yeoman's, Doctor's, Pardoner's, Shipman's, Priore's Tales, Sir Thopas, Melibeus, Monk's, Nun's-Priest's, Manciple's Tales, Corpus MS, Part V.

XLII. Second Nun's, Canon's-Yeoman's, Doctor's, Pardoner's, Shipman's, Priore's Tales, Sir Thopas, Melibeus, Monk's, Nun's-Priest's, Manciple's Tales, Lansdowne MS, Part V.
XLIV. A detailed Comparison of the Troilus and Criseyde with Boccaccio's Filostrato, with a Translation of all Passages used by Chaucer, and an Abstract of the Parts not used by W. Michael Rossetti, Esq., and with a print of the Troilus from the Harleian MS 3943. Part I.

XLV. Ryne-Index to the Ellesmere MS of the Canterbury Tales, by Henry Cromie, Esq., M.A. In 8vo for the separate Ellesmere MS.

XLVI. Ryne-Index to the Ellesmere MS, by Henry Cromie, Esq., M.A. In Royal 4to for the Six-Text.

XLVII. Notes and Corrections for the 8vo Ryne-Index, by H. Cromie, Esq., M.A. The issue for 1876, in the First Series, is,

XLVIII. Autotype Specimens of the Chief Chaucer MSS, Part I, 16 Autotypes, with a Note on the MSS, by Dr. F. J. Furnivall.

XLIX. The issue for 1877, in the First Series, is,

L. The Six-Text, Part VIII, containing the Parson's Tale, with a Table of its Corrections, and Mr. Cromie's Notes and Corrections for the 4to Ryne-Index.

L—LV. L. The Parson's Tale, Ellesmere MS, Part VII; LL. Hengwrt MS, Part V; LII. Cambridge MS, Part VII; LIII. Corpus MS, Part VI; LIV. Petworth MS, Part VI; LV. Landowne MS, Part VI.

The issue for 1878, in the First Series, is,

LVI. Autotype Specimens of the Chief Chaucer MSS, Part II: 9 from the Cambridge MS Gg. 4. 27, and 1 from Lord Leconfield's MS.


The issue for 1879, in the First Series, is,


The issue for 1880, in the First Series, is,


LXI. A One-Text Print of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part II, containing, VI. Mother of God; VII. Anelida; VIII. The Former Age; IX. Adam Scrivener; X. The House of Fame; XI. Legende; XII. Truth; XIII. Venus; XIV. Seagon; XV. Marriage; XVI. Gentilese; XVII. Proverbs; XVIII. Steildfastnes; XIX. Fortune; XX. Purse.

LXII. Autotype Specimens of the chief Chaucer MSS. Part III: 2 from Henry V's MS of the Troilus, when he was Prince of Wales (now Mr Bacon Frank's); 1 from Shirley's MS of the A B C at Sion Coll.

The issue for 1881, in the First Series, is,


The issue for 1882, in the First Series, is,


The issue for 1883, in the First Series, is,

LXV. Part II of Mr W. M. Rossetti's Comparison of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde with Boccaccio's Filostrato, completing the work.

The issue for 1884, in the First Series, is to be,

LXVI—LXIX. 6 Appendixes to the 6 MSS of the Six-Text, with Wood-cuts and colored Lithographs of 6 Tellers of Tales and of 6 emblematical Figures from the Cambridge Univ. MS, Gg. 4. 27, &c., and Process Engravings, for the
Ellesmere MS Part, of the 23 Ellesmere MS Miniatures. The Hengwrt MS, Part VI, contains The Canon's Yeoman's Tale from the Lichfield MS.

LXXXII. The Six-Text, Part IX, with color Lithographs of 6 Tellers of Tales and 6 emblematical Figures from the Cambridge Univer. MS Gg. 4.27; Forewords, Title-pages for the three volumes, &c.; and Prof. Hinan Corson's Index to the Subjects and Names of The Canterbury Tales.

The issue for 1885, in the First Series, is, LXXXIII. The Harleian MS 7334 of The Canterbury Tales, with Woodcuts of 23 Tellers of Tales from the Ellesmere MS, &c.

LXXXIV. Autotype Specimens of the chief Chaucer MSS. Pt IV. The Ellesmere. The issue for 1886, in the First Series, is, LXXV. Chaucer's Boece from the Cambridge University MS. Ii. 3. 21.

LXXVI. Chaucer's Boece from the Additional MS 10.349 in the British Museum, as edited by the Rev. Dr. R. Morris for the E. E. Text Soc. in 1868.


The issue for 1887, in the First Series, is, LXXVIII. A Rhyme-Index to Chaucer's Minor Poems, by Miss Isabel Marshall and Miss Lela Porter, in Royal 4to for the Parallel-Text.

The issue for 1888, in the First Series, is, LXXIX. A One-Text Print of Chaucer's Troilus, from the Campsell MS bef. 1415 A.D.

The issue for 1889, in the First Series, is, LXXX. A Rhyme-Index to Chaucer's Minor Poems, by Miss Isabel Marshall and Miss Lela Porter, in 8vo for the One-Text print of the Minor Poems.

The issue for 1890, in the First Series, is, LXXXI. Parallel-Text Specimens of all accessible unprinted Chaucer MSS: The Pardoner's Prolog and Tale, edited by Prof. Zupitza, Ph.D. Part I, from 7 MSS: Cambridge Dd. 4. 24, Christ-Church, Additional 5140, Devonshire, Haistwell (or Egerton 3729), Ingilby, Northumberland: the Dd. Group.

LXXXII. The Roumain of the Rose, from Thynne's print, 1532; ed. F. J. Furnivall. [Issued in 1911.]

The issue for 1891, in the First Series, is, LXXXIII. A Parallel text of The Roumain of the Rose (of which the first 1705 lines are most probably Chaucer's), from the unique MS at Glasgow, and its French original, Le Roman de la Rose, edited by Dr Max Kaluzna. Part I.

LXXXIV. A Rime-Index to Chaucer's Troilus, by Prof. Skeat, Litt.D.

The issue for 1892, in the First Series, is, LXXXV. Parallel-Text Specimens of all accessible unprinted Chaucer MSS: The Pardoner's Prolog and Tale, edited by Prof. Zupitza, Ph.D. Part II, from 10 MSS.

The issue for 1893, in the First Series, is, LXXXVI. Parallel-Text Specimens of all accessible unprinted Chaucer MSS: The Pardoner's Prolog and Tale, edited by Prof. Zupitza, Ph.D. Part III, from 6 MSS.

The issue for 1894, in the First Series, is, LXXXVII. A Parallel-Text of 3 more MSs of Chaucer's Troilus, the St. John's and Corpus, Christ's bridge, and Harl. 1239, Brit. Mus., put forth by Dr. F. J. Furnivall, Part I, with a Note by G. C. Macaulay, M.A.

The issue for 1895, in the First Series, is, LXXXVIII. A Parallel-Text of 3 more MSS of Chaucer's Troilus, Part II.

The issue for 1896, in the First Series, will be, LXXXIX. Prof. McCormick's Introduction to Chaucer's Troilus, discussing its MSS, its Text, its Metre and Grammar: 2nd Parallel-Texts, Part III.

The issue for 1897, in the First Series, is, XC. Parallel-Text Specimens of all accessible unprinted MSS: The Pardoner's Prolog and Tale, Part IV, from 17 MSS, edited by the late Prof. Zupitza, Ph.D., and Prof. John Koch, Ph.D.

The issue for 1898, in the First Series, is, XCI. Parallel-Text Specimens, Part V: The Pardoner's Prolog and Tale, a Six-Text, from 3 MSS and 3 black-letters, edited by Prof. John Koch, Ph.D., and Dr. F. J. Furnivall.

The issue for 1899, in the First Series, is, XCII. Parallel-Text Specimens, Part VI: The Clerk's Tale, a Six-Text Print from 3 MSS not containing The Pardoner's Tale, put forth by Dr. F. J. Furnivall.

The issue for 1900, in the First Series, is, XCIII. Parallel-Text Specimens, Part VII: The Clerk's Tale from the Phillips MS 8299 and the Longleat MS, put forth by Dr. F. J. Furnivall.

XCIV. Parallel-Text Specimens, Part VIII: The Pardoner's Prolog and Tale from the Hodson MS 39, put forth by Dr. F. J. Furnivall with an Introduction by Prof. John Koch, Ph.D.
The issue for 1901, in the First Series, is,
XCV. The Cambridge MS Dd. 4. 24. of the Canterbury Tales, completed by the Egerton MS 2726 (the Haistwell MS), ed. F. J. Furnivall. Part I.

The issue for 1902, in the First Series, is,
XCVI. The Cambridge MS Dd. 4. 24. of the Canterbury Tales, completed by the Egerton MS 2726 (the Haistwell MS), ed. F. J. Furnivall. Part II.

XCVII. Parallel-Text Specimens, Part IX. An Introduction to the eight Specimens of Chaucer’s Clery’s Tale, by Prof. Dr. John Koch.

The issue for 1907, in the First Series (none in 1903-6) will probably be, XCVIII. Specimen-Extracts from nine unprinted MSS of Chaucer’s Troilus, with an Introduction on the MSS, Metre and Grammar of the Poem, by Dr. W. H. McCormick. [At Press.

SECOND SERIES.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1868 is,
1. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part I. This work includes an amalgamation of Prof. F. J. Child’s two Papers on the use of the final -e by Chaucer (in T. Wright’s ed. of The Canterbury Tales) and by Gower (in Dr. Paul’s ed. of the Confessio Amantis).
3. A Temporary Preface to the Society’s Six-Text edition of Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales, Part I, attempting to show the right Order of the Tales, and the Days and Stages of the Pilgrimage, &c., by F. J. Furnivall, Esq., M.A.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1869 is,
4. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part II.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1870 is,
5. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part III.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1871 is,

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1872 is,
7. Originals and Analogues of parts of Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales, Part I.: 1. The original of the Man of Law’s Tale of Constance, from the French Chronicle of Nicholas Trivet, Arundel MS 56, ab. 1340 a.d., collated with the later copy, ab. 1400, in the National Library at Stockholm; copied and edited, with a translation, by Mr. Edmund Brock. 2. The Tale of “Merelau the Emperor,” from the GestA Romanaorum by Thomas Hoccleve, in Harl. MS 7833; and 3. Part of Matthew Paris’s Vita Officis Primi, both stories illustrating incidents in the Man of Law’s Tale. 4. Two French Fabliaux like the Reeve’s Tale. 5. Two Latin Stories like the Friar’s Tale.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1873 is,
8. Albertano of Brescia’s Liber Consilii et Consolationis, A.D. 1246 (the Latin source of the French original of Chaucer’s Melibe), edited from the MSS, by Dr. Thor Sondby.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1874 is,
9. Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works, Part II.: 3. John of Hoveden’s Practica Chilindre, edited from the MS. with a translation, by Mr. E. Brock. 4. Chaucer’s use of the final -e, by Joseph Payne, Esq. 5. Mrs. E. Barrett-Browning on Chaucer’s use being those parts of her review of the Book of the Poets, 1842, which relate to him; here reprinted by leave of Mr Robert Browning. 6. Professor Bernhard ten Brink’s critical edition of Chaucer’s Compleynte to Pite.

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1875 is,
10. Originals and Analogues of Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales, Part II. 6. Alphonse of Lincoln, a Story like the Prior’s Tale. 7. How Reynard caught Chaucer, the source of the Nun’s-Priest’s Tale. 8. Two Italian Stories, and a Latin one, like the Pardoner’s Tale. 9. The Tale of the Priest’s Bladder, a story like the Summoner’s Tale, being ‘Li dis de le Vescie a Prestre,’ par Jaques de Basiw. 10. Petrarch’s Latin Tale of Griseldis (with Boeceajo’s Story from which it was re-told), the original of the Clerk’s Tale. 11. Five Versions of a Yeartree Story like that in the Merchant’s Tale. 12. Four Versions of The Life of Saint Cecilla, the original of the Second Nun’s Tale. Edited by F. J. Furnivall.

11. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part IV.

12. Life-Records of Chaucer, Part I. The Robberies of Chaucer by Richard Breale and others at Westminster, and at Hatcham, Surrey, on Tuesday, Sept. 6, 1390, with some Account of the Robbers, from the Enrolments in the Public Record Office, by Walford D. Selby, Esq., of the Public Record Office.
Lydgate's Siege of Thebes.
Lydgate's
Siege of Thebes.

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PART I.—THE TEXT.

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1911, for the Issue of 1906.
TEMPORARY PREFACE.

§ 1. The title of the poem. In the colophons of the MSS. and oldest editions we find "Here endeth the destruccioun of Thebes" or "Here endeth the Sege of Thebes." But in later times the poem has most often been spoken of as "The Story of Thebes." In the text Lydgate repeatedly refers to "(the) story"; but here, with a few exceptions, by "(the) story" he means his Old French original. His own poem he generally mentions as "my tale." As a matter of fact, the question of the title has been decided by Lydgate himself, who in his Falls of Princes calls our poem "The Sege of Thebes."

Al to declare / me semyth it is no nede,
For in the Sege of Thebes ye may Rede
The stoory hool / and maad ther meneyoun, etc.
(Mus. Brit. Bibl. Harl. 1766, fol. 49 back.)

§ 2. The Siege of Thebes was written by Lydgate to form an additional link in the famous series of the Canterbury Tales composed by Chaucer. He represents himself as falling in with the pilgrims at their inn in Canterbury, when in mid-April he comes to the town to perform his vow to St. Thomas for recovery from an illness. He is received in the hall of the inn by the host of the Tabard and invited to join the company of pilgrims in their return journey to London. At sunrise on the following morning they all start off, and before they have ridden a bow-shot from Canterbury the host turns to Lydgate and asks him to tell some merry tale. Lydgate obeys, and "My tale I gan anon as 3e shal here" (l. 176). The prologue is, of course, addressed to the readers of the poem. In the tale itself Lydgate tries, by occasional references (ll. 182, 322 sq., 1043 sq., 1047 sq., cf. also 4522 sq.), to keep alive the impression that he is speaking to the pilgrims en route.

There is no doubt that the Prologue was the first portion written of the poem. And evidently Lydgate keenly enjoys his idea of composing an additional Canterbury Tale, and thus, as it were, taking up and continuing the unfinished work of his admired master. The
palpable anachronism involved in this idea did not deter him, and it would not, I suppose, much strike the general reader, nor does it, indeed, essentially diminish the quaint interest of his conceit. But it is obvious that Lydgate, who was about thirty at the time of Chaucer's death, could not at "ny3 fyfty 3ere of age" (l. 93) have found still remaining at Canterbury the same company of pilgrims with which Chaucer had come there.

§ 3. The poem has 4716 lines. The prologue (ll. 1-176), see § 2. The first part (ll. 177-1046) tells the disputes of Edippus and Iocasta, the second part (ll. 1047-2552) the disputes of Ethiocrates and Polymytes about the supremacy in Thebes, the third part (ll. 2553-4716) the siege and destruction of Thebes.

§ 4. The principal source of Lydgate's Thebes is an Old French prose romance, derived from the Old French poem Roman de Thebes. No known version of this prose romance agrees in all particulars with that used by Lydgate. But the version first printed 1500 and reprinted 1858 in the "Collection Silvestre," with the title "Sensuyt le Roman de edipus fils du roy Layus" (RE), comes very near to Lydgate's original. They differ, however, in some details. In most of these details Lydgate's original corresponded with the somewhat later version of the prose romance represented by that "Hystoire de Thebes" (HT) which is found inserted into a late 15th-century Old French translation, with numerous additions, of Orosius' well-known History of the World. Thus the apparently lost version that formed the basis of Lydgate's Thebes must have held an intermediate position between the two versions just mentioned. But it was decidedly much more closely allied to RE than to HT.

From his Old French source Lydgate has taken about two-thirds of his poem. More than a fourth he has drawn from his own creative imagination or from his general store of knowledge. The rest of the poem, about the twentieth part of the whole, comes partly from the Bible, but principally from such authors as Seneca, Martianus de Capella, Boccaccio, Chaucer.

§ 5. Lydgate treats his original with perfect freedom as regards form, recasting the expressions, enlarging or shortening the tale, not infrequently omitting unimportant particulars. In a few cases Lydgate has left out points the poetic beauty of which would certainly

have caught at once the attention of Chaucer. But on the whole it may be said that everything the poem possesses of poetic charm, it owes to Lydgate’s work.

The hero of parts II and III is Tydeus, on whom Lydgate lavishes his highest praise. In painting Tydeus’ character and extolling his exploits, the author had, no doubt, in his mind’s eye England’s youthful hero, King Henry V. Here and there in the poem allusions to contemporary political events may be traced (see for inst. § 6).

§ 6. Lydgate probably began his Thebes in the latter part of 1420. It was finished before the death of Henry V (August 31, 1422). And it seems safe to assume that the poem had been completed so long before that date that copies of it had been made and circulated. For if it had still been in its author’s hands when he learnt the irreparable loss his country had suffered, he would certainly have recast the end of it. In writing ll. 4690–4703, and especially the last lines of this passage: “And charitè . . . shal her bryghte bemes sprede . . . in dyuers nacioouns Forto reforme atwixe Regiouns Pees and quyet, concord and vnytè,” Lydgate clearly had in view certain terms of the treaty of Troyes concluded in May 1420. The 24th paragraph of this treaty says (see Rymer’s Foedera, Tom. ix, p. 901):

Item, ut Concordia, Pax, & Tranquillitas inter predicta Franciæ & Angliæ Regna perpetuo futuris temporibus observentur, & obvietur Occasionibus & Principiis, ex quibus inter eadem Regna, quod absit, Debata, Dissensiones seu Discordiæ futuris possent temporibus exoriri, Concordatum est, quod dictus filius noster Rex Henricus laborabit, . . . ambo Corone, scilicet Franciæ et Angliæ, perpetuo futuris temporibus commanebunt & erunt in unâ & eadem Personâ, viz. suâ, etc.

A comparison of the words of this paragraph with l. 4703 shows at once whence have sprung Lydgate’s “Pees and quyet, concord and vnytè.” See also the 25th paragraph. Cf. Troy Book, v, 3999–3442. The whole passage l. 4690 sq. of Thebes resounds with a jubilant note of hopefulness, and could not possibly have been written or issued after England’s hopes of a triumphant peace had been so suddenly blighted by the King’s death.

§ 7. The Siege of Thebes is written in heroic couplets. It has long been held up as a specimen of unusually bad metre. This censure seemed to be justified by the character—very unsatisfactory

from a metrical point of view—of the old printed texts. The present edition, the text of which is based on the best MS. collated with all the other known MSS., will prove the censure to be unmerited. The five-beat iambic lines of Thebes present the metrical traits peculiar to Lydgate's heroic verse.

§ 8. The great number of MSS. still preserved bears evidence of the popularity once enjoyed by our poem. There are, as far as is now known, 21 MSS. of Lydgate's Thebes in the public and private libraries of England. To this number are to be added the old edition of 1500 (?) and 1561, each of which represents a separate MS. The best MSS. are the Arundel 119 (Brit. Mus.), the Bodley 776, the Additional 18632 (Brit. Mus.), and the MS. belonging to Lord Mostyn, designated by Ar. Bo. Ad. M. in the variæ lectiones given at the foot of the pages. As basis of the present edition the Arundel MS. has been taken, every deviation from it being marked by asterisks in the text, or, in the case of pause-bars, only mentioned among the vv. II. The Arundel MS. 119 is a small folio, $10\frac{3}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{8}$ English inches, on vellum, bound in calf, and contains only the complete text of our poem. It has 80 leaves. The text is written in single columns, and ends on leaf 79 front.

Axel Erdmann.

Upsala, April 6, 1911.
LIST OF THE MANUSCRIPTS AND OLDEST EDITIONS.

Ba. = Marquis of Bath's MS. 257 (Longleat).
Bo. = Bodley MS. 776.
C. = Cambridge University Library, Addit. 3137.
Du. = Prince Frederick Duleep Singh's MS. (Old Buckenham Hall).
E₁. = Wynken de Worde's edition (1500?) 8vo.
E₂. = in William Thynne's fol. edition 1561 of the works of Chaucer.
G. = Mr. J. H. Gurney's MS. (Keswick Hall).
I. = The late Sir H. Ingilby's MS. (Ripley Castle), now belonging to Mr. Lawrence Hodson (Compton Hall).
Lb. = Lambeth Palace Library, MS. 742.
M. = Lord Mostyn's MS. (Mostyn Hall).
T₂. = Trinity College (Cambridge) Library, MS. O. 5. 2.

In the foot-notes the manuscripts and oldest editions are given in the following order (cf. the genealogy in the Introduction):

SYNOPSIS OF THE GAPS exceeding two lines, in the manuscripts and oldest editions (the numbers are inclusive):

Ad₁. 785—788.
Ad₂. 785—788, 4094—4158, 4504 to the end.
Ap. 1681—1746, 3409 to the end.
Ba. 2490—2580, 4432 to the end.
Bo. 1—8, 31—40, 4456—4586.
C. 1—822, 886—951, 1017—1142, 1403—1463, 1858—1922, 3663—4060, 4386—4515.
Di. 1—153.
Synopsis of the Gaps in MSS., etc.

Du. 111—337, 4284—4340, 4459—4572, 4630—4716.
E. 1. 107—176, 4363—4418.
I. 785—788, 3935—4116, 4582—4676.
Lz. 849—852.
Lb. 65—392, 4597—4658.
M. 147—222.
P. 1669—1672.
Ra. 2099—2294.
S. 1455—1459.
T1. 615—726, 1061—1172.
T2. 2485—2672, 3634—4209.

Ar. E2. G. L1. are complete.
The Siege of Thebes.


Incipit Prologus.

When brieste phebus / passed was þe ram
Myd of Aprille / and in-to bole cam,
And Saturnus old / with his frosty face
In virgyné / taken had his place,
Méncolik / and slowgh of mocions,
And was also / in thoposícioun
Of lucina / the moné moyst and pale,
That many Shour / fro heuene made avale;
whan Aurora / was in þe morowe red,
And Júbi ter / in the Crabbés Hed
Hath take his paleys / and his mansioun;
The lusty tyme / and Ioly fressh Sesoun
whan that Flora / the noble myghty quene,
The soyl hath clad / in newé tendre grene,


THEBES.
when the Canterbury Tales were told,—

some moral,

some ribald,

like those of

The Cook,

the Millere,

And the Reve,

also the

Pardonere,

[leaf t, back]

with her flourés / craftyly ymeynt,

Braunch and boughi / wip red and whit depeynt,

Fletinge þe bawme / on hillis and on valys:

The tymne in soth / whan Canterbury talys

Complet and told / at many sondry stage

Of estatis // in the pilgrimage,

Euerich man / lik to his degré,

Some of desport / some of moralité,

Some of knyghthode / loue and gentillesse,

And some also of partit holynesse,

And some also in soth / of Ribaudye

To maké laughter / in þe companye,

(Ech admitted / for noñ wold other greve)

Lich as the Cook / þe millere and the Reve

Aquytte hem-silf / shortly to conclude,

Boystously / in her teermés Rude,

when þei hadde / wel dronken of the bolle,

And ak also / with his pylléd nolle

The pardowner / beerdles al his Chyn,

Glasy-Eyed / and face of Cherubyn,

Tellyng a tale / to angre with the frete,

ROLOG.] Lydgate's Praise of Chaucer, Flower of Poets.

s opynly // the storie kan sow lere,
ord for word / with every circumstauance,
cion ywrithe / and put in remembrance
y hym payt was / 3if I shal not feyne,
loure of Pootes / thoroughout al breteyne,
Which sothly hadde / most of excellence
a rethorike / and in eloquence
Rede his making / who list the trouthe* fynde)
This neuer shal / appellen in my mynde,
ute alwey fressh / ben in my memoreye*:
o whom * be souë / pris/ honoure / and glorye*
t wel seyinge / first in our language,
hief Register / of pis piligrimage,
1 pat was tolde / forsteing noght at al,
eynd talis / nor ping Historial,
With many prouerbe / diuers and vnkouth,
e rehaersale / of his Sugrid mouth,
f eche thyng / keping in substaunce
he sentence hool / with-out variance,
foyding the Chaf / sothly for to seyn,

36. As opynly] As o. as T. Du. Lb. And o. as L. Al o. as M. 37. for]

written by

Chaucer,

the Flower of Poets,

(who will be always fresh in my memory,)

and told his

Tales

38. Eychon write] Echnone wroteth M.


42. r. T. Ba. P. Ro. through L. S. thorough out of E. l. sothly] shortly P. hadde Ad. Ra. To. had Bo. M. of om. L. Ro. 43. In]


thing L. nor nothynge L. Ba. and thing Lb. 51. prouerbe] prouerbes

Enlumynynge / þe trewe pike\d greyn
Be crafty writinge / of his sawes swete,
Fro the tynde / thate deden* mete
First the pylgrimes / sothly euerichon,
At the Tabbard / assembled on be on,
And fro suthwerk / shortly forto seye,
To Canterbury / ridynge on her weie,
Tellynge a tale / as I reherce can,
Lich as the hoste / assigne\d every man.
None so hardy / his biddyng\d disobe\y.

And this while\* / that\ the pylgrimes leye
At Canterbury / wel logged\* on and all,
I not\ in stroll / what\ I may it call,
Hap / or fortune / in Conclusion, 
That\ me by\l / to entren into toun,
The holy seynt\ / pley\ny to visite
Aftere sikesse / my vowes to auytye, 
In a Cope of blak / and not\ of grene,
On a palfrey / slender / long\* / and lene, 
\p rusty brydel / mad nat\ for þe sale,
My man to-forn / with a void\e male; 
which of Fortun\e / took\ myn Inne ano\n
The Pilgrims' Host asks Lydgate to sup with them. 5

The Host gives Lydgate advice as to his Health.  [Prolog.

A grei puddyng / or a rounde hagys, 100
A Franchëmole* / a tansey / or a froyse.
To ben a Monk / Sclander is 3oure koyse;
3e han be seke / I dar myñ hede assure,
Or latë fed / in a feynt pasture. 104
Lift vp 3oure hed / be glad, tak no sorowe!
And 3e shal hom ridë with vs to-morowe!
I seyë, when 3e rested han 3our fille.
Aftere soper / Slepe wil do noñ ille. 108
Wrappe wel 3oure hedë / with* clothës rounde aboute!
Strong* notty ale / wol makë* 3ou to* route.
Take a pylon / pat* 3e lye not* lowe!
3if nedë be / Sparing* not* to blowe! 112
To holdë wynde /, be myñ opynyoun,
Wil engendre / Collikes* passion
And makë men to greuen / on her roppys,
whan thei han filled / her mawës and her cropys. 116
But* towaëd nyght* / ete some fenel Rede,

PROLOG.] The Host tells me how to get a good Night’s Rest.

Annys / Comyn / or coriandre sede!
And lik as I / pouer haue / and myght,
Chargi 3ow / rise not at Mydnyght,
Thogh it’ so be / the moonë shynë cler.
[wol my-silf / be 3oure Orloger
To-morow erly / when I se my tyme,
For we wol forp / parcel a-forcë Pryme,
A company / pardë / Shal do 3ou good.
What’! look vp, Monk / for, by kokkis blood,
Thow shalt be mery / who so pat sey nay.
For to-morowe, anoon / as it’ is day,
And that’ it’ gynne / in þe Est’ to dawe,
Thow shalt be boundë* / to a newë lawe,
Att’goyng out of Canterbury toune,
And leyn a-sidë / thy professiou.n.
Thow shalt not’ chësë / nor þi-silf withdrawe,
þif eny myrth / be founden in thy mawe,
Lyk the custom / of this Compenye;
For non so proude / that’ dar me denye,
Knysth nor knauë / Chanon / ne nonne,

To telle a tale / pleyly as thei konne,
When I assigne / and se tyme opportune.
And for thet we / our purpos wil contyne,
We wil homward / the samé custome vse,
And thow shalt not / platly the excuse.
Be now wel war / Stody wel to-ngyht!
But, for al this / be of herté liȝt!

Thy wit' shal be / þe Sharer and the bett.'
And we anon / were to Soper set,
And servyd wel / vnto oure plesance;
And sone after / by good gouernance.
Vnto bed goth eve of maner wight.
And touarde morowe / anóñ as it was light,
Every Pilgryme / bothè* bet and wors,
As bad oure hostë / tok a-ñón his hors,
Whan the soumë / roos in the est' ful clyere,
Fully in purpoos / to come to dynere.
Vnto Osprygyn / and brekë þer our faste.

When and whan we weren / from Canterbury paste
Noght the space / of a bowë draught,
Our host in hast / haþ my bridel rauht,
And to me seide // as it' were in game,
"Come forth, daun Iolin / be you Cristene name,
And lat’ vs make / some manere myrth or play !

PROLOG. | Lydgate agrees to tell the Pilgrims a Tale.

Shef' 1oure portoos / a twenty deuelway!

It* is no diisport / so to patere and seie.

It' wol make 1oure lippês / wonder dreye.

Tel some tale / and make ther-of a* Iape!

For be my Rouny/ thow shalt' not' eskape.

But preche not / of noñ holynesse!

Gynne some tale / of myrth or of gladnesse,

And noddé not' / with thyne heuy bekke!

Telle vs some thyng' / that' drawep to effecte

Only of Ioyé / ! make no lenger lette !'

And when I saugh / it woldé be no bette,

I obeyëd* / vnto his biddyngse,

So as the lawê / me bonde in al thinge ;

And as I coudé / with a pale cheere,

My tale I gan / anon / as 3e shal here.

Explicit Prologus.

Incipit Pars Prima. Per &c.


Ra. P. portas L.1, portes E2. porteis L2. portoys Ba. portewes S. E2. a] on

P. in a Ba. 163. It is T.1, L.1, Di. Ad1, Ad2. I. Ra. Ba. T.2, L2. Ro. Hit is Bo.


Gyf Bo. yeve T.1, Gyff vs L1, or of] or G. and of Bo. T.1, L.1, Ro. and Di. P. 169. nodde I. nod Bo. Ad1, nodde] om. Ad2. with] so with Ro. om.


Di. beke Ro. necke Ad2. I. 170. vs] om. L.1. some thyng]' merithing Di

(written by later hand, the original reading being effaced). drawep] touchip Di.


as been altered by a later hand into effekke. 171. make] and make Bo. T.1.


anoN] I began anon Ap. anon I gan S. began P. anon as] so as T.2. shal] shul

T.1, T.2. P. may G. om. Ra. here] after here P.
As I am now one of your company, I will tell you a story of the Siege of Thebes, a city built by King Amphion.

How he raised the walls, it is wonder and merveil forto here.

Amphiom's persuasive Words got Thebes built.

Amphiou's Songe was his craftey Speche, his swete Wordes. [PT. I.

The Musycal / the lusty instrument,
I mene the harpō / most melodious,
yovē to this kyng / be Mercurius,
224.

And his song / this auctour can 30w teche,
was no thyng / but the crafty speche
Of this kyng / ycallēd Amphioun;
Wher-by He made / the contrēs envyroun
To han such lust / in his wordēs swete,
That were so plesaunt / fauourable, and mete
In her Eerys / that shortly ther was noon
Disobey sant / with the kyng to goon,
Whe so euere / that hym list assigne.
His cheer / his port / was outward * so benygne,
That thorgh his styryng / and exortacioun
With hym they went / to byldē * first this towν,
And forsook / eech man his contrē,
Be on assent / to make this Cytē
Royal and riche / that līch was nowher noon.
And thus the wallis / made of lyn and stoon,
Were Reysūd first / be syngyng of this kyng,
lieē as Poetys / feyne in her writyng,
Passyng Rich / and Royal of entaille.
Her may 3e See / how myche may avaylle
The goodlihed / and lownesse of a kyng,

And speecally in cher and in spekyng, To his lyges / and / to bere hym fayre In his appor / and / shew hym debonayre, And nat / to bene / to straungē ne soleyn In contenauance / outwaund / be disdeyn; Which causep ofte / who that Can aduerthe, Grete hatred / in the puples herte, And ther-vpon / priuely wol rowne, When a pryncē / doth vp-on hym frowne, Shortly deme / for al his excellence, Among hem-silf / out of his presence, Euerych concludē / lich his fantasye. And thus ful ofte / gendred is Envye In folkēs hertes / of soleyntè and pryde, For swich as list / nat onys loke a-syde To Reward hem / when they lowly loute. And ageyn kynde / it is / out of doute, That eny hed / be recorde of the wyse, Shuld the foot / of disdeyn despys. Which berep hym vp / who so can takē hede, And Susteneth / in his mostē* nede As his Pyler / and / his soppowayle.

268. For all things, their end is good.

272. For that which is good, is good for all men.

276. For that which is good, is good for all mankind.

280. For that which is good, is good for all men.

284. For that which is good, is good for all men.

288. For that which is good, is good for all men.

292. For that which is good, is good for all men.

296. For that which is good, is good for all men.

298. For that which is good, is good for all men.
Cadmus bilt first Thebe of.

He cut a bull’s hide into strips, and enclosed land as the site of Thebes.

* How the centre of Boece toke first his name of a bolys skyn, After called Thebes.

* How kyng Cadmus was exiled out of Thebes be provess of kyngge Amphyoun.
And Cadmus thus hath his kyngdam lorn,
Sceptre and crowne / and his powere Royal.

That ye wel knowe / be Informacioun
Clerely the pitfi / and exposicioun
Of this mater / as clerkes can you telle.
It were but veyn / lenger for to dwelle,
To tary 30w / as in this matiere,
Sith my talo / which that 3e shal here,
Upon oure waie / wil lasten a longe while,
The space* / as I suppose / of vii. myle.
And now 3e knowé* / first how Ampheyon
Bylt and began / this Cité and this toun,
Regnyng* ther / long* aftere, as I rede.

Of hym no moré / ; for I wil procede
To my purpoos / that I first* began :
Not* tellyng here / how the lyné Ran
From kyng to kyng / be successiou,
Conveying douñ / pe stok of Amplyyon
Cereously be lyneal* discent ;
But leue al this / pleynly of entent
To tellé forth /, in bookéas as I rede,

If how layus be processe / gan succeede
To bere the Croune / in this myghty Lond,
holdynge the Sceptre of thebés in his hond,
Manly and wys / duryng al his liff.

And Iocasta / callèd was his wyff;  
Ful womanly / the story seith certeyn,  
For a tymé / thogh she were bareyn,  
Tyl Layus / in ful humble wise  
To have a child / didè* Sacrifice,  
Fyrst to* apollo / in his char so briyt',  
And Iubiter / than hap so gret a myght',  
Beseching' hem / withi devout' reverence,  
To graun't only / thorgi her influence,  
That* his request' may exeuced be;  
And specially / to Goddesses thre,  
He besoughte / Pallas and Iuno  
And Dyanë / ferto helpe also  
That* he be not* defrauded of His bone.  
And his preyere / accepted was ful sone,  
That*/fynaly / thorg his ryyttys olde,  
Evene lik' / as his herté wolde,  
The queene Iocasta / hath anoon conceyued;  
Which whan the kyng / fully hath percyued*  
He made in hast'/ hym lyst not' to abide,  
Thorgh his kyngdom / Massagerës ryde  
Fro Coost to Coost' / the story can devyse,  
For dvyynoure / and phylosophres wise,  
For such as weren / famous physiciens  
And wel expert / Astronomynys,  
To Come* in hast / vnto his presence  
To fynden* out / shortly in sentence,  

And eke T. 2. And to Di. helpe Bo. Ad. 1. helpen M. 356. herte Bo. hert  
L. 1. Ro. Messangeris T., Massagers Ra. Massangeers Ad. 2. I. ryde] to ryde  
Bo. and all the other MSS.  
THEBES.
By Crafting only / Of Calculacioun,
The Chryhês fate* / and disposicioun; 368
And ther-vpon / to gyve / a Ingêment,
The Root ytaken* / at the ascendent,
Trewly soughte out* / be mynut* and degré
The silfe* horæ / of his nativity,
Not* forgete / the heuently mansions
Clerly Cerched / be smalâ fracciouns,
First* be Secoundes / tiers and ekê quartes,
On Augrym stoonês / and on white caertes
ypreuèd out* / be diligent labour,
In tables correcte / devoyde of al error
Justly sought* / and founde / out* bothe* twoo,
The zeerês collecte* / and expance also
Consyrdred ek / be good inspecioun
Every hour* / and constellacioun
And eche aspecte / and lookês ek dyuers,
Which were good / and which also pervers,
Wher they were toward / or ellys at debat,
\* happy, welful / or infortune.
And fynaly / in conclusyon,
They founde satourn / in the Scorpionn,
Hevy-chered / malencolik / and lotli,
By Crafting only / Of Calculacioun,
The Chryhês fate* / and disposicioun; 368
And ther-vpon / to gyve / a Ingêment,
The Root ytaken* / at the ascendent,
Trewly soughte out* / be mynut* and degré
The silfe* horæ / of his nativity,
Not* forgete / the heuently mansions
Clerly Cerched / be smalâ fracciouns,
First* be Secoundes / tiers and ekê quartes,
On Augrym stoonês / and on white caertes

To stop his son slaying him, Layus bids Jocasta kill him.

And woodε* Mars / furious and wroth, holding his Sceptre / in þe Capricorn,

The sanic hourε* / when this chylde was born,

Venus deiecte / and Contrarious

And depressεd / in Mercuryes hous;

That the dome / and Iugēment final

Of thies Clerkes / to speke in special,

Be Fatal sort / which may not be wijdawre,

That with his swert / his fader shal be slawe;

Ther may no man helpe it / nor excuse.

On whiche thyng / the kyng gan sere muse,

And cast he wolde / on that other side

Agayn her doom / for hym-silfe provide,

Shape a way / and remedy to-forn

Biddynge the queenε / when the chylde were born,

With-oute Mercy / or moderly pytε

Thatε he be ded /: it* may non other be.

And in al hastε / lik as he hath sentε,

She obeyδ / his commaundεmentε.

With woeful herte / and a pitous loke

And facε pale / her ʒonge sone she toke,

Tendre and greνε / both of flessh and bonys,

To certeyn men / ordeynεd for þe noonys

From poynt to poynt / in al maner jing

To execute / the biddynge of the kyng.

They durste not delay it / nor abide,
But to a Forest / that stood fer bysyde,
They took Her wey and faste gan hem spede
The kyngges wille / to parforme in dede,
Havyng therof / passyng hevynesse.
But whan that they / beheelden the fairnesse
Of the Chyld / and excellent beautè,
In her herte / they hadde grete pytè,
And pleynly cast / among hem was no stryf,
That the child / shulde* han his lif.
And ano[n ful hygh / vpon a tre,
In a placè / that no man myght se,
They henge hym vp / the story kan rehearse.
But first* his feet / porgh / they gan to perce,
And on bowès tendre / tough, and smale,
They knet hym vp / shortly pis is no tale,
Hym to preserue / from bestys wild* and Rage.
And after that* / they*token her viage
Toward Thebès / in alle the hast* they may.

But* of fortunè / thilke samè day
with her houndès / serchyng vp and doun,
The huntès went / of kyngs poliboun
Thorghi the forest* / ganè forto fynde,
Some afor[n / and somè / cam behynde,

In Ra. and Ba. 416 and 417 are missing; in Ra. abide 415 is alterèd to a base
the crasure is written to make a. [pis is] pis G. thys Ro. om. Lb. no] the Ap.
And gan serci / and sekë wonder sore
Among the hillës / and the holtës* hore.

And as they Reenge / the trenchis by and by,
They herde a noyse / and a pitous cry
Of thys chylld / hangyng on the tre;
And aH at onys / drowë forto se,
And lefte not til* they han hym founde;
And toke hym doune / and his fete vnbounde,
And bare hym hom / vnto Polyboun,
Kyng of Archadye / the famous Regioun.

And whan that he / first pe chylld gan See,
Of his woundës / he hadde grete pytë,
To beholde / his tender fete / so blede;
And callëd hym / Edippus / as I rede,
which is to seyn / platly this no phage,
Boreëd the feete / as in that langage.

And first the kyngë in his Royal halle*
Made his men / an norys for-to calle,
This ʒonge chyklye to foster and to kepe
With her Milk / that he nat ne wepe;
And his leches / he charged ek also,
Til he were Hool / Her deuer forto do:
Fully in purpoos* / for the child was fair,
After his day / to maken hym his hayr;
For cause only / who so taketh hede,
Sone hadde he noon / be lynë to succede;

And Whether* that he had / a wif or noon,  
I fynde not / and therfor lat' it goon.

* But by processe / of dayes and of yeeres,  
This Edyppus / amongst his pleying feeris  
was in his port² / passyng ful of pride,  
That is noyn with hym / myght in pees abide.  
In hert³ he was / so Inly Surquydows,  
Malencolik⁴ / and Contrarious,  
Ful of despity / and of heghe displayn,  
That no wight⁵ durste* / shortly hym with-seyn ;  
Til on a day / he gan with oon debate  
To whom he hadde / speycaly grete hate,  
Which of Rancour / and of hasty tene,  
As he that myght / His pridé not sustene,  
Gan vpon hym / cruelly abreide,  
And vnto hym felly / thus he saide :  
" wherto, " quod he / " artow so proude of port,"  
Contrarie also / cuer / in oure disport,  
Froward and felle / lastynge cuer in oon,  
As thow were lord / of vs euericion,  
And presumest fully in wyrychein,  
Lik as thow were sone / vnto the kyng,  
And descended / of His Royal blood ?

467. by] in T₂. of dayes and of yeeris] by dayes and  
470. myght in pees] in pees myght M.  
Di. L₁. P L₂. Ro.  
471. he was] was he M. Di. so] om. S.  
472. and] and eke M. Di. T₂.  
474. durste Di. Ra. durst Ar. dorst Bo. T₁. M. Ad₁. shortly  
476. speycaly grete] grete and  
oydous Ro.  
press P.  
481. arrow] to arrow Bo. T₁. M. Ra. aertow Ad₁, ar thow Lb.  
atrow T₂. ar tow Du.  
485. presumest fully] fully presumest Bo. alone,  
486. vnto the] vnto oure Bo. Ra. to the I. to a Lb,
pt. 1.] Edippus asks King Polibon if he is a King's son. 23

But wher so be / thou be wroth or wood,
Thow art' no thing /, and thow list take hede,
Appartenyns / vnto his kynrede,
But in a Forest / founden and vnknowe,
whan thow were 3onge /, therfore bere the lowe ! 492
And vvitrely* remembre, 3if the lyst,
Thy byrth and blood / ar bothe two vnuwist.
This the fyne / shortly / of my tale.

Wherewith Edippus / gan to wexè* pale,
And chaunge also cheer and contenauce,
And gan a-point / in his* remembreantra
Word be word / and forgat* right' nouȝt',
And felly / musèd* / in his owne thouȝt',
And cast' he wold / with-oute more taryng'
The trouth enquire / of poliboune the kyng;
And whan he saugh / opportuyné space,
And the kyng' / in a* sycre place,
He hym bysoghte / lowly on his kne
To his request // benigne* to se,
And that he woldè / pleynly / and not' spare
Of his byrth / the treuè ground* declare,
And make hym sure / of this thyng' anoi
jif he were / his verrey sone or noñ.

Of Appollo / in storie as is tolde,
Whos statue / stood / in a char of golde
On* whelës four / boornyd bright and shene;
And with-In a spirit / ful vnclene,
Be fraude only / and fals collusioun,
Answered gaf / to every question,
Bryngyng the puple in ful gret error,
Suche as to hym dyden fals honour
Be Rytys uséd in the oldé dawes
Aftere custome / of paganysmes* lawes.
And Edyppus / with ful humble chere, 
To Appollo makéd His preiere, 
Besechynge hym on his kneës lowe,
Be some signë / that he myghte knowe,
Thorg* Evidencë Shortly comprehended,
Of what* kynredé / that he was descendyed.
And whan Edyppus be gret* deuoiciou,
Fynyshëd hath / fully his orysoun,
The fend* anoñ / with-Innen Invisyble,
With a vois dreadful and horrible,
Bad hym in hastë / taken his viage
Toward® Thebës / wher of his lyncage
He herën shal / and be certeised.

And on his way / anoñ he hap hym hyed,
by hasty Iournë / so his horse constreyed.

At a tournay, Edipus unknowingly kills his father Layus. [PT. 1.

Day be day / til he hap atteyned
Vnto* a castel / Pylothes ycalled,
Rich and strong / and wel aboute walled,
Adjacent* / be syyt of the contré
And perteynent* to Thebes the Cyté:
If kyng* Layvs / beyng* ther present,
For to holde a maner tornement*
With his knyghtés / 30ng* and coraious,
And other folkés / that* were desyrous
To preue hem-silf / shortly for-to telle,
Who by force / other* myght* excelle,
Or gote a namié / thorgh his hegh pronesse.
Euerich of hem / dyd his bysynesse
On hors-bak / and also ek on foote,
Al be that* sonic founde ful vnsoote,
Rather a pley of werre / than of pees;
Wher Edipus put hym-silf in prees,
As he that* was / ay redy to debat,
Ensorsyng hym / to entren at the gate,
Maurgré ah tho / that* hym woldě* lette.
H And in the pres / of aventure he mette
Kyng* layvs / and cruelly hym srogh,
Thow the story / writ* not* the maner howli,
Ne no wight* can / of alle the companye

562. aboute walled] aboute Walled Ba. S. about
teynyng T. Lb. Di. apperteynyng Bo. M. L. 567. coragens Bo. corayus M
curious Ad. Ad. I. 568. folkes Ar. G. L. Ap. folke or folk the rest. 569
other] other Ar. other myght] might other L. Ra. Ba. 572. Euerich] eche Bo
Al be hit pat P. Albe though Lb. And by that L. founde] founded it L. M. Di
579. all tho] all hem T. of tho Bo. of all tho Ba. wold Bo. wold Ar. M
hym woldě] wold him Ad. Ad. I. S. 582. pogh Bo. though Du. 583
In Ar. a pause-bar also after wight.
Be no signe / verrely espye
By whos hond / that the kyng  was slawe;
For Edippus in hast / gan hym with-drawe
And kept hym Coy / of entencioun.
Gret was the noysye / and the pitous souyr
In the Castel / for slaughter of the kyng,
Dooel and compleytnt / sorowe and wepyng;
But for they seggh / heynynesse and thought
Ageynes deth · vayleth lit or night,
They ordeyne with Ryttys ful Royal
For the feste / caliód / Funeral.
And li x the custom / of the dayes olde,
The corps they bred / into ashes colde,
And in a vessel / rounde, mad as a bal,
They closeyd hem in gold and in metal.
And after that did her bysy Cure
In Thebes to make a sepulture,
And richely, hem list no lenger lette,
The asshen didé* they enclose and shette.
Of this matere / ther ys* no mor to seyn.
But to Edippus / I wil retourne ageyn,
Which hym enhaste / ay fro day to day
Towardes Thebes / in al that euere he may,
Brennyng in herte / hoot as eny fire,
The fyn to knowe / of his fatal desire.
But, for that he failéd / of a Guye,de,
Out of his way / he wente fer be-side,

Edippus with-draws in haste.

Edippus journeys in haste towards Thebes.
The descriptioun of the foule Monstre.

The Sphinx slays all passers-by who can’t solve the problem he sets them.

Thorga a wylde / and a waast contré,
By a mounteyn / that stood vpon the see,
Wher that monstres / of many dyuers kynde
Were convnersaunte / in story as I fynde;
Amongés* which / sothly ther was oñ,
So inly cruel / that no man durst goñ,
For drede of deth / forby that passage.
This monstre was so mortal in his rage,
which hadde also / be descriptioun,
Body and feet / of a fers lyoun;
And lik a mayde in soth was hede and face,
Fel of his look / and cruel to manace,
And odyous of countenaunce and sight;
Æ And as I redé / Spynx / this monstre hight,
Wors than Tygre / dragon / or serpent.
And I supposé / by enchauntement
He was ordeyned / on the hyl tabyde,
To sleen aH tho / that passéden be-syde,
And specially / aH that diden* flyle
To expowne / his mysty dyvynaile,
His problem ek / in wordès pleyn and bare
With-oute avys / opynly to* declare,
Or with the lif / he myghte not* escape.
This verry soth platly and no Iape.
Æ And 3if that he, be declaracioun,
3af ther-vpon / cleer exposicioun,
He shuld in hast / there was noñ oper mene,

The Sphinx sets Edippos a hard Problem to solve.

Sleen this monstre / for all his cruel tene.
Ther may of mercy / be / non oper graunte.

But of all this Edippos ignoraunte,
This dreadful hiif / stondyng on a roche,
Er he was war / gan ful nygh approche,
More perilous platly / than he wende.
And sodeynly / the monster* gan* descendes,
To stoppen his way / and letten his passage,
Thus abraydyng* with a fel corage:

"I haue in herte Inly gret* disport;
That* fortune / ha[p broght the to my sort,
To make a preef* / zif thow mayst endure,
The fatal ende / of this aventure,
Set at a fyn / sothly be daiës olde."
And by and by / al the caas hym tolde,
Gete the palme / and bere away the pryse
Touchyng* this thynge / sette a-twene vs tweyñ,
with lyf or deth / which we shal dareyn.

And this Monstre / with a despitous chere
his problem gan / thus as 3e shal here.
"Ther is a beest* merveilous to se,
The which in soth at* his natiuyte
Is of his myght* / so tender and so grene,
That he may hym-siluë* nat* sustene
Upon his fete / thogh he hadde it sworñ,
But *if that* he / be / of his moder born.

Then it goes on 4 feet; then on 3; at last on 2.

And afterwardes / be processe of age,
On fouré fete / he makep his passage;
After on thre / if I shal not feyne,
And alderlast / he gop vpright on tweyne;
Dyuers of port / and wonderful of cherys:
Til, be length / of many sondry seeres,
Natu rly / he goth aseyn on thre,
And sith on foure, it may non oper be,
And Fynaly / this the trouthë* pleyn,
he retourneth / kyndely aseylyn
To the matere / which that he kam fro.
If loo / her is al /: my problem is I-do.
Muse her-vpon / with-outë werre or stryff
It to declare / or ellis lese thy lyff."

Then on 3 again,
and finally goes
back to the
matter it came
from.

Solve this,
or die."

Edippus thought
over the puzzle,

And when Edippus / gan this pin aduerre,
Wel assuréd in his manly herte,
Gan in his wytt cerchen vp and douè,
And of prudence / cast in his reson,
Be grete avis / what thynge this may be;
Seyng also / that he may not flee,
and how ther was / counsel noon ne rede,
But tellé trouth / or ellys to be dede.
And be ful good / deliberacion
Thus he answerd / in conclusion,

'Thowe Spynx' quod he / 'fals and fraudulent!'
Thow foule* Monstre / thow dragon, thow serpent!'
which on this hyl / lich as I conceyve,
lyst in a-waite / folkes to deceyue,

665. afterwardes Bo. afterward M. Ad, 668. vpright]vpritth Ar. vp-rygl
Bo. cffe P. it] as P. 673. this] his is Bo. Du. L.,, Lb. M. Di. Ad., I. Ra. Ba
Edipus solves the Problem the Sphinx set him.

But truste wel / for al thy slglyht wi'! Thy falsē* fraudē / shal anoñ be qwyt. Me list not nowe whisper neither rowne, But thy problem / I shal anoñ expowne So opynly / thou shalt not go ther-fro. loo! this it is / tak good hede ther-to!

Thilkē* best thou spak of herto-forn, Is every man / in this world ybori, Which may not gon / his lymēs be so softe, Both as his moder / bereth hym alofte In her armes / when he doth crye or* wepe. And after that / he gynneti forto crepe

On fourē* feeti in his tendre youth, Bexperience / as it is ofē kouthi, A-forn yrekned / his hondēs bothē* two. And by processe / thou mayst consider also With his two fete / for al thy felliē tene, He hath a staf / hym-selven to sustene, And than he goth / shortly vpon thre.

And alther-last / as itv most nedēs be, Voydingi his staf / he walkep vpon tweyū:

Til it so be / thorgē agē / he atteyn,

That lust of 3outhe the wasted be and spenti;

Than in his hond / he taketh a potent,

And on three feet / thus he goth ageyn,

694. fals Ar. Bo. M. Adj.
I dar afferne / thow maist it not withsey wyn,
And some aftere / thrugh his vnweldy myght,
By influence / of naturys right,
Bexperience / as erery man may knowe,
Lich a child / on foure he crepeth lowe.
And for he may no whyle* here soiowrne,
To erth ageyn / he most in hast retouerne,
Which he kam fro / he may it not remewe*.
For in this world / no man may eschewe,
This verray soth / shortly and no doute,
When the wheel of kyndé cometh aboute,
And naturally hath his cours y-Ronne
Be circuete / as doth the shené sonne,
That man and chylde / of hegh and lowe estat;
It geyneth nat / to maké / mor debat,
His tymé sette / that he mosté* fyne,
When Autropos / of malice doth vntwyyne
His lyvés thred / by Cloto first compounded.

Loo / her thy problem / fully is expowned,
At our metynge / as I took on honde,
To the lawe / that thou most nedés stonde
And in al hast / of my hondés deye,
But of reson / thow can it ought withseye.'

And so this Sphynx / awapyd and amaat,

Stood / disamayéd / and dysconsolat,  
With Chier doune-cast / Muët, pale, and ded.
And Edippus anon smote of the hed  
Of this fende / stykynge and vswete,
And the Contré sette holy in quyete;  
Wherby he hath / such a pris ywonne
That his fame is euery cost yronne  
Thorgh al the londe / that he the monstre hath slawe.
And lyné-right / to Thebês he gan drawe,
Wel receuyéd / for his worthynesse,
For his manhode / and his grete* prouesse.  
And for they segh / he was a semly knyght,
Wel fanourééd / in euery mannys sight,
And sawh also Thebês the myghty toun,  
Not only they / but al the Region,
Weren destit / of a gouernour,
Açeynst his foon / hauyng no socour
Hem to defendé* / but the quene alloñ;
Among* hem-self / makynge ful gret moñ;
For heire was noñ / as bookës specifie,
The Sceptre / or crownë forto occupie:
For which the lordës aH be on assent
with-Inne the touñ / set a parlement,
Shortly concluding / if it myghte beñ,


THEBES.
Sif
Incestuous Marriage is against God's Law & ruins folk. [PT. I.

they resolve to
ask her to wed
Edippus, and
make him King.

Prudently to trete with the quene,
Namely they / that helde hem-silf mosti sage,
To condescende / be way of Mariage,
She to be Ioyned to this manly knyght,
Passing prudenti / and famous ek of myght,
Most likly man / as they can discerne,
The worthy Cytè / to kepen and gouerne.

And thorg counsayl / of the lordès alle
To her desyre / pletnyly / she is falle,
And accorded / with-oute mor tarying,
That of Thebès / Edippus shal be kyng;
By ful assent / was noñ that seid* nay.
And tymé set / ageyn a certeyn day
Among hem-silf / and finaly devysed,
The weddyng was / in Thebès solempnyzed
Ful ryally, which nedès mosti vnthryve,
Only for he his moder / toke to wyve,
Vnwist of bothë* / he was of her blode,
And ignoraunt / shortly, how it stode,
That he to-forn hadde his fadere slawe,
For which this weddyng was ageyn the lawe.

And to-for god / is nei})er feire ne good,
Nor acceptable / blood to touche blood:
Which cause hath ben of greti confusioun
In many londe / and many Regyoun,
Grounde and roote / of vnhap and meschaunce,
The fyn concludyng / alway with vengeauence,
As men han seie / by cleer experience;

766. trete Bo. M. Ad1, 767. sage] age G. 769. manly] famous Ad1, Ad3
I. om. S. 772. to] om. Ad1, kepen Bo. Ad1, kepe M. gouerne] to gouer
M. L3. 775. taryinge Ar (e underdotted), taryyng Bo. M. taryyng Ad1. 77
seide T1. M. Lb. Ra. seid Ar. Bo. Ad1. 781. rialy Bo. M. Roialli Ad1, need
Bo. nesus Ad1, 782. he his moder toke] he tok his moder Ad1, Ad2, I. 78
hou pat Ad1, Ad1. I. 785. to-form Ar. tofore Bo. M. 785—788 are missing
Ad1, Ad1. I. 786. For which] Wherfor M. Di. For which thing Ba, this]
Di. om. Ba. 790. londe and many] londis and Ad3, I. 792. concludyng
seyn L1. Ra. E2 seyne T2. see Ad1. I. seen M. Di. E1, S. P.
And holy writ / recordeth in sentence
How herodês / falsly in his lyff
By violencé toke his brother wyf,
For she was faire / and plesaunte to his sight,
And kepte her stille / be force* / þorph his myght,
Al be to her* / he haddé / title non;
And for her sake / the holy man seynt Iohn
For his trouthe / in prison lost his hede.

Therfor I rede / euery man take hede,
Wherso he be Pryncé, lorde, or kyng,
That he be* war teschewé such wedyng,
Er that* the swerde / of vengeunce hym manacé,
lest he lesé / hap, fortune, and grace;
Takyng ensample / in al manere thyngé
Of Edyppus / in Thebês crownèd kyng*;
Al be that* he wroght* of ignoraunce,
Ful deryk and blynde / of his woful chaunce.
And zif vnwist* / he of Innocence,
As 3e han herde, fil in such offence,
For which he was punished* and brought* lowe,
What* ar* they worthy that* her errour knowe,
And fro the knotté / list* not* to abstene
Of such spousale / to god and man vnclene?
I can not* seyn / nor mor therof devise.
Demeth your-silf that* prudent* ben and wise,
And Edippus / hath among* in mynde,
No Muse was at Edippus's unhappy Wedding. [PT. I.

Of whom the weddyng, lik as 3e may fynde,

Vnhappy was / and passing odious,

Infortunéd / and vngracious.

I am wery mor therof to write.
The hafull processe / also to endyte
I passe ouer, fully of entent; 
For ymenéus / was not ther present,
Nor lucyna / list not ther to shyne,
Ne ther was none / of the musys nyne
By on accord / to maké melodye;
For ther song noté be heuenly Armony
Neither Clyo / nor Calypoé,
On of the sustren / in nombre thríes thre,
As they dydè* when philolegye
Ascendid vp hegh aboue the skye
To be weddi / this lady vertuous
Vnto hir lord / þe god mercurius;
As Marcyn yanméél / de Capelle,
In his book of weddyng can 3ou telle,
Ther concluyng in this mariage
The poete, that whilom was so sage;
That this lady, callëd sapience,
I-wedded was vnto eloquence;
As it sat wel, by heuenly puruæance,
hem to be ioyned / be knot of Aliuanee.
But of bothè* two, sothly, of entent

The dread Guests at Edipus’s Wedding.

At the weddyng in Thebes were absent;
That caused after / grete aduersite.
For fynal enede / of that solemnnyte
was sorowe / and wo / and destruccioun,
Vtter ruyne / of this Royal toune.
Ther may no man helpe it nor socoure,
For a tyme / in Ioye / thogh they floure.

But at this weddyng, platly forto telle,
was Cerberus / Chief porter of helle,
And herebus / Fader to hatrede,
was ther present with his hool kynrede,
His wiff also / with her browes blake,
And her doghtren / sorow forto make,
ydous-chered / and vggely forto see,
Megera / and Thesiphon,.

Allecto ek / with labour and envie,
Drede and fraude / and fals trecherie,
Tresoun / pouerte / Indigence, and nede,
And cruel deth / in his Rentë Wede,
Wrecchednesse / compleynt* / and eke Rage,
Fer ful pale / derkness / croked age,
Cruel mars / as eny Tygre wood,
Brennyng* Ire / of vnkyndë blood,
Fraternal hatë / depë settë the rote,
Sauel only deth / that ther nas no bote,

[leaf 16]

Edippus reign'd long in Thebes,

Edippus reigneth / many day and longe.

Edippus and Jocasta

Assuryd othēs / at the fyn vntrewe:

AH thise folk / werēn / at this weddying newe,

To make the towne / desolat and bare,

As the story / after shal declare.

Edippus and Jocasta had 2 sons

By Jocasta he had sonës tweyn,

Ethyoctes and also Polymyte

And, in bokes / as sondry clerkës write,

Doughtres two/ ful gooldy on to se,

Of which* the ton hight Antygonë,

And that other / callëd was ymeyne,

Of her beautë / Inly soureyyn.

Edippus ay devoyde / of werre and strif,

with Iocasta ladde a mery lyf

Tyl fortune / of her iniquytë

Haddé envie / of his prosperité.

But when Edippus was most famous,

For whan he shon / most riëche in his renoun,

From her wheel / she plongéd hym a-doun

Out of his Ioye / into sodeyn wo,

As she is woné / frowardly to do,

And namely hem / that setten her affiaunce

Of erthly trust* / in her variaunce.

One night

† For whan this kyng* / passing of gret myght*,

Sat* with the queene / vpon a certeyn nyght*,

Casually whan his folk echoñ

Out of his* Chambre sodeynly wer gon,

872. were Bo. Ad.1. this] be Ad₄. Ad₄. I. 873. the] om. G. 878. soma
Bo. sonës M. Ad.₁. 879. also] om. Bo. Polymyte] Polymyte Ad₄. P. 881
ful] om. G. 882. which Di. C. T₄. E₂. the which Ar. G. Bo. and the res
I. C. T₂. E₂. 883. called was] was called G. 885. ay] om. Ad₁. Ad₄.
she] he M. plongéd] plukkyth L₁. 891. his] om. Ad₁. Ad₄. I. into] into a D
PT. I.] Jocasta sees the Wound-marks on Edippus’s feet. 39

Or he was war / Iocasta gan byholde
The Carectys of his woundës olde,
Vpon his fete / enprented wonder depe;

Turnyng her facë / brast out forto wepe
So secrely / he myght’ it not espie,
And she anon / fille into a fantasie,
Ay on thys thyng’ / musyng more and more,
And in her bed / gan to sighe sore.

And when the kyng’ / conceyuetñ her distresse,
He gan enquere / of her heynesse
Fully the cause / and occasione;
For he wil write / in conclusione,
What’ her eilep / and why she ferde so.

“My lorde,” quod she / “withoute wordës mo,
Parcel cause / of this sodeyn rage
Is for that’ I in my tender age
had a lorde / I-named Layus,
kyng of this toune / a man riȝt vertuvs,
Be whom I hadde / a sonë / wonder-fair’,
likly tabene / his successour’ and hair’ :
But’ by causë / his dyvynours tolde
At his birthe / softly that he sholde,
3if he haue lyf / be fatal destanyë,
Sleen his fader / it may non ofer be ;
For which the king’ / his fati to eschewe,
Bad me in hast’ / as hym thoughte dewe, 
To sle the childe / and haue therof no routh :
And I anōn bad with-outë slouth

Jocasta sees the marks of old wounds on his feet,
[leaf 15, back]
*Certeyn men / vp peyne of Iugemente,
To* execute / the comunmente
Of the king* / as I gaf hem in charge.
And forth they gon / to a forest large,
Adiacent* / vnto this contrè,
Percen his fete / and honge hym on a tre,
Nat* parfourmyng* / theexecucioun.

On hym they hadde / such compassioun.
lefte hym ther / and hom resorte ageyñ,
Beyng* in doute / and in noñ certeyn,
At theyre repeire / as they tolden alle,
Of this childe / what* afterward* is falle ;
Sawe they saidé / huntys han hym founde,
Which lad hym forth / and his feet vnbounde ;
But* to what* coost* / they coude not* declare.
Which parcel is of myn evel fare,
Grounde and cause / of myn hevy chere,
Considerd ek the woundës that* appere
Vpon 3oure fete /, and woot* not* what* they mene.
And on thyncg / ay / is at myn herte grene,
My lord,allas* but* of newe date :
kyn Layus / slayèn* was but* late

Jocasta asks why Edippus came to Thebes.

At a Castel / nygh by this contré,  
when Edippus came into the land.
upon 3oure comynge / into this Cité.
Al this yweied / and rekned into on,  
And this yweed, and rekned into on.
Maketh myn hertè / hevy as a stôn,  
Skenfliththis Edippus came.
So that I can counsel / non / nor Rede."

And with that word the kyng lift vp his hede,  
Edippus sighs.
And abrayde / with sharpe sighës smerte,  
And al this thing be ordre / gan aduerte,
Ceriously / be good avisement;  
Ceriously be good avisement.
And by signës / cleer and evident
Conceyuth wel / and sorë gan repente,  
Conceyuth wel, and sorë gan repente,
\[wàs hym-silf / that\] Iocasta mente.  
\[wàs hym-silf / that\] Iocasta mente.

And when the Quene / in manere segh hym pleyñ,  
Jocasta asks
By her goddes / she gan hym to constreyne  
Edippus why
To shewen out the cause of his affray,  
To shewen out the cause of his affray,
And it expowne / and makë no delay,  
he came to
Crop and root / shortly, why that he  
This he came to
Entred first / into that contré,  
Entred first / into that contré,
Fro when he kam / and fro what regioun.  
Fro when he kam / and fro what regioun.
But he hir put / in dilusioun,  
But he hir put / in dilusioun,
As he hadde* done it for the nonys.  
As he hadde* done it for the nonys.
\[il at* the* laëste / he brak out* atonys\]  
\[il at* the* laëste / he brak out* atonys\]
\[into the quene / and gan a processe make\]  
He says he was taken, with his pierst feet,
\[first* how he was / in the forest take,\]  
\[first* how he was / in the forest take,\]
\[wounded the feet* / and so forþ every thynge,\]  
\[wounded the feet* / and so forþ every thynge,\]
\[of his Chershing* / with Polyboun the kyng,\]  
\[of his Chershing* / with Polyboun the kyng,\]
And hool the causeë / why he hym forsoke,

Edippus tells Jocasta the Story of his Life and Sins. [PT. I.


then went towards Thebes by Apollo’s bidding,

and slew King Layus.

He now finds that Jocasta is his mother as well as his wife.

Both sorrow.

And in what wise / he the weyë toke

Toward Thebês / as Appollo bad,

And of fortune / how that he was lad

Wher that Spynx / kepte the mounteyn,

And how that he slough also in certeyn

kyne Layus at the castel gate,

Towardês nyght whan it was ful* late,

And how to Thebês that he gan hym spedè

To fynden oute / the stok of his kynrede:

which vnto hym gan to wexi* couth;

For by processe / of his grenê south

he fonde oute wel, be reknyng of his lif,

That she was both / his moder and his wif.

So that al nyght* and sving on pe morow

A-twene hem* two / gan a newe sorowe:

Which vnto me were tedious to telle;

For ther-þpon /j/þif I shulde dwelle,

A long* space it woldè occupie.

But 3e may reden in a Tragedye

Of Moral Senyk fully his endynge,

His dool, his meschief / and his compleynyg;

How with sorow / and vnweldy age

This Edippus / fille into dotage,

lost* his witt / and his worldly delit,

And how his sonës* / had hym in despit,

And of disdeyn / tok of hym no kepe.

And bookës seyn / his eyën oute he wepe.
And as myn auctour liketh to devise,
s his sones rebuke hym and dispise,
on a day / in a certeyn place
out of his hede / his eyen he gan race,
nd Cast at hem / he can non other bote,
nd of malice / they trad hem vnder fote,
fully devoide / both of loue and drede.
And when Edippus / for meschief was thus dede,
4th-Neene a pytte / made in the erthe* lowe,
of cruelte / his sones / han hym throwe,
Vers* than serpents* or eny tigre wod.
Of Cursid stok / cometh vnkynde bledd,
as in story / 3e may rede her to-forun;
A be the Roesi* / grow / out of a thorn.
Thus of Edippus /, when he was bynde and old,
The wretched ende / I haue* you pleynly told.
For which shortly / to man and child I rede
To be wel war / and to taken hede
Of kyndely ri3t* / and of conscience
To do honor* // and due* reverence
To fader and* moder / of what estat thei be,
Or certeyn / ellis / they shul neuere the.

1004. As] and as M. (from 1003). That Di. his] om. M. sonnes Bo. soones
levoyd Ad.] Ra. 1010. was thus] thus was M. Di. Ra* Ba. P. thus] om. Ad.,
Were Bo. Wer T. *Wer wors Ad., I. than] than a Lb. P. than any Ba. or
of om. L, blynd and] om. Di. S. whan . . . old] fat was so bolde Ad.,
Ad. I. 1018. haue Bo. T., Lb. M. Ad., ha Ar. 3ou] om. Bo. Di. pleynly]
In Ra. and Ba. II. 1017—1020 are very much altered, thus:

Thus I haue rehersid al the caas
Off Edippus whens that he was
And the wretched end wherfore that I rede
Every (eny Ba.) man and child be war and take hede Ra. 1020

1021. and of] and Ad., I. 1022. honor] nur (miswritten) Ar. due M. Ad.,
the] I-the Lb. Ad., Ba. S.

* Nota.
* How every
man oght of
dieute to do
reuerence to
Fader and
modere.
* Or elles ther
wil folowe
vengeance

[Leaf 17, back]

For who that is not to hem debonayr
In specch in port for to trete hem fair,
Hem to obeye in honeste and drede,
And to cherissi* of what they han nede,
I dar afferme exceptyng nil astatic,
That he shall first be unfortunat
In alle his werk both on see and lonk,
And of what thyng that he take on honde
Fortune fowrward to hym and contrayre*,
Waast* of his good, pleynly and appaire,
Fynde plentè of contex were, and striff,
Vnhappy ende and shortnesse of liff,
And graceless of what he hath to* do,
Hatred of god and of man also.

† Therfor no man be heroic rekkëles,*
But make 3oure myrown of Ethiocles
And his brother called Polymyte,
Which in such thyng* gretly* were to wite,
As se shall here of hem how it fil,
And when we ben descendid doune this hil
And ypassëd her to the lowë vale,
I shall begynne the remnant of my tale.

‖ Explicit Prima pars istius Codicilli.

‖ Incipit Secunda Pars Eiusdem.

Secunda pars.

1031. werke] werkus Lb. on] on je G. in Lb. 1032. of] after M. Di. thyng
1033. Fortune fowrward] For the tyme forward E₂, to hym and] and to hym E₁,
contrayre Lb. E₁, P. E₂, L₂, contrayre Ar. Bo. and the rest, except S., that ha
pleynly and appaire] plenty and appayre S. 1035. fynde Bo. M. Ad₁, 1037
do] at do Ar. G. a do T₃, a doo Ap. addo P. he hath to do)] that he hath
do L₂, 1038. Hadrede Ar. Hatered Bo. Hatered M. Ad₁, hated Di. 1039
Therfor] Ther of G. rekles Ar. G. Bo. L₁, Lb. T₂, reklesse Ra. rekleses T₃, Du
L₂ reccheles M. Di. 1042. thyng] thinges E₁, caas Lb. gretly] gretlich A were] was Lb. gretly were] wer gretly Ra. Ba. P. 1043. se] he G. here Ar
Bo. T₁, Du. M. Ad₁, Ra. hire Lb. fil Bo. Ad₁, felle Lb. fel M. fel(): helle
descended G. this] je Bo. M. Di. Ad₁, I. G. of this S. 1045. ypassëd] ypassë
L₂ passed T₁, Ad₂, I. the] this M. P. Iowe Bo. M. Ad₁, Ra.
After Boughton, the Tale goes on.

Secunda Pars.

Assèd the throp / of Bowtoun on þe ble,

By my chilyndre / I gan anon to se, 1048

Thorgh þe sonnë / þat ful cler gan shyne,

Of þe clok þat it drogh to nyne;

And saugh also þe siluer dropês shene

Of þe dewe / lich peerlys* / on þe grene, 1052

Vapoured vp in-to the eire* alofte,

han zephyrus / with his blowing softs

wedere madë lusty / smoth / and feir,

nd right* attempre / was the hoolsom eir*;

he samë hour / aH the hoolë* Route

of the pylgrymes / rydyng* round aboute,

my talë / when I gan proccede,

hercyng* forth / as it was in dede,

Han Edippus / buryed was and graue,

ow his sones / the kyngdam for to haue,

mong* hem-silf / be ful mortal hate

When we'd past Boughton

it was near 9 a.m.

All the Pilgrims rode round me when I went on with my tale.

After Edippus's death,

his sons strove for the Crown.


For the crownë / gonnë to debate
which of hem / Iustly / shal succeed,
And the Sceptre / of the toune possede;
Advertyng nought\* / neither to right\* ne wronge,
But\* echë of hem / to make her partie stronge,
And his querele / proudly to sustene:
From whoos hertës / was devoyded* clene
Of brotherhode / the faithful alliaunce.
Fals Couetise / so made hem at distaunce,
Fully worcynge* into destruccion
And Ruyne / of this noble toure.
So hootë brente the hatred and envie
Of bothe two / thorgë pompous Surquedye,
That* nowther woldë* / pleylynly in a poynß
Other forborne* /, they stod in such disioynte
as thow* they hadde / of berthè* be foreys.
Tyl of the toune / the noble Citezeyns,
knyghtës, Barounës / with many worpi lord,
Shope a way / to mak* hem of accord,
And to seth* hem / in quyete / and* in pees.
But for his part* / this Ethiolesc
Alegge gan that* he was first yboren;

or Hantyg Ra. Ba. nought Bo. not M. Di. nat Ra. Ba. neither to r. ne
G. Bo. Lb. Ad., S. P. E., neither to r. nor Ra. Ad. I. neipre to r. no l
neither to r. ne to Ba. nother to r. ne E., nothy r. nor Ap. nober r. ne
to r. neither to M. Di. to r. nor to T. 1069. querelle Ar. G. quarel Bo.
M. Ad., Ra. quarell Du. T. 1070. devoyded] devoyden Ar. 1073. worc
1076. bothe Bo. 1077. nowther T. neither Bo. Lb. Ad., Ra. wold
Di. how as Ar. G. Bo. Lb. M. E., S. Though as L., lik as T. P. E., L.
berthe Du. birthe M. Ra. berth Ar. Ad., birth Bo. T. of berthe bej of
birthë M. Di. 1080. Citezeyns Ar. Bo. Lb. Citezeyns Ad., S. Citezens
Citezens L. 1081. many Bo. many a Ad. 1082. Shope Ar. G.
Eteocles, as the elder, is to be crowned first.

For which he ought of resoun go to-forn n the Cité / to be crowned kynge,
5th be lawe / ther was no lettyng:
For vnto hym / longeth / the heritage be discent / and be title of age.

But polyme / of ful hegh disdeyn, 1087. 1107. 1094.
M opynly gan replie ageyn
And for his part / seide, in special, 1108. 1096.
Reson was non / that' he shuld haue alle Regaly and domynacioun,
And the lordship hooly of the toun, 1109. 1096.
And he right nought /, out of the Cytè
But* lyve in exile / and in pouertè,
ful concluyng*, with-oute feer and dred,
rather than suffre that /, he wil be ded.
And thus, alas / thorogh her envious strif,
At the ende / euerych loste his lif,
At* gret mischief / as 3e shal after here.
1110. 1094.
But thylkè tyme the lordès al yfere
ful bysily did her dyligence,
By gret* avis / and ful high prudence,
To setten hem in quyete and in Reste;
Conseylyng* hem pleylyn for the beste,
To leve her strif / of wisdam and resoun,
And condescente / to some conclusion

Each Brother is to reign for one year alternately. [PT. II:

The Theban lords get them to agree that each brother shall reign for a year;

and while one reigns, the other shall go away and do warlike deeds.

° The conuenienc of the bretheren.

They shall change yearly.

Which to bothe* / myghte most' availe;
That fynaly / thorgh her gouernaile,
The lordes alle / beyng' tho present',
They han hem broght' / to be of on assent',
Of on hert' / as brother vnto brother,
Euerich of hem / to regner* after other,
3eer be 3eer / as it' cam aboute,
So that the ton / shal absent' hym oute
Fully that' 3eer, and hym-siluen* guye
Be his manhode / and his chyvalrye,
haunte hym-self / in Dedys marcyal;
whil his brother / in his See Royal
Holdeth his sceptre / the Citè to gouerne;
And when the 3eer / his cours hap ronné 3erne
And is come out' / he shal hane* repair
To Regne in the Thebes / lik as lord? and hair,
There to receyue / fully his dignyte;
whil the tother voideth the Citè,
Paciently / taking' his aventure
Til* he ageyn / his honoure may recure.

Thus entrechaunch euery 3ere they shal:
The ton ascenden* / that' other hap a fal.
They most' obeye of hert' / and take it wel,
licli as the tourn / resorte? of the whel.
For this was hool / the composioun

Both Eteocles

A-twene the bretheren / and conuenienc,

Polyneices rides from Thebes.

PT. II.

Polyneices rides from Thebes.

Ful knet vp / be greit avisement,
To-for the goddys / be oth of sacrament;
Neuer after to groche* ne to varye,
But* a-complissiuen Shorty / and not tarye,
ich as thaccord / enrolled in the toune,
From poyn* to poyn* / madé mencionu.

But* alderfirst* / be reson of his age,
Ethycyles / hadde thauantage
To regne aforn / and to were a crowne,
Polymytele / hym hastyng out* of toune
Duryng! that 3eer /, it* may noñ other be,
Whil his brother / sat* in his Royal See
Ful richely vpon fortunês wheel;
And rode hym forth / armêd briñt in stele,
This Polymyte / sothly as I rede,
Hym-silf alone / on a Ryal Stede,
With-oute guyde / al the longê day,
Beyng aferd / to kepe the heghê* way,
In his herte / hauynge* suspicione
To his brother / of malice and tresoun,
est* he pursued / thorgh fals vnkyndê* blood
To have hym ded / for couêtise of good,
That he alloñ / myght* have* possessiou


THEBES.
Polyneices comes to a Forest by the Sea.

Duryng his lif / fully of the touñ.
For which in hast / havyng no felawe,
Polymyte a-sidë gan hym drawe
By a forest / Ioynyng to the See,
knowyng right nought the syyt of the contré,
Ful of hillës / and of hegh mounteyns,
Craggy Rochës / and but fewe playns,
wonder drelful and lothsom of passage,
And ther-with-al / ful of beestis rage;
holdyng his way of hertë* no thyng light,
Maat* and wery / til it drowe to nyght.

And al the day / beholdyng environn,
He neyther saugh castel, toure, ne touñ;
The whiche ping* greuen hym ful sore.

A tempest rises;
And sodeynly / the se began to Rore,
wynde and tempest* hidously tarise.
The Reyn doune bete / in ful grisly wise,
That man and beest* therof were adrad,
And negh for ferë* gan to wexë mad,
As it semptë / by the wooful sownes
Of Tygres / beërës / boorës / and lyouns,
which for refut* hem-silne* forto saue,
Euerich in hast* drogh vnto his Caue.

But Polymyte / in this tempest* huge,
Allas the while* fyndeth no refuge,

Nor hym to schrowde / saugh nowher no socour
Til it was passëd / almost mystynghour
A largë spæc / that the sterres clere,
The cloweës voyde /, in heueni did appere;
So that this knyght / out of the forest large
Gan approchen / to the londe of arge,
Seyn a palays myghty of beeldynge;
Of which Adrastus / callëd was the kyng;
A manly man / riche and wonder sage,
And ronnë was / sondel / into age,
Born of the Ile / which callëd is Chysoun,
And whylom soke / of the kyngë Chaloun;
And for his witt /, in story as is kouth,
he chosen was / in his tendre youth,
Of alle Argë / to be cromned kyngë;
Chief of alle Greece / by record of wrytynge;
Not be dissentë / nor successioun,
But al only / of fre eleccioun
To* holde of Arge / the sceptre in his hond,
As mostë worthy / of alle* grekës lord,
louëd and durëd / for wisdom and Justice.

As the story / pleynly can devise,
This worthy kyngë hadde doghtres two,

Adrastus dreams of his two Sons-in-law.

Passyng fair / and right good also.

It were to longe / her beautè to discryve.

And the eldest / callèd was Argyve,

Dèfyfylè ynamèd the seconde.

And Adrastus, lich as it is founde,

This worthy kyng / haddè sonè non,

To succede / after he be gon ;

For which he was duryng al his lyff

Trist in hert / and* passingly pensif.

But hool his trust / and his hopè stod,

Be Aliaunce / of some worthy blood

Brouȝt Inne by mene / of his doghtres tweyñ,

That he shal be releseèd / of his peyne,

Thorgh recomfort / of some his mariagè.

And sothly yet* ful high in his corage

He troubled was be occasion

Of a sweuen and a visiôñ,

Shewèd to hym / vpon a certeyn nyght.

For as hym thought / in his inward sight*

whyl he slept , / by cleer inspecioun,

A wyldë boor / and a fers lyoun

Possedè shal, thise bestès in her Ràge,

His doghtres two / be bond of mariagè

In shorte tyme / with-In a certeyn day ;

which braght his herte / in ful grete affray.

But þing in soth / that destinè hath shape,

1211. ynamed] ynamed was G. 1212. lich] þe kyng L9. is] was L9.
PT. II.] Polyneices enters Argos city and goes to the Palace. 53

Her in this world / ful hard is to eskape;
Eke merveylous / a man tescheue his faate.

And Polymyte / of whom I spak late,
With the tempest / bete / and al be-reyned
Be grace only / the Cite hath atteyned,
Wither Adrastus / ful statly of degrê,
Thilkê* tymê / helde his Royal see.
The troubly nyghtâ / myrk, and ful obscure,
hath brought this knyghtâ / only be aventure
Thorgh the Cite, enclosèd with a wal,
Vnto the paleys / chief and principal,
Wher as the kyngye / in his chambræ alofte
lay in his bed / and slepte wonder softe.
Eke alle his folk / hadde her chambræ take,
læk as Fortune / peraunter hadde shape,
The silfê* tymé / be-cause it was so late;
And Casuallly / no porter / at the gate,
As itâ hadde* be rightâ for the nonys.
And in a porchê* / bilt of squarê stonyes,
Ful myghtîly enarchèd envyroun,
wher the domys / and plees of the touñ
were executâ / and lawès of the kyng,
And ther this knyght / without* mor tarying,
Wery and maat / from his stede alightâ;
Hangyng the rene / in al the hast he myght,
vpon his arme / surer hym to kepe,

And leyde hym doune / and gan anon to slepe,
As hym semptö / that tyme for the beste.

And whil that he lay thus forto reste,
Of aventure / ther cam / a knyght ryding;
The worthiest in this world lyvyng,
Curteys, lowly / and right vertuous,
As seith myn autour / Callœd Tidyus,
Eurous in Armes / and manly in werkyng;
Of his byrthe / sone vnto the kyng
Of Calidoyne / a londe of gret renown.

And he, allas / out of that Regioun
Exilœd was / for he his* brother selowe,
As Stace of Thebœs / writ the manere howe,
Al be that he / to hym no malys mente.

For on a day / as they on huntyng wente
In a forest / for herte / and for hynde,
So as he stod vnder a grene* lynde,
And Casenuely / lethe his Arow Slippe,
he slough his bröder / callœd Menalippe,
Thorgh mortal sort / his honde was begyled:
For which / he was / banishëd* and exiled,
As the lawë / narowe / sette his charge.

And for this caas / he cam first to Arge,
Into the porche / wher polymyte slepe,
Of aventure / ere he toke eny kepe,

The samé nyght hidously beseyn
With the tempest / of thonder / wynde / and reyn;
And filt also / anoy / and gret damage,
Thorg the Forest holding his passage,
As Polynye haddë* do to-forn,
In peryl oftë / likly to be lorn,
With beestës rage / set* on everie side,
Til of grace with-outen eny guyde

He rode thorg Arge / the grete myghty toui,
Stræght to the paleys / and the chief dongun,
Lich as I tolde / wher polymyte lay;

And at* his comyng / made a gret affray,
For he was blynde / porch derkness of the nyght,

And hym to gwyë* / he ne fonde no liȝt
when he cam Inne / of priket nor of torche,

Til he vnwarly / entred the porche,

And wold han takë ther / his herbygage.

But* Polynye / stert vp in a rage,

Sodeynly awakëd / as I rede,

with the nyinge / of his proude stede.

And first* of al / whan that* he byhelde
A knyght* y-armed / vpon his brest* a sheld,

Polynyez wakes.

Polynyez wakes at the Neighing of Tidens's Steed.

Thydeus threatening to harm Polyneices.

Polynesice says his name and that he means no harm.

Tydeus

"For I, quod he, "toke it vp to-torn and will it kepeth during this nyght, I see the platly maugre al thy myght."
Me to deuyde / but rather vileynye,
3if 3e take hede / that se me a gentil knyght.
And I suppose / 3e han / no title of right
To this logyng / be way of heritage,
More than haue I, for alle 3oure fellô rage.
And pardè / 3it i' shall be no desese,
Til to morowe thogh 3e do me ese,
Of gentillesse / only with 3oure leve ;
To suffre me / it' shall litil greue.'

But Polyneices

Polymyte was froward / and contrayre,
And shortly seide / it' geyneth not' to stryve ;
That' of force he shall devoidë blyve,
Or vttrely / a-ten hem bothe two
This thyngs to Trië / he most haue ado.

And Tydeus, seynge / no bettre mene,
Ful lik a knyght' / in steel y-armëd* clene,
With-out abood / faste gan hym spede
Wonder lyvely / forto take his stede,
And thus thies knyghtës / pompous and ellat,
For litil causë / fillen at' debat'.
And as they ranne to-gider on* horsbak,
Euerich on other / first' his sperë brak.
And after that' / ful surquedous of pride,
With sharpë swordës / they to-gyder ryde
Ful yrously / thise myghty champiouns,
In her fury / likë Tygres or louyns.

1330. vilenye Bo. Du. velonye Di. vilenye Ad. 1334. fel Bo. M. Ad. 
E1. S. both Bo. bothe M. Ad. 2. om. L. 1343 and 1344 omitted in Ad. 1. and I. 
1346. armed Ar. Bo. and all the other MSS. (ep. 1306). clene] brith L1. (; mene). 
on] or Ar ; in Ar. a pause-bar after they and another after ranne. 1352. Euerich] 
1354. sharpe Bo. Ad. sharp M.
Adrastus stops Polyneices and Tideus fighting. [PT. II.

And* as they hurlt / that* all þe paleis shoke,
kyng* Adrastus / out* of his slep awoke,
And made in hast* his chamberleynés calle,
And þorph þe courte / his worthy knyghtes alle,
Comaundyng* hem to descende and se,
And reporte / what* it myghte be,
This wonder noysse / in his courte be nyght.

And when they saugh two straungé knyghtés figh†
In platys bright* / and in thikkë* maile,*
with-outë Ingé / , they hadde grete mervailé*;
And disamayéd / of this vnkouth þing*,
As they fond / toldé* to the kyng*.

† And Adrastus / for derknesse of þe nyght,
From his Chambre / with many torché* light†
Into the courte / is discended donß,
AH his meyné / stondyng en-vyroun,
Of thyes knyghtés having* ful grete wonder.
And of manhode / he put* hem first* a-sonder,
Hem comaundyng / lich a gentil kyng*,
To leuën her strif and sesen of her* figh†;
And entred Inne with a knyghtly loke,
And first* fro hem / her swerdés both he took,
Aftermyng ek, as to his fantasie, 1380
It was a Rage / and a gret folye
So wilfully / her lyvës / to Iuparte, 1384
with-outë Iuge / her querel to departe,
And specialy / in the derkë* nyght'
When neither myght of other han no sight', 1384
Charging* hem upon peye of her lif
To disseuer and styntyn of her strif.
*And Tydeus in all the hast he myght,
Ful humblely* from his stede alight;
And right mekely / with cheer and contenance
Put hym hooly in the governance
Of Adrastus / in al maner ðing*.
And Polymyte / mad ek no tarying* 1392
To light also / and woldë* not wipsey
The kyngges biddynge / lowly to obey,
So as hym ought / with due* reuence.
And as thei stoodë* / both in his presence,
He gan enquerë first / of her estaat,
The cause also why they weren at debat,
Of her cuntrees / sothly and her age,
Laxed ek / touching her lynge,
Be descant of what stok ðei were born.
And Tydeus his answer / gaf to-forñ;
Toldë pleyly / and made no lesyng;


PT. II. Polyneices and Tidues submit to Adrastus.
He's son to Caledonia's king, and is banisht. How that he was / soné to the kyng;
Of Caledoyn / and riȝtful heir' therto;
And of his exile / the soth he told also,
As ȝe han herde / in the storye rad.

Polyneices says Jocasta was his mother,
but holds his tongue about his father.

Still, Adrastus knows all about it.

He has the princes

The strangë knyghtës / beynget at debat,
Thorg his paleys / to chambres of estat,
Eche by hym-silf / forto take his ese.
And every ping; in soth, that myght hem plese,
was offred hem / lich to her estates.
And whan they weren / disarmëd of her platis,
Cusshewës / Greuës / and her sabatons,
her harneys voyded / and her habergons,
Tweynë* mantels / vnto hem wer broght,
Frett with peerle / and richë stonyts, wronght
Of cloth of golder / and veluyt cremysyn,
Ful richely furred with hermyyn,
To wrap hem Inne / ageyn the coldë morowe,
After the rage / of her nyghtës sorowe,
To take her reste / til* pe sonne* arise,
And than pe kyngt / in ful prudentë wise,
First of alle / was not* rekkëles
pe knyghtës hertës / for* to setti in pees,
that\'euer after, I dar afferme it wel,
Eche was to other trew as eny stele
During her lif / both in word and dede,
vnder a knottë / bounde of broperhede*.
\footnote{And Adrastus / pe worthy kyng famous,
A feeste madë / riche and plenteuous,
\footnote{1435. hem} to hem Lb. M. \ haue T₉,
\footnote{1437. Cusshewës Ar. Bo. T₉, M.}
lambions Ra. Ba. 1439. Tweyne Ra. Tweyn Ar. G. Bo. T₉, Ad.₉, Twey Lb. M. Two T₉. mantels Ar. T₉, M. Ad.₉, mantelles Ra. manteles Bo. manteles G. Lb. mantelis T₉. vnto Bo. M. to Ad., were Ad., were Bo. 1440. Frett M. Ad.₉, E₃. Freyt Bo. T₉. S. Freight Lb. peerle (perle) in all the MSS. and] with P. 1440. omitted in G. 1441. veluet cremesyn Bo. veluet

PT. II.] Adrastus sends Polyneices and Tidens to his Palace.

led to staterooms.
Tidens and Polyneices disarm,
are clad in rich garments
and furl wraps,
and then rest.
Adrastus makes them friends,
and each is then true to the other.
[leaf 24, back]
To thise knyghtes, hym-silf therto-at present.
And after mete, ful goodly he hap sent,
This noble kyng, for his doghters dere,
Of gentylless / forto maků chere
To the knyghtes / comů fro so ferre.
And lik in soth, as lucyfer the sterre
Gladeth the morow, at his vprysing;
So thoo ladies / at her In-comyng,
With the stremes / of her eyůn clere,
Goodly apoint / and wommanly manere,
Contenaunce* / and excellent fayrnnesse,
To alle the court / broghten In gladnesse.
For the fresshnesse* / of Her heavenly cheres
So agreeable was to the strau-gers,
At her Entré / that in especial*
hem thoght; it lik a thyng* Celestial;
Enhastynge hem / in ful knyghtly wise
ageyněs hem / goodly to arise.
And as they mette / with humble contenaunce,
Ful konyn gly / did her observaunce,
Hem conveying / to her sitting-place.
But, sothly I haue* leyser non nor space
To reherce / and put in remembraunce,
Hooly the maner / of her dalliaunce.
It was to longe / for you to abide.

But wel I woot / that* the god Cupide,
By influence / of his myghty hond,
And the feruence / of his firy brond,
Her metynge first / fortunœd hath so wel,
That* his arowes* / of gold, and not* of stiel,
IPercéed han / the knyghtês hertês tweyn,
Thorge the brest* / with such a lusty peyn
That* ther abood / sharpe / as spere or launce,
Depe yfiched / the poynť of remembrance,
which may not* / lightly / racêd ben away.
And thus in Ioye / they dryvê forth pe day
In Play and Reuel / for the knyghtês sake.
And towards nyght* / they her chambres take
At duö* tyme / as her fader bad,
And on her way / the knyghtês han hem lad
Reurently vp be many staire ;
Takyng* lievê / gan anoñ repaire
To her logging* / in a ful statly toure,
Assignêd hem / be the harberioure.
And after spicês / pleynly, and the wyn
In Copped gretê / wroght* of gold ful fyñ,
With-oute taryng* / to beddê* streght* they goñ.
Toouchyng* her reste / wher they slepte or non,
Demeth 3e louers / that* in such maner thing
Bexperience han fully knowlecychyn ;

1480 and at once
1483. firy Bo. fuyri Ad., fury Du. 1483. fortuned hath] hath fortunœd Di. 1484. arowes G. Bo. M.
harowes Ar. arwes Ad., gold] on. G (loue added by later hand above the line).
kyghtês kynges Lt. 1492. towards Bo. toward Ad.,. 1493. At] Ad Ar.
due Bo. Ad, dieu Ar. dewe G. 1495. many] many a Bo. Du. L., Lb. Di.
lye Ar. G. leene Bo. C. leene Tj. Ad, T. leef M. here leve Lb. P. gan]
gonne M. T., and gan Ap. 1498. herbergeoure Bo. herbergoûr Ad, herbeioure M. 1500. cuppes Bo. Ad, coupes Ro. grete Bo. M. Ad, gold]
wheder Bo. whedir Ra. whethy Ro. wer Ad, 1503. 3e] the P. 1504.
Ad, I. Ra. Ba. fuly such S. knowlecychyn Ar. Bo. Ad, knowlachynge L.,
Adrastus sees his Dream-beasts on the 2 Princes' shields. [PT. II]

Adrastus lies awake,

For it is nat declar'd / in my boke.

But as I fyndē / the kyngg al nyghtt woke,

Thoghtfull in herte / the story specifies,

Musing sore / and ful of fantasies;

First aduerting / he grete worthynesse

Of this knyghtēs / and the semlynesse,

Her lusty youth / her force / and her manhode,

And how thei weren y-come of Royal blode.

Al this he ganne / to revolue aboute,

Ay in his herte / hauynge a maner doute,

A-twenē two / hangynge / in balaunce

where he shuldē / maken an aliauce

A-twenē his doghtren / and the knyghtēs tweyn.

For on thyngē / ay / his hertē gan constreyñ.

The remembrance / of his avision,

Of which to-forn / I madē mencioun,

Wild Boar and the Lion, p. 52.

Touchyng / pe lyon / and the wilde boor,

It nedeth nat / to rehearse it mor,

Casting alway / in his Fantasie,

What it myghte / cleerly signyfie,

This dirke dreme /; this was hid and cloos.

Next day he

But on the morowe / Adrastus vp aroos,

And to the temple / the riȝte way he took,

And gan prie / deuontly on his book

To the goddes / his dreme to speciefe.

And they hym bad homward forto hye,

And to beholde / in the knyghtēs sheldys

Adrastus sees his Dream-beasts, on the Princes' Shields.

The fellé beestys / peynted in the feeldys;
Which shal to hym /, be cleer inspecion,
Ful pleylnly / maké declaraciqn
Of his dreme / which he hadde in the nyght.
And Adrastus / enhasted hym ful rist
In her Sheldés wisly to beholde.
Wher that he saugh / as the goddes tolde,
In the Sheldés / hangyng vpon hokys,
The bestes ragé / with her mortal lokys.*
And to purpos, lik as wri
t Bochas,
Polyneicés / ful streight embracéd was
In the hert of a feere lycyn.

And Tydeus / abouen his haberioun
A Gypn haddé / hidous / sharpe and hoor,
wroght of the bristles / of a wylde boor.
The whiché* beestis / as the story lerys,
ver wroght and bete / vpon her banerys,
Displaéd broodé* / whan they shuldé fight.
wheref the kyngé / whan he hadde a sighté
Att hys reperi / in herte was ful glad,
And with a facé / ful demur and sad
with his lorde, thaté he about hym hadde,
to the temple / he thys kynghtés ladde.
And whan they haddé / with all circumstanqes
of Ryty oldé / doñ her observaunces,

1532 and they explain his dream,

1536 as Boccacio says.

1540 [leaf 26]
Polyneicés's shield has a
lion's hide;

1544 and Tides's
gipon is of wild-
boars' bristles.

1552 Adrastus
takes Tides and Polyneicés
to the temple,
Hom to the court; they resort ageyn.
And in an hallë / riche and well beseyn,
This worthy kynge of herte lyberal,
Made a feeste / solempe and Royal,
Which in deyntees / surly dyd excelle.
But tis were veyn / every cours to telle,
her straungë sewës / and her sotyltees,
Ne how they sat / lik to her degrees;
For lak of tyme I lat it* ouerslyde.

And after mete / Adrastus toke a-syde
The knyghtës two / and lik a proudd merchant
In sykre wisë / thus his tale he gan.

"Sirs," quod he / "I ne doute it nouȝt
hat it is fretsh and grene / ay in your thought
How that first / by goddis ordynaunce,
And after next / though fatys purvaunce,
And be workynge / of fortunës hond,
How that 3e werën brouȝt into this land
Bothë* tweyn / But now this lastë* nyght.
Of whos comyng / I am ful glad and light
First in my-self / shortly to expressse,
whan I considre / and se the liklynesse
Of your personys / with the Circumstancys
And hool the maner / of your governorys;
Seynge ful wel / wherto shulde I feyne,
3e likly be her-after to atteyn

To* grete estat / and* habundauunce of good,
Thorgh 3oure birth / and 3oure Royal blood;
3e may not fayl’ / but 3e haue wrong’.
For 3e are bothc’ manly / and right’ strong.
And forto sette 3oure hertes mor at ’ reste
My purpoos is / I holpe for the beste,
So that in 3ou be no variance,
To make a knotte / as be allyaunce,
Atwixc’ 3ow and my doghtres two,
3if 3oure hertes / acorde well therto.
¶ And for I am fully in dyspeyr
To succeede for to han an heir,
Therfor 3e shall han possessioun,
Duryng my lyf / of half this Regioun,
Forthwith* in honde’ / and hool after my day.
Ther is no man / that therto shall sey nay.
And sothly after / whan that’ I am graune,
Eche of 3ow / shal his party haue
Of this kyngdam, as I haue provided ;
This to seyn / it’ shall be devyded
A-twen 3ow two, euerich to be crowned,
3oure pourparties / be euytè compowned
So egally / in euery mannys sight,
That’ ech of 3ow / reioysè shall his ryght.
And by 3our wit / 3e shul the lond amend,
And of manhode / knyghtly it diffend.
Ageyn oure enmyes / and oure mortal foì.

1584 As Tides and Polyneices are of Royal blood
1588 Adrastus proposes that
they shall wed his daughters
1592 have half his land during his life,
and all after.
1600 Each shall have an equal share,
1608 and defend the land against its foes.

Tydeus accepts Adrastus's offer.

And for the daies / passëd ben and gon
Of my desyrés / and my lusty soulti,
I am ful set/ / forto makë kouthi

That 3e shal han / lik myn opynyoun,
The gouernance / of this Regioun.
To this entente / me somethi for the beste,
3e to gouerne / and I to lyve in reste,
Fully to folowe / the lust of my desyris,
Hunte and hauke / in wodes and Ryvëris

And for to han / non other attendance

Vnto no thing'/ but' vnto myn ese,
For which shortly / 3if it agrë and plese
That I haue seid / to zon / that' be so wis,
And be according'/ vnto 3oure avis,

Delaieth not'/ but' in wordës pleyñ,
What' 3ow semeth / gif answere ageyñ."

And whan Adrastus / hadde his talë fyned,
Tydeus / with hed / ful lowe enclyned,
As he that was / a verray gentyl knyght,
With al his power / and his fullë* myght

Ful humberly / thankëdë* the kyng
Touchyng* his profre of so high a thyng,

And for his parte / seide he wolde assente
Fully of hertë / neuere to repente,
To a that' ever the kyng' hap sayd.

And Polymyte / was also wel apayd, 1636 and so does
In the story / as it is comprehendid. Polynesces,
And so they ben / bothè* / condescendyd
The kynggès willè / to fulfille in dede
From poyntr to poyntr / and ther-vpon procede,
wherso euer / that they wynnre or lese. 1640

And Tydeus / made / his brother chese,
Of gentillesse and of curtesye,
which that it was / most / to his fantasye 1654
Of the sustre[n / for to han to wive.
And he in soth / chosen hath argyeve,
which elddest was / ful womanly to se.
And Tydeus / tok than* Dêphylyee,
Of her beautè / most soureyn excellent. 1657

And Adrastus / thorgh-oute his lordh hath sent
For his lordès / and his baronage,
To be present* / at the mariage 1652
Of the knyghtês / and make no lettyng;
And they echoñ · cam at his bidding;
In goodly wysë / meke and ful benygne,
Ageyn the day / that he did assigne. 1656
And thyder cam ful many lusty knyght,
Ful wel beseyn / and many lady brijt;
From evry Coyst / and many frecshf squywer,
Be Story seith / and many comunere,

To byholde the grete Ryalte
And the maner / of thys solempnyte.
    But* to telle / aff the circumstances
Of Iustës / Reuel / and the dyuers daunces,
The feestës riche /, and the gyftës grete,
The pryve sighës / and the feruent hete
of louys folk / brennyng* as the glede,
And devyseis / of many sondry wede,
The touches stole / and the* amorous lookes,
By sotyl craft* / leyd oute* lyn* and hokes,
The Ialous folk / to traysshen and begyle
In their awayt* / with many sondry wile:
Al this in soth / descrivyn I ne can.
    But* wel wote I / the newë famë ran,
This menë while* / with ful swift* passage
Vnto Thebes / of this mariage.
And by report trewe and not* yfeyned,
The soune therof the eerës hath atteyned,
reaches Eteocles in Thebes,
Myn auctour writ* / of Ethyocles,
Touchyng* thonour / and the grete encre
Of Polymytyë / highly magnyfied,
And how that he / newly was allied
With Adrastus / in the londe of Arge.
and troubles
him.
The whiche thyng* / he gretyly gan to charge,
Eteocles fears Polyneices will attack him.

1687. Sore musying / and castyng vp and doun
The grete pouver / and the hegh renoun
Of Adrastus / the which of grekes land:
Hadde al the power / soget to his hand:
Lest that he / for Polymytēs sak
vold vp on hym / a newē were make,
But if that he, lik the convencion,
Att tymē sette / deluyerēd the toun
To his broδer / by bond of oth * I-sworn*,
Be conceauntes / assured her to-forn,
3if 3e remember / late as I 30u told:
which he was nat / in purpos forto hold,
But from his heste / Caste forto varye.
And ther-vp on list no longer tarye,
Lich his desire / to shapē remedyes.
And first he sente for his next allies
In whom he hadde / most his affiauncé,
For his lordēs / that hadde gouernauncé
Of his kyngdom / to come to hym anoñ.
And when they waren present euerichoñ,
he seid plenyly / wenyng for his best,
That his hert / shall neuer lyve in rest,
But in sorrowe / and in a manner drede,
Eteocles thinks that, backt by Adrastus,
unless he resigns his crown at the end of his 1st year.
So he sends for his allies and lords,
and tells em he can never rest

1685. Dredyng Iuly / that this mariage
Shal after turne / vnto his damage,
1692.

1698. 1694. 1686. 1685. 1692. 1700. 1708.
1693. 1690. 1695.
1707.
1704.
1699. 1700. 1703. 1708.
1709.
Tyll his brother / outrely be dede;
That he in Thebé's / in his Royal sete
Myyght aloë / regnën in quiete;
be mente hym-silt / shortly, and noth other,
Vnperturbed / of Polymyte his brother.

And at this counsayl / diuers of entent,

But three sorts of men are present.

¶ I fynde wright / thre folkês were present.

Some in soth / that feithful were and trewe,
And some also / that can chauange of newe,
And other ek / that be-twixte* twyñ
Couretsyd powde / vnder colour feyn.

The firste seide, abonen* all* thyng
Trouthe* shulde* / longe to a kyng,
Of his word / not* be variable,
But pleyn / and hool / as a Centre stable.

¶ For trouthe* first* / with-outer* eny wene,
Is Chief Pyler / that* may a kyng sustene,
In Ioye and honour / for to lede his lyff.

For trouthe whilom / hadde a prerogatif,
As of Esdre / the book can specyfie,
Record* I take / of Prudent* Neemye,
That* worthy kyngges / for al her grete pride,
Wyn / and wymmen / ben ek set* a-syde,

With all her power / and domynacioun, 

having their reward / in comparision

To truthes myght / and truthes worthynesse.

For as Esdre / pleynly / dothi expresse,

Who taketh hede / in the same place,

Be* the Influencé / sothly / and the grace.

Of trouthe alloň / this oldé Neemye

Gat hym licencé / to reéedifie

The wallys newe / of Ierusalem.

Which trouthe is tresour / chief of evey rewme, 

For Salomon writ / how that thynges twayne,

Trouth / and mercy / lynkéd in a cheyne,

Preserve a kyng / lik to his degré,

From al meschief / and aduersitê.

Allas therfor / that' eny doublenesse,

Variaunce or vnsicrenesse, 

Chuangé of word? / or mutabilite*,

fraude / or deeyte / or vnstabilete*,

Shuld in a kyng / han domynacioun,

To causen after / his destruccioun.

Of kyngges / redeth the story doune be rowe,

And seth / how many / han ben ouerthrowe

Thorgh her falshede / fro* fortunes whel*.

For vnto god / it* pleseth neuer a del,

A kyng to ben / double of entent*;

For it* may happé / that the world is blent*
Eteocles wouldn't be True, and so destroy Thebes.

If, o'er all, he seeth / be seigh't of her werkyng.

But this the truth"* / god seep every thyng*

Right' as it is / for ther may be no cloude

To-forn his sight' / truth* forto shrowde.

If it may be clipsed / and derk'd be discye, But' at the last' / it' wol clerly shyne,

By fals engyn'e / liggyng in a-weise, Who that' seith nay /, shew his briȝte bemes.

As a serpent* / forto yndermyne;

But at the last / it wol clerly shyne, Who that' seith nay /, shew his briȝte bemes.

For it' in soth / of kyngdames and of Reawmes

Is berer vp / and conservatrice

From al Meschief / sothfast' mediatrice

To god aboue / who so list' to se,

To kepe a kyng* / in Prosperite

On every side / as I afferme dar.

For which 3e kyngges and lordês beth wel war

Your bihestês / lustly forto holde!

And* thank how Thebês / with his wallês* olde

Distroiêd was / platly / this no les,

For doubleness / of Ethioecles,

Which his puple / after sore abouht:

Only for he nat' by counsel' wroght' v

Of hem that' worn / bothe trewe and wis :

End of Eteocles' first year's reign in Thebes.

He gave up Truth, 1784

[1] the counsayl of Flatareres.
and followed those who bade him stick to Thebes

1788

and let his brother whistle for it.

1792

Eteocles decides to stick to his crown.

1796

Eteocles decides to stick to his crown.

1800

How the yeer was come out that Eteocles reigned.

His first year's reign in Thebes

1804

is ended,

1782. worchen Bo. Ad,#, worche M. werke Tg. devys] avise Ad,# I. 1783.

ette Bo. Ad,# 1784. flatere Bo. Ad,# flatrye Ar. 1785. thenke Bo. M.

henk Ar. Ad,# 1786. And] orn. Tg. to holde] tolde Di. to shelde E,# more


Bo. nor Ar. Ra. ne Bo. M. Ad,# Tg. heestes] heste Ra. Ba. to forne Lb. aforne

M. E,# befor Bo. Ad,# Ra. Tg. 1790. his] youre Lb. blowen G. Bo. Tg. Lb.


Soche Eo. Suche all the rest. as] pat Bo. Tg. Du. Lg. M. Di. E,# S. C. Tg. 1795.

hoole her tale] hole her tale M. Di. Ba. C. hool the tale Lb. her hole tale P.

talle whole S. her tale hole Tg. fyned] Ifynid S. fyned (: enclyned) Ra.

Ba. 1799 and 1800 omitted in Du. 1800. hym to] Or holdeth the P. contrayr

contraire Ra. Ba. Eo. he] him Ba. Eo. Lg. they Ro. orn. Lb. Di. was] it was Ra.

Ba. Lg. Ro. 1801. while Bo. Ad,# Ra. whyl Ar. hath] orn. Ad,# Ad,# I. shene

Ad,# sheen Bo. 1802. The] Th Ar. twelve] XII Bo. Ad,# round] hath Ad,# Ad,# I. 1803. Ethiocele Ad,# Ethiocele Bo. rekenyng Bo. Ad,# rekenyng

Ar. 1805. and the] and M. Di.
and he ought to give up the crown to Polyneices.

[leaf 30, back]

who, doubting his brother, asks Adrastus to advise him whether he shall sit still or claim Thebes.

Adrastus says Polyneices may be trapt

Of couenaunte / he shulde voide his place, And Polymytè ek / his iournè make Toward? Thebês /, posses[ion] to take Of duë* title / But t he haddë wronge:

Which thought? in soth / the 3eer was wonder longe

Of his Exil / er it kam aboute. And for he hadde / in hert a manere doute Lest? in his broder / ther wer falsed* found?

Taquyte hym-silf / lik as he was bound, ¶ To Adrastus / he gan declar his herte, Beseching* hym / this mater? to aduerte, And ther-vpon / to 3iue a cousayl sone, Touchyng* his right? / what? was best? to done, wher it? was bet? to go? / or to abyde, Or liche a knyght? manfully to Ryde hym-silf allone / and makë no massage,

For to Chalaunge / his rightful heritage with-Inne Thebês / outhër* be pees or stryf, And ther-vpon / to Iuparte his lif. Thus was he set? / for al his ferçe brother.

But? Adrastus / sothly / thought? a-nother Bet? was to sendë / than hym-silf to go? Lest he were trapped among his mortal fo>? Havyng* his brother / suspecte in this cas That? be fraude? / or be some fallas,

He wolde* werk / to his destrucciou,
Tideus resolves to claim Thebes for Polyneices.

he wer hardye to entreyn in-to toun.

in which he bad hym / prudently tak hede, 1836

nd concludyng / how it was mor spede

at some other be / to Thebés sent,

apparcevy fully the entent

Of Ethio cle / outward be some signe,

and wher that he / his croune wil resigne

or thilke zeer / lik as he made his ooth:

and whan he knewe / how his parpoos goe

her vpon to werken / and procede.

Thus Adrastus / wisely gan hym rede.

And whil they trete / vpon this matere,

Tydeus with a manly chere

side vttrely / for his broder sake,

his massage / he wolt Undertake

ith hool thempris / of thenbassyat,

er it wilful / or infortunat:

e wil not sparé / what so that betide.

But Adrastus / on the toper syde,

nd Polymyte / in conclusion.

Teren contrarye / to that opynyoun,

nd saideth sothly / as hem thoughte righte,

ith that he was / so wel / a preued knyghte

nd descended of so worthy blood,

1834. entreyn Ar. G. E., Ro. Ap. entreyn Bo. and the rest. into] in G. om. Ra. Ba. 1834. [ful] Fully L., P. E., was] were M. 1836. mor] moste lb. was mor] more were Di. spede c. 1839

Tideus rides to Thebes, and goes to the Palace. [PT.

That' they nolde / for non erthly good,
For all Thebès / with the regalye,
Put his body / in such Iupartie.

But all this thyng / anayled hem* ritw* nostw;
For he wol forth / how dere that' it be botw,
Takyng* lievè / first of all thestatys,
And armèd hym in Mayle / and surè platys,
And Shipe hym forth / vpon his Iournè.

who madè sorowe / but Dëyphylè,
with bitter teerès / dewèd al her face,
Ful ofte sit h / swownyng in the place,
Trist and mournyng / in her blakè* wede,
When she saugh / that' he took his stede;
So inwardly gan encres* her mone,
Seyng* her lord / so ridè forth allone
Vpon his way / this worthy Tydeus.

And in al hast', the story telleth vs,
He spedde hym so, makyng' no delayes,
That' in space / of a fewe daies
The helgie toures of Thebès / he gan so,
And entred is / into the Cité,
Wisly enqueryng* / wher the Paleys stood;
And lik a knyght / thidere streght he* rood,
Markyd ful wel / in many mannys sight;
lich Mars / hym-silf, / in stiel y-armèd* bright,
Til he atteynèd hath the chief* dongoun,
wher as the kyng* / helde his mancyoun.

And thorgh the paleys / with a knyghtly look
Into the hall / the righte way he took,

1858—1922 lost in C. 1861. hem Bo. G. M. Ad, hym Ar. om. I
armed] armeth G. sure] in sure M. Di. 1866. The rubric begins with Whom
sorowe, but these three words have been crossed out with red ink. 1869. blak I
blak Ar. M. Ad,]. 1871. So] She M. gan encres(e)] encres gan Ar. G. T, E, E
encressen Ba. gan teueres Ra. gan to in-crease S. 1872. ridè] ridy
L, M. Di. T, E, 1876. in space] in he space Ad, Ad, I. T, E, L, Ro.
Ap. armed Ar. Bo. and all the other MSS. (cp. 1306, 2618). 1883. Ar. / a pause-bar between atteyned and hath. 1884. Wher as] ther as Bo.
Tideus meets Eteocles and his Lords.

From his stedé / when he lighte douů.  
Not afered / but hardy as lyoun,  
Wher as the kyng' / with lordés a gret' route  
And as hym thoug't / connenient' and due  
He entred Inne / most manful of corage,  
A* execute / the fyn of his* massage.  
And as hym thought' / connenient' and due  
'ul konnyngly / he gan the kyng salue  
requiring hym' / of kyngly excellence,  
Goodly wise / to* seo hym audience,  
And not disdeyne / neither in port' ne cheer,  
Sith he was Come / as a massagere  
From Polymyte / his owné brodere dere;  
Konnyng' his talé / thus, as se shal here.  
"Sir*" quod he, "vnto your worthynesse  
My purpos is brefly to expresse  
The effecte only, as in sentement;  
Of the massage why that' I am sent'.  
It were in veyn / longe processe forto make.  
But of my mater / the verrey ground' to take,  
In eschewyng of prolixite.  
And voyde away / al superfluyte,  
Sith youre-silf best' ought' to* vnderstond?  
The causé fully / that we han on hond',  
And ek conceyve / pentent of my menynge,  
Of rightwisnesé / longgyng' to a kyngé:  
First' considred / 3if that' se tak hede,

1899. messagere Ad₁, messangere Bo. T₁, M. 1900. Gynnyng] Begynnynge L₁, S. Ap. his] a P. thus as] as thus Ad₁, Ad₂. I. Ra. Ba. 1901. Sir only in P. and Ro. (re-inserted), omitted in all the other MSS. (Q in Ar. is a two-line capital. In Ra. the late corrector has written O king at the beginning of the line.)  
of his agreement

when Edippus / the oldē* kynge was dede, 1916.
how that 3our-silfe / and 3oure brother blyve 1916.
For the croune / contagiously gan stryve 1916.
As mortal soon / by ful gret hatrede, 1916.
which of 3ow two / shulde* first succeede: 1917.
Til that 3e were / be meenys reconcyled, 1919.
3e to regne / and he to be exiled 1920.

that he should reign for one year only, 1920.
and then give place to Polyneices, 1920.

1926.

[leaf 32, back]

If Tidus mad 1926.
in the name of 1926.
Polymythes / requere. 1926.
Taquake 3ou / lik a trewe knyghtt, 1926.
In eschewing the mortal werre and strif, 1926.

who now requires him to keep his oath. 1926.

That* trouth is mor / in comparisoun, 1940.

Than aH the tresour / of your Regyoun,
More acceptable / vnto god and man
Than aH richessé / that 3e rekne kan.
Wherefor in hast / and lat' ther be no slouthe,
Quytyeth 3our-silf / Iustly of 3our trouthe
Vnto 3oure brother / avoyding' this Cytè,
And lat' hym regnen / in his Ryaltè,
] The crowne of Thebes / a 3eer to occupie.
Than wol al Grece / preise and magnifie
oure hegh renoun / and may sey noth other
But' 3e han quytt' 3ou / Iustly to 3our brother.
This hool theeffecte / of al that I wil seyn,
Answer expectaunt' / what' 3e list' sende ageyn.'"

When Tydeus / haddè told' his tale,
Ethiocles, trist' / and wonder pale,
is conceyt first' in maner* hath refreynd,
Dyssimulyng' / vnder colour feyned,
shewyng' a cheer / in maner debonayre,
Co' his entent' / wonderly contrayre,
ward' in herte / wood and furious,
Turnyng' his face / towarde Tydeus,
he gan abraid' / and at the last' out-brak,
And euen thus / vnto hym he spak.
I "I haue* great mervale //" quod he, "in my thought'
of the massageé / which* that' thou hast' broght,'
that' my brother / as thou hast' expownyd,

1944. Eteocles
1948. Eteocles should then
1952. and let Poly-
1956. Eteocles turns
1960. pale
and dissembles.

* The answer of
Ethiocles.

T. Ap. al pe Bo. and the rest. G. has omitted, of I. 1948 the words silf Iustly of
our trouthe, and of I. 1947 Unto your, and reads: Quytyeth your brother, etc.
1952. 3e] om. Bo. 3e han quytt' ye acquite C. T. E. L. Ro. that ye acquite P.
THEBES.
Desyreh so / in Thebes to be crownyd, 1968
Havynge reward / to the habundance,
The grete plentie / and the suffisance
That he hath nowe / with the kyng of Arge :
That me semeth / he shuld litle charge 1972
To han lordship / or domynacioun
In the boundis / of this lyttyl town,
Sith he regneth / so fresshly in his flours,
Surmountyng / aH his predecessours 1976
Be newe eneres / thorg fortunis myght;
werof in hert / I am right glad and light:
Fully trustyng / if I hadde rede
To his help, that with-out rede
lik a brother than* I shuld hym fynde
To meward feithful, trewe, and kynde:
Supposing pleyneley euermor
Of this regne / he set / but litle stor,
Nor cast hym not / for so short a while
As for a seer, his brother to exile,
To lyve in pouertie / and great distresse.
he wol not suffre it / of his high* noblesse.
It were no token as of brotherhede*,
But a signe rather of hatrede,
To interrupte my possessiou
Of this litil pore Regioun." 1980

Al that he spak /, who that couth aduerete,
Of verrey scorn, Rooted in his herte;

sholde I (than om.) Ad., I. 1982. To meward] To me ware Bo. feithful] feit
As it sempte /, the story can you teche,
By the surplus / sothly of his speche:
He myghte nat no lenger hym refreyne
But platly seide / "as a-twene vs tweyne,
I menè thus / Polymytes and me,
Ther is* no bonde / nor no surité,
Nor feith y-made / that may hym avaylle,
As he cleymeth / to haue* the gouernaylle
Of this Cité, nowther 3ere nor day.
For I shal lette hym, sothly, 3if I may,
That he shal not be title of no bonde,
Reiøysse in Thebës / half a foot of* londe.
Late hym kepe aH that he hath wonne!
For I purpoos / as I haue* begonne,
To rege in Thebës / enforth al my lyve,
Maugré al* hem / that ther-ageynës stryve,
And in despit* of his frendës aH,
Or the counsayllle / that hym list to calle.
lat hym be sur /, and knowë* this right* wel,
his manassyng* I dredë* neuer a del.
And sikerly, as to my devis,

1996

And he platly declares that

2000

Polynæces
shan't have 6 inches of land in Thebes,

2004

as he, Eteocles,
means to reign
there all his life.

2012

As to Tidæns,

Eteocles is surprised at the presumption of Tidens.

Eteocles is surprised at his presumption in bringing Polyneices's message.

While Eteocles lives,

Polyneices shall have nothing to do with Thebes.

Tidens is silent

Whan Tydeus saugh the fervent Ire

Of the kyng\ with angre set a-fire,

Ful of despit\ and malencolye;

Conceuyung eke / the grete felonye


In his appont, lik as he wer wood;
This worthy knyght a lityl whille* stood,
Sad and demur / or oght* he wolde seyn.
But at the laste thus he spak ageyn.

"Certiës," quod he / "I conceyve of newe
Aboute the, thy counsel is vntrewe,
I dar it* seyn and vowën at the best*,
Nor thow art* not* feithful of thy behest,
Stable of thy word / that* thow hast seid to-forn,
But deceyveable / and falsly ek forsworn,
And ek periur / of thyn assured oothi.

"But wher so be / that* thow be lief or loti,
I seye the shortly / hold it* for no fage,
Al shal turn / vnto thy damage,
Trust* it* wel / and in ful cruel wyse.
Alle Grekës londe / shal vpon the ryse,
To ben avenged / and manly to redresse
The gret* vntroutlie / and the hegh falsnesse
Which that* thow hast* / ageyn thy brother wroght.
It shal ful dere / after this be bought.
And verrely in dede, as thou shalt* lere,
kyng* Adrastus / wil medle in* this matera,
And alle the lordes / about* hym envyroun,
That* boundë ben / to his subieccioun;
Prynces / Dukës / and many a noble Knight,
In sustenyng* / of thy brotheres right,
Shal on a day / withi sper and withi shed,
Ageynës the be gadered in a feld,

Tideus upbraids, threatens, and defies Eteocles.

Tideus calls on the Thebans to support Polyneices.

Forto obeye / and serue, botho* two,
This nexte 3eer / now anoñ folowyn',
As to 3our lord / and 3our trewe kyng,
*Polemytes / thoghñ he be now absent,
By Iust accord / maad in parlament,
At 3oure devis / which sitten her a-rowe,
Engrosèd vp / as it* is wel knowe,
And enrolled / only for witnesse
In 3oure regestres / to voyden al falsnesse,
That* non of 3ou / vary may of newe
Fro that* I sayè* / but* he be vntewe.
For which I rede / 30ur-silf to acquyte.
Lat* no tymè / longer / 3ou respit,
But* at* onys / with-oute mor tarying,
Of manly force / feteth hom 30ur kyng,
Maugré his foon / lik as 3e ar bounde,
And lat* in 30w / slouthe* noñ be founde,
To put* hym Iustly* in passioun
This my consayl in conclusioun."

When Tydeus / hadde his massage sayde,
lik to the chargè / that* was on hym laide : 2112
As he that* list / no longer / ther soiourne,
Fro the kyng* / he gan his facè tourne,
Nat* astoune / nor in his hert* afferde ;
But* ful proudly / leyde hond on his swerde,

2092. both Ar. Bo. Ad. 2093. next Bo. Ad. folowyn Bo. folwinge Ad. 2098. vp] was vp E2, well] right well E1, is wel] wele be Di. knowe] I-knowe Ra. S. 2099 in T1, is almost wholly cut away. 2099——2294. in Ra. the original four leaves are lost and new ones, with modernizing alterations, of the text, supplied by the same hand that has made several alterations in other parts of the poem. Ra. is put within brackets, when quoted in this part of the poem; (2099 in Ra. reads: And eke enrolled for to bear wytnesse). 2100. voyden] avoided Ad1, Ad2, I. 2102. Fro Ar. T1, Du. I. P. L. Ap. From L1, Ad., E2. For (see 2103) Bo. G. M. Di. Ad., (Ra.) Ba. E1, S. C. T1, Of Lb. say Ar. Bo. M. Ad1, but] but yf E1, E2, om. L1, (except: Ra.) he be] see be Bo. T1, Du. L1, Lb. M. Di. S. Ad1, Ad2, I. (Ra.) Ba. 2103. your-self Bo. M. Ad1, to acquyte Bo. acquyte Ad1. 2106. feteth Bo. T1, Ad1, fectith L1, Lu. M. feteth hom] (et home agayn Ra.) 2108. slouthe T1, M. C. slouth Ar. Bo. Ad1, slouthe non] no slouth Bo. Ad2, I. E1, S. P. E2. (And lett in you no slothfastnes be founde Ra.) 2109. Iustly] Iustly Ar. 2110. This is Bo. M. Ad1, 2111. Ar. has a second pause-bar after hadde. 2113. he] him Ad1, Ad2, I. Ba. S. that] om. S. he that list] pat list he Di. ther] om. S. P. no longer ther] pere no longer Ad1, Ad2, I. Ba. soiourne] to soiourne Ad1, ba. 2115. astonyed Bo. M. astoneid Ad1.
Tydeus de parte[d] from be kyng.

And in despit[?] / who that[?] was lief or lotli,
A sternē pas / thorgh the halle he gothi,
Thorgh-out[?] the courte[?] / and manly took his stede,
And out[?] of Thebēs / faste gan hym sped, 2118.
Enhastyn[?] hym[?] / til he was at[?] large,
And sped hym forth / toward[?] the londe of arge.

* Thus leue I hym / ridē forth a while,
whilys that[?] I retourne ageyn my style 2119.

Vn to the kyng[?] which in the halle stood
Among[?] his lordēs / furious and wood,
In his hertē / wroth / and euel apayd
Of the wordes that[?] Tydeus had* said;
Specialy / havyng[?] remembruanc
On the proude dispitous diffiaunce
Whilys that[?] he sat[?] in his Royal See;
Vpon which he wil auengēd be 2120.

Ful cruelly, what[?] euere that[?] befaller.
And in his Irē / he gan to hym calle
Chief constable / of his Chyvalrye,
Chargyn[?] hym[?] / fastē[?] for to hye
with al the worthy Choys[?] of his houshalde,
which as he knewe most[?] manful and[?] most bolde,
In al hast[?] Tydeus to swe
To-form or* he out[?] of his londe remwe, 2121.

---

Tydeus rides towards Argos.

Eteocles is furious.

He bids his Chief Constable pursue Tydeus

Eteocles sends Fifty Knights to kill Tideoe.

Vp peyn of lyf / and lesyng of her hede,
With ouyte mercy / anon that he be dede.
And of knyghtes / fyfty weren in nombre,
Myn autour seith / vnwarly hym tenembre
Armed echon in mayle and thikké* stiel,
And ther-with-al // yhorséd wonder wiel.
At a Posterne / forth they gan to ryde
By a geynpath / that ley oute a-side,
Secrely / that no man hem espie,
Only of tresoun / and of felonye.
They haste hem forth / at the longé day,
Of cruel malys / forto stoppe his way,
Thorgh a forest / aH of oñ assent;
Ful courtly to leyyn a busshement
Vnder an hiH / at a streite passage,
To falle on hym at mor unaunytage,
The samé way / that Tydeus gan drawe,
At thylke mount / wher that Spynx was slawe.
He nothing war / in his opynyoun,
Of this compasséd / conspiraciu, 
Butt Innocent / and lich a gentyl knyght,
Rood ay forth / til* that it drowe to nyght,
Sool by hym-silff / with-outé companye,
havyn no man / to wisse hym or to* gye.

Butt at the laste / lyfytng vp his hede,
Tideoe rides on

But at laste sees


[leaf 36] and slay him.
[Fifty knights ride to waylay him.

* How falsly
Ethyocles leyde
a busshement
in the way to haue slayn Tydeus.
Toward Euë / he gan taken hede ;
Mid of his way · riȝt as eny lyne,
Both he saugh / ageyn he monë shyne
Sheldës fressh / and platës bornëd bright;
The which environ / casten a gret lyght;
arma men.
ymagynynge / in his fantasye
How Tydeus
outrayed fifty
knyghtes þat
lay in a-wayt
for hym.
Ther was teson / and conspiraye
wrought by the kyng / his iournë forto lette.
And of al that / he no thynge ne sette,
But wel assurèd / in his manly herte,
list nat onys / a-sydë to dyuerte,
But kephe his way /, his sheld vpon his brest;
And cast he sperë / manly in the rest.
And the firste platly / that he mette,
The rest attack
him.
Thorgh the body / proudly he hym smette,
That he fille dë · chief mayster of hem aH ;
And than at onys / they vpon hym falle
On euerie part / be compass envyrion.
But Tydeus / thorghe his hegh renoun,
His blody swerde / lette / about hym glyde,
Sleth and kylleth / vpon euerie side
In his Iree and his mortal tene,
That meruaile was he myghte so sustene
Ageyn hem aH / in euerie half besette.
But his swerde was so sharpe whette,

2166. Eue] evyn Ba.  heuene Ad1, Ad2, I.  taken] to take C. T2, P.  216 Mid] In myd Bo. T1, Du. L1, M. Di. Ad1, Ad2, I. Ba. S. Amydde P.  In myd
his T1, Lb. M. Di. Ba. E1, S. (ryght manly in þe r. Ra.)  2179. first Bo. Ad
2180. proudly] om. Ad1, Ad2, I. myghtly L1, smerty L2, prudently
2181. fell Bo. M. Ad1, 2182. than] with þat Ad1, Ad2, I. they] þe g
Bo. 2184. heyg] gret Ad2 I. om. Lb. 2186. Sleth[Slowe Lb. kylleth
killed E1, styketh Ad2, I.  (That he dothe slee and kyll Ra.)  2187. an
and in Bo. T1, Du. L1, Lb. M. E1, S.  2189. in Ar. G. Bo. T1, Du. L1, Ad1, Ad
That his foome fonde ful vnsoote.
But he, alas! was mad / alight* a-foote,
Be force grounded in ful gret distresse;
But of knyghthod and of gret prowess
Vp he roos, maugre all his fooñ,
And as they cam, he slogh him oon be oñ,
lik a lyoun / rampaunt in his rage.
And on this hille / he fond a narow passage,
which that he took / of ful high prudence;
And liche a boor stondying* at his* diffence,
As his foome / proudly hym assaylle,
upon the pleyen / he made her blode to Raylle
Al enviroun, that the soyl wex rede,
Now her now ther / as they fillé dede,
That her lay on / and ther lay two or thre.
So mercyles / in his cruelitet
Thilk day he was vpon hem founde.

And attonys / his enemys to confounde,
wher as he stood / this myghty champiouñ,
Be side he saugh / with water turnëd doun,
An hugë stôn / largë / rounde and squar;
And sodeynly / er that thei wer war,
As it haddë leyn / ther for the nonys,
Vpon his foone / he rollëd it at onys,
That ten of hem / wenten vnto wrak,

Tidesus is beaten to the ground,
but gets up,
seizes a narrow pass,
[leaf 37]

He rolls a huge stone
down on his foes,
kills ten,
And the remnaunt amsad drogh a-bak;
For on / by on / they wente to meschaunce.
And fyanal/ he broghte to outrauence
Hem enerychon / Tydeus, as blyve,
That non but/ on / was* left of hem* alyue;
ym-silf yhurt/ and ywounded kene,
Thurgh his harneys / bledyng on the grene.
The theban knyghtes / in compas rounde aboute
In the vale / lay* slayen* all the route,
which pitously / ageny the moné gape;
For non of hem, shortly, myght* eskape,
But dede echon / as thei han deserved,
Saue on excepte / the which was reserued
By Tydeus / of intencion,
To the kyng / to make relacioun
how his knyghtes / han on her iourné sped,
Euerich of hem / his lyf left* for a wed,
And at* the metyng* / how they han hem born:
To tellen al / he suréed was and sworn
To Tydeus / ful lowly on his kne.
By which ensample / je opynly may se
Ageynés* trouthe* / falshed hath no myght.

† Hou trouith
with lityl multi-

with-oute which * may be no victorye *.

Therfor ech man / have * this in memorye *,

That* gret* pouer / shortly to conclude,

Plentè of good / nor mochè* multitude,

Sceightor engyne / fors / or felonye,

Arn to feble / to holden Chanpartye

Ageynes* trouthè* / who that* list* take hede.

For at* the ende falsheede may not* spede

Tendure longe / she shul fynde it* thus.

Record I take of worthy Tydeus,

which with his hand / thorugh trouthes excellence,

Fifty knyghtes / slogh in his dyffence,

But* on except* / as I late* tolde,

Sworn and assurèd with his honde vpholde,

The kyng* tenformè / how they weren atteynt.

And Tydeus, of bledyng wonder feynt,

Maat* and wery / and in gret* distresse,

And ouerleyd / of verray feblenesse ;

But* as he myght* / hym-silue tho sustene.

He took his hors / stondyng on the grene.

Wortheld vp / and forth he gan to ryde

An esy pas / with his woundës wyde.

And Sothly / zit* in his opynyoun

he was alway / afferèd of tresoun.

But* anguyshouis / and ful of bysy peyne

He rode hym forth / til he did atteyne

Into the boundës / of Lygurgus lond,

A worthy kyng* / and manly of his hond.

2239. which] woch Ar. whom G. victoyre (: memorie 2240) Ar. 2240. ech] every Lb. 2241. haue Bo. M. Ad1, ha Ar. 2242. moche Bo. M. Ad1, moch Ar. 2243. Sleight Bo. and all, except Sleight Ar. E1, fors or] force of Ba. (force eke or Ra.) 2245. Ageyns Bo. agoist Ad1, troupe Ad1, trouth Ar. Bo. 2247. To endure Bo. M. Ad1, longe Bo. M. Ad1, 2250. slowe M. Ad1, slewe Bo. 2251. late Bo. M. Ad1, E, C. layt* Ar. (as I have latly tolde Ra.) 2253. tenforme Ad1, to enfourme Bo. to enforme M. 2254. wonder] was wonder Du. 2257. hym-silue Ar. G. Ap, hymselfe E1, S. (Ra.) him-self Bo. and the rest, tho] to G. Ad1, Ad2, I. Ba. E1, S. so L1, Di. hym-silue tho] tho hymself C. T2, P, E2, L2, (he gan hym-selife Ra.) 2258. Stondyng] (vat stode vppon Ra.). 2259. Worthed vp] worchid vp (sic) S. (And vpp he lyght Ra.) to] om. Ad2. I. 2262. aferde Bo. Ad1, 2263. anguyshous Bo. M. anguissous Ad1.
Tideus rides into the Castle Garden,

And he ful paal / only for lack of blood,
Tydeus saugh / wher / a castel stood,
Strong' and myghty / belt vpon a roche,
Touard which / he faste gan approche,
Conveyed thider / be clerness of the ston,
That' be nyght' ageyn the moonë* shoñ,
On heghë* toures / with crestës marcyal.
And Ioyneaut* / almost' to the wal
was a gardyn / lityl out' be syde,
Into which / Tydeus gan ride,
Of aventure / be a gatë smal.
And ther he fond / forto rekne al,
A lusty herbere / vnto his devis,
Sooke and fressli / lich a paradys,
Verray heuently / of inspeccion.
And first' of al / he alighte doun,
The goodly placë / whan that' be byheld,'
And fro his nek / he voyded hath his sheld,'
Drogh the brydyl / from his horses hede,
let hym goon / and took no maner hede,
Thorgh the gardyn / that' enclosëd was,
Hym to pasture / on the grenë* gras.

And Tydeus / mor hevie than is led,
Upon the herbès / grene,* whit, and red,
As hym thoughte / that tyme for the best
He leid hym doune / forto tak his rest;
Of werynessë / desirous to sleepe,
And non awayt / his body forto kepe;
And with dremës / grochëd ever among;
Ther he lay / til* the larkë song
With notës newë / hegh vp in the ayr,*
The gladë morowe / rody and right* fayr,
Phebus also, casting* vp his bemes,
The heghë* hyllës / gilde with his stremes,
The sylner dewe / vpon the herbès rounde;
Ther Tydeus lay vpon the groundk,
At the vprist / of the shenen synne,
And stouadèmele* / his grene* woundës rvnne
Roundë about* / that the soyl was* depeynt*
Of the grene / with the redë meyntr.

And euery morowe / for hoolsomnesse of eyre*,
Lygurgus doghter / madeëd her repeyr,
Of custom ay / among the flourës newe
In this gardyn / of many dyuerse hwe,
Swich Ioyë haddë / forto taken hede,
On her stalkës / forto sen hem sprede,
In the Allurës / walkingt to and fro.

And whan she hadde a litle while* goo

She sees a sleeping knight

her-self allonë* / casting vp her sight;
She byhelë / wher an armëd knygth
lay to rest hym / on the herbës colde;
And hym besydel / she gan ek byholde
his myghty stedë / walkynge her and ther.
And she anon / fille in a maner fer,
Speceally when she saugh the blood
Sprad al the grene / aboute ther she stood.

\[ But at the laste / she kaught hardynesse, \]
And womanly / gan her forto dresse
Toward this knygth / havyng a manere rede
And gret doute lest that he were dede.
And of her willë / sothly this was chief,
That she thoughte forto mak a prief
how that it stood / of this man, ful ofte.

She touches him gently

And forth she gooth / and touchéd hym ful softe,
Ther as he lay / with her hondes smale.
And with a face dedly / blęk, and pale,
lich as a man adawèd / in a swogh,
Vp he stert / and his swenf he drogh,
Nat fully out / but put it vp ageyn
Anon as he hath the lady seyn,
Beseching hir / only of her grace,
To han pitè / vpon his trespace,
And rewe on hym of her womanhede.
For of affray / he was falle in rede
lest he hadde / assayled ben of newe
Of the thebanes / preuèd ful vntrewre;

For dread of which he was so rekkoles,
Ful humbly\n/hym yelding\nto the pes, 2344
Tryst\inhym-silf\nhe passid hadde his boundes.
And when that she saugh his mortal wondres,
She hadde routh\nof verrey gentyllesse
Of his desse\nand of his distresse,
And bad he shulde\nno-thing\nde dismayd,
Nor in herte sorouful nor affrayd,
Disconfort\nhym in no maner thing.
"For I," quod she\"am doghter to the kyng,\nCallyd lygurge\which gretly me deylete
Euer morowe\nthis gardyn to visyte;
It\nto me so passingly disport."
"Wherfor," quod she\"beth of good comfort;\nFor no wight her\touchyng\your viage,
Shal hynder\nor do 3ow no damage.
And 3if\n3e list\nof al 3our auenture
The pleyni*\ntrouth\nto me discure,
I wil in sothi\ndo my bysynesse
To reforme\n3oure greuous hevynesse
with al my myght\nand hool my dylygence;
That I hope of 3oure gret offence
3e shal han helpe in 3our\aduersitè.
And, as ferforth\nas it\nlith in me,

Lycurgus's Daughter takes Tideus to a Chamber.  

Trusteth right' wel / ye shul no faute fynde."

And when he sang' / that' she was so* kynde,  23
So wommanly / so goodly, and benyngne
In al her poort' / be many dyuers signe,
He vnto his' / be ordre wold not' spare
his auenturis / fully to declare,
In Thebès first' touching' his massage,
And at* the hil' / of the woode* Rage,
Of his woundes / and his hurtes sore
(It were but' veyn / to reherce it' mor)
By and by he told her every del,
The which in soth / she likëd neuer a del,
But' haddë routh and compassioun
Of his meschief / wroght' be fals tresoun:
Byddying in hast' / that' he shuld hir' swe,
And wommanly / as her thoghte dwe,
To a chambre / she ladde hym vp alofte,
Ful wel beseyn / ther-in a bed right' softe
Richëly abouten apparyled
With cloth of gold /, al the floor rayled
Of the samë / both in length and brede.
And first this lady / of her womanheide,
hir' wymmen badde / as goodly as they kan,
To be attendaunt' on this wounded man.

And when he was vnarmd to his sherte,

2367. shul Ar. M. Ad1. shal Bo.  2368. that\om. G. she\om. Du. so.
Ad1. Ad.3. I. Ra. Ba. S. om. Ar. Bo. and all the rest. that he was kyng
Ad.2. I. Ra. E7. S.  2370. many\many a Du. Ad.1. Ad.2. I.  2371. wold\di
Ad1. Ad.2. I.  2374. atte the hil G. L2. at hill Ba. E22. al the hil Ar. Bo. of
all the rest, except pe hille L7. all pe wholl S. (see Notes). wode Bo. M. wood Ar2.
of the woode] of all pe woode L7. of the woodie E22. of the worthy P. and
the wood Ad1. I.  2375. and his\ and of his Bo. and E1.  2379. hadde M. i
Ful wel beseyn\om. Ad2. I. ther-in] where inne Ad.3. I. bed] bed was Ad2.
P. (the last three words added with paler & by later hand).
rayled Ad1. Ad.2. I.  2386 omitted in P; the later hand has written in the
margin: With Curtent & hangynge Of Arras golde and stony.
She made first wash his woundes smerte, 2392
washes and dresses his wounds,  
And serche hem wel / with dyuers instrumentes,  
And madé* fette / sondry oynémentes,  
And leches ek / the beste she koude fynde,  
Ful craftely to stauence hem / and to bynde. 2396
And euer thing/ that may do hym ease  
Taswage his peyn / or his woo tapese,  
Was in the courte / and in* the Castel sought/,  
And by her byddying / to his chambré brought. 2400
And for his saké / she hath after sent/  
For swich deyntees / as wern conuenyent/,  
gives him dainties,  
Moost nutrityf / be phisikés lore,  
hem that wern syk / or wounded / to restore, 2404
Makyng her wymmen / ek to taken kep  
And wayt/ on hym / anyghtés when he slep,  
And be wel war / that/ no thing asterte  
That was or myght/ be / lusty to his herte. 2408
Taswage, tho askt to stop  
And with al this / she preiéd hym abyde  
Till he were strong/ and myghty forto ride,  
In the castel to pley hym / and disporte,  
And at leyser / hom ageyn resorté  
when he myght bywelde hym at his large. 2412
But/ al for nought/ : he wil hom to Arge,  
Tideus, tho aswage Lycurgus's castle,  
Ike his lyeye on the nexte day,  
[leaf 40, back] 
With-out/ aboond / to hast hym on his way,  
and bids her women watch him.  
owly thonkyng/ vnto her goodnesse  
will go home to Argos. 2416

2392. wasssh Bo. wassehe M.  
2394.  
2395. leche T.  
2396. mitted in P., but And caused thym his woundes to bynde written in the margin by  
2398. To aswage Di. L/ to swage Bo. and the rest.  
2399. courté contre Ad. I. in the Castel} in om.  
2404. hem/ to hem Ad. I.  
2409. praid Ar. praid Ad. I.  
2413. bywelde Di. S.  
2416. nexte Di. nexto  
2417. hir of Ad. I. goodness]  
2418. worthynesse Ro.
Tides returns to Argos, to his Wife.

Of her fredam / and bountevous largesse,
So womanly that' hir list taken* hede
Hym to refreshh in his grete nede,
Beheestyng hir' / with al his fulli* myght,
He woldi* be hir servaunti / and hir knyght,
Whyl he leueth, of what she wold hym charge.

And forth he rood / til he cam to Arge
In full gret hast / and woldi nowher dwelle.
But what shuld I herecon owther telle
Of his repeir / the coostês or the pleyns,
The craggy Roches / or the hegh mounteyns,
Or al the maner / of his hoom-coyngne,
Of the metynge / or* the welcoyngne,
Nor the Ioȳe / that̄ Adrastus made,
His wife clasps
Nor how his sustre / and his wif were glade?
Nor how that they /, wherto* shuld I write,

him in her arms.
Enbracêd hym / in her Armês white,
Nor the gadryng* / about hym / and the pres
Nor of the sorowe / that Polymytiès

Polyneices
Nor the sore / and his facé pale?

Grieves to see
Mad in hym-sílf / to sen hym so forwounded,*
His greuous hurtes / his soorys / ek vnsounded,

him wounded.
His dedly look / and his face pale?

(Of alle this / to gynne a newê tale

It were in soth / a maner ydylnesse)

Adrastus’s Doctors soon cure Tideus.

or how hym-self in orde did expresse
rst how that he in Thebês hath hym born,
or how the kyng / falsly was forsworn,
or of the awayt / nor tresoun that he sette,
han syfty knyghtês / on the way hym mette,
je han henô / al the manere howe,
ith-oute which / my tale is long; ynowe.

But Adrastus / made* men to seche
every Coost / for many diuerse leche,
so come in hast / and make no taryng,
on a peyne / be biddynô of the kyng,
don her craft / that he wer secured
and of his force / in every part assured.
and they echon / so her konnyngô shewe
at, in space / of a daiês fewe,
e was al hool / maad of his skinesse.
so was ther Ioye / and tho was ther gladnesse
orh-outô the courte / and thorgh-outô al the toun.

Tydeus / for his gentyllesse,
his manhood and his lowlynesse,
atô he was holde / the moste famous knyghtô
ad bestô byloued / in every manmys sightô
orh-outô grece / in every Regioun.

But now mostô I / make a digressioun,
tellô shortly / as in Sentementô,
thilke knyght / thatô Tydeus hath sentô
o Thebês / onely to declare
e grete meschief / and the euël fare

Eteocles, on hearing that his 50 knights were slain, is nearly mad with rage.

Eteocles says his knights were cowards.

*q How Ethiocles was asstoned when he herd the deth of his knyghtes.

Vnto the kyng / how it is befall, The opyn trouthe / of his knyghtes alle, how Tideus hath slayn hem euerychoyn, That, sauf hym-silf / ther eskapéd non : which was reserved / from sheding* of his blood, The kyng* to tellë pleynly how it stood. And when he hadde rehereséd euery poynți, Ethiocles stood / in such disioynt* Of hatful Iré that he waxe nye wood. And in his tene / and his fellë mood, Of cruel malys / to the knyght* he spak, And fellly seidé* that it was for lak Only of manhood / thorg her cowardys, That thei wern slayn / in so mortal wyse. "And hanged be he / highë* by the nekke That of your deth / or of you" slaughter Rekke, Or you compleyn / outher* on or aH, Of the meschief / that is 30we befallt. I do no force / that* non of you astere. But* fye vpon your falsë* coward herte, That on knyght* hath, thorg his hegh renoun, Brought 30w aH into* confusionu, Ful graces / and ful vnhappy to,”

The survivor answers that

"Nay," quod this knyghtt, “it is no-thing* so.

It is thy vnhappe / pleynly, and not oures,
That so many worthy werreoures,
Which al her lif / neuer hadde shame,
Except this quarel / taken in thy name,
That grounded was / and rooted on falssenesse :
This was cause / in verray sikernesse,
Of our vnhappe / I woot wel, and non other,
And the vntrouthé* / don vnto thy brother,
And that thow were / so opynly forsworn :
A parcel causé why that we wer lorn
was fals brekyngg / of thy thyn assured oth.*
And tho the kyng* / almost* mad for wroth,
In purpoos was forto slee this knyght,
Oonly for he seidé to hym right,
The which alias / both at eue and morowe,
Supriséd was / with a dedly sorowe,
Renewëd ay, in his remembrance,
With the pitous / and vnhappy chaunce
Of the meschief / and mysauenture,
Touching the deth / and disconfiture
Of his feeres / and of hym-silf also :
That the shamfast* / in-portable wo
So frat on hym / with such a mortal stryff
That he was wery / of his owné lif ;
Hent a swerd* / and a-sidé sterte,
And rove hym-silf euen to the herte,

2496 Eteocles himself
2500 was the cause of their mishap:
leaf 42
2504 he broke his oath.
2508 This knight, in a fit of sorrow and despair,
2512 drives a sword into his own heart.

The corpses of the slain Knights are burnt and buried. [PT. II.

The friends of the dead knights

w^2 The kyng^2 hym-silf / beyn^2 th^3 present^3;
That^3 the rumour / and the noys is went^2
Thorgh-out^2 Theb^2s / of^* the wood^2 rage,
Be swich as wer^2 * / Ioyn^2d by lynge
To the knyght^2s / slay^2n^2 at^3 the hille ;
That^3 th^3 at^2 tonyes / of oon herte and wille,

They wold^2 han ryse / thorgh-out^2 the Cit^e,
Vpon the kyng^2 / aveng^2d forto be,

Which of her deth / was chiefl^2 occasion^2.

But^2 the barouns / and lord^2s of the toun

But the lords

(leaf 42, back)

quiet them.

want to take vengeance on Eteocles,

Ful busy wern / this Rumour to dysesse,

Of high prudence / to stynten and appese,
In quyte / every thing^2 to sette.

The corpses

And after that^2 the bodyes hom they fette

Of the knyght^2s / lik as 3e han herde,
Afon yslaw^2 / with the blody swerde
Of Tydeus / ful sharpe whet^2 and grounde.
And in the feld^e / so as they hem founde,

Only of loue / and affecion^2,

are brought to Thebes,

Solempnely^2 they brought^2 hem into toun.

And, lik the maner / of her rytis olde,

burnt,

They were first^2 brest^2 / into Asshes colde,

and buried.

Euerich buryed / lich to his degr^2.

Lo her kalendys / of aduersite,
Sorowe vpon sorowe / and destruccioun,
First of the kyng / and aft the Regyoun;
For lak oonly / lik as I 3ow tolde,
That biheestes / trewly wern not holde:
pe Firste grounde / and Roote of this Ruyne,
As the story / shall clerly determyne,
And my tale / her-after shall 3ow lere,
3if that 3ow list / the remenaunt for to here.

¶ Explicit Secunda pars
Joh Lydgate

¶ Incipit pars Tercia

Why, Mars,

And of thy kynde hoot\,* / combust\,* and drye,
(As the sperkles\,* / shewen fro so ferre,
By the strempes / of \* red\*e sterre,
In thy spere / as it\,* aboute goth)

were you so wroth with men of Thebes,

whose city was burnt thru hate,

from Original Sin?

Cruel Mars / ful of malencolye,
And of thy kynde hoot\,* / combust\,* and drye,
(As the sperkles\,* / shewen fro so ferre,
By the strempes / of \* red\*e sterre,
In thy spere / as it\,* aboute goth)

what\,* was caus\,* / that\,* thow were so wroth
with hem of Thebês\,* / thorgh whoos feruent\,* Ire

The Cîte brent\,* and was sette a-fyre,
As bookës oldë / wel rehercë konne,

Of Cruel hatë / rooted and begynne,
And engendred /, the story maketh mynde,
Oonly of blood / corrupt\,* and vnkynde,

Bynfeccioun / callëd Orygynal,
Causyng\,* a strif / dredful and mortal,
Of which the meschief / thorgh al grecë Ran.

And kyng Adrastus / alderfirst\,* began,

King Adrastus resolves to conquer Thebes.

which hath hym cast\,* / a conquest\,* for to make
upon Thebês / for polymytês sake,
In knyghtly wisë / ther to preve his myght\,*
Of ful entent\,* / to recure his right\,*
And first\,* of al he sette a parlement\,*
And hath his letters / and massagerês sent
Thorough-outëe Greece / to many sondry kyngges,
hem to enhast / and makë no lettyngges. 2576
And rounde about', as maad is mencionn,
he sent also / to many Regyoun
For Pryncês / Duke{s} / lordys, and barouns,
To taken vp / in Citees and in toues,
And chesen out' / the moste liklyest',
And swich as weren* / preued for the best:
As of manhode / and sende* hem vp echion,
And in her honde / receyve her pay anon,
with Adrastus to Thebës forto ryde.

And tho lordês / that' with hym abyde
In household stille / han her levë take,
To ryden hom / her retenne to make
In ther contrees / as they weren of degré,
To stuffen hem / and taken vp meynë
And make hem stronge / with knyghtës and squyers,
with sperës / bowës / and with ablasters,
In al the hast' possible / that' they may,
And to returne / in their' best' aray,
At' termë sette, ful manly to be seyn,


[leaf 43, back] The grete pur- neauce of kyng Adrastus toward Thebes.
The court-lords go home for

men and arms, to muster soon

Ther cam the kyng / ynamod palemoun, 2616
Oft assayed / and found a manly knyght, That with hym broght / in steel y-armod* bright,
Ful many worthy / out of his cuntre.

And Tidesus / most knyghtly forto se, 2620
That manly man / that noble werreyour,
As he that was / of worthyness flour,
Maister and myour / by worthynesse flower,
hath sent also into the myghty lond 2624
Of Calcedoyne / of which he was hayr,
That is a kyngdam / bothe* riche and fayr,
Chargynge his counsale / and officers also,
In al the hast / that it may be do,
To seken out / the beste werreyours,
Of famous knyghtes / and preuéd sawdyours,

Thorgh al the lond / and layde on hem this charge 2632
With-oute aboode / forto come to arge.
And they obeye / ful lowly his biddyng,
Enhastynge hem / and made* no lettyng;
But spedde hem fast / vppon her iourné.

And fro Thebës / the myghty strong Citè, 2636
kam doune knyghtes / with many another man,
Maugrè the kyng* to helpè* what they Can,
Considerd first* / his falshe and tresoun,
Ymeued only / of trouthe and of resoun,

to help Poly-
neices,

To Polymytès / as they were sworn of 3ore,

To his Crowne / Iustly to restore:

And whan they weren at large out of the touň,

Vnto Argè / they be descendid douň,

And, lik her oth* / and her assurance,

As they wern bounde / only of lygeaunce,

To hym they Cam / in ful lowly wise,

Redy to doň / what hym list devise.

And whan he hadde / her trouthë * ful coneyued,

He hath to gracë / goodly hem receyued,

Assignying hem / her place mydde the hoste,

Assembled ther / from many diuerse cose:

That* synaly / in this companye

ygadred was / the floure of Chyvalrye

Ychosen out of all grekës lond

The most* knyghtly / and manful of her honde:

That* I trowë, sith the world began,

Ther was not* seyn / so many manly man,

So wel horsëd / with sper and with sheld,

To-gydre assembled / sothly, in a field.

Ther men may see many straungety guyses

Of Armyng* newe / and vncoth devyses,

Euery man / after his fantasye;

That* if I shulde / in ordre specifie

Euery pes / longynge to armure,

And ther-vpon / do my bysye cure,

It* wer in soth / almost a dayes werk;

2644. Vnto Ar. G. C. P. E. And to L. Ro. Inta Bo. and the rest. 2645. lik
om. Bo. oth] both Ar. and her] and Ti. 2646. bounde Ar. Bo. M. Ad., Ra
that Ra. hym] it M. Di. list] om. S. hym list] he wold L. Ro. devise
to devise Ti. Du. L. M. Di. E. S. 2649. hadde] hath Ad., Ad. i. trouth
2650. goddy heym] hem goddy Ad., Ad, i. them goddy S. 2653. synaly
fully M. Di. this] his L. Ro. 2654. ygadred] Thier gadred L. Ro. gader
C. M. 2655. Ychosen] Ichose Lb. Chosen Ti. C. Ichosen was Ra. al] the Lb
2656. manfully manly M. Di. 2659. with sper] and with sper Ad., Ad, i.
second with om. Ad, i. Ba. 2661. may] might Ad, Ad, i. Ra. Ba. E, S
C. P. E. mowe Lb. men may] myhite men Ra. Ba. gyse Bo. M. Ad,
2662. of Armyng newe] or armoure new Du.
And the termes also ben to derk,
To rehearse hem clerly and to Ryme:
I passe ouer / only for lak of tyme.
And telle I wil / forth of her loggyng,
How Adrastus / the noble worthy kyng,
Hath every lord / liik to his degrè,
Receuyed wel / with-Innen his Cytè:
And ther they hadde / liik to her plesaunce,
Of what nedeth / fulsom habundaunce,
For man and hors / plentè of Vitaylle;
Comaundyngt / thatt no thyng ne faylle
That alle thise noble worthy werreoures,
Both high and lought · and poorë* soudeoures,
Iserued weren of thatt they hadde nede.
For Adrastus / prudently took hede,
Ful liik a kyng / touchingt her termè-day,
That thei to-forn / wer serued of her pay.
He was so free / hym listt no thyng restreyñ;
And no man hadde cause to compleyn
For hunger / thrust / nor for Indygence.
And in a prince / itt is ful greyt offence,
As clerkës seyn / and a greyt repreef,
Suffre his puley / lyun at mescheef.
Itt is ful hevy / and greuous in her thoughtt
3f he haboundt / and they han rightt noghtt.
he may nott both / possedë good and herte,
He to be riche / and Seen his puley smerte.

Adrastus gives
[leaf 45]
every one good lodging,
and food for man and horse.

What yayleth
a kyng to payen
his puley trewyly
her sowde.
No one could complain.
It's a great reproach to a prince to be full
and leave his folk empty.

Kings must give freely if they wish to be loved. [PT. III]

He may the body / of power well constreyne,
But her hertë / hath a ful longë Reyne,
Maugré his wyght / to louen at her large.
Ther may no kynge / on hertës sette a charge,
Nor hem coarten* / from her lybertë.

Men seyn ful ofte / how that* thouhte is fre.
For which eche princë / lord / and gouernour,
And specialy every Conquerour,

Lat* hym be war / for al his hegh noblesse,
That* bountë, Fredom / plente, and largesse,
Be on accord / that they his brydel lede,

Lest* of his puple / whan he hath most* nede,
He be defrauded / ; whan he is but* alone,
Than is to latë forto make his mone.

But* in his courte / lat hym first* devise
To exile scarshed and couetise;

Than is he likly / with fredam 3if he gynee,
loue of his puple / euermore to wynne,
To regnë long* in honoure, and contune
Ay to encressë / be fauour of fortune,
And his enemyes manely to oppresse.

For loue is mor / than gold or gret richesse ;
Gold faileth ofte / loutë* wol abyde

2695. power] pore Ad., poore Ad., I. E., poor Ra. poer Ba. the power
povert S. He may wel be body of pore c. Ad., Ad., I. He may the poore bo
P. Ro. coart L., coharten Ra. coharten Ar. Ad., coerten G. coherent T., Lb.
Ad., I. E., coeren M. Di. coerten L., to bynd S. from] for]
one S. every Lb. lord] om. C. 2703. hegh Ar. G. C. T., P. E., Lb. Ro. A
om. Bo. and the rest. 2705. on Ar. om Bo. M. Ra. one E., T., Ap. o
Ad., Ad., I. in Ar., between his and brydel, is written plci, but this is be
crossed through and underdotted. 2708. is] is Ad., Ad., I. S. C. it is
I. Ra. or Lb. 2714 om. in G. 2717. loue] gold Ar. and loue Du. but he
P. E.,
For lyf or deth / be a lordys syde;
And the tresour / shortly, of a kyng
Stondeth in loue / abouen* alle* thyng.
Farwel lordshipe / bothe* morowe and Eve
Specially / whan louë taketh his leve!
And who so list / a merour forto make
Of kyngly fredam / lat* hym ensample take
Of Adrastus / the manly kyng famous,
So liberal and so bounteous
Vnto his puple / at* al tymês found*:
Which mad hym strong* / his foemen to confound*; 2728
And loue only / his enmyes to werreye,
Alle greccë made his bidding* to obeye,
Of oon accord / knyghtly be his side,
Al attones / to Thebës forto ryde,
For tavengë / sith they were so strong*;
The gret* Iniurye / and the inportable wrong*
Don to his sone / and* his next* allye,
As ze to-form / han herd me specific.
But* while* Grekës / rest* a whil in pees,
I will resort* / vnto* Ethioles:
which* in Thebës warly hath espied,
Be his frendes / as he was certefied,
Of the Grekys / hooly the ordinaunce,
Her purpoos ek / and her purueaunce,
And therof had in herte a manere drede.
And first* he took his counsayle and* his rede 2744


Greece ready for war against Thebes. Eteocles takes counsel.

King Adrastus was so generous that his folk loved him;
and all Greece was ready to join him in war against Thebes.

[leaf 46]
Meocles prepares Thebes against Attack.

Of the lordis / and barons / of the toun,
And of the wisest / of his Regioun,
as to his defence.

How he myghte maken resistance,
Manfully / to stonden / at diffence,
To be so strongt / that ther wer no doute.

And in the contrees / adiacent aboute,
And ek also in foreyn Regionus,
He hath withhold / al the Champions ;
And ther-vpon / he sent out his espies
And his frendës and his next allies
And alle the worthy / dwellyng enviroun,
Long / fresh / and lusty / he gadred into toun ;
Maskowede his wallys / and his hegbë* tours,
And stuffed hem / with manly sowddeours.
Round aboute / he settë many Gonnys,
Grete and smale / and somë large as tonnys ;
And, in his hasty / passing feruent hete,
He spent his tresour / and gaf giftës grete
Vnto knyghtes / and worthy men of name ;
And ouermorë* / to encre his fame,
and lords,
he 3af to lordes / Iuellis many-fold,
Clothës of Veluet / of Damask, and of gold,
To gete hym hertës / sothly, as I rede,
To helpe hym now in his grete nede.
He lays in store
Of flesh and fission / and of wyn and corn.

Sette his Capteyns / erly / and ek late
with ful gret stuff strong at everie gate.
And mad also be werkmens / that were trewe,
Barbykans / and bulwerkès newe,
Barreris / cheynys / and dichès wonder depe;
Makyng his Vouh the Cité forto kepe
Whil he lyuep / despit of alh his soon.
And by his goddys of metal and of ston,
Ful ofte he svoor / both of herte and thouht,
That it shall first / ful derë* be abouht;
And many a man with pollex, swerd, and knyff
To-for this toune / shall first lese his liff,
And ther shall ek / many sydës blede,
Or his brother possibly possede
The toune in pees / lich as Grekës wene.
But at the ende / the truthë* shall be sene,
lat hym be war and wel to-forn provyde!
For Adrastus / on that other side,
For his party was not necligent;
But on a day / helde a parlement,
AH his lordës sittyng* envirowen,
To dryvé shortly / a pleyn conclusiou\nAnd vp tapoynt* / the fyn of ther entent.
But somë thoughtë / ful expedient,
Or they procede / to wirkö* be thavice

It is thought best to go by the advice of the wise old bishop, Of on that wise ful prudent and right wyce
And circumspecte / in his werkès alle,
A worthy bishop / into age falle,
And Callod was, sothly / by his name
Amphiorax / of whom the grete fame
Thors through the londe / bothen est and south,
Amonges* Grekes / passingly was kouth;
A man, in soth / of olde antiquyté
And most acceptid of auctorité,
First be resoun of his high estat
And eke for he was so fortunat
In his werkès, and was also secre with the goddys, knowyng her pryvete :
By graunto of whom / as bookès specyfye, He hadde a spirit / of trewe prophecye, And cowde aforu ful opynly dyvyne
Thyngges begonnë / how they shulde* fyne, And eke, be craft / of Calculcioun, 3iue * a dome / of euery questioun ;
And hadde in magik / grete experience, And fyndë cowde / be heuonly influence
And by mevyng / of þe heghë* sterrys, A fynal doome of Contek and of Werry ;
And wistë* wel, as his goddys tolde, that, 3if Grekes / forth her iournë holde, It* turnë* shulde* platly /, this no fage,

To gret spesie / and to gret spesie damage
Of hem ychoñ / ; and in especial
The moste parte / of the blood Royal
Thorgh al Greece, it may not be withdrawe,
In this viage shortly shal be slawe;
And 3if hym-silf / with the Greke's wente,
Who that euer wepte hym / or bymente,
This was the fyn / and may nat be socoured,
Of the erth / he shulde* be deoure,
Quyk as he was, he knewe it in certeyn.
And for he saugh ther was non ofer geyñ
To saue his lif / nor no* bet* diffence,
Than vttrely withdrawe his presence;
* Preying his wiff / for hym to provide,
3if he wer sought / that* she wolt hym hide,
And wommanly / for to kepe hym cloos,
And of trouxh concelen his purpoos;
For al his trust / touchyng his greuance,
was fully sette / in his purvyanse.
I hope to god / that* he thar not* drede
Of no deceit* / in his* wommanhede.
She was so trewe / as wommen ben echon,
And also cloos / and mwt* as a stoñ,
That* she ne wold / as the matier stood,
Discureñ hym / for no worldly good.

[leaf 47, back]  
2824 The prop[er]cie of Amphiorax,  
most of its  
Kings would be slain,

2828 and he himself devourd alive.

2832 To save his life,  
he hides himself,

2836 and asks his wife  
to keep him  
secret.

2840 At first, she  
does so,
Amphiorax's Wife tells where he is hiding.

If But fynaly / the Grekes, of entent;
In al his drede / han* for this bisshope sent;
Thogh it was long / er they myght hym fynde,
For cause his wif / was to hym so kynde,
That ful seurly / hath lokked vp his cors.
But for she hadde a maner of remors

In hir-silf / grevyng* her conscience,
Dредиng* to falle / in full grete offence,
Lest her soule / were in perly lor, 
whan she be oth* / compellèd was and sworn;
They requeryngt / zif she coude telle
wher her lord* the bisshope shulde* dwelle:
Which to discure / his herte was ful loth,
Til tyme she gan / remembren on her oth*,
And coude a truth / of Custom not denye
And hadde also greyt conscience to lye,
Wonder hevy / with a sorrowful face,
Maurgrè hir lust / taughte* hem* to the place
wher as he was / shet vp in a toure,
Al alone / havyng no socour.
They falle on hym / or that* he was war,
And sette hym vp / in a ful richè Char.

A fool he was / to Iupardè his lif
Forto discure his counsel to his wif;
And zit she was ful sory for his sake,
Specially / whan she saugh hym take.

Bot I hopè / that* her hevynesse

2848. his] this Ad, I. S. Ad, (t underdotted). her L, han Bo. M. Ad, (get
hath Ar. this Ar. Ad, I. C. T, E, pe Bo. G. and the rest. 2849. was] we
Ad, Ad, I. 2853. grevyng] geryng Ar. 2854. falle Ar. Bo. M. Ad, f
Du. 2856. oth] hoth Ar. 2857. They] there E, requeryng] required B
P. requyryng her L, coude) wolde P. 2858. shuld Ar. Bo. shold M. Ad
2860. her] the M. Di. hoth Ar. 2862. hadde] om. Bo. she had Ad, Ad,
Ra. Ba. had shee S. gret om. M. Di. a grete Ad, I. as gret S. to) for
Ro. 2864. hem] hym Ar. 2865. wheras) Where pat Di. shet Ra. shitte Bo. M
shut Ad, 2866. Al] om. Ba. 2867. falle] fell L, E, E, They falle on hym
were Ad, I. 2868. And sette hym vp] Is take and sett Ro. 2869. fool] gret
fool E, yeoparde E, E, Iupart Bo. iuparte M. T, iubarte P. iuparte
Ad, C. iupertin S. 2871. she was) was M. Di.
Gan asswage ful sonë, by processe,
In short' tymë / whan that' he was gon.
Ther is no tempest' / may last' euere in on.

But' this bishopes / be verrey force and myght,
Vnto Grekes / conveyed was ful right,
This hoore* gray / in his char syttyng.
And they ful glade* / wern of his comyngr,
having a trust* / and ful opynyoun
That', thorph cause and occasion
Of his wisdam / and his sapience
And by vertue / of his hegh presence,
They shuld eschewe / al aduersite
Possible to falle / as in her Iournë.
And, as the story / fully hath devised,
Ful circumspect* / and riht' wel advised,
he hath pronounced / in the Parlament,
To-forn the lordës / and the president,
his Cleer concyte / in verry sikernesse,
Nat' entryked with no doublenesse,
her dysemol dais / and her fatal houres,
Her auenturys / and her sharpe shoures,
The froward soot* / and the* vnhappy stoundys,
The compleytëts / of her dedly woundys,
The woeful wrath / and the* contrariousté
Of fellë Mars / in his cruelté,
And howe, by mene / of his gyr mood,
and how

all the best
blood of Greece
would be shed.

Ther shal be shadde / al the worthy blood
2906
Of the Grekes / it may not be escheuished,
If her purpoze be execute / and swed.

"Ther is no moré / this shal be the fyñ:
The hegh noblez shal drawé to declyne
Of Grekés blood / in meschief, sorowe, and woo:
And with al this / I my-silfe also,
As my faté hath a-form dispozyd,
Depe in the groundé / I shal be enclosed,
And lookkéd vp / in the dirké* vale
Of cruel deth." / lo ! this was the tale

That* the bisshope / to Adrastus tolde,
Hym counsayllynge* / his purpoze to withholde,
In eschuynge of mor meschief and sorowe.
For alle his goddis he took vnto borowe,
3if þe Thebans / and þe grekés mete,
The fyn þerof shal be so vnswete
2901
That* alle grece after shal it* rewe;
warnyng* hem / 3if þei the meschief knewe
That shal folowe / which no man may lette,
Thei wold abstene / a siegé forto sette
Vnto Thebës / and her purpoze leve.

with whos wordes / the lordës gan hem greve,
And ther-Inne haddé* / but ful smal delit,
And euerechoñ / of hertly hegh despit,
They abrayde / and seide he was vntrewe,
A controver / of prophecëis newe,
And ek also / for al his longe berde,

2900. Ther] The Ar. 2901—2904 omitted in Du. 2902. execute] execute
Adj. Adj. I. S. swed] shwed Lq. served P. 2909. dirk Ar. derke Bo. A
Lb. contrarye Ap. 2927 omitted in Adj. and I.; 2928 in Adj. and Adj. insert
after 2934, in I. omitted altogether (see Introduction). 2927. ek also] also
An olde Dotard / a coward, and aferde; 2928 call him an old
dotard,
And of Rancour / gonnë* to diffye 2930 and say they'll
Both his kalkyngr / and his astronomey,
And shortly seide / pei took therof non hede, 2932 not follow his
Ne wil no-thyng / gourner hem after¹ his rede. 2936 advice,
This was the clamour / and noyse, in anye cost,
Of hegh and lough / porgh-out all the hoost,
And specialy / of the sowddeours,
And of lordës / regnyng in her flours,
And of thethestates / effectuely, I mene,
which of age / were but tendre and grene,
That¹ han* not hadde / by martys Influence,
Of the werré / gret experience. 2940

"If her, zif ze list / 3e may considre and Se
Of conceytes ful grete diuersyte,
How that youth / no peril cast a-fori
Til he by* meschief / sodeynly be lorn*,
Wher as age / provydeth / euery thing
Or he bygynne / to casten the endyng;
¶ youth is gouernyd / be a largé Reynne
To renne forth, and can hym not reffreyñ, 2948
But of hede / set on al attonyys,
As he that hurtleth / ageynes hardë stony.

2929. gonne Di. Adi. C. P. Eo. Ro. gon Ar. Bo. and the rest.
to] hym to Ad.² hym I. diffye Di. T₂. defye Bo. M. Adi. 2930. his] for his
Adᵦ. of his I. kalkyngr calkeling written on erasure with blucher ink Adᵦ. calcing Eᵦ. calcyng Lb. talkyngr Adᵦ. I. 2932. no-thyng] in uo thyng S.
Age and Youth contrasted. Folly oft beats Wisdom. [PT. III.

Broseth hym-silf / vnwarly and parbrakethi.

But' age experte / no thyng' undertaketh

But' he to-forn / be good discrescioun,

Make a due examynacioun

How it wil tourne / outher* to badde or good.

¶ But' 3outh, as fast' / as sterëd is the blood,

Taketh emprises of hasty wilfulnesse,

Ioye at't the gynnyng' / the ende is wrechednesse.

¶ The oldë, prudent' / in al his govenaunce,

Ful longe a-forn / maketh purecaunce;

But 3outh allas be counsail wil not wyrke,

For which ful ofte / he stumleth in the dyrke.

Thus selde is seyne / the trouthe* to termyn.

That' age and 3outhë* / drawë be o lyne.

And wher that' foly hath domynacioun,

Wisdam is putte / into subieacioun,

lik as this bysshop /, with al his hegh prudence,

For cause he myghte haue* / no audienc,

AH his wisdam / and his profecye

Of the Grekes / was holden* but folye.

For thogh Plato / and wisë Socrates,

Moral Senek / and Diogenes,

Albumasar / and prudent Tholomee,

And Tullius / that' hadde soureynty

whyloM in Rome / as of eloquence:

Thogh aH thise / shortly in sentence,
were a-lyve / most konynge and experte,
And no man list / her counsel to adverte,
Nor of her sawes / forto taken hede,
What myght availle / and it cam to nede?
For wher prudence / can fyndë no socour
And prouidensté / haueth no favour,
Farwel wisdam / farwel discreetioun,
For lakke only / of supportacioun.

2976 What's the good of wise men's advice
if folk won't follow it?

For vnsupported / with his lokkses hore,
Amphiorax / sighen / gan ful sore
With hede enclynycd / and many evyl thouht,
whan that he sauhe his counsayl stood for nought.

2977 Amphiorax grieves that his advice is not taken.

Amphiorax / sighen / gan ful sore
With hede enclynycd / and many evyl thouht,
whan that he sauhe his counsayl stood for nought.

2978 For vttrely / the grekës, as I tolde,
han fully cast / her Tournë for to holde,
Made hem redy / and gonnen to hosteye
Toward Thebës / the Cytë to werreye;
And in Grecë / wil no lenger tarye,
And forth with hem / Amphiorax they car ye,
Sette in his Char / with a doolful herte,
Whan he wist / he myghte not asterte
Of his fate / the disposicioun.

And hosteying / into the Region
Of lygurgus / Grekës gan approchie
A sondy londe / with many Craggy roche.

for to] to Ad, Ad, I. Ba. holde] iholde E. 2991. redy] ostry Lj. gonnen
hastye Ad, I. hasty Lj, haste P. 2992. to] forto Tj. P. werreye] verreye Lj,
warry Lj. were; (hostee) Lb. waste P. 2995. char Tj. M. Ad, chare Bo.
But al the way, sothly, that pei goñ,  
For hors nor man / water was þer noñ:  

[leaf 50, back]  
and find no water.  

*þe grete meschief þat Grekes hadde for wateres.  

But drye* weren the valës and thepleynys.  
For al þat þeere / they hadden had no reynys  
But full greth droutht / as mad is menciom ñ  
And al the londe / Cerchynȝ enviroun  

They nowther fondë / wellë nor* Ryver  
hem to refressh / nor water that was cler,  
That* they allas / no refut* ne konne.  
So inportable / was the shenë sonne,  
So hoot* on hem / in feldës wher they leye,  
That* for meschief / man and hors gan deye,  
Gapynȝ ful drye / vpward into south;  

Men suck their spear heads  
of cold iron.  

Tideus and Campaneus  
ride out to search for water.  

They enter a garden,  

But al the way, sothly, þat þei goñ,  
For hors nor man / water was þer noñ:  

PT. III.] He finds the lady Ipsipyle, & tells her the Greeks' want. 125

Wonder hoolson / both of syyt and ayr†;
Ther-Inne a lady / which passingly was fayr,
Sittynge as tho / vnder a laurer tre;
And in her Armes / a litil child hadd she,
Ful gracious / of loke and of visage,
And was also / wondre tendre of age,
Sone of the kynge / born forto succede,
Callêd ligurgus / in story as I rede,
Whoos hertly Ioye / and worldly ek dispersed,
Al his myrthe* / plesaunce, and confort
Was in this childª / of excellent fayrnesse.

And this lady / Myrour of semlynesse,
Al sodeynly as she cast vp her sight
And on his stedè / sauh an armêd knyght,\nGretely abasshed / gan anoî remwe.

But Tidesus after gan to sve
And seydè / " sustir / beth no-thyng dismayed;"
In 3oure-silf displesèd nor affrayed!
For we ar come / only to þî place
3ow to bische / of mercy and of grace,
Vs to socour / in oure grete nede,
Declaring 3ou how it stont in dede:
her faste by / almost at the hand,
The worthiost of al Grekes land⊥,

Kyngges, Prynces / be * loggèd in thefeld£,

And many other / with pollax / speer and shed,  
which in meschief / peryl, and gret drek,  
For want of water / ar likly to be ded.  
For ther was non' / of hegh nor lowgh degré  
In al our host /, now passéd daiés thre,  
That drank allass / excepting non' estat';  
Our viage / is so infortunat':  
Preying 3ow / of wommanly pytè,  
Benygnèly* / and graciously to se  
how of Greee aH pe Chyualrye  
Of her lyuës / stont' in Iupartie ;  
That 3e wold / of wommanhedë telle  
3if 3e knowë* Ryver / spryng', or welle,  
Specially / now in al oure Care,  
of gentillesse vnto vs declare.  
lo' her is alle / 3if 3e list' to here,  
That' I wol seyn / myn ownë suster dere.”  
And whan this lady / Inly vertuous,  
The conpleynt' herde / of worthy Tydeus,  
Of verrey pytè / chaungeth cer and hewe,  
And in her herte / vpon her woo gan rewe,  
And ful goodly / seyng his distresse,  
Seyde vnto hym : in al his hevynesse,  
“Certës,” quod she / “3if I were at' large  
Touching' this child' / of which I hauë charge,  
I shulde in hast' / of al that' doth 3ow greve  

PT. III.] Ipsiphyle guides Tideo to a Well and a River. 127

To my pourer / helpen to releve,
Only of routh / and compassiouun,
And leue / al other / occupacioun,
Conveye* 30we / and be 3oue trewe guyde
To a Ryver / but lityl her be syde.
But I dar not / so moche me assure
This litil child / to put in aventure.
I am so ferdul / from it to departe.
But for 3oure sakè / yet* I shal iuparte
My lif, my deth / of trewe affeccion,
To provyde / for 3our sauacion.

"Took the child" / and laide it in her lappe,
And richely in clothës / gan it wrappe,
And Couchèd it / among the herbès soote,
And leyde aboute / many hoolsom roote
And flourës ek / bothè* blewe and rede.
And suprisëd / with a mane drede
Ith Tideo / forth / anoû she wente,
S she in trouthè* / that no treson mente,
And on hir way / woldè* neure dwelle
Al she hym brouht / to a right faire welle
And ta Ryver / of water ful habounde.

The Greek troops rush to the River, drink and bathe. [PT. II]

But who was glad and who was tho Iocounde

But Tydeus / Seyng the Ryver!

which in al hast / sente his messenger

To Adrastus / and bad hym nat abide,

But doune descende / to the Ryver-syde

with al his host / recur forto haue

At this Ryver / her lyue's forto saue.

And pei enhast hem / makyng non abood,

AH attonys / to the Ryver rood *

Forte drynke* / ; pei hadde so gret lust

Of appetit / forto staunche her thrust:

And somë dronk / and fonde it did hem good ;

And somë wern / so fervent and so wood

Vpon the water / that in sikernesse,

Thorgh vndiscret / and hasty gredynesse,

Out of mesur / the watere so pei drynke

That they fille ded / euene vpon the brynke ;

And somë naked / into þe Ryvere ronne,

Only for hete / of the somer sonne,

To bathen hem /, the water was so cold ;

And somë also / as I haue* 3ow told,

I menë tho that prudent wern and wise,

The water drank / in mesurable wyse,

That of þe thrust / they haue* to-forn endured

They were refresshed / fully and recured.

And Greke's than / of hegh and lowe degré,
For high profit / and great commoditē,
Compass the Ryuere / cristalyn of sighte,
Of oon accordē / they her tentys pyhte
To rest hem ther / in relees of her peyne,
Only the space / of a day or twylene.

And whylys Grekes / vpon the Ruyer lay,
This Tydeus / vpon the same day
Ful knyghtly / hath don his diligence,
This 3onge lady / with great reverence,
To Adrastus / goodly to presente:
At whoso comynge / þe kynge hym-silvē wente
Ageynēs * hir / she fallyng douñ on knees,
All thestatēs present and degrees
Of Grekes lond, absent was nat on;
And in his Armēs / took hir vp anoñ,
Thanking hir / of her bysynesse,
Of hir labour / and her kyndēnesse,
Behotying hir / lik as he was holde,
If any thing pleynly that she wolde
That he may don / she shuld it redy fynde.

And Grekes aH / the story maketh mynde,
Of thestatys / beynge the present,
Thankēd hir / with al her hool entent,
For refresshyng / don to many Grek;
And for her part / they biheght her ek,
With her body / and goodēs bothē two,
What her list / commaunde hem forto do,
Why Ipsiphyle had to leave her own Land.

[PT. III.

To be redy platly | and nat faille.
And her myn autour | makep rehersaille
That pis lady | so faire vpon to se,
Of whom pe namë was Isyphilë,
To Adrastus told /, as ye may rede,
Lynealy / the stok / of her kynrede,
Whilom how she / a kyngges doghter was :
Rehersyng hym | hooly al the cas,
First why pat she / out of her contrë wente,
Shortly for she wuldë * not assente
To execute / a conspiracion,
Mad by the wymmen / of that Region,
A thyng contrayr | and ageyn al right,
That echë of hem / vpon a certeyn nyght,
Be on accord / shal warly taken kepe,
Fader / brother / and husband in her slepe,
With knyvës sharpe / and rasourës * kene
Kytt her throtës / in that mortal tene;
Vnto this fyn /, as bochas tellë can,
In al that londe / be not founde a man,
But slayn echon / to pis conclusiou
That wymmen / myght han domynacioun
In pat kyngdam / to regne at libertë
And on no partie / Interrupted be.

Ipsiphyle
But for pis lady / passing debonayre,
To pis mordre / was froward and contrayre,
saved her father,
Kept her fader / pat he was not slawe
But frow pe deth / preserved and wipdrawe,

Ra. Ba. warly] verraly Du. veryly P. taken Ar. takyn Ap. take Bo. G. of 
For which, alas! / she fledde þe contrè,
And of a pyratə / taken in the see,
To kyng lygurgus / brouht In al her drede.
And for her trouþ / and her womanhede
To hir he took / his jonge child to kepe,
which in the herber / allonē* she left* slepe
whan Tydeus / she broghte to the welle.

And by Iason / somë bookis telle
That* this lady / haddé sonēs two,
whan that* he / and hercules also
Toward Colchos / by hir* contrè Cam
For tacompnysshi / þe conquest of the Ram.
But who that* lyst* / by and by to se
The story hool / of this* ysiphylë,
Hir fadres name / of which also I wante*,
Thouñ somë seyn / he namèd was Thoante,
And somë bokës * vermés ek hym* calle :
But to knowe / þe auenturës alle
Of pis lady / Isyphile the faire,
So feithful ay / and inly debonayre,
Lok on the book / that* Iohn Bochas made
Whilom of wommen / with rethorikës glade,
And directe / be ful souereyn style
To fayrë* Ia(ne* / the queen of Cecile.

Reðe ther the rubrich / of ysiphylë,

---

Of her trouth / and her hegh bounte,
Ful craftily compiled for her sake.

And whan that she hap her lieue take
Tydæus gan hyr to conveye,
To* the gardyne / til* she is repayedred.

Of alle Ioye / and of alle* wulfenesse,
And destitu[t / of myrth* and* alle gladnesse,
For now of woo / gyynn pe sharpë shoures.

For this lady / fond* among the flores
her litil child* / turnëd vp pe face,
Slayn of a serpent* / in pe selue place,
yhr tailë* burlyd / with skalys siluer-shene.

The Venym / was / so persyng* and* so kene,
So perilous ek / the mortal violence
Caussed, allas! / thorg[h] long absence :
She was to slouhi / homwand* forto hie.

But now can she / but* wepe, wayle, and* crye ;
Now can she nouht* / but* sighen and compleyn
And wofuly wryng* her handys tweyn,
Dedly of look / pal of face and chere ;
And gan to rende / her giltë* tresses clere,

ipsiphyle tears
her hair,

3212. is despeyred G. is dispayred Ad2. I. C. T.2. P. E2. Ro. dispire
Adj. S. ys dispayred L1. despeyred Ar. Bo. and the rest. 3213. second* allom.
Bo. and the rest [in P. wulfenesse has been crossed, and replaced by gladnesse by
later hand]. 3214. of myrth* of all myrth L3. E2. and* alle] and of all L1.
word written by later hand, on crasure). 3215. gynnet Bo. M. Adj.1. gynnet
Ar. burlyd] burled vp P. Curlyde no. 3220. now] nought L3. can] gane R.
3225. Now can she nouht] But now she can ought Adj.1. Adj.2. I. Ra. Now et
3227. face] hir face S. 3228. gilt Ar. Bo. M. Adj.1. gylyt P. clere] of here
Ipsiphyle thinks she will be slain for her neglect.

And oftē sith she gan to seyn, "allas!
O wooful wrech / vnhappy in this cas,
What shal I don / or whider may I toune?

For pis the fyn / zif I her* soiourne,
I woot right wel / I may it* not* escape 
The pitous fatē / patē is for me shape.

Socour is non / nor ther may be non red,
lich my desert / but* that I mot* be ded;

For thorhe my slouth / and my neclgyence
I haue, allas! don so gret* offence

That* my gilt* /, I may it* nat* excuse,

Shal to the kyng* / of treson me accuse.
Lycurgus's heir

Thorgh my deaute / and slouthē* bothē* two,
Lyonel's heir
His sone is ded / and his heir also,
which he louēd mor than al his good:

For tresour non / so nygh his herte stood,
Nor was so depē / graue / in his corage:

That* he is likly to fallen in a Rape
when it* is so, myn odyous offence

Reported be vnto his audience;

So inportable shal be his hevynesse.

And wel woot I / in verrey sothfastnesse,
That*, whan the quenē* / hath this ping* espied;

To myn excuse / It may nat* be denied,

Ipsiphyle appeals to Tidues for help.

Will be revenged on her, and demand her death.

She runs back to the Greeks.

Ipsiphyle tells Tidues that a serpent has kilt Lycurgus's boy, and that she is in peril.

Tidues promises to help her.

I do not / ther geyneth no pyte,

With-out respite / she wil avenged be

On me, alas! / as I ha deserved;

That fro the deth / I may not be preserved

Nowther be bille / ne supplicacione;

For the rage / of my transgressioun

Requereth deth / and non other mede."

And thus, alas! she, quaking in her drede,

Non other helpe / nor remedye* kan,

But dreynyt in sorrow / to be Grekes Ran,

Of herty wo / face and chere disteyned

And her chekes with wepyng al bereynyl,

In hire affray / distracte and furious.

To-forn alle / she cam to Tydews,

And fille on knees / and gan her compleynyt mak,

Toldë pleyuly / that for grekes sake

She mort be ded / and shortly in substance

Rehersing hym the grete of her greuance:

First how be traynys of a fals serpent

The child was slawe / whil she was absent;

In what disioynte / and peril that she stood.

And when that he her meschief vnderstood,

Vnto hire ful knyghtly he behiht

To help and forther / al that euere he myght;

hir pitous wo / to stynten and appese.

And forto fynde / vnto hire disesse

Hasty confort, he went a ful gret pas

To Adrastus / and told hym al the cas
Of pis vnhappy / wooful aventure,
Beseching hym to don his bysye cure,
As he was bounde / of equyté and riȝt,
And aduerter / and to han a siȝt.
How she qwit her to Grekēs her to-forn
whan they wer likly / fortō haue* be lorn,
The socour voide of her womanhede:
For which he most of knyghthood taken hede
To remedien pis vnhappy thinge.
And Adrastus / lik a worthy kyng
Taquyt* hym-sylf / the story makepmyynk,
To thy lady wille nat be found vnkynd,
Neither for coste / nor for no travaylle,
But bysye was / in altatmyghtavaille
To hir socour / considered alle þingges,
And by thavice / of alle þe worthy kyngges
Of Grekēs lond / þei be accorded thus,
Prynces, Duke sized / and worthy Tydeus,
To hold her way / and al at onys ryde
To lygurgus / dwelling ther be-syde,
Of on entente / þif they may purchase
In any wisė / fortō gete grace
For this lady, Callēd yisphilē;
They wold assayē* þif it myghte be.

And to his paleys ful ryal bylt of stōn,

PT. III.] The Greeks will appeal to Lycurgus for Ipsiphyle.

To Adrastus / and told hym al the cas
Of pis vnhappy / wooful aventure,
Beseching hym to don his bysye cure,
As he was bounde / of equyté and riȝt,
And aduerter / and to han a siȝt.
How she qwit her to Grekēs her to-forn
whan they wer likly / fortō haue* be lorn,
The socour voide of her womanhede:
For which he most of knyghthood taken hede
To remedien pis vnhappy thinge.
And Adrastus / lik a worthy kyng
Taquyt* hym-sylf / the story makepmyynk,
To thy lady wille nat be found vnkynd,
Neither for coste / nor for no travaylle,
But bysye was / in altatmyghtavaille
To hir socour / considered alle þingges,
And by thavice / of alle þe worthy kyngges
Of Grekēs lond / þei be accorded thus,
Prynces, Duke sized / and worthy Tydeus,
To hold her way / and al at onys ryde
To lygurgus / dwelling ther be-syde,
Of on entente / þif they may purchase
In any wisė / fortō gete grace
For this lady, Callēd yisphilē;
They wold assayē* þif it myghte be.

And to his paleys ful ryal bylt of stōn,
The Greeks ride to Lycurgus's palace.

Lycurgus promises the Greeks rooms.

The worthy Grekes / cam ryding euerichoñ,
Every lord ful freashly on his stode,
And lygurgus / example of manlihede,
Anon as he knewe of her coñynç;
Taquyt hym-silf / licli a gentil kyng,
Ageyn hem went to mete hem on the way,
Ful wel byseyln and in ful good array,
Receyvyng hem with a ful kyngly chere.
And to Adrastus seid, as 3e shul here,
"Cosyn," quod he / and gan hym to enbrace,
"3e be welcome / to 3oure owne place,
Thankyn hertly to 3our hegh noblesse
That so goodly / of 3our gentillesse
Towardes me / 3e list you to acquite,
3oure-silf pis day / 3our cosyn to visite,
In this castel to také 3oure loggyng;
That neuer hit I was so glad of thyng
In al my lif / and therto her my trouth.
And ouermorë / ther shal be no slouth
That the Chambres / and the largé tours
Shal be delyuerc / to 3our herberious;
That ever lord / as he is of degré,
Vnto his loggyng / shal assignéd be.
3oure officerës* / lat hem-silf * devise

3318. goodly] om. I. jour] your he Ad, Ad2, Ra, Ba, S. your good hih I. ye
3319. Towards Ar. Bo. and all, except] Toward Bo, C. you now you I
3323. In] An Ar. And E1. 3324. oumer T1, M, Di, Ad, I, C, Ro. oumeror Ar. more over I, Ad1. ener more Bo, at
3329. officeres Lb. officeres Ra. officers Ar. Bo. T1, M, Ad1, hemself Bo. I
3318. goodly] om. I. jour] your he Ad, Ad2, Ra, Ba, S. your good hih I. ye
3319. Towards Ar. Bo. and all, except] Toward Bo, C. you now you I
3323. In] An Ar. And E1. 3324. oumer T1, M, Di, Ad, I, C, Ro. oumeror Ar. more over I, Ad1. ener more Bo, at
3329. officeres Lb. officeres Ra. officers Ar. Bo. T1, M, Ad1, hemself Bo. I
If the howsying / may largely suffice
To sow and screen / strechen and attein,
That no thyne estat / hane cause to compleyn.
And alle your hoost / logged her be-syde,
which in Tentys / upon you abide,
at hem fette / be myn auctorite,
Vitayle ynofi / her in my Citè.
And alle that may socour hem or saue,
And, at a word / al that euere I hate
Is ful and hool / at your commandement."
I Quod Adrastus / "that is nat our entent,
Nor on no parte / cause of our conyng.
For we be come al for another thyng,
A certyn gift / of you to requere,
Benygnely / if ye list to here,
which may Grekës / passyngly availe,
Of our request / if that ye nat ne faille,
which we dar not / opynly expresse,
with-outé that ye wold / of gentillesse,
3oure gaunt afor / conferme and ratefye.
Than wer we bold / it to specifye.

Lycurgus is told of his Boy's Death.

Quod lygurgus / "what-euer thyng: it be,
Noure' exceptid / but only pinggës thre:
If The first is this / it touchë* nat' my lif,
My zonë sonë, pleylyn, nor my wyf;
Take al my good / or what 3e list provyde
Of my tresour / and sette pies thre a-syde,
Al the surplus / I count nat at a myte."

Than Adrastus / astonyed was a lyte
whan lygurgus / in conclusion,
Of his sonë / made excepcion.
And whilis they / entreten þus yfere,
Ther cam forth on / with a wooful chere,
Of face and look / pal and no-thing rede,
A-lowdë crieth / "the kyngës* sone is dede,
Allas the whyl! / that whilom was so fayr,
After lygurgus / born forto ben hayr;
The which, allas! / hath 3olden vp the breth,
Of a Serpent / stonge to the detli
And with his woundë* / newë*, fressh and grene,
In therber lith / that pitë is to sene,
And hath so leyne / almost: al this day;"
T. III.

Lycurgus laments; his Queen swoons.

That when lycurgus / herde* this affray,
and wist his child was ded and hath no mo,
nytil wonder / thogh that he were wo.
for sodeynly / the importable smerte
tan anoî / and hent* hym by the herte
that, for constreynt / of his dedly peyne,
thorgh-out he felte koruen every veyne.
The ragé gan myne in hym so depe
that he can not* but sighé* / sobbe, and wepe.

And with the noysse / and lamentacion
The qwen distraught* / is descendid doun.
And when she knewe / the* ground of al this sorowe,
hit neded* her no teereis / forto borowe

But twenty tymë ny* upon a rowe
A-swoune she fille / vnto þe grounde lowe;
And stoundé-mele* / for this hegh meschaunce,
Stille as ston / she lyggeth in a Traunce.

¶ And when the child / into the court was brouht
To-fore lycurgus / alas! I wite hym nought,
Vpon the cors / with a mortal face,
he Fil atonys / and gan it to embrace,

Lycurgus weeps for his son's death.

The sorrow that he kyng lycurgus
made for the death of his child and the lamentaciones of the queen.

His queen and lies in a trance.
The boy's corpse is brought in.

Soore* Grype / and ageyn vpsterete;
That when Adrastus / gan this thyng aduerte,
Of kyngly routh / and compassionate
From his eyen / the teerēs fillē doun;
Ek kyngges / Dukēs, that Aboutēs* stood,
Only of pitē / which is in gentyl blood,
No power hadde / the water to restreyē
That on her chekēs / dounē bygan to reyn.
But al a day / woldē* not sufise
Alle her sorowes / in ordre to devise,
First of the kyngē / and of the queene also:
To tellen aH / I shulkiē* neuer ha do,
Not in the space / almost of an hour,
But when the stormēs / and pe sharpiē* shour
Of her wepyng / was somwhat ouergōn,
The lytil cors / was grauen vnder stōn.
That and Adrastus / in pe samē tide
lygurgus took / a litil out aside,
And ful wisely / with his prudent spechī,
The qwenē* present / gan hym forto tech
That so to sorowe / avayllē may right noght,
To mordre hym-silf / with his owēn thouht.
ith loos of deth / no man may recure
Thogh he in woo / perpetuellly endure ;
A helpeth nat / when the soule is go.

And our lif her, who taketh* hed thor-to,
If both an exile / and a pilgrimage,
Of torment / and of bitter Rage,
Lich a See rennyng to and fro,
Wync an ebbé / when the flood is do,
Lytil space abidynge at the fulle :
Of whos soiour / the pope zeue? no bulle.

For kyng is non, nor duk, nor Emperour,
That may hym shroude / ageyn þe fatal shour
Of cruel deth / when hym list manace
To marke a man with his mortal mace.

Than geynpe nat to his sauioune
Neyther Fraunchysë / nor proteccioun,
And lit / or noght / may helpen in this caas
Saufecondit / or Supersedyas.

For in this world / who so look a-right,
Is non so grete / of power nor of myght,
Non so richë / shortly/ nor so bold
But* he'mot' dey / outher* 3ong* or old.

And who in 3outh* / passeth pis passage,
He is eskapød / al the woodë* Rage,
Al sorowe and trouble / of this present lyff,


Adrastus begs Lycurgus to forgive Ipsiphyle.

Repleneshed* with contek / warre and stryff,
which seck'd or nenere / stont* in Suerté.
Wher-for best* is, as semeth vnto me,
No man gruchó* / but, of hegh prudence,
The sonde of goddis / tak in pacience.

And 3e that ben so wis / and manly to,
3oure-silf to drowne in torment* and in woe
For los of thyng* / zif* that 3e list to se,
which in no wise may recuried be,
Is gret foly and vndiscrecioun."

And thus Adrastus / hath conveyéd doun
The substantia hool / of that* he wolde seye :

Til that he fond / a tymé forto preye

Conuenient* / for ysphilice,
Bysechyng hym forto han pité
Of þat* she hath offended his highnesse,
Not* wilfully / but* of reklesnesse :
First* þat* he wold* / his doomés so* dyvide,
Mercy preferre / and sette* right* a-side,
At the* request* and preier of hem alle,
Of this vnhappe / and meschief that* is falle

The Serpent or Ipsiphyle must be kild.

by hasty Rigour / nat to do vengeaunce, 
hat' thynk afor / in his purvyance, 
cho to wrechës / doth mercy / in her drede, 
hal mercy fyndë / whom he hath most' nede: 
and sith he hath power, myght, and space, 
at hym tak this lady / to his grace, 
for lak of routhë* / that' she nat' ne dye. 
| But tho the quenë / gan agayn replye 
And platly seide / as in this matere, 
\textit{A}vayleth not' requeste / nor preyere, 
?ytë, Mercy / nor remyssyoun, 
Bat' zif it' be' / by this condicioun 
That' the serpent', cause of al pis sorrowe, 
Thorgh her labour / lay his hed to borowe. 
This is fynal / and vtter recompense 
Io fyndë gracë / for her gret' offence, 
Or ellis Shortly / shoedë* blood for blood. 

And when Grekys her answer vnderstood,  
Al of accord* / in her beste wise, 
Took on hem / this auenturous emprise, 
For loue only / of Ysphylee; 
And gan to ryde / envoyron pe contré, 
By hillës, valeys / Rochës, and ek Cauës,  

The Serpent is shot, and Ipsiphyle is forgiven. [PT. II]

In dychis dirk \ and in olde gravis,
By everey cooste \ cerchyng \ vp \ and doun:
Til at the last \ ful famous of renown;
The worthy knyght \ parthonolope
was the first \ that happed for \ to Se
This hydous Serpent \ by a Ryver-side,
Gret and horrible \ stern and full of pride,
Vndere a Rocchi* \ by a banke lowe;
And in al hast \ he bent a sturdy bowe,
And ther-In sette an arowe* fylid kene,
And through the body \ spotted blew \ and grene,
Ful myghtily he made it forte Glyde,
Hent* out \ a swerde \ hongyng be his syde,
Smoot \ of his hede \ and ano\n it hent
And ther-with-al gan the Quene present*,
wherthorgh her sorowe parcel gan aswayne.
And thus, of provessse \ and of hegh corage
This manly man \ parthonolope
hath reconciled faire Ipsiphyle
Vnto gracë \ fully \ of \ to Quene,
Hir* Ire avoided* \ and her olde tene.

And by Adrastus mediacion,
Kyng lygurgus \ graunted a pardoun
To this lady, that* from al daunger fre,
She was restorëd to her libertë.

3484. dirk Ad, derke Bo. derk M. 3486. atte last Bo. Ad, at last M. 3487. knyght] king Ad, Ad, I. 3488. happe\] happende Lb. happenyd P for to Lb. C T2, E, to Ar. Bo. and the rest. 3491. roche Bo. M. Rocch Ar roch Ad, banke Bo. bank M. Ad, 3492. al at the Ad, I. bent] hente Di Ba. E, C T2, L, 3493. a narowe Ar. 3496. The line begins with And in all th MSS. except Ar. G. L, Hent out] Rent out Ar. G. Bo. T, Du. L, E, L, 3499 her sorow]\em Lb. C T2, P, E, parcel] em Ad, Ad, I. Ra. Ba. S. gan] sh gan E, aswayne] tasswayne E, to aswayne Lb. Ra. P. to swage C. T, 3500 and of] and Ad, Ad, I. Ra. S. C 3501. parthonolope] this prothonolope C this Parthonolope T, E, 3504. avoided Bo. T, Du. L, M. Di. Ra. Ba. S. L, avoided Ar. G. Ad, auo\] voved Lb. C T2, E, voved P. olde] om. G. Ra Ba. 3504 in Ad, is omitted at its right place, and stands at the bottom of the second column of the page, after l. 3522; in Ad, and I. it has been replaced by a new line, to rhyme with 3503, viz. Off the offence of his pardoned to bene. 3507 that] om. Lb. M. Di. C T2, P, E, daunger] damag S. in Ra. l. 3507, which is the bottom line of leaf 38 back, stops at To this ladie th; after th a few letters seem to be erased, but most of the latter half of 3507 has never been written, the vellum being quite untouched here.
In his paleys / al her lif to dwelle.
Thogh Iohn Bochas / pe contrarie telle:
For this autour affermep / out of dread
That, when this child / was by the serpent ded,
She durste not / for her gret offence
Neuer after comeñ in presence
Of lyurgus / but of intencioun
Fledde anon / out of that Regioun ;
Att herte she took / the childês deth so sore.
what fille of hir* / I fyndë* can no more
Than 3e han her‡ / aform me specifye.
And the kyngdam / but 3if bookys lye,
Of lyurgus / was ycallêd Trace.
And, as I rede in an other place,
He was pe samé myghty Champioun,
To Athenes / that kam with Palamoun
Ageyne his brother / that callèd was arcye,
Lad in his chaar / with fourë* bookys whyte,
Vpon his hed / a wreth of gold‡ ful fyn.
And I fynd ek* / how bachus, god of wyn,
with this kyng* / was whilom at debat*;
Only for he / pompous and Elat*,
Destruccioun / didë* to his vynys,


THEBES.
and put water in wine,
the God broke his limbs and drowned him.

And for he first / sett allay on wynys,
Meynté water / when they were to strong.
And this Bachus / for the grete wrong'
Brak his lymys / and dreynt hym in þe Sece.
Of lygurgus / 3e gete no more of me.

But the truth / þif þe lyst vervyfie,
Rede of goddes / the Genologye,
lynealy / her kynrede be degrees,
I-braunchëd out / vpon twelue trees,
Mad by Bochas / decertaldo called,
Among Poetys / in ytaillé stalled,
Next Fraunceys Petrak / swyng in certeyn.

Now vnto Grekys / I wil retourne ageyn,
To tellè forth shortly, þif I konne,
Of her Iournè / that they haue * begonne :
how Adrastus / hath his lieuu * take
Of ligurgus / with his browes blake ;
And departyng, with seynt Iohan to borowe,
Mad his wardës / on the nexte morowe
So wel beseyn / so myghty, and so strong,
Wonder orly / when þe larkë * song,
With a trumpet * warnëd euery man
To be redy / in al the hast they kan
Forte remewe / and no letting make.

Not de xii arboribus in libro Bochacii de genealogia
See Boccaccio on the Genealogy of the Gods.
He was next poet to Petrarch.

[A leaf 59, back]

Adrastus takes leave of Lygurgus.

Ad_, Meynt Bo. water] with water E_, whan Ar. G. Lb (when) C. T. P. E
L. (when) þere Bo. where T. and the rest. to] so L. Di. Ra. om. B
3534. this] thus Lb. S. P. Bachus Ar. Bo. M. Ad_, Bacus T. bakes L
Bochas E_, the grete] grete Ra. Ba. þat stronge M. Di. 3535. lymys M
lymes Bo. limes Ad_, lymes S. dreynt] drouned C. 3537. vervyfie Bo.
Dn. Ad_, to specific Ad_. I. 3538. Rede Bo. M. ređith Ad
goddes] the goddes Ad_. I. of goddes the] the goddes of Ba. genologye Ad
genalogie Bo. Genealogie M. genalogye Di. Genalogie Ad_. genealogie%
3540. vpon] on Ra. of Ba. XII Bo. twelv Ad_, 3541. decertaldo Ar. B
3545. forth shortly] shortly forth Ad_, 3547. lief Ar. leene Bo. Iene M. Ad
Ar. Bo. M. Ad_, Ion C. Iohan E_, borowe Bo. borw M. Ad_, 355
omitted in Ba. 3551. myghty] mystely Di. 3552. larkë Bo. Ad_, la
Ar. M. 3553. warned] warnë Bo. M. Ad_, I. 3554. they] he Ad_, Ad
I. Ba. 3555. remewe Bo. M. Ad_,
And so they han / the righte way I-take
Touarë Thébiês / the grekês euerychoïn,
That's such a nombre / gadred into on,
Of worthy knyghtês neuerė aforn was scyn,
when they in ferê / monstrēd in a pleyû.
And they ne stënty by non occasion
Til they be come euên a-for the toure,
And pight her tentys / proudly, as I rede,
Vnder the wallys / in a gryn* mede.

¶ And when the* thebans / were besette aboute,
The manly knyghtês / wold han* yssyd oute
And hane* scarmosshéd / in her lusty pride,
With her foomen / on the toper side.
But* be byddying* / of Ethiocles
Alle plûkë* nyght / ïe kepte hem-silf in pe,
Be cause only / that* it was so late,
With grety awayt* / set at* euerÿ gate,
Men of Armys / al the nyght* wakyng*
On the wallys / be byddying* of ïe kying,
Lest* þer werë / treynys or tresoun.

And on the tours / and in the Chief Dongoun
he sette vp men / to makë mortal sowns
with brasyn horns / and loudë Clarions,
Of ful entent* / ïe wacchës farto kepe,
In his wårë / that* no man ne slope.
And Grekys proudly / al ïe longe nyght*
kyndled* fyrys / and maadal ful gret lyght*;

The Greeks ravage the Country round Thebes.

Sette vp loggyng / vpon everey Syde
lik as they shuld / euere ther abyde,
Compas the toune / ther was no voidè space
But al besette / her fomen to manace.
And whilys they afor þe Citi laye,
On everey cost / they sent out to forraye,
Brente townes / thorpe's and vilages,
with grete ravnyn makynge theyr pillages,
Spoyyle / and robbe / and brouȝt* home vitaille
And al maner soortes / of bestaylle,
Shep / and neet* / and in her cruel rage
with houndes slowe / at that was saugage,
Hert* and hyndë* / bothë buk and doo,
The blake* beer / and þe wylde Roo
The fatte swyn / and þe tusshy* boor,
Karyng* al hom / for the grekës stoor,
whete and wyn / for her auaunage,
Hay and Otys / foder / and forage.
With þis kalendis / as hem thynkë* dwe,
Greks gan / the thebans to Salwe,

PT. III.] Different opinions on the War raised among the Thebans. 149

Mynistring: hem / occasionis* felle,
be sege settē / shortly forto telle,
Of ful ententes / in their hateful pryde,
For lif or deth / ther-vpon tabilde,
who so euer / ther-with be a-greued,
Til they fully / her purpoos hauve achede;
Ther may therof / be makēd no relees.

And of al* this / ful war / Ethiccles
Can in party / gretly to * meraville
when that he saugh / pe gretete apparaylle
Of the Grekes / pe Citē rounde aboute;
And in hym-silf hadde a maner doute,
Now at the poynet / what was best to do.
For thilkē* tymе / it stood with hym so
That to some abidyng in þe toune
he hadde in hertē / gret suspicione
list toward hym / that they were vnstable,
And to his brother / in party favorable;
For in the Citē / ther was variance,
which vnto hym was a gret meschaunce;
For in his nedē / shortly / he ne wiste
Vpon whom / þat he myghte triste;
For they wer not / alle of on entete:
For which he hath / for his counsale sent,

Ar. Bo. and all the other MSS. (cf. 4204 and see Notes). 3605. her Bo. M. Ad.,
3606. to abide Bo. M. Ad. 3607. ther-with] herwith Lb. P. theratte
E2. 3608. Ar. has another pause-bar after they. 3609. maken] made Lb. Ad.
om. Ar. Bo. and the rest. And of al this] Of this and Ad. Ad. I. Ra. Ba. S. Of
his L2. And all this while Ro. ful war] ful weel war Ra. C. full weel war was
Ba. full warre was L2. Lb. Ad. I. was ware P. 3611. Gau] Wheche game Lb.
Ra. Ba. hadde he had Ad. Ad. I. 3615. atte poynet Bo. Ad. at poynet M.
all the poynet Lb. 3616. thilke Bo. Ad. thilke Ar. M. that S. 3617. Ar.
has a pause-bar after abidyng. 3619. list Ar. G. lest Bo. M. Ad. Ra. (see
Notes), toward hym] to him ward Ad. to hym Ad. I. him] om. Lb. that]
his] his Bo. nede] herte Ad. I. 3624. might Bo. M. Ad. sholde Ad. I.
wiste: triste Ar. Ad. wist: trist Bo. M. wiste: truste C. 3626. For which]}
his lords and his mother Jocasta.  

Al his lordes / and the oldc Quene, 
which as he dempte / were* pur and elene,
Hool of on herte / and not\ variable, 
Of old\ expert\ / and alwas founde stable; 
Requeryng hem / be-cause\ they were wys,
Al openly to tellen // ther avis
Wher it\ was best / pleynly, in her sight,
With his brother / to treten or to fight.

And somc gaf / a ful blun\ sentence, 
which hadde / of werre / non experience: 
Seyde it\ was best\ / and nat\ ben afferd,
To trye his right\ / manly with pe Sword.
And some also / that\ wer Moor prudent, 
Spak vnto hym / by good avis\ment, 
And list\ nat\ spar\* / but\ ther concey\e toldle 
how hit\ was best\ / his couenaunt forto holde, 
And to parforn / his heeste mad to-forn 
To his brother / lich as he was sworn;
So that\ his word /, the wors to mak hym spede, 
Be nat\ founde / variant\ fro the dede, 
For non hatred / rancour, neyther pryde.
And tho / the quene\* / took hym out aside,
Tolde hym pleynly / it\ was ful vnsittyng. 
Swidi doublenesse / to fynden in a kyng,

some, 

*Keep your promise to your brother.*

\* Note
\* The word of quene Jocasta to Ethioles.
Jocasta takes Etoeles aside,

And seide hym ek / al-thohi he were strong,
To his brother / how he dide* wrong,
"As al the toune / wil record, in dede,
And berë* witnesse / 3if it kam to nede.
Wherfor lat' vs shape another mene
In this materë / whil that' it is grene,
Or this quarel / gonne of voluntë,
Turre / in the fyyn / to mor aduersitë.
For 3if it' be / darreyned be batayle,
who tresteth most' / may ful likly faille.
And it' is folly / be short' avisëment,
To putte a strif / in martys Ingimënt.
For hard it' is / when a Iuge is wood,
To tret' asforn hym / with-out' loos of blood.
And 3if we put our mater* / hool in Marte,
which with the swordë / his lawës doth coarte,
Than may hit' happe / wher 3e be glad or lotli,
Thow and thy brother / shal repente bothi;
And many a-noper / that' is her present;
Of 3ooure trespas / that' ben Innocent,
And many thousand / in cas shal compleyn
For the debat' / only of 3ow tweyn,
And for 3our strif /shal fyndë ful vnsoote.

"And for how thir art' gynnyng, ground', and Roote

3651. al-thohi] pough Bo. L.3652. how] haue Du. dide Bo. M.
dede Ad., did Ar. 3654. omitted in Lb. P.; in Lb. the line is left blank:
he'll have to account for all who die in the war.

Peace and war, life and death, hang in the balance.

Of this Injurie / and this great vnright,
To the goddys / that' herof han a sight,
Thow shalt' accountys / and a reknyng make
For alle tho / that' persshyn for pi sake.
And now the causè / dryven is so ferre,
Sodeyn pees / outhèr* hasty werre

Moot' folwe anon /; for the fatal chmaunce
Of lif and deth / dependeth in balancce.
And no man may / be no craft restreyne
That vpon on* / platly of this tweyne
The soort' mot' fallè / lik as it' doth tourne,
Who so euer laagh / or ellys mourne.

And thow art' dryve / so narowè to pe stake
That thow mayst' nat' / moo delayès make,
But' fight' or tret' / this quarel fortó fyne;
By non engyn / thow canst / it' not' deelyne.
And hasty cas / , as folk seyn that' be wys,
Redresse / requereth by ful short avys:

For treté longe / now avayleth noight.
For to the poynèt' / sothly thou art' brouht',
Outher* to kepè thy possessioun
Or in al haste / devoyde / out' of this towne,
wher thow therwith / be wroth or wel apayd."

"Now notè vel / al that' I haue* sayd,
And by my counsayl / wisly condescende
Wrong', wrouht' of olde / newly to amende.

The tyme is come / it may be non other.
wherfor in haste / trete with thi brother
And ageyn hym / make no resistence,
But to thy lordys / fully 3iue* crendence:
By whoos counsayl / sith they be so sage,
late Polymyte / reioyse his heritage.
And that shal turne / most to thyn avail.
loö! her is hool / the fyn of our counsaill."

¶ And shortly tho / for verrey Ire wroth,'
Thouhe thetore / froward was and loth,
Accored is /, heryng* al the prees,
if he algate shal trete for a* pes,
It moste be / by this condicion
That he wol han / the domynacioun
First* in chief / to hym-silf reserued,
As hym thought* / he hadde wel disserued,
And saue to hym / hool the souerynte;
And vnder hym / in Thebes þe Cité
he to graunte / with a right* good cher,
Polymyte* / to regne* for a 3er,
Than tavoyde* / and not* resor* ageyn :
For mor to cleyme / was nat* but* In veyn.
This wold he doñ / only for her sake,
And other-wise / he wil non endé make
with the Greys / what* fortune enere falle.
And fynally / among* his lordys alle
Ther was not* on / of hii nor lowgh estat,

That wolde* gon / on this ambassyat
Out of the town / nother for bet nor wors;

so Jocasta will.

Til Jocasta / madě sadyl her hors,
And caste her-silf / to gon for this tretè,
To make an endè / zif it wolde be.

Jocasta and her daughters,

And this was don / the morowe right be tyme,
Vpon the houre* / whan it droh to pryme.
And with hyr went / hyr zonge dohtres twayne,
Antigone & and the feyr ymeyne,
Of hyr meynè / ful many on aboute,
At the gate / she was conveyéd oute,
And of purpos / she madè first hir went
On hors-bak / to kyng Adrastus tent;
He and his lordys / beyng al yffere.

Antigone and Ismene,

Who welcomes her.

And they receyve hyr / with a right glad chere,
Shewynge hyr / lik to hir degré,
On euery half / ful grei humaneytè,
Polynytès / rysyng fro his place,
And humblely / his moder gan enbrace,
Kyssede hyr / and than Antigone,
And ek ymeyne / excellingly of bewtè.

Polyneces

And for that they / passyngly were faire,
Gret was the pres / concours, and repaire
Of the ladyes forto han a sight.

And Jocasta / procedeth anon ryght

PT. III.] TIDEUS REJECTS ETEOCLES'S TERMS. POLYNEICES MUST BE KING. 153

To Adrastus / hit mater to purpose,
And gan to hym / opynly disclose
Thentent & wiH of Ethioicles,
And by what men he desireth pes,
To hym reserued / as she gan specific,
The honour hool / and the regalye,
with Sceptre and Croune fro hym not devyded,
But hool to hym / as he hath provided;
And Polymyte, be this condicioun,
Vnder hym to reigne / in the tow
As a Soget, be suffraunce of his brother,
But the Grekes / thouoten al another,
And Specyaly worthy Tydeus,
Pleynly affermyng it should nat be thus:
For he wil hauë / no condictious,
But sette a-Syde / atH excepcions,
Nothing reservid / as in special,
But hool the lordship, Regalye, and al,
Polymyte & it fully to possede,
In Thebes Crowned / verrayly in dede,
As Rightful kyng / putte in posceioun,
llich the Couenauntys & commencioun
Imad of olde / assuryd, and asselyd,
"which shall not now of new be repelyd,
But stable and hool / in his strength* stonde.
And lat' hym so platly vndyrstone! And first that he devoyde hym ou't of town,

TIDEUS REJECTS THEM.

PT. III. TIDEUS REJECTS ETEOCLES'S TERMS. POLYNEICES MUST BE KING. 153

And delyuere the Sceptre / and the Crowne
To his brother / and mak' theraf no more.
And shortly ellys It' shall be boult' ful sore
Or this mater brought be to an ende.

For Grek is non / that' shal hennys wende
Or that' our right's / which is vs denied,
with lif or deth / darreynid be and tryed:
we wil not' arst fro this towne remewe.

"And 3if hym lyst / al this thynge eschwe
And al meschief / styntyn and appese,
To either part' / he may do gret' ese:
Thus I menë / for his auwantage,
Delyuer vp hool / the treuwh herytage
To his brother / for a 3eer tendure.

And Grekys shal fully hym assure,
By what' bonde that' hym list' devise,
The 3eer complet' / in our beste wise
To hym delyuer / ageyn possessioun
with-outë strif / or contradicioun.

And to this wyn / Justly hold* vs to.
"And 3if it fallë / that' he wil nat so,
Lat' hym not' wayte / but only after werre.
The hour is come / we wil it' not' differre.

To hym ageyn / whan that 3e resorte;
Fro which apoynt' / we cast' vs not' to varye."

And 3it to hym / Amphiorax contrarye
Ful pleunly saide, in conclusion,
This fyn shal cause a destrucson
Of hem echon / 3if it forth procede
To be parfourned / and execute in dede.
But thilke tyme for al his eloquence
He had in soth / but lytly audience.
For wherso euer / he ment / good or ille,
kyng Adrastus / bad hym to be stille.

And tho Jocasta / as wisdom did hyr techi,
humble of her port / with ful softe specch,
Gan seké mensys / in hyr fantaseye
3if she myght the Iré modefy.
Of the Grekes / to make hem to enclyme
In eny wise / hyr rancour forto fyne.
She dyd hyr dever / and hir bysy cure.
But tho byfel a wonder aventure,
Cause and ground / of gret confusion,
Greky's perturbyng / and also ek the town,
And it to tellë / may me not asterte.
For which a whil / my stycre I mot dyuerte,
And shortly tellë /, by descriptiouy,
Of a Tigre dwellyng in the town,
which fro a kyngdam / besyden adiacent,
Out of Egipte / was to Thebés sent:
the* which* beast by record of scripture

3806. Amphiorax] Amphiorax Bo. 3807. Ar. has a pause-bar after pleunly.
The wondrous tame Tiger of Thebes.

The tiger is savage,
Is most swift / as of his nature,
And of kynd also most savage,
And most cruel / when he is in his rage,
And, as Clerkys makē mencioun,
He of body / resembleth the lyon,
And lik a greyhound / the mosel and the heid,
And of Eyen / as eny fyret red,
Ek of his Skyn / writen as I fynde,
lich a panten / conversant in ynde,
with al maner hwys and coloures;
And is ful oft / discyeued with merours
By fraude of hunty / and fals applearenc
Shewyd in glas / with-outen existence,
whan his kyndles / arn be sleight ytakē, 
And he deceyued / may no rescus make. 

And lik a lombe / was this Tygre tame,
Ageynys kynde / myn autour wrihte the same.

"And this best / mervallous to se,
was sentē to* ymeyne and antigenē:
which vnto hem / didē* gretē confort,
And Cowdde playe / and makē good* dispōrt,
lik a whelp / that is but 3ōng of age;
And to no wight didē* no damage,
No mor in soth / pan doth a litil hound ;
And it was worth many hundred pound
Vnto the kyng / for ay in his greuance

This Tiger, the Greeks kill. Thebans try to avenge it. 159

Ther was no *ting;* did hym mor plesaunce,
That for no tresour / it myght not be bought.
For whan that *e* was pensif or in thought;
It putt hym out of his hevnynesse.

And thilkū * tymc /*, the story doth expresse,
That Ioesta treted * for a pes,
This tamē Tygre / in party rekkōles,
Out * at* the gates / in sight of many a man,
Into the felde / wildly * out ran,
And Casualy rennyng to *and* fro,
In and oute, as doth a tamē Roo;
Grekys wenynge / that *e* wer 3ong*s* of age,
That *e* this Tygre / haddē be saugae,
And Cruelly besettyng al the place
Rounē aboutē / gan hym to enchace

Til he was ded / *and* slayēn * in the feld.
The slaughter of whom whan *pat* they byheld,
The proude Thebans / which on the wallys stood,
They renné doune ful furious *and* wood,
wenyng he had / be slayēn * of despit.*
Takyng her hors / with-outē mor respit,
Fully in purpos / with Grekys forto fighte,
The Tigres deth / tavengen 3if they myghte.

And out *they rood / with-outē gouernaylle,*
And ful proudly / Grekēs gan assaylle,
And of hatred / *and* ful hegh desdayne

---

Many men are slain. The Thebans are driven back. [PT. III.]

and slay the

Fyl vpon hem / that han the tygre slayne,
And cruelly quitten hem her mede,

Greeks who kild the tiger.

That many Greke / in the grene mede,
By the force / and the grete myght
Of her Foomen, lay slayën* in ãs fight.
The Tigres deth / so derë they aboughte,
So mortally the* Thebans* on hem woreghte
That al the hostt, in the feld liggyng,
was astounyd / of this sodeyn thynge.

With them are Eteocles

And in this whil, of Rancour rekkëles,
Out of Thebes rood Ethioles,

and King Tremor.

And with hym ek / the worthy kyng Tremour,
Of his hond a noble werreour,
That made Grekës to forsak her place,
And to her tentyss / gan hem to enchace.
And myd the feld / as pei to-gyder mette
On hors-bak / with sperës sharpo* whette

Of verray hate / and of* envious pryde,
Ful many on was ded on outher syde.

Many on both sides are slain.

[leaf 65, back]

¶ The whichë* thynge / whan Tideus espieth*,

wood as lyoun / to hors-bak he hith,
As he that was neuer a del afferd;
But ran on hem / and met heim in the bend,

The manhood of Tydeus.

And Maugrë hem / in his cruelë,
he made hem fleen / hom to her Citë,

hem pursuyng* / of ful dedly hate,

To-for the sword of this Tydeus, 3912
he was on hem so passing furius,
so many theban / he roof vnto the herte. 3916
That when Iocasta / the slanhtre gan aduerce, Jocasta begs
Polymyteis / she gan prey ful fayre
To makę Grekis / hom ageyn repayre, 3920
And that they wolden styntyn to assaylle
For thilkę* day / and cessen her bataylle.
At whoos requeste / pleynly and preyere,
And at Reuerence / of his moder dere,
Polymyteis, her herte to conforte,
Grekes madę / hom ageyn resorte
And Tydeus to stynten of his chas.

And they of Thebes hasting a gret pas,
Ful trist and hevy / ben entred into toun.
And for the Tygre, in conclusion,
As se han herd / first began this stryff,
That many theban / that day lost his lyff
And recurlees / hath 3olden vp the brethi,
In thyngyng / of the tygres deth.

And al this while / duely as she ought,
he quene Iocasta / humblye besoughts


And thebes hasteng a gret pas,
Jocasta returns to Thebes.

Kyng: Adrastus / only of his grace,
Some men only / wisly to purchase___3936

to make peace;
To make a peace / atwene the brotheren tweyn,
And the tretè / so prudently ordeyne,
On eiper party / that no blood be shad.

but he will
And this Adrastus / avisè and rist: sad,
For Grekis party / answer gaf anon
That other endè / shortly gete she noh,
lich as the lordis / fully ben avisyd,
Than Tydeus hath afor devisyd.

Jocasta goes back to Thebes.

"And whan she saugh it may non oper be,
She lievè tok / and hom to the Cytè She is repeirèd /, hauynge to hyr Guyde
Polmytès Rydynge be her syde.
And Tideus ladde Antigone,
And of Archadye / prothonologè,
The worthy kyng, did his bysy peyne
To ben attendant / vpon fair ymeye, Whos hert she hath / to her servisè luryd :
And he ageyn hath purtraied and fyguryd
Myd of his brest /, which lightly may not passe,
Hooly the feturis / of her fresshly face.

3950
Hym thought she was so faire a creature;
And though that he durst hym not disclose,
3it in his hert / as ferforth as he kan,
He hath avowéd / to ben) her trwè man, unnist to hir / pleynly and vnknowe

3944

and in his heart
plesges his
truth to her.
How he was markëd with Cupidës bowe, with his Arwë / sodeynly werreyd.

And to the 3atë / the ladyes conuemed

Ben entred In / for it drew* to eve, Grekys of hem taking* tho her leve;

Thogh some of hem wer sory to departe, 3it* of wisdam / they durste not* iuparte

Vnder a conduit* / to entren into toun, lest* it turned to her confusion.

Thouli somë bookës / the contrarye seyn:

But* myn Autour / is platly ther-ageyn,

And affermeth / in his opynyoun, That Tydeus / of hegh discrecioun,

Of wilfulnesë / nor of no folye, Ne wold as tho put in Iupartie

Nowther hym-silf / nor noñ of his ferys.

And the ladyes / with her heuencly cherys,

Angelik / of look / and contenance,

Lich as it is / put* in remembrance,

At* her entryng* from Grekys into toun,

Polymytës / of gret* affecioun,

The quen bysouhte / thilkë* nyght not* fyne

For tasseyë 3if she myght* enclyme

Ethiocles, of conscience and ryght;

To keep counsel as he hath beheld
Ful sore agon / with the surplusage,
List the contrarie / tourne to damage,
First of hym-silf / and many an oer mo.

And thus fro Thebës / grekys ben ago
To her Tentys / and rest hem al that nyght.
And Lucyna / the monshon ful bright
with-Innë Thebës / on the chief dongoun,
whan Iocasta made relacion

Vnto the kyng / and told hym al the Guyse,
How that Grekys vttrely despyse
his profe made be fals collusioun;
Only excepte / the commencion,
Of old engrocd by gret purvyance,
which is enrollyd / and put in remembrance,
Vpon which they fynaly wil reste:

hym cousaillinge / hir thouhte for the beste,
To conforme hym / to that he was bounde,
yst in the fyn / falsnesse hym confounde.

But alt hir cousayl / he set it at no prys,
he dempt hym-silf / so prudent and so wys;
For he was willful / and he was indurat,
And in his hert / of malyce obstynat,
resolvd not to.
And outtrelly / avised in his pouht,
with-Innë Thebës / his brother get right nouht.
And in his Errour / þus I lete* him* dwelle.

And of Grekis / forth I wil 3ou telle,

which al that nyght kepte hem-silué cloos.
And on the morow / whan Tytan vp aroos,

They armyd hem / and gan hem redy make,
And of assent* / han the felde I-take,

With the Thebans / that* day, out* of doute,
Forto fighten / 3if they yssen oute.

¶ And Adrastus / in ful thrifty wise,

In the feld* / his wardys / gan devise,

As he that* was / of aH deceitís war.
And richely I-armyd* / in his char

Amphiorax cam with his meynê,
Ful renomyd of antiquiê,

And wel expert* / be-causê he was old.
And whil that* Grekys, as I haue 3ou told,

wer bysiest her wardys, to ordeyne,
Myd of the feld / bifyl a cas sodeyne,

Ful vnhappy / lothysom, and odylb;
For liche a thing* / þat* wer invisible,

This oldê* bishopp / with char and hors certeyn
Disaperyd / and no mor was seyne.

Only of fate / which no man can repelle,
þe erth opnede / and he fille doun* to helle,

with aH his folk / þat* vpon hym abood.
And sodeynly / on the grounde on which he stood

Closyd ageyn / and to-gyder shette,

4012. Next morning

the Greeks take

the field.

4016. The Greeks take

the Field. 

Amphiorax sinks down to Hell. 165

And of Grekis / forth I wil 3ou telle,

which al that nyght kepte hem-silué cloos.
And on the morow / whan Tytan vp aroos,

They armyd hem / and gan hem redy make,
And of assent* / han the felde I-take,

With the Thebans / that* day, out* of doute,
Forto fighten / 3if they yssen oute.
Amphiorax is sent to Hell for his false Idolatry. [Pt. III.

The Devil paid him his wages,

And thus the devil / for his old outrages,
ich his decert, paiéd hym his wages. 4040
For he ful lowe / is descendid down
Into the dirk and blakë* Regyoun
wher that* Pluto* / is crownyd and ystallyd
with his quene / prosperpina I-callyd. 4044
with whom this Bishop / hâp made his* mansioun
Perpetuellely / as for his guerdoun.

for his idolatry,

[leaf 68]
lo; what* ayayllen Incantaciouns
Of exorsismës / and coniurisouns ;
what* stood hym stede his Nigromancye,
Calculation / or astronomye ;
what* vayllod hym / the heuenly manciouns,
Diverse aspectis / or constellacionis ?
The ende / is nat* / hot* sorwe and meschaunce,
Of hem nde* setten / her oute assurance
In swichë* werkës supersticious,
Or trist* on hem / : he is vngracious.

Recorë I takë, shortly forto telle,
Of this bysshop / sonken down to helle,
whos wooful ende / about* in every cost;
Swich a Rumour / hath makëd in the host.

That the noys / of this vnkouth thynge
Is yronne / and comë to the kyng;
how this vengeaunce / is vnwarly falle.
And he anoñ / made a trumpet calle
Alle his puple / out of the feldt ageyn;
And euerychon / assembled on a pleyn
To-fore the kyng / and also rounde aboute.
Every man / of his lyf in doute,
Ful pitously / gan to frowne and loure,
list that the grounde hem alle wil deuoure
And Swalowen hem / in his dirkië* kave;
And they ne can / no recur hem to save.
For nouther force / nor manhode may availle
In swiche meschief / the valewe of a maylle.
For he that was wisest / and koudë most;
To serche and sekë / thorgh-out al the host,
Amphiorax / when that he lest wende,
To helle is sonken / and coude hym not* diffende,
(To hym the tyme vnknownen and vnwist)
In whom whilom was al þe Grekis trist,
hér hoolë* confort / and her affiaunce.
But aH attonys / for this sodeyn chaunce
And this meschief / they gan hem to dispeire,

and want to go home.

Hom to Grecē / that they wil repeyre.
This was the purpoos / of hem euerichoīn.
And on the wallys / of Thebēs lay her foīn,
Reioysing hem / of this unhappy eure,
wenyng therby / gretly to recure.
And on her tourēs* / as they loken oute,
They on Grekēs / enviously gan shoute,
And, of despit1/ and gret enmytē,
Bad hem foolys / goī hom to her contrē,
Sith they han lost1/ her confort and socour*,
her false* prophetē / and her dyvynour:
wherthogh / her partie / gretly is apeyrīd.
And in this wisi1/Greks dispeyrēd,
Dempē pleynly / be tokens evidente,
This cas was falle / by som enchauntēment1,
By wichēcraft* / or by* fals sorcery,
Ageynēs* which may be no remedye,
Tristy diffēncē / helpē*, nor socour.

The Thelans chaff the Greeks,

And whan Adrastus herde* this clamour,
he bysī was ageyn this perturbaunce
To provyde / some maner chevysaunce.
And to hym calleth / such coursayl as he wiste,
For lyf or deth / that he myghte tryeste,
Requeryng1 hem / but in wordys fewe,
In this mescrief / her mocioun to shewe,

Sowynq E.2 gretly] om. Adj.2 recure] to haue recure M. Di. 4091. toore
Bo. M. Adj.1 tours Ar. 4092. Grekēs] the Grekes Du. L1. gain T1. Lb
M. Di. C. shonte] to shoute Adj.1 Adj.2 Ra. Ba. C. E.2 L2. 4093. despit and
gret] gret dispit and Adj.1 Adj.2 Ba. S. gret dispit and of Ra. enmyte Ar. Adj1
enmyyte Bo. enmyte M. envite L1. L2. 4094 to 4158 lost in Adj. 4095
Du. E.2 dispeyrēd] dispireōd Adj.1 S. E.2 4099. tokens Bo. M. toknes Adj,
4101. wichecraft M. Adj. wichecraft Ar. wyche-craffe Bo. or] and E.2 by
wichecraft is wh, wunderdolled. 4102. Ageyns Ar. Bo. M. Adj. may be] in
Ba. 4103. helpe Bo. help Ar. M. Adj.1 4104. herde Bo. Adj. herd Ar. M
4105. this] the Adj. 4106. chevysaunce Adj. chevysaunce Bo. 4107. such
Bo. M. Adj. 4109. but in] bouten Bo.
And declare by good avisement,
What to Grekys was most expedient,
To remedy / and make* no delay,
The vncouth noyse / and the greet affray
That Grekys made / with clamour inopportune,
And newe / and newe euere in on contynue.

And they that were most manly and most wise,
Shortly saide / it wer a cowardlyse,
The heigh emprise / that they han vndirtake
For dred of deth / so sodeynly forsake.
It were to hem / a perpetuel shame
And outre hyndryng / vnto grekys name;
And better it wer / to euery werreyour
Manly to dye / with worship and honour,
Than lik a coward / with the lyf endure.
For onys shamyd / hard is to recure
his name ageyn / of what estat he be.
And sith Grekes / of old antiquyté,
As of knyghthode / who so list tak hed,
Ben so famous / and so renoméd,
3if now of newe / the shyning of her Fame
Eclipsid were / with any spotte of blame,
It were a thynge vncouth forto here,

The Greeks resolve to fight till Thebes is laid low.

Of whose renown / the benes 3it ben clere
Thorg al the world / wher as they han passyd,
And ben not 3it / dyryd nor diffacyd,
By no report / nother on se ne londe
thyng to forsak 3 / that they tok on honde.
"And by example / of our progenitours,
as conquerors,
pat 3 whilom wern / so manly conquerours,
To-for that we into Greci wende,
Of thyng bygon / lat 3 vs make an ende,
And parte nat / nor Seuere from this town
Til it 3 be brouht 3 to desstruccioun,
wallys / tourns 3 / Crestyd and batailled
And for werri strongly apparayled,
Be 3rst 3 doune beti 3 / that 3 no thyng 3 be seyn,
But al to-gyder / with the erth 3* pleyn
Be lowi 3* leyde / or that 3 we resorte :
That 3 afterward / men may of vs reporte,
That 3 we bygan / we knyghtly han achienyd
Vpon our foon / with worship vnrepreuyd."

This was the cousaylle / shortly, 3nd thavis
Of the Grecks that 3 manly wern 3nd wys,
That 3 neuere afor wey merkyd with no blame,
And specialy / swich as dread 3* Shame,
And fully caste / what 3 fortune ever tyde,
On her purpoos / to the ende abyde,
That 3 on no part 3 / her honoure not apalle.

And to this counsaille / Grekys, on and alle, 4160
Ben condescendyd / and, for mor happy sped,
In sted of hym / that was so laté ded,
Amphiorax / buryed / depe in helle,
That koudé whilom / to the Grekys telle
Of thyngês hid / how it shal falle, aforñ :
In sted of whom / now they han hym lorñ,
They casten hem / wisly to purchase
Some prudent man / to occupye his place,
That in swich thyng / myght hem most' availle
Thorogh mystery of his dyvynaylle,
By craft of sorte / or of profecye,
Jif eny swich they couden out espye.
And among al /, her purpoos toatteýne,
As I fyndé / they han chosyn tweyne,
Most renomed / of hem euerychoñ.
And Menolippus / callyd was the toñ,
And Terdymus / ek the tother highte.
And for he hadde most' faunour in her sighte,
This Terdymus / was chosen and præferryd.
And in* her chosys / Grekys han not' erryd ;
For whilom he / lernyd / his emprise
Of his maister / Amphiorax the wyse,
And was disciple / vndyr his doctrine.
And of entent / that he shal termyne
Vnto Grekys / thyngês that shal falle,
*As a bisshop mytred in his stalle,

They* don for him* / in many vncouth wyse
In the temple / to godlys sacrifice;
And thus confirmed* / and stallyd in his Se,
A fewe dayes / stood / in his degré,
After his mayster / with ful gret honour,
Of Grekys choisë / to be successour.

The Thebans suffer;

And al this tyme / in story as is told,
Ful gret meschief / of hungry, thrust, and cold;
And of Thebans / as they issen oute,
lay many on / slayen * in the route
On outher part /, of fortune as they mette :
her mortal swerdys / wer so sharpe whette.

And Tydens among hem of the toun

Fro day to day / pleyeth þe lyoun
So cruelly, wher so that he rood,
That Theban noñ / aforne his face aboord,

He made of hem, thorg his high renown,

So gret slaughter / and occasioun*
That as the deth / fro his swerd they fledde,
And who cam ne.xte / leid his lyf to wedde.
He qwitte hym-sylf / so lik a manly knyght;
That wher he went / he putte hem to the flight,

And maugre hem, in his cruelté

He droff hem hom / into her Citë,

hem purswyng* / proudly to the gate:

That vn to hym / they bar so dedly hate
That they hem caste / by sleyht or some engyn,
To bryngyn hym / vnwarly to hys fyn;
And leyde awayt / for hym day and nyght.
But O. allas! / this noble manly knyght,
Vpon a day / as he gan hem enchace,
And mortally / made hem lese her place
And sued hem / almost to the towne,
That causd was of his destrucfioum.

For on, allas! / that on the wallys stood,
which al that day / Vpon hym abood,
With a quarel / sharpe heded for his sake,
Markede hym with a bowe of brake,
So cruelly, makenge non arrest

Tyl it was passyd both eaten and brest.
Wherthorgh, allas! / ther was non oper red
Nor lech-craft* / but that he mot be ded,
Ther may therof be made non delays.
And 3it was he / holdyn / in his dayes
The beste knyght / and most manly man,
As myn Autour / wel rehercē kan.

But for al that was ther no dyffence
Ageyn the strok / of deothys violence.
And Bochas writ / er he was fully ded,
he was by Grekys / presentyd with he hed
Of hym that gaf / his laste fatal wounde:
And he was callyd / lik as it is founde,
Menolippeus / I can non other telle.

4212 That they bar so dedly hate.
4214, 4216 But one day. 4216, 4220 But one day. 
4218, 4220 But one day.
4218. 4220 a Theban crossbow-man.
4224 shot and kild him.
4232 Tho he was the best of the Greeks.
4236 [leaf 71] he couldn't withstand Death.

Il But thillkë* day / Thebans wex so felle

Vpon Grekys / that's vnder her Cytè

The manly kyng* Parthanolopë

Islayën* was / euene afor the gatys;

And ther also, Armyd bright* in platys,

The famous kyng / callyd ypomedoun,

The samë day /, as mad is menciouñ,

On hors-bak / manly as he fought,

At the briggë / euene vpon the draught,

Besette with pres / casually was drownyd.

And thus fortuné / hath on Grekys frownyd

On euery sydë / thilk vnhappy day.

But al the maner / tellen I ne may

Of her fightyng* / nor her slaughter in soth,

Mor to declarë / than myn Autour doth.

But thillkë* day / I fynde / as 3e may sen,

whan Phebus / passyd was* merydyen

And fro the south / westward gan hym drawe,

hys gylte tressys / to bathen in the wawe,

∥ The Theban kyng* / felle Ethyocles,

Rote of vnreste / and causer of vnpees,

The slaughter of Grekys / whan that* he beheld,

Armyd in steel / he kam out* in-to feld,*

Ful desirous / in that* sodeyn hete

Polyemytës / at* good leyser to mete,

Fortune frownd on the Greeks.

Eteocles rides forth

[leaf 71, back]

to fight Poly-

neices,

4240. thilk Bo. Ad₁, thilk Ar. M. Thebans] Thebans Bo. Du. waxe
vnhappes E₁. In Du. the second half of 4260 (and causer of vuples) and the first two words of 4261 (The slaughter) are omitted, and the remnants of the two lines joined into one line. 4261. Grekys] the Grekis Lb. P. peple Di. that om. Ad₁, Ad₂. I. Ra. Ba. S. 4262. out] om. M. Di. Ad₁, Ad₂. I. in-to] if Ba. of P. feld Ar. G. pe felde Bo. and all the rest. 4263. sodeyn Bo. M. Ad₁, sodeyne Di.
Syngulerly / with hym to han ado.
For in this world / he hatede no man so;
he sat so nygh / emprented in his herte,
whoos comynge out / his brother gan aduerce
Vpon his stele / in the opposit,4268
And hadde ageynward / also gret* delyt
To meten hym / 3il fortune assente.
Thenvious fyr / so her hertys brente
with haate Cankered / of vnkyndë blood.
And lik two Tygres / in her ragë wood,
with speerys sharpë / groundë for the nonys,
So as they ranne / and mette both attony,
Polymytës / thorg platys, mayle, and sheedl.
Roof hym thorg-out / and smette hym in-to feltë.
But* when he sauli / the stremys of his blood
Raylle about* / in maner of a flood,
Al sodeynly / of compassion,
From his coursere / he alighte down,
And brotherly, with a pitous face,
To saue his lyf / gan hym to vnbrace*,
And from his wounde / of newe affeccioun,
Ful bys was / to pulle out* the trunchoun,

Eteocles kills his brother Polyneices.

On which Eteocles stabs Polyneices to the heart;

so both die.

The Thebans mourn their king's death.

Of loue only / handlyng hym ryght softe.
But O / alas! whil he lay alofte,
Ful yrously / Ethioles the felle,
Of al this sorowe / verraye sour and welle,
with a dagger / in al his peynys smerte,
his brother smoot vnwarly to the herte:
which al her lyf / halde be so wrothe.
And thus the Thebans / were yslawi* bothie
At the entr'e euene asforn the toun.
But* Grekys / tho / ben availed down
Out of the feld*/ the worthy knygths alle.
And in Thebês / loud* / as eny shalle,
The Cry aros / whan her kyngh was ded.
And to the gaty's / armyd foot and hed,
Out of the toun / cam many proud Theban.
And some of hem / vp on the wallys ran
And gan to shoute / that* pité was to here.
And they with-out* / of her lyf in were,
with-oute confort* / or consolacionn,
Dissepyreûd / roone* hom to the toun
And Grekys folowen after at the bak,
That* many on / that* day / goth to wrak.

Ba. P. 4289 and 4290 omitted in Ad. and I.; in Ad. these two lines are omitted
in their right place, but written in the bottom margin of the page a little bit below
the column. 4291. smert Bo. M. Ad., smarte E, 4292. smoot] roff L.
Bo. M. Ad., 4294 omitted in Ba. 4294. Ar. has a bar also between the an
Thebans. the] these P. om. Ra. Thebans] Thebans X Bo. T., yslawe Bo. P.
G. yslowe Ar. yslawe T, (wren s.). Lb. M. Di. Adj. C. yslayn T (y. were). I.
slayn L7. Ad2. I. Ra. E2. S. P. 4296. tho thus S. availed Bo. avaled M.
C. 4304. omitted in Ra. 4304. wip-oute Bo. M. lyf in altered in:
by a later hand to lytes. in were] in weer Ad2. in wyre Lb. in were I.
atte Bo. M. Ad1. at E2. L2. atte her Ra.
PT. III.] Hidous Noise. Furious Fight at the Gates of Thebes. 177

And as her foemen / proudly hem assaylle
Ful many Grekes* / thorgh platys and thorgh maylle
was shette thorgh-out, pressyng at the wallys,
And betyn of / with grete rounde ballys,
That' her lay on / and another sonder.
And the noysë, hydouser* than thonder,
Of gonny-shot and of* Arblastys ek,
So loude out-rouge / that many worthy grek
Ther lost' his lyf / ; they weren on hem so felle.
And at* the gatys /, shortly forto telle,
As Grekys prees / to entreyn pe Cyté,
They of Thebes / in her Cruelté
with hem mette / ful furious and wood,
And mortally / as they ageyn hem* stood,
Men myghte sen / sperys Shyuere a-sonder,
That to byhold / it was a verry wonder
how they foyne / with daggers and with swordys,
Thorgh the vyser / anynyg* at* the beryls,
Percyng also / thorgh the ronnde Maylles,
Rent' out' peces / of ther aventaylles,
That nouht* availleth / the myghty Geseran,


4329. Geseran Ar. gesseran M. Ad. 1. gesseron Bo. gesseroun Lb. gestran L. E. 1.

THEBES.
and spear.

Thorgh brest / and nekke / that the sperys Rañ. her wepnys wern / so sharpe grounde and whet,
In ther armurë / that ther was no le	.

For ther laye on / troden vnnder foote,
And jonder / on / percyd to the herte roote.

Her lith on ded / and ther another lame.

This was / the play / and the mortal game
Atwenë* Thebens / and the Grekys proude,
That the swowys / and the cryës loude
Of hem that lay / and 3olden vp the goost,
was herfd ful / aboute in many cost.

PT. III.] Eteocles is buried, mourn’d by his Mother and Sisters. 179

with barrys rounde / makéd forto laste, 4352
In which no wight* kervé may nor hewe. 4353
And Adrastus / with a grekys fewe 4354
Repeyréd is hom vnto his Tent,* 4355
And al that nyght* / he wastyd hath and spent* 4356
For his vnhappe / in sorowe compleynynge.

And they in Thebes / the nexte day swyng* her devoyre did / and her bysy cure,
To ordeyne and make / a sepulture 4357
For her kyng* / yslayen* in the feeld ;
And offred vp his baner and his shed,
His helme / his swerd*, and also his penoun,
Ther-Inne of gold* / I-betyn a dragoun,
high in the temple / that* men myghte se.n

And Iocasta / that* infortunyd quene,
er sonës deth / soore* gan compleyne ;
And also ek / her zonge doghtres twyne,
Both ymeye / and Antigonee,
Cryden and wepte / that* pytè was to se.
But* to her sorowes / that* was non refut*.
And thus the Cîte / bar / and destitut*,
havyng no wight* to gouern hem ne* guye:
For ded and slayn / was al the Chyualrye,
And no wight* left* almost* in þe toun

To regne vpon* hem / by successiou. 4376

But for they saugh / and tokyn also hed, with-outë pis / that* they hadde an hed In the Cyte / pei may not durë longe:
For though so be Comownerys be stronge with multitude / and have no gouvernaylle Of an hed / ful lytyl may avaylle: Therfor they han vnto her socour ychosyn hem a newë gouernour, 4384

An olde Tyrant* / pat* callyd was Creon, Ful acceptable / to hem ewrichoñ, And crownyd hym / with-outë mor lettyng, To regne in Thebës / and to ben her kyng;
Al-thogh* he hadde no title by descent But by* fre choys* / made in parliment. And ther to hym, lik as it is founde, By her lygeaunce / of newë they wer bounde, For to trewë / whyl the Cite stood, To hym only / with body and with good. Thus they wer sworn / and suyrd ewrichoñ; And he ageynward / to saue hem from her foön, And hem dyffende / with al his fullë* myght,
And meynten hem / in al manere ryght. This was thacord / as in sentement:

And in this while* hath Adrastus sent* 4400

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PT. III.  All the Grecian Ladies in black come to Argos.

From the Siege of Thebes the Cyte
A woundyd knyght hom to his contré,
Thorg al Grecé / pleynly to declare
Al pe slaughter and the evyl fare
Of worthy Grekys, ryght as it is falle,
And how that he hath lost his lordys alle
At' mor meschief / pan eny man can mouth.

And whan this thynge / was in grecé couth,
Fyrst to Argyve / and Deyphylee,
And to the ladies / ek in the contré
And of provynces / aboute hem adjacent;
They come down / al be on assent;
Worthy queenyss / and with hem ek duchessys,
And other ek / that' callyd were contessys,
And alle the ladys / and wymmen of degré
Ben assembled / in Argé the Cyte,
lik as I rede / and alle in clothés blake ;
That to byhold / the sorowe that' they make,
It were a deth / to eny man alvy.

And zif I shulde* / by and by descyve
Ther tendre wepyng* and ther wooful sownys,
hers complayntys / and lamentacions,
hers ofte sownyng* / with facys ded and pale,
Ther-of I myghte make a newé tale,

They gather

Almost a day / sow to occupye.

And as myn Autour / doth clerly certifie,

Thurgh-out the Greek / from all the Rigions

Out of Cities / and of Royal touns

Cam alle the ladies / and wyrmyns of estat,

Ful hevy-cheryd / and disconsolat,

To this assemble / asorn as I you tolde,

To journey to Thebes,

In purpoos fully / her Journé forto holde

Toward Thebès / thys sorwful creatureys,

Ther to bywaylle / her wooful auenturyrs,

Taquete hem-silf / of trouth in wommanhede

To her lordys / which in the feld lay dede.

And as the story / liketh to declare,

They travel barefoot,

Al this Journé / they wenton foote bare,

lik as they hadde / gon on pylgrimmage,

In tokyn of mournynge / barbyld the visage,

Wympled echo / and in burnet weedys,

Nat in charys / drawen forth with stedys,

Nor on palfreys blaké nowther white,

The Sely wyrmyn koude hem notуг\disconsolate, 

To hold her way / but barfote forth they wente,

So feithfully / euerichon they ment,

Thorgh hevynesse* / diffacdyd of her hwe.

And as I fyndë, they weryn alle trwe.

\* Now was not\p a wonder forto se

4426. doth clerly] clerely doth \adj, \adj. I. Ra. E. S. Ro. certifie\] specifye


\pe]\om. \lb. Ra. Ba. T. P. E. 4428. Citees Bo. M. \adj, the citees

\adj. I. T. second of (\ar. S. \eb. \le.\) othr Du. \om. \bo. and the rest.

4429. Came Bo. \come \adj. \come Ba. the]om. \ro. 4431. To In \ba.

4432 to the end lost in \ba. 4432. In] I \eb. \ro. om. Bo. T. M. Di.


of trouth in \ar. Bo. M. Ra. E. S. P. in troupe of \adj, \adj. I. of trouth and \eb.

4438. Journe] meyne S. on foote Bo. T. Ra. T. L. on foot M. \adj, on fete

\lb. they went on foote bare] the women went foot bare \adj. I (wente). 4439.

had Bo. M. \adj. 4440. barbyld the visage] barfote the vyage \lb.

4441. in] with \adj. \burnet] moorning \adj. I. 4442. in] with \adj. I.

charys] Chaires \eb. with] nor with \adj. I. 4443. nowther Ar. neithre Bo.

\adj. nor M. 4445. To hold her way] Her way to hold in eue \adj, \adj. I.

forth] om. \adj, \adj. I. E. Ro. 4447. Ar. has hevnesse. 4448. wernu

\adj, wern Bo. M. alle M. al Bo. they weryn alle] enerychon were G.

4449. \pat\ pis Bo. a] om. \adj, \adj. I. a wonder] a wondyr thyunge \lb. P.

forto] to T. P.
So many trewe / out of a cuntre,  
Attonys gadryd / in a compayne,  
And faithful alle / bookys can not lye,  
Both in her port / and inward in menying?  
Vnto my doom / it was an vncoth thyng,  
Among a thousand wemen outhre twoyne  
To fynden noon / that kowde in herté feyne.  
It was a mervaylle / nat ofte seyn alofrn.  
For seelde / in feldys / growthen eny corn  
But 3if some wede / spryng vp þer-among.  
Men allaye* wynys / whan they be to strong;  
But hir trouth was meynte wip noi allayes,  
They were so trewé / founde at' alle assayes.  
And they ne stynte / vpon her iourné  
Tyl that they cam þer as* they wolde be,  
wher Adrastus , wrytyn as I fynde,  
lay in his Tent* / al of colour ynde ;  
Gretly mervaylyd* / whan that he bihelid  
The nombre of hem / sprad thorg al þe feld,  
Clad alþ in blak / and barfoot euerychon,  
Out of his Tent* / he dressyd hym anoi,  
Vpon his hand / the kyng Campaneus*;  
Ful trist* in herte / and faco right* pitous,  

Agyn the wommen / forth they went' yfre.
And to byhold / the woeful hevy chere,

The wooful cryēs / also, when they mette,
The sorful sighys / in her brestys shette,

The teerys newe / distillyng on her facys,
And the swowyng in many sondry placys,
when they see

their dead lords,

face upwards.

Deiphile weeps

for Tides.

Topholde the ladys so compleyne,
wisshing' his herte / parted wer on twyneye.

And 3it, allas! / bothen* eve and morowe,
O thynge ther was / that' doubled al her sorowe,

That Old Creon / fader of fellonye,
Ne woldē* suffre, thorg his Tyraunye,
The dedō* bodies / be buried nowther brente,

The Greek Ladies wait till Theseus comes.

But with bestis and houndys to be rente.
he made hem aH / vpon an hepe be leyde.
wherof the wymmen trist and evyl apeyle,
For verray dool, as it was no wonder,
her hertys felt almost ryve a-sonder.

And as my mayster Chaucer list endite,
Al clad in blak / with her wymplies whyte,
With grete honour / and duc * reverence,
In the temple / of the goddess Clemence
They abood the space / of fourtenyght
Tyl Theseus / the noble worthy knyght,
Duk of Athenys / with his Chyvalrye
Repeyerd hom / out of Femynye,
And with hym ladde / ful feir vpon to sene,
Thorrh his manhod / ypolita the quene,
And her suster / sallyd Emelye.

and whan thys wommen / gomne first espoye
This worthy Duk / as he cam rydnynge,
Kynge Adrastus / hem alle conveyinge,
The wommen brouht vnto his presence,
which hym bysought / to give hem audience.
And aH attonys swownynge in the place,
Ful humblely / preiden * hym of grace
To rewe on hem / her harmys to redresse.
But 3if 3e list / to se the gentyllesse
Of Theseus / how he hath hym boryn,

He goes to Thebes,

slays Creon,

and puts his host to flight.

(Some say the)

women beat down the walls of Thebes,

and that Jocasta and her daughters

3if 3e remembre / 3e han herde it to forn
wel reherseyd / at Depforth in the vale,
In the bygynynge / of the knyghtys tale:

† First how that he / when he herd hem speke,
For verray routhè* felt his hertë / breke;
And her sorowys / when he gan aduertere,
From his courser / doun anoon he sterte,
Hem confortyng in ful good entente,
And in his Armys he hem aH vp hente.
The knyghtys tale / reherseth every del
Fro poynçe poynçe / 3if 3e lookë* wel,
And how this Duk / with-oute more abood,
The samë day / toward Thebës rood,
Ful lik in soth / a worthy conquerour,
And in his host / of Chyualyre the flour.
And fynally, to spekyn of thys thing,
with old Creon / that was of Thebës kyng;
how that he fought / and slough hym lik a knyght;
And aH his host / putte vnto the flyght.

† 3it, as some auctours mackë mencioun,
Or Theseus entred into toun,
The women first with pikkeys and with mallys,
with grete labour / betë dou of the wallys.
And in her wrytynge also as they sayn,
Campanueus / was on the wallys slayn,
with cast of ston / he was so overlade;
For whom Adrastus / such a sorowe made
That no man myght relese hym of his peyne.
And locaste / with her doghtres tweyne,
Ful woefully oppressyd of her cherys,  
To Athenes wer sent as prysonerys.  
What fil of hem more / can I not seyn.  

But Theseus / myn Autour writ certeyni,  
Out of the feld / or he fro Thebicis wente,  
He bete it downe / and the howsys brenté,  
The puple slough / for al her crying loud,  
Maad her wallys / and her towrys proude.  
Rounde aboute / euene vpon a rowe,  
with the Soyle / to be laide* ful lowe.  
That nouzt was left / but the soyle al bare.  
And to the wommen / in relaes of her care,  
The bonys of her lordys / that were slayn.  
This worthy duk / restoryd hath agayn.  

But what shuld I / any lenger dwelle.  
The oldé* Ryytys / by and by to telle,  
Nor thobsequies / in ordre to devise;  
Nor to declare / the manere and the Guyse.  
how the bodyes / wer to Ashes brenté,  
Nor of the goomés / in the flaumbé spenté,  
To make the ayre* / sweetter of relees,  
As fraunc encence / Mirre and Aloës;  

Nor how the wommen / roundé abouté stood,  
Somé with mylk / and some also with blood,  
And some of hem with vnés made of gold,  
when the asshes fully weren made cold.  
Tenclosyn hem of gret affeccioun.  
And benn hem hom / into her Regioun;  

4558. of vpon P. more Ar. G. Lb. C. T, P. E., Lz. om. T1. and the rest. can I  
I can T1. I. P. (see Notes). 4558. second her] om. Ad1. I. 4559. aboute M. Ad1.,  
ole M. Ad1. old Ar. 4567. Nor] For Di. the obseques M. Ad1.,  
flamme G. E1. T2. flame S. flawmes Ra. 4571. ayr M. Ad1. hayre Ar.  
were M. Ad1. 4577. To encloesn Ad1. To encloesn M. gret] ful gret C.  
4578. bern Ar. bere Ad1. borne M. Di.
And how that other / ful deddy of her loke,  
For loue only- of the bonys tooke,  
Hem to kepũ / for a remembrance :  
That' to reherce / everie observaunce  
That' was don / in the fyrês bright',  
or the games,  
or the taking leave of Theseus.  
or wrestling,  

Theseus goes to Athens.  

Kyng Adrastus with the ladyes repyreid hom ageyn to Arge.  

4582 to 4676 lost in I.  
4582. reherce Ar. and all.  
4585. Nor] Ne Lb. P.  
wrastlyng] wrestlyng Bo.  
worstelyng Lp.  
wraxling S.  
to] om. C.  
to telle] telling Tp.  
E2 Lp.  
om. Lb. P.  
4586. werm Ar. M.  
weren Di. were Ad1.  
4588. han M.  
han Bo. Ad1.  
4589. full] om.  
Ad1. Ra. P.  
4592. that] om. Ra.  
P. E2 Lp.  
gan Bo.  
and the rest.  
4594. yparted] And parted Di.  
Parted Tp1. C.  
4596. right Bo. M. Ad1.  
way Ar. Bo. M. Ad1.  
righte waye] way right he Ad1.  
righte wey he P.  
4597 to 4658 lost in Lb.  
4600. wepte M. wepte Bo. Ad1.  
they] he Lp.  
P. E2.  
4602. it] om.  
Ar. G. Lp.  
4603. shal Ar. Ad1.  
shal Bo. M.  
sholde E2. Ro.  
4604. At the Ar.  
Atte Ad1.  
At Bo. M.  

Bygynynge P. Lp.  
took]  
take Bo. Du. Ra. P.
Adrastus dies. Thebes destroyed 400 years before Rome founded. 189

Of myghty Thebes / shortly, and no more.
And thus Adrastus, with his lokkys hore,
Stille abood in Argé his Cyté
Vnto his ende /: 3e gete no more of me,
Sauf, as myn auctour / liketh to compyle,
After that he lyuéd but a while;
For he was old er the siegé gan,
And thought: and sorowe so vpon hym ran;
The which in soth shortyd hath his dayes.
And, tymé sette, deth makep no delays,
And al his Ioyé / passid was and goñ,
For of his lordys / alyvë was not on
But slayn at Thebes /, 3e knowën al the cas.
And when this kyng / in Argé buryed was
Ful Ryaly / with gret' solomnytë,
It: was acountyd / in bookys 3e may Se,
* Four hundred 3eer /, as mad is mencionn,
To-foor the beelding / and fundacions
Of gret' Rome / so Ryal and so large,
whan the ladies / departyden* from Arge
To her contrés / ful trest: and desolat:
lo: her the fyn / of contek and debat:
Lo: her the myght of Mars the froward sterre.
Lo: what it: is: for-to gynne a werre.
* How it: conclueth / ensample 3e may se
First of Grekys / and next of the Cyté:

For owther parte / hath matere to compleyne.
And in her strif / 3e may se thyngges twyne :

The worthy blood of al grece spilt,
And Thebes ek /, of Amphiion first bylt,
With-oute Recur / brouht vn to Ruyne
And with the soyle made pleyen as a lynne,
To wyldernessé turnyd / and desert,
And Grekys ek / falle into pouert,
Both of her men / and also of her good ;
For fynaly / al the gentyl blood
was shad out ther /, her woundys wer so wyde,
To los fynal vn to oother syde.

For in the werre is non excepzioun
Of hegh estat / nor lowli condicioun,
But as fortune / and faté, both yffere,
List to dispose / with her double chere,

Bellona* / the goddes in hir char
Aform provydel / ; wherfor ech man be war
Vnavysed / a werre to bygynne.
For no man woot who shal lese or wynne.
And hard it is when eyther party leseth.
And doutelés / nowther of hem cheseth
That they most / in al swich mortal rage,
Maugre her lust /, felyn gret damage.
It may nat be by manys myght restreyned.
And waren in soth / was neuer first ordyned

But for synne folkis to chastyse.

And as the byble / trewly kan devyse,

Heigh in heune / of Pryde and Surquedye,

Lucyfer, fader of Envie,

The olde Serpent / he levyathan,

Was the first / that euer werre gan:

Whan Michael / the heuenly Champion,

with his Feerys / venquisshyd the Dragoun,

And to hellé / cast hyme downe ful lowe.

The whiche serpent hath the Cockyl sowe

Thorg al erth / of envye and debat,

That vnnethys / is ther non estat,

with-outé stryf / can lyve in Charitè.

For every man / of hegh and lough degré,

Envycheth now / that other shulde thryve.

And groundé and causé / why that men so stryve,

Is covetyse / and fals Ambicioun,

That euerich wold han domynacion

Ouer other, and trede hym vndyr foote:

which of al sorowe / gynnyng is and Roote.

And Cristé recordyth / — red luk * and 3e may se—

For lack of love / whatés meschief þer shal be.

For .O. puple / as he doth devyse,

Agayn anoper / of haté shal aryse.

And after tellith whatés dyvisions

4660. * How that were byganne in heuen by the pride and sur-

quedye of Lucyfer.

4664. * lollusa

Envy rules now

Covetousnes

and Ambition

are the roots of all evil.

4680. * Surget gens contro gentem, 

Luci. xxi.

[leaf 78, back]

Ther shall be / atwix*egyouns,
Eueriche bysy*/ other to oppresse.

Strife starts
And al swich strif /, as he berth wytnesse,
Kalendys ben /, I take his word to borowe,
sorrow.
And a gynnyng*/ of meschief and of sorowe:
Men haue it* founde / be experience.

But War
But the venym / and the violence
Of strif, of werre / of contek, and debat,
That make< longys bare and desolat;

shall cease;
Shal be proscript and voyded out of place,
And Martys swenk / shal no more manace,
Nor his sperë*/ grousous to sustene,
Shal now no morë*/ whettyd* be so kene,
Nor he no morë*/ shal his haunerk shake.

Love shall
But loue and pees / in hertys shall awake,
And charite /, both in length and brede,
spread.
Of newë shal her bryghte beenys sprede
Thorgh grace / only : in dyuers naciouns,
Forto reforme / a-twix*egyouns
Pees and quyett / concord and vnyte.

Christ, who
is God
And he that is / both on / and two / and thre,
Ek thre in on / and souereyn lord of pees,
Which in this exil / for our sakë ches,
For louë only / our troubls to termyne,
and man,
For to be born / of a pur viryne:

let us pray Him, ¶ And lat vs prey / to hym that is most good,

Let us pray Christ to give us Peace here, and Heaven hereafter.

Which for mankynde shadde his herte blood, Thorgh byseching / of that heuenly quene, Wyff and moder and a Mayde clene, To sende vs pes / her in this lyf present', And of oure synnys / parfit amendement', And Ioye eternal / whan we hennés* wende. Of my talé / thus I make an ende. Explicit.

Here endeth the destruccioun of Thebes.

13. Thynne’s Animadversions (1599) on Speght’s Chaucers Works, re-edited from the unique MS, by Fredk. J. Furnivall, with fresh Lives of William and Francis Thynne, and the only known fragment of The Pilgrim’s Tale.

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Of the Second Series, the issue for 1878 (there was none in 1877) is.

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Of the Second Series, the issue for 1883 (none in 1879, ’80, ’81, ’82, ’83, ’85) is.


Of the Second Series, the issue for 1886 is.


Of the Second Series, the issue for 1887 is.


23. John Lane’s Continuation of Chaucer’s Squire’s Tale, edited by F. J. Furnivall from the 2 MSS in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, A.D. 1616, 1630. Part I.


Of the Second Series, the issue for 1888 (wrongly marked No. 27 for 1889) is.


Of the Second Series, the issue for 1889 is.

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27. The Chronology of Chaucer’s Writings, by John Koch, Ph.D., Berlin.

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Of the Second Series, the issue for 1892 is.
Of the Second Series, the issue for 1898 (none in 1898–97) is,

Of the Second Series, the issue for 1900 (none in 1899) is,
32. Life-Records of Chaucer, Part IV. Enrolments and Documents from the Public
Record Office, the City of London, Town-Clerk’s Office, &c., ed. R. E. G. Kirk, Esq.

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Of the Second Series, the issue for 1902 is,
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