Lydgate's Siege of Thebes.
Lydgate's

Siege of Thebes.

EDITED.

FROM ALL THE KNOWN MANUSCRIPTS AND THE TWO OLDEST EDITIONS,

BY

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PART I.—THE TEXT.

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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 mencyoun, 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 story of Edippus and Iocasta, the second part (ll. 1047-2552) the disputes of Ethiocles 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 1 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 "Sensyut 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

Temporary Preface.

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 naciouns 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 Franciae & Angliae Regna perpetuo futuris temporibus observentur, & obvietur Occasionibus & Principiis, ex quibus inter eadem Regna, quod absit, Debatas, Dissensiones seu Discordiae futuris possent temporibus exoriri, Concordatum est, quod dictus filius noster Rex Henricus laborabit, . . . ambo Corona, scilicet Franciae et Angliae, perpetuo futuris temporibus commanebunt & erunt in unà & eadem Personà, viz. suà, 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 editions 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. AdJ. 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. ll. The Arundel MS. 119 is a small folio, 10\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 7\(\frac{3}{4}\) 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.

7. C. = Cambridge University Library, Addit. 3137.
12. G. = Mr. J. H. Gurney's MS. (Keswick Hall).
13. I. = The late Sir H. Ingilby's MS. (Ripley Castle), now belonging to Mr. Lawrence Hodson (Compton Hall).

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—878.
Ad₂. 785—878, 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—1458, 1858—1922, 3668—4060, 4386—4515.
Di. 1—153.
Synopsis of the Gaps in MSS., etc.

Du. 111—337, 4284—4340, 4459—4572, 4630—4716.
E. 107—176, 4363—4418.
I. 785—788, 3935—4116, 4582—4676.
Lb. 449—852.
Lb. 65—392, 4597—4658.
M. 147—222.
P. 1669—1672.
Ra. 2099—2294.
S. 1455—1459.
T. 615—726, 1061—1172.
T. 2485—2672, 3634—4209.

Ar. E. G. L. are complete.
The Siege of Thebes.


Incipit Prologus.

Whan brijte phebus / passëd was þe ram
Myd of Aprille / and in-to bolë cam,
And Satourn old / with his frosty face
In virgynë / taken had his place,
Malencolik / and slowgh of mocioun,
And was also / in thoposicioun
Of lucina / the monë moyst and pale,
That many Shour / fro heuene made avale;
whan Aurora / was in þe morowë red,
And Iubiter / in the Crabbës Hed
Hath take his paleys / and his mansioune;
The lusty tyme / and Ioly fressli Sesoun
whan that Flora / the noble myghty quene,
The soyl hath clad / in newë tendre grene,

1-6 cut away in Bo. (7, 8 incomplete, the second half being cut away).

THEBES.
Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales and Pilgrims. [Prolog.

with her flourēs / craftily ymeynt;
Braunch and bough / wit red and whet depeynt,
Fletinge þe bawme / on hillis and on valys:
The tyme in solth / whan Canterbury talys
Complet and tolk / at many sondry stage
Of estatis // in the pilgrimage,
Euerich man / lik to his degré,
Sôme of desport / sôme of moralité,
Sôme of knyghthode / loue and gentillesse,
And somde also of parfit holynesse,

some moral,

And sôme also in solth / of Ribaudye
To makë laughter / in þe companye,
(Echi admitted / for ðon wold other greve)
Lich as the Cook / þe millere and the Reve
Aquytte hem-silf / shortly to conclude,
Boystously / in her teermōs Rude,
whan þei hadde / wol drunken of the bolle,

some ribald,

And ek also / with his pyllèd nolle
The pardowner / beerdles al his Chyn,
Glasy-Eyed / and face of Cherubyn,
Tellyng a tale / to angre with the frere,

also the

Pardonere,
[leaf 1, back]

PROLOG.

Lydgate's Praise of Chaucer, Flower of Poets.

As opynly // the storie kan 3ow lere, 36
word for word / with every circumstance,
Echon ywrite / and put't in remembrance
written by
By hym pat' was / 3if I shal not' fynye,
Floure of Poetës / thorought' al breteyne,
By the Flower of Poets,
Which sothly haddë / most' of excellence
In rethorike / and in eloquence
(Who will be always fresh in my memory.)
Which neuer shal / appallen in my mynde,
But' alwey fresshi / ben in my memorye* :
To whom* be 3ouë / pris/ honoure / and gloryë*
Of wel seyinge / first' in oure language,
Chief Register / of pis pilgrimage,
Al pat' was tolde / forgeting' noght at al,
Feyned talis / nor ping' Historial,
With many prouerbe / diuers and vnkouti,
Be reherasale / of his Sugrid mouthi,
Of eche thyng' / keping' in substantae
The sentence hool / with-outë variance,
Voyding' the Chaf / sothly for to seyn,

(Prolog.)}

Lydgate finds Chaucer's Pilgrims at Canterbury. [PROLOG.

from the Pilgrims' meeting

Enlumynysg / þe trewé pikéd greyn
Be crafty writinge / of his sawës swete,
Fro the tymé / that is deden * mete
First the pylgrimes / soethly euerychon,

At the Tabbard / assembled on be on,
And fro suthwerk / shortly forto seye,
To Canterbury / ridynge on her weic,
Tellyncy a tale / as I rehercë can,

Lich as the hoste / assignued every man.
None so hardy / his biddynge disobeye.

And this while* / that the pilgrymes leye
At Canterbury / wel logged * on and all,
I not in soth / what I may it call,

Hap / or fortune / in Conclusioun,
That me byfil / to entrnent into touñ,
The holy seynë / pleynly to visite
Aftere siknesse / my vowës to aqyute,

In a Cope of blak / and not of grene,
On a palfrey / slender / longe / and lene,
wp rusty brydel / mad nat for þe sale,
My man to-forn / with a voidë male;

which of Fortuné / took myn Inne anoñ

Wher pe pylgrymes / were logged euerichōn,
The same tyme / Her gouernour, the host,
Stonding in halle : ful of wynde and bost,
Lich to a man / wonder sterne and fers,
Which spak to me / and seide anon, “daun Pers,
Daun Domynyk / Dan Godfrey / or Clement,
3e be welcom / newly into kent,
Thogh 3oure bridel / haue neiper boos ne belle;
Besechinge 3ou / pat 3e wil me telle
First 3oure name / and of what contré
With-outē morē* · shorte-ly that 3e be,
That loke so pale / al denouye of blood,
Vpon 3oure hede / a wonder thred-bar hooD,
Wel araïed / for to ridē late.”

I answerd / ‘my namē was Lydgate,
Monk of Bery / ny3 fyfty 3ere of age,
Come to this toune / to doe my pilgrîmâge,
As I haue hight / I haue* therof no shame.’
“Daun Iohn,” quod he / ‘wel brokē 3e 3oure name!
Thogh 3e be soul / beth right glad and light!
Preying 3ou / soupe with vs to-nyght,
And 3e shal hauē* / mad at 3oure devis,

78. Wher] Where as Ad1, Ad2, I. Ther 3e, were logged] logged wern Bo. Du. M. Ad1, Ad2, I. Ra. Ba. Tg, were om. L1, euerichon] echon M. Ad3. Ar. has a second pause-bar after were. 79. Her] the Ad1, Ad2, I. Ra. Ba. S. the] here Ad1, Ad2, Ra. their Ba. S. 80. halle] be halle L1, Ad1, Ad2, I. P. 81. Lich to] Liche Bo. Tg, Du. L1, M. Ra. Ba. Lg, Ro. sterne] stoor Ra. Ba. 82. Which] That Ad1, Ad2, I. S. om. Ra. Ba. to me] anone P. and seide anon and seid L1. 84. welcom Ad1, Ra. welcome Bo. Tg, M. into] vtnto P. 85. neiher 3i 3. Bo. Tg, L1, M. Ro. nyther Du. nether L1, nouthir Ra. Tg, Ap. noþer Ad1, Ad2, I. E1, E2, P. Es, noþer Ba. boos ne belle] list nor belle Ad1, I. 86. Besechinge G. Ad1, Ra. besekyng Bo. Tg, Ad2, I. will] wolde Ad1, I. me] om. E1, E2. 87. 3oure] of youre E1, E2, of] om. Bo. Tg, Du. M. Es, E2. 88. more] mor Ar. G. Ra. Lg, 89. al] and G. 91. araised Ad1, arraied M. arayed Bo. ryden Bo. M. ride Ad1, 92. Lydgate (Lidgate) Lisdgate Bo. Lydygate Ap. 93. Bery Ar. G. Lg, Bury Bo. and all the rest (ep. 131). ny3] nat Ad1, I. 95. han] ha Ar. alone. I haue therof therof haue I M. 96. broke] brouke Bo. Tg, Du. M. Ad1, Ad2, I. Ra. Es, 3e] þee Bo. om. Ad2, I. 3e 3oure] he her Tg, 97. be] om. Ad2, I. soul Ar. G. Ra. soyl Ad1, soyl S. sole Bo. Du. M. Ad2, Lg, Es, Ap. soole Lg, sool I. E1, Tg, Ro. 3e be soyl] ye be foull Ba. ye be seke P. it is so Tg, be] bo Tg, Du. L1, M. Ad2, I. S. Tg, Lg, Ro. right] om. Ad2, I. 98. soupe] to soupe Bo. Tg, Du. L1, M. E1, Tg, P. Es, to nyght] þis nyght Bo. Tg, Du. L1, M. E1, Tg, E2, Lg, Ro (ep. 143). 99. haue] han Ar. alone. mad] om. Lg, Ro. 3oure] youre owne Ro. devis] avyes P.
A grete puddyng / or a rounde hagys, 100
A Franchëmole / a tansey / or a froyse.
To ben a Monk / Selender is 3oure koyse; 104
3e han be seke / I dar myn hede assure,
Or latë fed / in a feynt pasture.
Lift vp 3oure hed / be glad, tak no sorowe!
And 3e shal hom ridë with vs to-mörowe!
I sayë, whan 3e rested han 3our' fille.
Aftere soper / Slepe wil do non ille.
Wrappe wel 3oure hede / with* clothës rounde aboute!
Strong* notty ale / wol makë* 3ou to* route.
Tak a pylow / pat* 3e lye not* lowe!
3if nedë be / Sparë* not* to blowe!
To holdë wynde /, be myn opynyoun,
Wil engendre / Collikes* passioune
And makë men to greuen / on her ropps,
whan thei han filled / her mawës and her croppes.
116
But* towar* nyght* / e to some fenel Rede,

Annys / Comyn / or coriandre sede!
And lik as I / pouer haue / and myght,
I Chargé 3ow / rise not at Mydnyght,
Thogh it so be / the moonë shyñé cler.
I wol my-silé / be three Orloger
To-morow erly / when I se my tyme,
For we wol forp / parcel a-foré Pryme,
A company / pardé / Shal do you 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 boundé* / to a newé lawe,
Atté' goynge' oute of Canterbury toune,
And leyn a-sidé / thy profession.
Thow shalt not chësé / nor pi-silf withdrawe,
3if eny myrth / be founden in thy lawe,
Lyk the custom / of this Compenye;
For non so proude / that's dar me deny,
Knyght nor knaué / Chanon / prest / ne nonne,

120 and not get up at midnight.
He'd call me early;
124 and we'd start before Prime.

When we left Canterbury,
I was to tell a merry tale,
We leave Canterbury at sunrise, to dine at Ospringe.

To telle a talē / pleyuly as thei konne,
When I assigne / and se tyme opportune.
And for that wel / our purpoos wil contune,
We wil homward / the same custome vse,
And thow shalt not / platly the excuse.

Be now wel war / Stody wel to-nyght!*
But, for al this / be of hertē līst!*
Thy wit shall be / pe Sharper and the bet.”

And we anon / were to Soper set,
And seruēd wel / vnto oure plesauce;
And sone after / be good gouernaunce
Vnto bed goth euerie maner wight.

And touarde morowe / anoū as it was light;
Every Pilgryme / bothē* bet and wors,
As bad oure hostē / toke a-ñoū his hors,
When the sonē / roos in the estē ful clyere,
Fully in purpoos / to come to dynere
Vnto Osspringe / and brekē þer oure* faste.

And when we weren / from Canterbury paste
Noght* the space / of a bowē draught,
Our hostē in hast / haþ my bridel rauht,
And to me seide / as it was in game,
Come forth, daun Iohn / be yor Cristene name,
And latē vs make / some manere myrth or play!

---

Shet\textsuperscript{3} yourtoos / a twenty deuelway!
It* is no dispoyt / so to pate\textit{e} and seie.
It\textsuperscript{t} wol make yourto lipp\textoe{s} / wonder dreye.
Tel some tale / and make the\text{-}r\text{-}er of a* Iape!
For be my Rounce / thow shalt not\textsuperscript{t} eskape.
But preche not / of no\{n holynes\}e!
Gynne some tale / of myrth or of gladnesse,
And no\{d\}d\{d\} not\textsuperscript{t} / with thy\{n\} heuy bekke!
Telle vs some thynge\textsuperscript{t} / that\textsuperscript{t} drawe\textsuperscript{p} to effecte
Only of Ioy\oe{e} / ! make no lenger lette!"

And when I saugh / it wold\oe{d} be no bette,
I obey\oe{d}\textsuperscript{*} / vn\{t\}o his biddyngye,
So as the law\oe{e} / me bonde in al thinge;
And as I could\oe{d} / with\{a\} pale cheere,
My tale I gan / ano\oe{n} / as \oe{e} shal here.

\textit{Explicit Prologus.}

\textit{Incipit Pars Prima. Per &c.}

\textsuperscript{1} How ourse host
\textsuperscript{2} bad Daun Iohan
telle a tale,
not a holy,
but a merry one.
and began my
Tale (which is a sad one).
Lydgate will tell the Tale of the Siege of Thebes. [PT. I.}

[leaf 4]

Prima Pars.

I will tell you a story of the Siege of Thebes,

As I am now one of your company,

I entred am / in-to 3our companye,

And admitted / a tali for to telle

By hym pat hap pouer to compelle,

I mene our hoste, gouernour and guyde

Of 3ow echon / ridying her be-side;

Thogh that my wit / barayn be and dul,

I wol reherce / a story wonderful,

Towchinge the siege / and* destructiuon

Of worthy Thebees / the myghty Royal toun,

Bylt and begonne / of olde antiquite,

Vpon the tyme / of worthy Iosuë,

King Amphion.

Be dylignce / of kynge Amphional,

Chief causë first / of his fundacioun,

For which his fame / which neuere shal away,

In honure floureth / 3it vtnto this day,

And in story / remembred is and preised.

How he raised the walls,

But how the wallys / weren on heghte roised,

It is wonder / and merveil forto here.

But if ye list / I shal 30w platly lere
The maner hool / shortly in sentence,
Vnder support / of youre pacience,
As writ myn auctour / and bochas both two,
Rede her bookes / and 3e shal fynde it so,
How this kyng / thys prudent Amphyoun,
With the sweitesse / and melodious soun
*And armony / of his sweete song /
The Cyté bylt / that whilom was so strong /
Be vertue only / of the werbles sharpe
That he made / in Mercuries harpe,
Of which the strenge / were not touchéd softe,
Wherby the wallës / reiséd weren a-lofte,
With-outë craft / of eny mannys hond,
Ful 30or agon / myd of Grekës lond Æ;
which is a ping / of Poetës told,
Neure yesey / neither of song nor old.

[leaf 4, back]

† But, as Bochas / list to specifie,
Cler expownyng / this derkë poysye,
† Seith * Mercurye / god of Eloquence,
† That, be the myght / of heuenly influence,
† Vnto this kyng / at His natuië
Thorgh glade aspectë / that he shuldë * be
Most excellent / be craft of Rethorik,
That in this world / was non to hym lik ;
Which signysfieth / to hem that ben prudent;

Amphion's song was his sweet words,

Tho Musycal / the lusty instrument,
I mene the harpe / most melodious,
yové to this kyng / be Mercureus,

And his song / this auctour can sow teche,
was no thyng / but the crafty speche
Of this kyng / ycalléd Amphiooun ;
Wher-by He made / the contrés envyroun

To han such lust / in his wordés swete,
That were so plesaunt / fauourable, and mete
In her Eerys / that shortly ther was noon
Disobyesaunt / with the kyng to goon,
Wher so euere / that hym list assigne.

His cheer / his port / was outward* so benygne,
That thorgh his styring / and exortaixon
With hym they went / to byldé* first this toun,
And forsook / eech man his contré,
Be on assent / to make this Cyte
Royal and riche / that lich was nowher noon.

And thus the wallis / made of lym and stool,
Were Reyséd first / be syngyng of this kyng;
lichi as Poetys / feyne in her writyng,
Passyng Rich / and Royal of entaille.
Her may ye See / how myche may avaylle
The goodlihed / and lownesse of a kyng,

as poets feign.

lime and stone,
[leaf 5]

And speecaly / in cher and in spekyng,
To his lyges / and to beri hym fayre
In his appor' / and shewe hym debonayre,
And natr to bene / to straungé ne soleyn
In contenaunce / outward / be disdeyn;
Which causeth oft / who that' Can aduerte,
Grete hatred / in the peoples herte,
And ther-vpon ' / priuely wol rowne,
When a prynté / doth vp-on hem frowne,
Shortly deme / for al his excellence,
Amongst hem-silf / out of his presence,
Everych conclusé / lich his fantasye.
And thus ful oft / gendred is Envy
In folkés hertes / of soleynité and pryde,
For swich as list / nat onys lokie a-site
To Reward hem / when they lowé loute.

And ageyn kynde / it' is' out of doute,
That' eny hed / be recorder of the wyse,
Shuld the foot / of disseyn despyse

Which berep hym vp / who so can také hede,
And Susteneth / in his moste* nede
As his Pyler / and his sowpowayle.

For fyndale, ne were* the porayle
her berer vp / and Supportacions,
Farwel lordshyp / and domynacions
Thorough-oute the world / of every hegh estat!
Wherfor me semeپ / mor is Fortunates
Of Mercureye / þe sootи sugred harpe
Than Mars / swerdh / whetten kene and sharpe,
Mor accepted / wîp aspectis goode
Than is this god / with his lokes woode.
For humble speche / wîp glad conternaunce
May a pryncē / sothly mor avaunce
Among his puple / Hertēs ferto wynnē
Of inwardē loue / which that* wol not twynne,
Than gold / rychesse / pride / or tyranye,
Outher* disdeyne / daunger / or surquedye.
For of lordes / as* Clerkēs can reporte,
But* that* loue / her crownē do supporte,
The fyn ys noght* / in conclusioun.
I Takē recorē / of kyngē Amphyoun,
That* byltyē Thebēs be his eloquence
Mor then of Pride / or of violence,
Noble and riche / that* lik was nowher noī,
And thus the wallēs / mad of lym and stoon
Were reisēd first* / be syngyng of this kyngē,
līch as Poetēs / feyn in her wyntyng.

anst. What the good-
lihede of a prince
avayleth to
wynne the heret
of his puple.
Kind words and
looks get more
love than gold
and pride.

Ensamplc
of kyng Amphioyn.

How aftere the
opnyunc of
some auctours
But* sothly zit* / Some expositours,
Groundyng hem / vpon olde auctours,

PT. 1.] Cadmus sets out the site of Thebes with bull's-hide strips. 15

Seyn that Cadmus / the famous olde man,
Ful longe afor / this Citè first began
And the ground / of the bieldynge sette,
And the boundes / be compas out-mette*
With thong out-korve / of a boolys hyde,
Whycli envyroun / streccé myghtē* wyde
To gete Inne londe / a ful large space
Werh-vp-on to byld / a dwellyng place,
And callēd was the Soyle / þus geten Inne,
¶ Whylom Boece / of the boolys skynne.
The name after / into Thebēs turned.
¶ But Cadmus ther / hath longe not soiourned,
lik in Story / as it is complied;
For shortly he from thennys was exiled,
Neuer after to dwellen* in this toun,
Be the knyghthode of this Amphioun,
Which vp parformeth / riche for the noonys
The Cîte Thebes / of myghty squarē* stonyes,
As I so wolde / a litil here to-forn;

I've now told you all about the building of Thebes, and won't say more, as my Tale 'll last for 7 miles.

And Cadmus bus / hath his kyngdam lorn, Sceptre and crowne / and his powere Royal.

If now have I told / vnto you / ground of al, That 3e wel knowe / be Informacion
Cleerly the pith / and exposicioum Of this mater / as clerkês can 3ou telle,
It were but veyn / longer for to dwelle, To tary 3ow / as in this matiere,
Sith my talë / which that 3e shal here, Vpon oure waie / wil lasten a longe while, The space* / as I suppose / of vii. myle.
And now 3e knowë* / first how Amphioun Bylt and began / this Cité and this touñ, Regnyng ther / longe aftere, as I rede. Of hym no more /; for I wil procede

To my purpoos / that I first began: Not tellyng here / how the lynë Ran From kyng* to kyng / be successioun, Conveying douñ / je stok of Amphioun 332
Cereoly be lyneal* discent;
But leue al this /, pleynly of entent To tellë forth /, in bookês as I rede,

[leaf 6, back]

To bere the Croune / in this myghty Londë, holdynig the Sceptre of thebës in his hond, Manly and wys / duryng al his liff.

And Iocasta / calléd was his wyff;
Ful wommanly / the story seith certeyn,
For a tymè / thoghi she were bareyn,
Tyl Layus / in ful humble wise
To haue a child / didë* Sacrifice,
Fyrsst to* apollo / in his char so briżt,
And Iubiter / that haj so gret a myght,
Besechyng he / with denoun reverence,
To graunt only / thoghi her influence,
That his request / may executed be;
And specially / to Goddesses thre,
He besoughte / Pallas and Iuno
And Dyanë / forto helpe also
That he be not defrauded of His bone.

And his preyere / accepted was ful sone,
That fynaly / thoghi his ryytys olde,
Evene lik / as his hertë wolde,
The queene Iocasta / hath anoñ conceyued;
Which whan the kyng / fully hath perceyued*
He made in hast / hym lyst not to abide,
Thorghi his kyngdom / Massagerës ryde
Fro Coost to Coost / the story can devyse,
For dyyynoures / and phylosophres wise,
For such as weren / famous physiciens
And wel expert / Astronomyens,
To Come* in hast / vnto his presence
To fynden* out / shortly in sentence,

She is barren.
Layus does sacrifice to get a child.
Layus prays 3 Goddesses to help him.
He sends for diviners to find out the child's fate.
By Craft only / Of Calculacioun,
The Chyldës fate* / and disposicioun;
And ther-vpon / to 3eve / a Iugëment,
The Root ytaken* / at the ascendent,
Trewly sought out / be mynut and degre
The sille* hour / of his natvytë,
Not forsete / the heavenly mansions
Clerly Cerched / be smalë fracciouns,
First be Secoundës / tiers and ekë quartes,
On Augrym stooneë / and on white caertes
ypreuëd out / be diligent labour,
In tables correcte / devoyde of al errour
Lustly soght* / and founde / ouët* bothe* twoo,
The 3eerës collecte* / and expance also,
Consydred ek / be good inspicioun
Every hour* / and constellacioun
And eche aspecte / and lookës ek dyuers,
Which were good / and which also pervers,
Wher they were toward / or ellys at debat,
Happy, welful / or infortunat.
And fynaly / in conclusyoun,
They founde saftoun / in the Scorpion,
Hevy-chered / malencolik / and lothi,
And woodé* Mars / furious and wroth,
holdyng his Sceptre / in þe Capricorn,
The same houré* / when this chylde was born,
Venus deiecte / and Contrarious
And depresséd / in Mercuryes hous;
That the dome / and Iugémént fynal
Of thies Clerkes / to speke in special,
Be Fatal sorti / which may not be wirdrawe,
That with his swerde / his fader shal be slawe;
Ther may no man helpe it / nor excuse.

On whiche thynge / the kyng gan sore muse,
And cast he wolde / on that other side
Agayn her doom / for hym-sylf provide,
Shape a way / and remedy to-forne,
Biddyng the queene / when the chylde were born,
Withoute Mercy / or moderly pytè
That he be ded /: it* may noë other be.
And in al hast / lik as he hath sent,
She obeyèd / his comauwement.

Withi wooful herte / and a pitous loke
And facé pale / her songe sone she toke,
Tendre and grene / both of flessh and bonys,
To certeyn men / ordeynèd for þe noonys
From poyn to poyn / in al maner ping
To execute / the biddyng of the kyng.

390. woode L_i, Ba. wode Bo. T_i, Du. M. wood Ar. Ad_i, Ra. and] and eke
T_2. 392. houre Bo. hour Ar. M. Ad_i, whan] þat Bo. T_i, Du. L_i, M. Di.
398. second his] om. G. 399. helpe it] it helpe G. 400. whiche Bo. M.
Ad_2. Ayen Bo. M. Ayenste Lb. and gayn G. provide] to provyde Bo. T_i, Du.
L_i, M. Di. T_2. 403. Shape] To shape L_i. Shapyng Ad_i. Ad_2. I. P. remedy]
I. be to forne Lb. final Di. 405. moderly with s underdotted Ar. 406.
Di. T_2. P. all the Ad_2. I. 408. obeide Bo. obeied M. obeied Ad_i, 409.
To] And T_i, 413. pinge Ar. and 414. kynge Ar (both final e underdotted).
They durste not delay it / nor abide, 
But to a Forest / that stood fer bysede,  
They took Her wey and faste gan hem spede  
The kyngges wil / to parforme in dede,  
Havynge therof / passyng hevynesse.

But whan that they / behelden the fairnesse  
Of the Chyld / and excellent beauté,  
In her herté / they hadde grete pyté,  
And pleynly cast', among hem was no stryf,  
That the child / shulde* han his lif.  
And anóul hygh / vpon a tre,  
In a placé / that no man myght se,  
They henge hym vp / the story kan reheerce.  
But first their feet / jorgh / they gan to perce,  
And on bowës 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 Thebés / in alle the haste they may.

But of fortuné / thilke samé day  
with her houndés / serchyng vp and douñ,  
The huntés went / of kyng poliboun  
Thorgh the forest / gamé forto fynde,  
Some aforne / and somé / cam behynde,

And gan serch / and sekë wonder sore  
Amongst the hillês / and the holtês* hore.  
And as they Reenge / the trenchis by and by,  
They herde a noyse / and a pitous cry  
Of thys chyld / hangyng on the tre;  
And aH at' onys / drowe forto se,  
And lefte not til* they han hym founde;  
And toke hym donne / and his fete vnbounde,  
And bare hym hom / vnto Polyboun,  
Kyng* of Archadye / the famous Regioun.  
And whan that he / first til* he chyld* gan See,  
Of his woundës / he hadde grete pytë,  
To beholde / his tender fete / so blède;  
And calle'd hym / Edippus / as I rede,  
which is to seyn / plattly this no phage,  
Borëd the feeto / as in that* langage.  

And first* the kyng* in his Royal halle*  
Made his men / an norys for-to calle,  
This sonege chylde to foster and to kepe  
With her Milk / that* he nat ne wepe;  
And his leches / he chargëd 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;  

440. the hilles] hilles P. holtes] haltes Ar. G.  441. they] the Ar. renge  
til] to Ar. alone.  447. bare hym hom] hym bare home Du.  449. that he  
first* pe chyld] pe Ad. that* that* om. Ap.  452. who calls him  
't Edippus' == with berved  
feet,  
456. has him murnst  
and doctord,  
460. and means to  
make him his  
heir.
And Whether* that he had / a wif or noon,  
I fyndè not / and therfor lat it goon.

But by processe / of dayès and of þeeris,

This Edypus / amongst his playling feiris  
was in his port / passyng ful of pride,
That noñ with hym / myght in þees abide.
In hert he was / so Inly Surquyndows,

Malencolik / and Contrarious,

Ful of despyt / and of hegh disdeyn,
That no wight durstè* / shortly hym with-seyn ;

Til on a day / he gan with oon debate
To whoom he hadde / specyaly grete hate,
Which of Rancour / and of hasty tene,
As he that myght / His pridè not sustene,

Gan vpon hym / cruelly abrayde,

And vnto hym fellie / thus he saide :

"wherto," quod he / "artow so prodoue of port,  
Contrarie also / euer / in oure disport,
Froward and felle / lastyng euere in oon,
As thow were lord / of vs euerichèou,

And presumet fully in wyrychyn,
Lik as thow were sone / vnto the kyng,
And descended / of His Royal blood?

| Di. L, P Lz, Ro. 471. he was] was he M. Di. so] om. S. 472. and) and eke  
| M. Di. Tz. 474. durnse Di. Ra. durn Ar. dorst Bo. Tz, M. Ad., shortly  
| hym him shorti Ad., hym] om. Ad., I. 476. specyaly grete] grete and  
| odyous Ro. 478. might His pride not] might not his pryde Bo. T, Du. L, Lb.  
| pres P. 479. cruelly] cruelly Lz, - truely E,  
| abrayde] to abrayde Bo. T, Du. L,  
| Lb. M. Di. Tz, P. E,  
| abrayde] obrace Ad, chied Ad, chide I. 480. vnto]  
| to Bo. T, Du. L, Lb. M. Di. Ba. Lz, Ro. yet to Ad, I. fellie] fully Tz,  
| fellie thus] thus fellie P. 481. artow Ar. Bo. Tz, M. Ra. ertow Ad,  
| art thow Lb. arthow Tz, ar tow Du. 485. presumet fully] fully presumet Bo. alone.  
| wyrychyn Ar. werching Tz, I. worching Ad., Ad., E, S. werking G. Bo. T,  
| our Bo. Ra. to the I. to a Lb.
But wher so be / thow be wroth or wood, 488
Thow art no thing / and thow list takē hede, 482
Appartenynge / vnto his kynrede, 492
But in a Forest / founden and vnknowe, 498
whan thow were 3onge / therfor bere the lowe! 495
And vttrely* remembre, 3if the lyst, 498
Thy byrth and blood / ar bothe two vnwist.
This the fyne / shortly / of my tale.
Wherwith Edippus / gan to wexē* pale, 496
And chaunge also cheer and contenaunce, 499
And gan a-point / in his* remembrance 500
Word be word / and forgat* right nouȝt, 502
And felly / musēd* / in his ownē thouȝt, 503
And cast* he wold / with-oute more tarying.
The trouthe enquire / of polibouz the kyng.
And when he saugh / opportuné space, 504
And the kyng* / in a* syerē place,
He hym bysoghte / lowly on his kne
To his request* // benignely* to se,
And that he woldē / pleynly / and not* spare
Of his byrth / the trewe ground* declare,
And make hym sure / of this thyng: anoñ
3if he were / his verrey sone or non.

And Polyboun / only of gentilles, 
whan he heeved / the greté hevynesse 512

Of Edippus / and the wooful peyne, 
hè gan dissimule / and in manere feyne, 
lik as he had be / verrely his heyre.

But' mor and mor / he falleth in dispeir, 516

And doune on kneës / eft a-geyn gan falle, 
Hym conjurings / be the goddes alle 
To tellë trouth / and no thyngë to hide;

Affermyng' ek / he woldë* nat' abide
Lenger with hym / but ryden and enquere,
Til tyme he may / the verrey sothe lere 
In eny part of hap or of fortune.

And for that' he / was so inportune 524
In his desire, the kyngë with-outë aboord

Seriously / tolde hym* how it' stood, 
In a Forest' first / how he* was founde
Vpon a tre / be the feet ybounde,

And how he caste, in conclusion, 
To make hym kyng / of that' region
Aftere his day / shortly forto telle.

But' Edippus / wil no lenger dwelle,
But' took liove / and in hast' gan ryde
To a temple / faste ther he-syde

Of Appollo / in storie as is tolde,
Whos statue / stood / in a char of golde
On* whelës four / boorynyd bright and shene;
And with-In a spirit / ful vnclone,
Be fraude only / and fals collusioun,
Answere gaf / to every questioun,
Bryngyng the puple in ful gret errorr,
Such as to hym dyden fals honour
Be Rytys vscd in the oldë dawes
Aftere custome / of paganysmes* lawes.
And Edyppus / with ful humble chere,
To Appollo makëd His preiere,
Besechyng hym on his kneës lowe,
Be some signë / thatë he myghte knowe,
Thorg* Evidencë Shortly comprehyndyd,
Of whatë kynredë / thatë he was descendyd.
"* And whan Edyppus be gretë deuocioun,
Fynysshëd hath / fully his orysoun,
The fend* anôn / with-Innen Invisybte,
With a vois dereful and horrible,
Bad hym in hastë / taken his viage
Towardë Thebës / wher of his lynage
He herën shal / and be certeynd.
And on his way / anôñ he hap hym hyed,
by hasty Iournë / so his hors constreynd

Day be day / til he hap atteynded 560
Vnto* a castel / Pylotës ycallèd,
Rich and strong* / and wel aboute walled,
Adiacent* / be syyt* of the contrè
And perteynent* to Thebes the Cytè :

† kynge Layvs / beyng* ther present,
For-to holde a maner tornement*
Withi his knyghtës / song* and corayus,
And other folkës / that* were desyrous
To preue hem-silf / shortly for-to telle,
Who by force / other* myght* excelle,
Or gete a namë / thorghe his hagh prouesse.
Euerich of hem / dyd his bysynesse
572
On hors-bak / and also ek on foote,
Al be that* somë founde* ful vnsoote,
Rather a pley of werrë / than of pees;
Wher Edyppus put hym-silf in prees,
576
As he that* was / ay redy to debat,
Enforsyng hym / to entren at the gate,
Maugré aH tho / that* hym woldë* lette.
580
† And in the pres / of aventure he mette
Kyg* layvs / and cruelly hym sogni,
Thow the story / writy not* the maner howli,
Ne no wight* can / of alle the compaigne

Be no signè / verrely espye
By whos hond / that the kyng! was slawe;
For Edippus in hast' / gan hym, with-drawe
And kept hym Coy / of entencion.
Gret! was the noyse / and the pitous souñ
In the Castel / for slaughter of the kyng',
Dooel and compleyn / sorowe and wepyng!
† But! for they segñ / hevynesse and thoght'
Ageynës deth · vayleth lit or noght',
They ordèyne with Ryytys ful Royal
For the feste / calliéd / Funeral.
And lik the custom / of the dayës olde,
The corps they brent! / into asshes colde,
And in a vessel / rounde, mad as a bal,
They closed hem in gold and in metal.
And after that did her bysy Cure
In Thebës to make a sepulture,
And richëly, hem list no lenger lette,
The ashen didè* they encloë and shette.
Of this materë / ther ys* no mor to seyn.
But to Edippus / I wil retorne ageyñ,
Which hym enhasteþ / ay fro day to day
Towardës 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 failëd / of a Guyde,
Out! of his way / he wente fer be-side,

Thorg a wylde / and a waast contrè,
By a mounteyn / that stood vpon the see,
Whe[r that]t monstres / of many dyuers kynde
Were conversaunt / in story as I fynde;
Amonges* which / sothly ther was on,
So Inly cruel / that no man durst go[n,
For drede of deth / forby that passage.

This monstre was so mortal in his rage,
which hadde also / be descripcioun,
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 odysous of countenaunce and sight;

And as I redé /, Spynx / this monstre hight,
Wors than Tygre / dragon / or serpent.
And I supposè / by enchantement*
He was ordeyned / on the hyl tabyde,
To sleen aH tho / that passèden be-syde,
And specially / aH that diden* fayle
To expowane / his mysty dyyvynalle,
His problem ek / in wordès pleyn and bare
With-oute avys / opynly to* declare,
Or with the lif / he myghte not eskapec.
This verray sothi platly and no Iape.

If And 3if that e, be declaracioun,
3af ther-vpon / cleer exposicioun,
He shuld in hast / there was noñ oper mene,
Sleen this monstre / for al his cruel tene.
Ther may of mercy / be / non oper graunte.

But of al this Edyppus ignoraunte,
This dreadful hiiff / stondyng on a roche,
Er he was war / gan ful nych approche,
More perilous platly / than he wende.
And sodeynly / the monster* gan* descend,
To stoppen his way / and letten his passage,
Thus abraydyng* · with a fel corage :

"I haue in herte Inly gret* disport* 
That* fortune / hap broght the to my sort,
To make a preef* / zif thou mayst endure,
The fatal ende / of this auenture,
Set at a fyn / sothly be daiës olde."
And by and by / al the caas hym tolde,
Charging* hym to be wel war and wise,
Gete the palme / and bere away the pryse
Touchyng* this thyng* / sette a-twene vs tweyñ,
with lyf or deth / which we shal dareñ.

And this Monstre / with a despitous chere
his problem gan / thus as zë shal here.

"Ther is a beest* mervellous to se,
The which in soth at* his natiumye
Is of his myght* / so tender and so grene,
That he may hym-siluè* nat* sustene
Vpon his fete / thogh he hadde it sworn,
But zif that* he / be / of his moder born."


648. Edyppus is stoppt by the Monster, the Sphinx, and charged to solve the Problem he'll be set.
649. leaf 11, back
656. Of the problem that Spynx putte to Edipus.

'There's an animal which, at its birth, can't walk.
The Sphinx's Problem. Edippus denounces the Sphinx. [PT. I.

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 gof vpright on twewe.
Dyuer of port' / and wonderful of cherys:
Til, be length / of many sondry zeeres,

Then on 3 again, then on 4, and finally goes back to the matter it came from.

Naturally / he goth azeyn on thre,
And sith on foure, it may non oper be,
And Fynaly / this the trouthe* pleyn,
tellé / onf twewe.
he retourneth / kyndely ageyn
To the materé / which that' he kam fro.

Solve this, or die.'

Edippus thought over the puzzle,

And whan Edyppus / gan this ping aduerte,
Wel assurred in his manly herte,
Gan in his wytt' cerchen vp and douñ,
And of prudence / cast' in his resoun,
Be grete avis / what' thyng this may be;
Seyng also / that' he may not' flee,
and how ther was / counsel noon ne rede,
But' tellé trouthe / or ellys to be dede.

And be ful good / deliberacioun
Thus be answerd / in conclusion,

then cald the Sphinx a foul murdering Monster,

‘Thow 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 / folkês to deceyve,

But truste wel / for al thy sleighty wit,
Thy false* fraudë / shall anon be quwy.
Me list not nowe whisper neither rowne,
But thy problem / I shall anon expowne
So opynly / thou shalt not go ther-fro.
lo! this it is / tak good hede therto!

¶ Thilkë* best thou spak of herto-forn,
Is euery man / in this world yborn,
Which may not goñ / his lymës be so softe,
Bot' as his moder / bereth hym alofte
In her armes / when he doth crye or* wepe.
And after that' / he gynneth forto crepe
On fourë*.feet' in his tendre 3outhi,
Bexperience / as it is oftë kouthi,
A-forn ye kned / his hondës bothë* two.
And' by processe / thou mayst consider also
With his two fete / for al thy fellë tene,
He hath a staf / hym-seluen to sustene,
And than he goth / shortly vpon thre.
And alther-last / as it' most nedës be,
Voyding' his staf / he walkep vpon tweyn:
Til it so be / thorg agë / he atteyn,
That lust' of 3outhë wasted be and spent'
Than in his hond / he taketh a potent',
And on-thre feet / thus he goth ageyn,

I dar afferme / thou maist' it' not' withseyn, 
And some afterte / thorgh his vnweldy myght, 
By influence / of naturys right', 
Bexperience / as every man may knowe, 
Lich a child<sub>6</sub> / on foure he crepeth lowe. 
And for he may no whyl<sub>1</sub> here soiourne, 
To er<sub>1</sub>lly ageyn / he most<sub>1</sub> in hast<sub>1</sub> returne, 
Which he kam fro<sub>2</sub> /, he' may it<sub>1</sub> not<sub>1</sub> remewe*. 
For in this world / no man may eschewe, 
This verray soth / shortly and no doute, 
When the wheel of kyndë comëth aboute, 
And naturally hath his cours y-Ronne 
Be circuete / as doth the shenë sonne, 
That<sub>1</sub> man<sub>1</sub> and<sub>1</sub> chyld<sub>1</sub> / of hegh and<sub>1</sub> lowe estat<sub>1</sub>, 
It<sub>1</sub> geyneth nat<sub>1</sub> / to makë / mor debat<sub>1</sub>, 
His tymë sette / that<sub>1</sub> he most<sub>1</sub>* fyne, 
When Autropos / of malice doth vntwynne 
His lyves thred / by Cloto first compowned. 
Loo / her thy problem / fully is expowned, 
At<sub>2</sub> ourë metynge / as I took on honde, 
To the lawe / that<sub>1</sub> thou most nedës stonde 
And in al hast / of myn honde's deye, 
But of reson / thou can<sub>1</sub> it<sub>1</sub> ought<sub>1</sub> withsye.' 
And so this Spynx / awapyd and amaat<sub>1</sub>, 

Stood / disamayēd / and dysconsolaat;
With Chier doune-cast' / Muët, pale, and ded.
And Edippus anoñ smote of the hed
Of this fende / stynkyng and vnswete,
And the Contrē sette holy in quyete;
Wherby he hath / such a pris yronne
That his fame is euery cost' yronne
Thorgh al the londe / that he the monstre hath slawe.

And lynē-right / to Thebēs he gan drawe,
Wel receyued / for his worthynesse,
For his manhode / and his grete* prouesse.
And for they segh / he was a semly knyght',
Wel faavourēd / in euery mannys sight',
And sawh also Thebēs the myghty toun,
Not only they / but al the Reiquon,
Weren destitu / of a governour,
Aȝēynst' her foon / hauyng no socour
Hem to defendē* / but the quene alloñ;
Among' hem-self / makynge ful gret moñ,
For heire was noñ / as bookēs specific,
The Sceptre / or crowne fortē occupoe :
For which the lordēs aĥ be on assent
with-Inne the touñ / set' a parleunc',

Shortly concluyng / if it myghte beñ,

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

Prudently to treté with the quene, Namely they / that helde hem-silf most sage, To condescending / be way of Mariage, She to be Ioynéd to this manly knyghtt, Passing prudent / and famous ek of myghtt, Most likely man /, as they can discerne, The worthy Cytë / to kepen and gouerne.

And thorgh counsayl / of the lordës alle To her desyre / pleyntly / she is falle, And accorded / with-oute mor tarying, That of Thebës / Edippus shal be kynge, By ful assent /, was noñ that seide* nay. And tymë set / ageyn a certeyn day Among hem-silf / and finaly devyseyd, The weddyng was / in Thebës solempnyzed

Ful ryally, which nedës most vnthryve, Only for he his moder / toke to wyve, Vnwisst 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 neiper feire ne good, Nor acceptable / blood to touche blood: Which cause hath ben of gret* confusione In many londe / and many Regyoun, Grounde and roote / of vnhap and meschaunce, The fyn concludyng / alwyay with vengeaunce, As men han seie / by cleer experience;

And holy writ / recordeth in sentence
How herodēs / falsly in his lyff
By violencē toke his brother wyf,
For she was faiure / and plesaunte to his sight,
And kepe her stille / be forde* / porgh his myght,
Al be to her* / he hadde / title non;
And for her sake / the holy man seynte Iohn
For his trouthe / in prison lost his hede.
Therfor I rede / every man take hede,
Wherso he be Pryncē, lorde, or kyng,
That he be* war teshewē such weddyng,
Er thate the swerde / of vengeaunce hym manace,
leste he losē / hap, fortune, and grace;
Takyng ensample / in al manere thynge
Of Edippus / in Thebēs crowned kyng;
Al be that he wroght of ignoraunce,
Ful derk and blynde / of his woful chaunge.
And 3if vnwist / he of Innocence,
As 3e han herde, fil in such offence,
For which he was punisheđ* and brought Lowe,
What* ar* they worthy that* he errore knowe,
And fro the knotte / list not to abstene
Of such spousale / to god and man vnclene?
I can not seyn / nor mor therof devise.
Demeth 3our-siiff that* prudent* ben and wise,

And Edippus / hath among in mynde,

The wedding of Edippus

No Muse was at Edippus’s unhappy Wedding.

Of whom the weddying, lik as ye may fynde,
Unhappy was / and passing odious,
Infortunèd / and vngracious.

I am wery mor therof to write.
The hatful processe / also to endyte
I passe ouer, fully of entent;†
For ymenèus / was not ther present,
Nor lucyna / list not ther to shyne,
No ther was none / of the musys nyne
By on accord / to makè melodye;
For ther song not be heuenly Armony
Neither Clyo / nor Calypò.
On of the sostren / in nombre thriës thre,
As they dydè* whan philolegye

Ascendid vp hegh aboue the skye
To be weddid / this lady vertuous
Vnto hir lord / ye god mercurius ;
As Marcian ynamèd / de Capelle,
In his book of weddying can you telle,
Ther concluyding* in this mariage
The poete, that whilom was so sage,
That this lady, called sapience,
L-wedded was vnto eloquence ;
As it sat wel, by heuenly purruence,
hem to be ioyned / be knot of Alliance.
But bothè* two, sothly, of entent†

The dread Guests at Edippus’s Wedding.

At the weddying / in Thebês were absent;
That causèd after / grete aduersité.
For fynal eende / of that solempnytè
was sorowe / and woo / and destruccioun,
Vtter ruyne / of this Royal toun.
Ther may no man helpe it / nor socoure,
For a tyme / in Ioyë / thoght 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 browës blake,
And her doghtren / sorow forto make,
hydous-chered / and vggely forto see,
Megera / and Thesiphonee,
Allecto ek / with labour and envie,
Drede and fraude / and fals trecherie,
Tresouë / pouerte / Indigence, and nede,
And cruel deth / in his Rentë Wede,
Wrechednesse / compleynt* / and eke Rage,
Fer ful pælé / derknesse / crokëd age,
Cruel mars / as eny Tygre wood,
Brennyng Ire / of vnkyndë blood,
Fraternal hatë / deþ settë the rote,
Sane only deth / that ther nas no bote,

S. T₂. P. E’r. 853. at this] atte E₁, at his E₂, platly plainly S. C. E₂,
foro] to Ad₁. Ad₂. I. C. 854. was] were Ra. S. Cerberusa] Cerebrus Ad₁.
Ad, and I. omit And herebus, and have l. 855 fladir and foundour unto hatted.
856. hool Du. hole Bo. Ad₁. In the rubric beside l. 858 Nyght] Nygh Ar.
Thesiphonee] Tysiphone M. Di. Thesiphonie Ba (see). Thesephane P.
865. compleynt] compleyn Ar. G. eke Bo. T₁. M. Ad₁. eek Ra. 866. Fer ful
pale Ar. G. Ba. faireful pale Bo. and all the rest except L₁. and Lb., that have
fierfull pale. derknesse] Dronkenesse E₂. croked] and croked Bo. Ad₁, Ad₂. I.
Ra. Ba. P. L₂. 868. vnkynde Bo. M. vnkynd Ad₁. 869. deep Bo. depe M.
Edippus and Jocasta

Assuryd othiès / at' the fyn vntrewe:
AH thise folk / werên / at' this weddyng' newe,
To make the towne / desolate and bare,
As the story / after shal declare.

Edippus reignd long in Thebes,
¶ But ay in Thebès / with his wallès stronge
Edyppus regneth / many day and longe.
And as myn autour writ' / in wordys pleyn,
By Jocasta he had sonës tweyn,
Ethycles and also Polymyte
And, in bokes / as sondry clerkës write,
Doghtres two/ ful goodly on to se,
Of which* the ton hight' Antygonë,
And that other / callëd was ymeye,
Of her beautë / Inly soureyñ.

Edyppus ay devoyde / of werre and strif,
with Iocasta ladde a mery lyf
Tyl fortune / of her iniquytë
Hadde envie / of his prosperité.

But when Edippus was most famous,
For whan he shon / most' riche in his renoun,
From her wheel / she plongëd hym a-doun
Out of his Ioye / into sodeyn wo,
As she is wonte / frowardly to do,
And namely hem / that setten her affiaunce
Of erthly trust' / in her variaunce.

Fortune cast him into woe.
¶ For whan this kyng' / passing' of gret myght',
Sat' with the quene / vpon a certeyn nyght',
Casually when his folk echoñ
Out of his* Chambre sodeynly wer gon,

Or he was war / Iocasta gan byholde
The Carectys of his woundês olde,
Vpon his fete / enprented wonder depe ;
Turnynge her face / brast out forto wepe
So secrely / he myghte it not espie.
And she anon / fille into a fantasie,
Ay on thyss thyng / musynge mor and more,
And in her bed / gan to sighe sore.

And when the kyng / conceyueth her distresse,
He gan enquere / of her hevynesse
Fully the cause / and occasioun ;
For he wil wite / in conclusion,
What / her eilep / and why she ferde so.

“My lorde,” quod she / “withoute wordês 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 rîst vertuvs,
Be whom I hadde / a sonë / wonder-fair,
lîkly tabene / his successour / and hair :
But / by cause / his dyvynours tolde
At his birth / softly that he sholde,
3îf he haue lyf / be fatal destanyê,
Sleen his fader / it may non oþer be ;
For which the kyng / his fâtë to eschewe,
Bad me in hast / as hym thoughte dewe,
To sle the childe / and haue therof no routih :
And I anôi bad with-outê slouth

Jocasta sees the marks of old wounds on his feet,
[leaf 15, back]

He asks why she does so.
She says she
bore a son to King Layus,
who was told that the boy
should slay his father.
Layus bade Jocasta kill her babe.
But the men she
told to do it,

*Certeyn men / vp peyne of Iugémente,
To* executé / the comandémente
Of the kingt / as I gaf hem in charge.
And forth they gon / to a forest large,
Adiacent / vnto this contré,
Percen his fete / and honge hym on a tre,
Nat* parfourmyng / theexecucioun.
On hym they haddé / such compassioun.
lefte hym ther / and hom resorte ageyn,
Beyng in doute / and in non certeyn,
At theyre repeire / as they tolden alle,
Of this childe / whatt afterward is falle ;
Saue they saidé / huntys han hym founde,
Which lad hym forth / and his feet vnbounde ;
But to whatt coost / they coude not declare.
Which parcel is of myn evel fare,
Grounde and cause / of myn hevy chere,
Considerd ek the woundës thatt appere
Vpon zoure fete /, and woot not whatt they mene.
And on thyng / ay / is at myn herte grene,
My lord, allas butt of newe date :
kyng Layus / slayen* was butt late

Jocasta asks why Edippus came to Thebes.

At a Castel / nygli by this contrè, when Edippus came into the land.

vpon 3oure comyng / into this Citè.

Al this yweied / and rekned into oñ,

Maketh myn hertë / hevy as a ston, 952

So that I can counsel / non / nor Rede."

And with that wordâ the kyngâ liftâ vp his hede,

And abraydâ / with sharpe sighës smerte,

And al this thingâ be ordre / gan aduerte,

Ceriously / be good avisëments;

And by signës / cler and evidentâ

Conceyueth wel /, and sorë gan repente,

Itâ was hym-silf / thatâ Jocasta mente. 960

And when the Quene / in manere segh hym pleyñ,

By her goddes / she gan hym to constreyne

To shewen outâ the cause of his affray,

And itâ expowne / and makë no delay,

Crop and rootâ / shortly, why thatâ he

Entred firstâ / into thatâ contrè,

Fro when he kam / and fro whatâ regiouñ.

Butâ he hirâ putâ / in dilusiouñ,

As he haddë* done it for the nonys.

Til atâ the* laste / he brak outâ atonyñ

Vnto the queene / and gan a processe make

Firstâ how he was / in the forestâ take,

wounded the feetâ / and so forþ euery thyngâ,

Of his Chershingâ / with Polyboun the kyngâ,

And hool the causë / why he hym forsoke,

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

And in what wise / he the weye toke
Toward Thebes / 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
kyng Layus at the castel gate,
Towardes nyght whan it was ful* late,
And how to Thebës that he gan hym spede
To fynden oute / the stok of his kynrede:
which vtnto hym gan to wexë* couth;
For by processe / of his grenë southe
he fonde oute wel, be reknyng of his lif,
That she was both / his moder and his wif.

So that al nyght and swing on pe morow
A-twene hem* two / gan a newë sorowe:
Which vnnto me were tedious to telle;
For ther-pon /"if I shulde dwelle,
A long space it woldë occupie.
But je may reden in a Tragedye
Of Moral Senyk fully his endyng,
His doul, his meschief / and his compleynyng,
How with sorow / and wynweldy age
This Edippus / fille into dotage,
lost his wit/* and his worldly delit,
And how his sonës* / had hym in despit,
And of diseyn / tok of hym no kepe.
And bookës seyn / his eyën oute he wepe.

And as myn auctour liketh to devise,
As his sones rebuke hym and dispise, 1004
Vpon a day / in a certeyn place
Out of his hede / his eyen he gan race,
And Cast at hem / he can noñ other bote,
And of malice / they trad hem vnder fote, 1008
Fully devoided / both of love and drede.
And whan Edippus / for meschief was thus dede,
with-Inne a pytte / made in the erthe* lowe,
Of cruelte / his sones / han hym throwe, 1012
Wers* than serpent* / or eny tigre woode.
Of Cursid stok / cometh vnkynde bloode,
As in story / 3e may rede her to-forn;
Al be the Roosë* / grow / out of a thorn. 1016
Thus of Edippus /, when he was blynde and olde,
The wrecched ende / I haue* 3ou pleynly told.

For which shortly / to man and child I rede
To be wel war / and to taken hede 1020

(of kyndely riȝt* / and of conscience
To do honur* // and duȝ* reuerence
To fader and * moder / of what estat thei be,
Or certeyn / ellis / they shul neuere the. 1024


Thus I haue rehersed al the caas 1017
Off Edippus whens that he was 1018
And the wrecheid end wherfore that I rede 1019
Every (eny Ba.) man and child be war and take hede Ra. 1020

For who that is not to hem debonayr
In speci, in port / for to trete hem fai,
Hem to obeye / in honestè and drede,
And to cherissi* / of what they han nede,
I dar afferme / exceptyng noñ astat,
That he shall first be infortunat
In alle his werk / both on see and lond,

They who don't honour parents,

And of what' thyng that' he take on hond
Fortunè froward / to hym and contrayre*,
Waast* of his good / pleyly and appaire,
Fyndè plentè / of contek / werre, and striff,
Vnhappy ende / and shortnesse of liff,
And gracëlees / of what' he hath to* do,
Hatrede of god / and of man also.

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

† Explicit Prima pars istius Codicilli.
† Incipit Secunda Pars Eiusdem.

Secunda pars.

Secunda Pars.

Asséd the throp / of Bowtoun on þe ble,
By my chilyndre / I gan anoñ to se, 1048
Thorgh þe sonnë / þat ful cler gan shyne,
Of þe clowk that it drogh to nyne;
And saugh also þe siluer dropes shene
Of þe dewe / lich peerlys* / on þe grene, 1052
Vapouréd vp in-to the eire* alofte,
whan zephyrus / with his blowing* softe
þe wedere madë lusty / smothe / and feir,
And right* attempre / was the hoolsom eir*;
The samë hour / aH the hoolë* Route
Of the pylgrymes / rydya* roundë aboute,
In my talë / whan I gan procede,
Rehercyng* forth / as it was in dede,
Whan Edippus / buryed was and graue;
How his sones / the kyngdam for to haue,
Among* 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.

PT. II. ] After Boughton, the Tale goes on. 45
For the crownë / gonnë to debate
which of hem / Iustly / shal succede,
And the Sceptre / of the toune possede;
Advertyng nought / neither to right ne wronge,
But ech of hem / to make her partie stronge,
And his querele / prouedly to sustene:
From whos hertës / was devoyded* clene
Of brotherhode / the faithful alliaunce.
Fals Conetise / so made hem at distaunce,
Fully worchynge into destruccion
And Ruyne / of this noble touñ.
So hootë brente the hatred and envie
Of bothe two / thorgli pompous Surquedeye,
That nowther woldë* / pleynly in a poyn†
Other forbern* /, they stod in such disioynte
as thow* they hadde / of berthë* be foreyns.
Tyl of the toune / the noble Citezeyns,
kyghtës, Barounes / with many worë lord,
Shope a way / to mak hem of accord,
And to set hem / in quyete / and in pees.

But for his part†/ this Ethioles
Alegge gan that he was first yborn;

For which he oght of resoun go to-forn
In the Citè / to be crownèd kyng;
Sith be lawë / ther was no lettyng:
For vnto hym / longeth / the heritage
Be descnt / and be title of age.
But1 polymyte / of ful hegh 'diadeyn,
Al opynly gan replie ageyn
And for his part / seide, in special,
Reson was non / that he shuld haue alle
Regaly and domynacioun,
And the lordship hooly of the toun,
And he right nought /, out of the Cytè
But* lyve in exile / and in pouertè,
Ful concludyng, with-oute feer and dred,
Rather than suffre that /, he wil be ded.
And thus, alas / thorgh her envious strif,
At the ende / euerich loste his lif,
At2 gret2 mischief / as 3e shal after here.
But3 thylkè tyme the lordës 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 love her strif / of wisdam and resoun,
And condescende / to some conclousion

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 communcion of the bretheren.

They shall change yearly.

Thus entrechaunge every 3eere they shal:

They most obeye of hert/ and take it wel,

For this was hool / the composicion,

Both Eteocles

A-twene the bretheren / and communicon,
Polyneices rides from Thebes.

Ful knet vp / be gret avisement;
To-for the godlys / be oth of sacrament,
Neuer after to grochē* ne to varye,
But a-complisshēn shortly / and not tarye,
lich as thacord / enrollēd in the toune,
From poynτ to poynτ/ made mencioun.
   But alderfirst / be reson of his age,
Ethycles / hadde thaunantage
To regne aforn / and to were a crowne,
Polymyte / hym hastyng outh of toune
Duryng that 3eer / it may noth other be,
Whil his brother / sat in his Royal See
Ful richely vpōn fortunē wheel;
And rode hym forth / armēd brijt in stele,
This Polymyte / sothly as I rede,
Hym-silfe allone / on a Ryal Stede,
With-oute guyde / al the longē day,
Beyng aferd / to kepe the heghē* way,
In his herte / havynge suspicioun
To his brother / of malice and tresoun,
lest he pursued / thorgh fals vnkynde* blood
To haue hym ded / for couētise of good,
That he alonī / myght̄ haue* possessioun

Polyneices comes to a Forest by the Sea. 

Duryng his lif / fully of the touν.
For which in hast /, havyng no felawe,
Polymyte a-sidė gan hym drawe
By a forest / Ioynyng to the See,
knowyng right nought the syyt of the contrė,
Ful of hillės / and of hegh mounteyns,
Craggy Rochės / and butfew playns,
wonder dredful and lothsom of passage,
And ther-with-al / ful of beestis rage;
holdyng his way of herti* no thyng* light,
Maaτ and wery / til* it drowe to nyght.
And al the day / beholdyng enivrouņ,
He neyther saugh castel, toure, ne touν;
The whiche þing / greuедин 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 ferė* / gan to wexě mad,
As it semptė / by the wooful sownes
Of Tygres / berės / boorės / and lyounes,
which for refut* / hem-siluė* forto saue,
Euerich in hast* / drogh vnto his Caue.
But Polymyte / in this tempest* huge,
Allas the while* / fyndeth no refuge,

1161. haast Bo. hast M. haste Ad,, 1162. drawe] to drawe M. Di. with-
1165. hegh Ar. lye Bo. 1166. Craggy] Cracchy Ad.] I. roches] roges M.
1173. whiche Bo. Du. M. which T., Ad., greuедин greueth E.,
tarise Ar. E., to arise Bo. T., Ad., Ra. to ryse P. game
ryse Lb. 1176. grisly] greuedin Ad. I. 1177. man and beest*] many a
beste E. were Ar. L. Ro. om. T. was all the rest. adrad] rad Ra. Ba. C.
1178. fer Ar. feer Bo. feere M. Ad., to] om. M. Di. waxe Bo. M. wex
Bo. hast Du. haste Ad. 1183. P underdotted, before But Ar. 1184. while
Bo. M. Ad., whil Ar.
Polyniceis comes to Argos, whose King Adrastus has 2 Daughters. 51

Nor hym to schrowde / saugh nowher no socour
Til it was passéd / almost mydnyght howr
A large spacie / that the sterrés cler,
The clowdeés voyde / in heuene did appere;
So that this knyght / out of the forest large
Gan approchen / to the loude of arge,
Seyng a palays myghty of beeldyng,
Of which Adrastus / calléd was the kyng,
A manly man / riche and wonder sage,
And ronnē was / soundel / into-age,
Born of the Ile / which called is Chysoun,
And whylom some / of the kyng Chaloun;
And for his witt / in story as is kouth,
he chosen was / in his tendre youth,
Of alle Argé / to be crownéd kyng,
Chief of alle Grece / by record of wryting,
Not be dissent / nor successioun,
But al only / of fre eleccioun
To* holde of Arge / the sceptre in his hond,
As most worthy / of alle* grekēs lond,
loulēd and drad / for wisdam and Justice.
And as the story / pleynly can devise,
This worthy kyng haddē doghtres two,

Near midnight the clouds clear off.

\* How Poly-
mytes cam into
the lond of
Arge.

Adrastus is king
of Argos,

clowdes] cloude Du. voyde Bo. void Ad.1. 1190. approchen Bo. M. Ad.1.
Chaloun] Chaloun Ad.2. Thalon Ra. Caloun Ba. called Cholon P. 1197. And
for his witt And is wryten Ra. Ba. in story] om. Ad.2. I. is] it is L. M. Di. Ad.
Heeld above the line). Ba. in his hond] and the Cronne P (a different hand has
added and Towne with paler ink at the end of 1204). 1204. As] And G.
of alle] in all (om. the) Ad.2. I. of alle the Ar. of the (om. alle) L.2. Ro.
1207. had Bo. M. Ad.1.
Adrastus dreams of his two Sons-in-law.

Passyng fair / and right good also.
It were to longe / her beaute to discryve.
And the eldest / called was Argyve,
Dëyfylë ynamëd the seconde.

And Adrastus, lych as it is founde,
This worthy kyng / haddë sonë noñ,
To succeed / after he be goñ;
For which he was duryng al his lyff
Tristt in hert / and* passingly pensif.
Butt hool his trustt / and his hopë stod,
Be Alaunce / of some worthy blood
Brouzt Inne by mene / of his doghtres tweyñ,
That he shal be releseëd / of his peyne,
Thorgh recomfort / of some hie mariage.
And sothly yet* ful high in his corage
He troubled was be occasion
Of a sweuen and a visionñ,
Shewëd to hym / vpon a certeyn nyght.
For as hym thoght / in his inward sightt
whyl he slept t, / by cleer inspecioun,
A wyldë boor / and a fers lyoun
Possed shal, thish bestës in her Rage,
His doghtres two / be bondt of mariage
In shorte tyme / with-In a certeyn day;
which broght his herte / in ful grete affray.

But pingt in soth / thatt destiñë hath shape,

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

And Polymyte / of whom I spak late,
With the tempest / bete / and al be-reyned
Be grace only / the Cite hath atteyned,

* Where Adrastus / ful statly of degré,
Thilkë* tymë / helde his Royal see.
The troublly nyght* / myrk, and ful obscure,
hath brought this kynght* / only be auenture
Thorh the Cite, enclosed with a wal,
Vnto the paleys / chief and principal,
Wher as the kynght / in his chambr alofte
lay in his bed / and slepte wonder softe.
Eke alle his folk / hadde her chambrs take,
lik as Fortune / peraunter haddë shape,
The silfé* tyme / be-cause it* was so late;
And Casually / no porter / at the gate,
As it* haddë* be right* for the nonys.
And in a porcë* / bilt* of square* stony,
Ful myghtely enarchéd envisyoun,
wher the domys / and plees of the toun
weren execut* / and lawês of the kyng;
And ther this kynght* / without* mor taryng,
Wery and maat / from his sted altoight;

Hangange the rene / in al the hast he myght,
vpon his arme / surer hym to kepe,
And leyde hym doune / and gan anoñ to slepe,
As hym semptë / 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 / Callëd Tidyus,
Eurous in Armes / and manly in werkyng,
Of his byrthe / sone vnto the kyng,
Of Calydonye / a londe of greet renoun.
And he, alas / out of that Regioun
Exilëd was / for he his* brother sclowe,
As Stace of Thebës / writ the manere howe,
Al be that he / to hym no malys mente.
For on a day / as they on huntyngs wente
In a forest / for herte / and for hynde,
So as he stod vnder a grenë* lynde,
And Casually / let his Arow Slippe,
he slough his broder / callëd Menalipple,
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,

\[ Into the porche / wher polymyté slepe, \]

Of aventure / ere he toke eny kepe,

The samë nyght hidously beseyñ

With the tempest / of thonder / wynde / and reyn;

And filt also / anoy / and gret damage,

Thorg thë Forest holding his passage,

As Polymyté haddé* do to-forn,

In peryl ofté / likely to be lorn,

With beestés rage / set on every side,

Til of grace with-outen eny guyde

He rode thorg Arge / thë grete myghty touñ,

Streñth to the paleys / and thë chief dongoun,

Lich as I tolde / wher polymyté lay ;

And at his comyng / made a gret affray,

For he was blynde / thorg derkenesse of the nyght,

And hym to gyvö* / he ne fonde no lijt

whan he cam Inne / of priket nor of torché,

Til he vnwarly / entred the porche,

And wold han také ther / his herbygasse.

But Polymyté / stert vp in a rage,

Sodeynly awaked / as I rede,

with the nyinge / of his proudé stede.

And first of al / whan that he byhelde

A knyght y-armed / vpon his brest a sheldë,


55
Polyneices leaps on his horse and threatens Tydeus.

leaps on his horse, and abuses Tydeus,

And gan the maner / of his aray aduerte, Of verrey Ire / vpon his hors he sterte, And cruelly gan tydingis enquere Whennys he cam / or what he dede there, And bad in hast / his answer to devise. And Tydeus, in ful humble wise, Answerd ageyn / of verrey gentillesse, And seid in soth / that of hegh distresse, Of the tempest / and the derke nyght, he dryven was / lich an erraunt knyght, Of nede only / and of * necessite And high constreyn't / of his adversiteit, To také loggyng' / wher so that he myght'; And in that' courte / therfor he alight'.

and that he means no harm.

With-outé moré*, thenkyng' non outrage Nor to no wight' / noyeng* ne damage. Than Polymyte / of malys / and hegh pride Toldé hym shortly / he shuldé* not' abide, Nor loggé ther / thogh he had it' sworn.

[leaf 22, back]

"For I," quod he / "teke it' vp-to-forne And wil it' kepé during' al this nyght', I seie the platly / maugré al thy myght:"

Tidens says Polyneices

¶ Quod Tydeus / 'that is no curtesie

Me to deuoyde / but rather vileynye,
3if 3e take hede / that se we a gentil knyght!
And I suppose / 3e hau / no title of right
To this loggyng / be way of heritage,
More than hau I, for alle 3oure fellé rage.
And pardè / 3it it shal be no desese,
Til to morowe thegh 3e do me ese,
Of gentillesse / only with 3oure lease;
To suffre me / it shal litil greue.'
¶ But ay the morö Tydeus spak faire,
Polymytè was froward / and contrayre,
And shortly seide / it gelyneth not to stryve;
That of force he shal devoide blyve,
Or vttrely / a-twen hem bothe two
This thyng to Trié / he most haue ado.
¶ And Tydeus, seyling / no bettre mene,
Ful lik a knyght / in steel y-arméd* clene,
With-out abood / faste gan hym sped
Wonder lyvely / forto take his stede,
And thus thies knyghtės / pompous and ellat,
For litil causė / fillen at debat,
And as they ranne to-gyder on* horsbak,
Euerich on other / first* his sperē brak.
And after that* / ful surqueded of pride,
With sharpē swordēs / they to-gyder ryde
Ful yrously / thishe myghty championus,
In her fury / lik Tygres or lyouns.
And* as they hurlte / that all þe paleis shoke,
and made in hast3 his chamberleyne's calle,
and porhe the courte / his worthy knyghtes alle,
Comaundyng hem to descendente and se,
This wonder noyse / in his courte be nyght.
And when they saugh two straungë knyghtës fighte
in platys brighte / and in thikke* maile,*
with-outë Ingë /, they hadde grete mervaile*;
And disamayed / of this vnkouth ping,
As they fond / toldë* to the kyng:
‖ And Adrastus / for derknesse of the nyght,
He comes down,
AH his meynë / stondyng en-vyroun,
Of thyes knyghtës having* ful gret wonder.
And of manhode / he putt hem first3 a-sonder,
Bids them stop fighting,
He tells hem they're great fools,
And entred Inne with a knyghtlye loke,
Affermyng ek, as to his fantasie,
It was a Rage / and a gret folye
So wilfully / her lyvēs / to Iuparte,
with-outē Iuge / her querel to departe,
And specialy / in the dērkē* nyght
When neither myght of other han no sight,
Charging* hem vpon peyne of her lif
To disseuer and stytnyn of her strif.
† And Tydeus in al the hast' he myght,
Ful humbely* from his stede alight,
And right mekely / with cheer and contenance
Put hym hooly in the governaunce
Of Adrastus / in al maner ping'.
And Polymyte / mad ek no taryng*
To light also / and woldē* not' wiptye
The kyngges biddyng / lowly to obey,
So as hym ought / with duē* reuerence.
And as thei stoodē* / both in his presence,
He gan enquerē first / of her estaat,
The cause also why they weren at' debat,
Of her cuntrees / sothly and her age,
L-axed ek / touching' her lynage,
Be descent' of what' stok pēi were born.
And Tydeus his answer / gaf to-forn;
Toldē pleylny / and madē no lesyg'.
60 Polyneices says he is Jocasta's son. Adrastus knows his Father.

he's son to Caledonia's king, and is banisht.

How that he was / sonë to the kyng
Of Caledoyn / and rizful heir thereto;
And of his exile / the soth he told also,
As 3e han herde / in the storye rad.
And Polymyte / with cheer and face sad,
Seyde he was born / in thebeës pe Cite,
And Iocasta, the gretë famous quene,
his moder was / with-outen* eny wene.
But of his fader / whilom kyng and lord,
For verray shamë he spak not a word,
Only for he / 3if I shal not feyne,
his fader was / and brother bothë* twye ne:
The which, in soth / he was ful loth to telle.
And eke the kyng / wold hym not compelle
Of gentillesse / but bad, with-oute blame,
Of his birthë* / forto haue no shame;
For hool the caas / and manner euery deH,
Touchyng* his kynne / he knewe pe ground ful wel,
lich as it was, by ful clieur report;
Enforsyng* hym forto do comfort,
with aH his myght / and his bysy peyne,
This manly kyng / to the knyghtes twye ne,
And to hem seide'/ aorn hym as they stood,
He wiste wel / not of ful worthy blood
They were dysceded / touchyng* ther kynrede.
And made in hast* / his officerës* lede

The strangé knyghtés / beyng' at debat',
Thorgh his paleys / to chambres of estat,
Eche by hym-silf / forto take his ese.
And euer þing; in soth, that myght' hem plese,
was offred hem / lich to her estates.

And whan they weren / disarmed of her platis,
Cusshewes / Greués / and her sabatons,
her harneys voyded / and her haberions,
Tweyné* mantels / vnto hem wer broght,
Frett' with peerle / and riché stony, wroght
Of cloth of golde / and veluyt cremysyn,
Ful richeiß furred with hermyïn,
To wrap hem Inne / ageyn the colde morowe,
After the rage / of her nyghtéss sorowe,
To take her reste / til* þe sonne* arise.

And þan þe kyng' / in ful prudent' wise,
First of alle / was not rëkkëles
Þe knyghtéz hertës / for* to sett' 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*.

If And Adrastus / þe worthy kyng famous,
A feeste madé / riche and plenteuous,

To thise knyghtës / hym-silf ther-at present.
And after mete / ful goodly he hap sent,
This noble kyng / for his doghters dere,
Of gentyllessë / forto makë chere
To the knyghtës / comë 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 stremsë / of her eyën clere,
Goodly apport / and wommanly manere,
Contenaunce* / and excellent fayrnesse,
To alle the court / broughten In gladnesse.
For the fresshnesse* / of Her heuenly cheres
So agreeable was to the straun-gers,
At her Entrë / that in especial*
hem thoughtë it lik a thyng Celestial;
Enhastyngë hem / in ful knyghtly wise
ageynës hem / goodly to arise.
And as they mette / with humble contenaunce,
Ful konyngly / 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 daliaunce.
It' were to longë / for 3ou to abide.

But wel I woot / that the god Cupide, 1480 and at once
By influence / of his myghty hond?
And the feruence / of his fry brond,
Her metynge first / fortunéd hath so wel,
That his arowes* / of gold, and not of stiel,
Idercéd han / the knyghtës hertës tweyn,
Thorgh the brest / with such a lusty peny
That ther abood / sharpe / as spere or lance,
Depe yfichéd / the poynët of remembreance,
which may not / lightly / racèd ben away.

And thus in Ioye / they dryvé forth þe day
In Play and Reuel / for the knyghtës sake.
And towards nyght* / they her chambres take
At duë* tyme / as her fader bad,
And on her way / the knyghtës han hem lad
Reuereuntly vp be many staire;
Takyng lievé / gan anoni repaire
To her logging / in a ful statly toure,
Assignèd hem / be the harberiore.

And after spicës / pleynly, and the wyñ
In Coppës greté / wroght* of gold ful fyñ,
With-outë taryng / to beddé* streghët they gon.
Touchyng her reste /, wher thei slepte or noñ,
Demeth 3e louers / that* in such maner thing*
Bexpericence han fully knowlecchyng; 1504

Adrastus sees his Dream-beasts on the 2 Princes' shields. [PT. II.]

Adrastus lies awake,

For it is nat declarèd / in my boke.
But as I fyndè / the kyng al nyghtè woke,
Thughtful in herte / the story specifies,
Musing' sore / and ful of fantasies;
First aduerting' / pe gretè worthynesse
Of this knyghtès / 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 rauolue aboute,
Ay in his herte / hauyng' a maner doute,
A-twenë two / hangyng' / in balaunce
where he shuldè* / maken an aliaunce
A-twenë his doghtren / and the knyghtès tweyn.

For on thyng' / ay / his hertè gan constreyn,
The remembrance / of his avioun,
Of which to-forn / I madè mencioun,

Wild Boar and the Lion, p. 52.

Touchyng' / pe Lyon / and the Wilde boor,
It nedeth nat' / to reherce it' mor,
Casting alway / in his Fantasie,
What' it' myghte / clerly 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 preie / deuoutly on his book
To the goddes / his dreme to speccifie.

And they hym bad homward fortó hye,
And to beholde / in the knyghtès shieldys

1506. alnyght Ar. 1512. weren Ar. Bo. Tj. Du. E. were (wer) all the rest.
comen thei were C. Royal Ar. Bo. Ad. Tj. ryal C. E. full riall L. worthy
an] any G. L. 1517. A-twenë Bo. M. Ad. doghtres Bo. dooughtres M. Ad.
E. 1 made] made I haue M. Di. made is C. P. E. makid is Tj. mencioun] a
Ad. I. on] in Lb. 1530. forto] to G. 1531. beholde Bo. M. Ad.
The fellë beestys / peynted in the feoldys;
Which shal to hym / be cleer inspecioun,
Ful pleyly / make declaracioun
Of his dreme / which he hadde in the nyght.
And Adrastus / enhasted hym ful riȝt's
In her Sheldës wisly to beholde.
Wher that he saugh / as the goddës tolde,
In the Sheldës / hangynge vpon hokys,
The beestës ragö / with her mortal lokys*.
And to purpos, lik as wryteth Bochases,
Polymyte / ful streght / enbracëd was
In the hyde / of a feerece lyoun.
And Tydeus / aboue his haberioun
A Gypon hadde / hidous / sharpe and hoor,
wroght of the brestels / of a wylde boor.
The whichë* beestis / as the story lerys,
wer wroght / and bete / vpon her banerys,
Displäied broodë* / whan they shulde fight.
wherof the kyng / whan he hadde a sight
Att hys repeir / in herte was ful glad,
And with a facë / ful demur and sad
with his lordes, that he about hym hadde,
To the temple / he thyss knyghtës ladde.
And whan they hadde / with all circumstauces
Of Rytys oldë / don her obseruaunces,

Hem to the court & they resort ageyn.  
And in an hallé / riche and wel beseyn,  
This worthy kyng of herte lyberal,  
Made a feeste / solempne and Royal,  
Which in deynteys* / surly dyd excelle.  
But it were veyn / euery cours to telle,  
her straungé 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 knyghtés two / and lik a prudent man  
In sykré wisë / thus his tale he gan.  

"Sirs," quod he / "I ne doubt it nouzt  
hat it is freßhë / and grene / ay in your thoth  
How that first / by goddys ordynaunce,  
And after next / thorgh fatys purveaunce,  
And be workynge / of fortuné hond,  
How that 3e werën brouzt into this lond  
Bothé* tweyn / But now this lasté* nyghte:  
Of whoos comyngé / I am ful glad and light  
First in my-self /, shortly to expresse,  
whan I considre / and se the likynesse  
Of your personys / with the Circumstancys  
And hool the manner / of your gouernancys;  
Seyng ful wel /, wherto shuld I feyne,  
3e likë be her-after to atteyn

beseyn (ayen) M. Di. 1560.  
feest Bo. feste Ad₁, deynteys Bo. Lb. Ad₁, deynys Ar. deynteys M. C.  
deynteis Lg. Ba. surly] shortly Ro. 1563. and her] and other C. Tg. E₂. 1565.  
Ap (cecre). secret Ad₁, Ra. E₂. Ro. seccret S. thus] and thus C. this Lb.  
Ro. jour] my P. In M. the illuminated capatl S of l. 1569 having been cut away, the  
first letters of 1570 and 1571 are gone, together with the words And after in l. 1572.  
1571. goddys] the goddis Ra. 1572. thorgh] bi Ad₁ Ad₁. I. honde with a dot  
laste Ad₁. last Ar. Bo. 1578. liknesse G. 1579. with] and Di. the] alle Ra. Ba  
Circumstancys] Circumstauence (: governaunce) P. 1582. likly] lik Ad₁, Ad₁.
To* grete estat / and* habundance of good, 1584
Thorgh 3oure birth / and 3our Royal blood ;
3e may not† faylē / but† 3e hauē wrong,
For 3e are bothē* manly / and right* strong.
And forto sette 3oure hertēs mor at reste
My purpos is / I hopē for the beste,
So that† in 3o be no variance,
To make a knotte / as be allyauunce,
Atwixē* 3oow and my doghtres two,
3if 3oure hertēs / accordē wel therto.
If And for I am fully in dyspeyr
To succedē for to han an heir; 1592
Therfor 3e shall han possessionn,
Duryng my lyf / of half this Regioun,
Forthwith* in hondē / and hool after my day.
Ther is no man / that† therto shall sey nay.
And sothly after / whan that I am graue,
Eche of 30w / shall 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 equytē compowned
So egally / in euery mannys sight,
That ecl of 3ow / reioysē shall his ryght.
And by 3our wit / 3e shul the lond amend,
And of manhode / knyghtly it differē
Ageyn our eemyes / and oure mortal foīn.

Tydeus accepts Adrastus's offer. 

And for the daies / passed ben and gone
Of my desyres / and my lusty southe,
I am ful set / forto maké kounth

That ye shall reign;
Adrastus will abdicate,

hunt, and
take his ease.

Tydeus
As he that was / a verray gentyl knyght,
With all his power / and his fullé* myght

Ful humblyly / thankédé* 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 aH that euer the kyng hap sayd.
And Polymyte / was also wel apayd, 1636
In the story / as it is comprehendid, 1636 and so does
And so they ben / bothë* / condescendyd 1640 Polynieces,
The kynggës willë / to fulfille in dede 1644 who, by Tides's
From poyn't / to poyn't / and ther-vpon procede, 1648 courtesy,
wherso euer / that they wynne or lese. 1648 chooses Argeia,

And Tydeus / made / his brother chese, 1652
Of gentillesse and of curtesye, 1652 and they and
which that was / most / to his fantasye 1654 their ladies
Of the sustren / for to han to wine. 1654 come.
And he in soth / chosen hath argyve, 1658 Adrastus
which eldest was / ful wommanly to se. 1658 summons his
And Tydeus / tok than* Döypylee, 1658 lords to
Of her beautë / most souereyn excellent. 1658 the wedding
And Adrastus / thorugh-outhe his londë hath sent of his
d For his lordës / and his baronage, 1656 daughters;
To be present / at the mariage 1659
Of the knyghtës / and make no lettyngï. 1659 Adrastus
And they echoñ · cam at his biddingï,
In goodly wysë / meke and ful benygne,
Ageyn the day / that he dide assigne. 1656
And thyder cam ful many lusty knyghtï,
Ful wel beseyn / and many lady briytï,
From euery Coostï / and many frecessë squyverï,
be Story seith / and many comunere,

1658. apayd (e underdotted) Ar. 1638. bothe Bo. Adï. both Ar. 1641.
Lï. Lb. M. Di. Adï. Adï. I. Ra. Ba. Eï. S. was) ys P. was most] most was C.
taken hab Tï.; in Ro. l. 1648 reads And Tedeus choos Deiphyle ful rigth. Ar. has
a second pause-bar after tok. 1650. thorugh-oute] thorph M. Di. 1651. For] Of
Ro. thes two S. knyghtes] knytes Ar. 1654. cam Bo. come M. Adï.
To byholde the grete Ryalte
And the maner / of thys solemnitye.

But to telle / all the circumstances
Of Iustës / Reuel / and the dyuers daunces,

The feestës riche / and the gyftës grete,
The pryvë sighës / and the feruent hetë
of louys folk / brennyng as the glede,
And devyses / of many sondry wedë,

The touches stole / and the* amorous lookes,
By sotyl craft / leyd oute* lyne and hokes,
The falsous folk / to traysshen and begyle
In their awayt / with many sondry wile:
Al this in soth / descryuen I ne can.

But wel wote I / the newë famë ran,
This menë while* / with ful swift* passage
Vnto Thebës / of this mariage.

And by report trewe and not yfeyned,
The soune therof the eerës hath atteyned,

Myn auctour writ /, of Ethycolës,
Touchyng* thonour / and the gret* eneres
Of Polymytë / highly magnified,
And how that he / newly was allied
With Adrastus / in the londe of Arge.

The whiche thyng* / he gretly gan to charge,

1661. Ryalte Bo. roialte Ad1.
Eteocles fears Polyneices will attack him.

Dredyng Inly / that this marriage,  
Shal after turne / vnto his damage,  
Sorë* musyng/ and castyng vp and doun  
The grete pouer / and the hegh renoun  
Of Adrastus / the which of greke's land,  
Hadde al the power / soget to his hand:  
Lost that he / for Polymytês sak  
wold vpon hym / a newë werrë make,  
But* zif that he, lik the conuencioun,  
At tymë sette / delyuerëd the toun  
To his broder / by bond of oth* I-sworn*,  
Be couenauntes* / assured her to-forñ,  
3if 3e remembre / late as I 3ou told:  
which he was nat / in purpos forto hold,  
But from his heste / Caste forto varye.  
And ther-vpon list no longer tarye,  
Lich his desire / to shapë remedies.  
And first he sente for his next allies  
In whom he haddë / most his affiaunce,  
For his lordês / that hadde gouernaunce  
Of his kyngdom / to come to hym anoñ.  
And when they werën present euericchoë,  
he seidë pleynly /, wenyng* for his best,  
That* his hertë / shal neuer lyve in rest,  
But* in sorowe / and in a maner drede,

Till his brother is dead.

Tyl his brother / outrely be dede;
That in Thebes / in his Royal sete
Myght allone / regnen in quiete;
be mente hym-silf / shortly, and non other,
Vnperturbed / of Polymyte his brother.
And at this counsayl / diuers of entent, 1712

"If fyndeth writ / thre folkës were present.
Some in soth / that faithful were and trewe,
And some also / that can chauce of newe,
And other ek / that be-twixe* tweyn
Courly kowde / vnder colour feyn. 1720

The firste seide, abouen* alle* thyng
Trouthe* shulde* / longë to a kyng,
Of his word / not* be variable,
But pleyn / and hool / as a Centre stable. 1724

"For trouthe* first / with-outen* eny wene,
Is Chief Pyler / that* may a kyng sustene,
In Ioye and honour / for to lede his lyff.
For trouthe whilom / hadde a prerogatiff,
As of Esdre / the book can specysie,
Record I take / of Prudent Neemye,
That worthy kyngges / for al her grete pride,
Wyn / and wymmen / ben ek set* asythe. 1732

1710. vtterly be Bo. M. be vtterly Ad1, Ad2, I. 1712. alone Ad1, alloan Bo.
regne Bo. Ad1, 1715. this] his Lb. Di. Ad1, Ad2, I. Ra. Ba. S. C. E2, at this

counsay] at her comeyg. P. 1716. written G. 1717. were faithful G. 1718.
can Bo. conne Ad1, can chanunce] change konne M. Di. 1719. other] some other
P. L2, betwene Bo. T1, Lb. M. Di. Ad1, Ad2. I. E1, S. C. T2, E2, betwixt
Du. tweyn] po tewlne Ad1, them both tweyne Ad2, them tho tweyn I. 1720.
kowde vnder colour Ar. Bo. Ad1, vnder colour koude M. Di. 1721.
aboue al Ar. Bo. M. Ad1, abouen alle Ra. 1722. Trouthe Bo. M. Ad1, Trouth
Ar. T1, Lb. Ra. shulde Bo. T1, Lb. Ad1, shuld Ar. M. Ra. longe Ar. Bo. T1,
Lb. M. Ad1, long Ra. to] vnto T2, E2, Ro. til Ad2, I. 1723. be] to be L1,
Countre L1, 1725. trouthe Bo. M. Ad1, trouthe Ar. withoute Ar. Bo. Ad1,
M. withouten Di. 1730. Neomye Ad2, I. Ba. 1731. That] What Ad2,
Ar. ek] also L1, Ro. ; in Ad1, E1, S. 1732 is omitted; Ad2, and I. instead of
wymmen have have bene put doun ; in Ra. after 1730 the space of
one line is left blank, and then follows, making three lines for the two 1731 and 1732:
Afforne kyngis wemen and wyn That worthi kyng for al ther grete pride Leid hym
doun and put on a side. Ba. has no blank line ; after 1730 follow the same three
lines as in Ra., only with wyfe for wyn and on syde for on a side (see Notes).
With all her pow'r / and domynacioun,
having reward / in comparisoun
To truthes myght / and truthes worthynesse.
For as Esdre / pleyly / doth expresse,
Who taketh hede / in the same place,
Be* the Influencé / sothly / and the grace
Of trouthe alloí / this oldé Neemye
Gat' hym licencé / to réedifie
The wallys newe / of Ierusalem.
Which trouthe is tresour / chief of euer rewme,
For Salamon writ' / how that' thyngès tweyne,
Trouth / and mercy / lynkéd in a cheyne,
Preserve a kynge / lik to his degré,
From al meschief / and aduersité.
Allas therfor / that' eny doublenesse,
Variaunce or vnscirennesse,
Chaunge of word€ / or mutabilite*,
fraude / or decye / or vnstabilite*,
Shuld in a kynge / 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 kynge to ben / double of entent*;
For it* may happé / that the world is blent

Truth is above all.

By truth, Nehe-~
miah got leave to rebuild the walls of Jeru-~
salem.

† Trouth and~
mercy preseuen
a kynge from al aduersyts.

† Chaunge nor
doublenesse shal
not be in a kynge.

See how many
kings have been
overthrown by
falseness!

1734. reward] no reward Ad2. I. comparisoun Bo. T1. comparacion Du. 1735. To trouthes] To trouth his P. The trouthes E1. and] om. E1. and~
trouthes] and his Ad2. Ad2. I. 1738. Be the] The in all the MSS. 1742. trouth]~
all the T2. rewme T1. reme Bo. Lb. Ad1. reem M. reame T2. Ro. realme~
thynges] kynges L1. L2. 1748. vnsikernesse Bo. 1749. mutabilite] mutablite~
Ar. 1750. or] other M. Di. vnstabilite C. T2. L2. Ro. vnstablute Ar. G.~
ystabilitee Bo. and all the other MSS. 1753. redeth Du. redith Ad1. rede~
it M. Di.
Eteocles wouldn't be True, and so destroyd Thebes. [PT. II]

Ful oftë sith / be sleght of her werkyng.
   But this the trouthe* / god see p every thyng* 1760
Right* as it is / for ther may be no cloude
To-forn his sight* / trouthe* forto shrowde.

† It may be clipped / and derked be discyte,
By fals engyne / liggyng in a-wyte,
As a serpent* / forto vndermyne ;
But at the last* / it wol clerly shyne,
Who that seith nay /, shew his brijte bemes.
For it* in soth / of kyngdames and of Reawmes 1768

Is berer vp / and conservatrice
From al Meschief / sothfast mediatrice
To god abouë / who so list* to se,
To kepe a kyng* / in Prosperité 1772

On every side / as I afferme dar.
For which 3e kyngges and lordës beth wel war
3our bihestës / Justly forto holde !
And* think how Thebës / with his wallës* olde 1776

Distroëd was / platly / this no les,
For doublenesse / of Ethioecles,
Which his puple / after sore abouht* :
Only for he nat* by counsell wrought* 1780
Of hem that* wer / bothe trewe and wis :

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

hym lyst nat worchen / after her devys;
But lefte trouthe / and sette his fantasies
To be gouerned / by fals flaterye *;
† That bad hym thenkë* / how he was a knyght,
And to holde of fowc* / more* than of* right,
Duryng' his lyf / lordship of the toun,
And not* to lesë his possessioun

For no bond / nor heestës mad toforn;
But lete his brother / blowë* in an horn,
Wher that hym lyst / or pypen in a red.
This was the counsayl / platly and þe Reed
Of swich as listë nat / to seyn the soli,
But falsly flater / with her wordës smoti.
† And whan they haddë / hool her talë fyned,

Ethiocles / fully is enclynéd,
Who so euer ther-at* / laugh or wepe,
likë her counsayl / possession to kepe,
who that sey nay / or gruche ther-ageyñ;

hym to contrarye / he thought was but* veyñ.

But in this whyle* hath the shene sozne

The twelcë signës / roundë aboutë Ronne

Sith Ethiocle / be Inst* rekenyng*;
In Thebës was crowned / lord and kyng;
holdsyn* the sceptre / and the dyademe;
That be resoun / as it volde seme,
The tymë was ful complett / and the space,
is ended,


He gave up

Truth,

† the counsayl of Flataereres.

and followd

those who bade

him stick to

Thebes

and let his

brother whistle

for it.

† How the yeer

was come out

that Ethiocles

regnyd.

His first yeer's

regin in Thebes

1782
and he ought to give up the crown to Polyneices,

[leaf 30, back]

Polyneices

and he ought to give up the crown to Polyneices,

Of couenaunte / he shulde voide his place,

And Polymyté ek / his iourne make

Toward Thebês /, poscessioun to take

Of due* titte / But* he hadde wronge:

Which thoghtt* in soth / the 3eer was wonder longe

Of his Exil / er it* kam aboute.

Who, doubting his brother,

And for he hadde / in hert a manere doute

Lest* in his broder / ther wer falshed* foundt*

Taquyte hym-silf / lik as he was boundt,

‖ To Adrastus / he gan declar his herte,

Beseching* hym / this mater* to aduerte,

And ther-vpon / to 3iue a counsayl sone,

Touchyng* his right* / what* was best* to done,

wher it* was bet* to goñ / or to abyde,

Or liche a knyght* manfully to Ryde

hym-silf allone / and maké no massage,

or claim Thebes

For to Chalaunye / his rightful heritage

with-Inne Thebês / outher* be pees or stryf,

And ther-vpon / to Iuparte his lif.

Thus was he set* / for al his fercé brother.

But* Adrastus / sothly / thoght* a-nother

Bet* was to sendé / than hym-silf to goñ

Lest he were trapped among his mortal foñ;

Havyng* his brother / suspecte in this cas

That* be fraude / or be some fallas,

He woldé* werk / to his destrucicon,

If he wer hardye to entren in-to toun,
For which he bad hym / prudently tak hede,
Ful concluding / how it was mor spede
That some other be / to Thebes sent,
To apperceyvē fully the entent
Of Ethiole / outward / be some signe,
And wher that he / his crowne * wil resigne
For thilke * seer / lik as he made his oothi:
And when he knewe / how his purpoos goth
Ther-vpon to werken / and procede.

Thus Adrastus / wisely gan hym rede.

And whil they trete / vpon this materie,
Tydeus with a manly chere
Saide * vttrely / for his broder sake,
This massage / he wolde vndertake
with hool thempris / of thenbassyat,
wer it wilful / or infortunat:
He wil not sparé / what so that betide.
But Adrastus / on the top(er) syde,
And Polymyte / in conclusion,
Werent contrarye / to that opynyoun,
And seidē sothly / as hem thoughte right,
Sith that he was / so wel / a preuēd knyght
And discended of so worthy blood,

toun Ar. Ro. the toun Bo. and the rest. 1836. Ful] Fully L. P. E2. was] were M.
Di. C. T2. P. E2. mor] moste Lb. was mor] more were Di. spede] nieede C. 1839
and 1840 transposed in I. 1840 omitted in S. wher] whether Lb. M. Di. P. if
Ra. Ba. Eg. his] the P. crowne Bo. M. Adj. crowne Ar. wil (wol) wolde L. M.
pelike L1. ylke S. 1843. worken Bo. M. 1845. trete Ar. Bo. T1. Lb. M.
pe enbassyat Bo. thenbassyat M. Adj. 1850. wer it] whether it were M. Di.
so well a preuēd E2. so well a preferred P. so wel a proud S. a gentil Bo (so
wel om.).
That they nolde / for non erthly good,
For a\H Theb\es / with the regalye,
Put his body / in such Iupartie.  1860

But a\H this thynge / auayl\ed hem* riʒt* noʒt*;
For he wol forth / how dere that it be boʒt,
Takyng liev\e / first of a\H thestatys,
And arm\ed hym in Mayle / and sur\e platys,  1864
And Shope hym forth / vpon his Iourn\e.
who mad\e sorowe / but\D D\eyphyl\e,
with bitter teere\s / dew\ed al her face,
Ful ofte sith / swownyng in the place,  1868
Trist and mou\nyng / in her blak\e* wede,
Whan she saugh / that\e he took his stede ;
So inwardly gan encres* her mone,
Seyng her lor\e / so rid\e forth allone  1872
Vpon his way / this worthy Tydeus.

And in al hast\e, the story telleth vs,
He spedde hym so, makyng\e no delayes,
That\e in space / of a fewe daies  1876
The heg\le tou\res of Theb\es / he gan se,
And entred is / into the C\it\e,
Wisy enqu\eryng\e / wher the Paleys stood ;
And lik a knyght\e / thidere streght\e he* rood,  1880
Markyd ful wel / in many mannys sight,
lich Mars / hym-silf /, in stiel y-arm\ed* bright\e,
Til he atteyned hath the chief dongoun,
wher as the kyng\e / helde his mancyoun.

And thurgh the paleys / with a knyghtly look

go\es to the palace,
and into the hall

Into the hal\H / the righte way he took,

---

From his steed / when he lighted down,  
Not afraid / but hardly as you,
Wher as the king / with lordes a great route
In the hall sitting / round about, 
he entred Inne / most manful of courage, 
To execute / the fyn of his* massage, 
And as hym thought / convenient and due
Ful konnyngly / he gan the kyng salue
Requiring hym / of kyngly excellence,
In godly wise / to* seve hym audience,
And not disdeyne / neither in port ne cheer,
Sith he was Come / as a massagere
From Polymyte / his owne brodere dere;
Gynnyng his talé / thus, as 3e shal here.
"Sir*", quod he, "vnto 3our worthynesse
My purpoos is brefly to expresse
Theeffete 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 eschewing of prolixitie,
And voyde away / al superfluyte,
Sith 3oure-silf best ought to* understand
The causë fully / that we han on hond,
And ek conceyve / pentent of my menynge,
Of rightwisnesse / longgyng to a kyng:
Firste considred / 3if that 3e tak hede,

when Edippus / the oldé* kyng† was dede, 1914
how that 3our-silff / and 3oure brother blyve 1916
For the croune / contagiously gan stryve
As mortal foon / by ful gre† hatrede,
which of 30w two / shulde* first* succede:
Til that† 3e were / be meenys reconcyled,
3e to regne / and he to be exiled 1920
Out† of this towne / for a 3eerës space,
And than ageyn / resorte to his place,
To regne as kyng†, and 3e to voyden 1924
So as 3our tourne / be processe kam aboute;
Euerich of 3ow / paciently tendure
Thenterchaungyng† / of his Auenture,
Who were put† out† / or stood in his estat†,
Ther-vpon to makë no debat†,
Lich the Couenaunt / and convencioun,
Enrollëd vp† / by lordys of this town,
Which of reson may not† be denied.
And sith 3e han / a 3eer† / y-occupied, 1932
† Polimytës / requerë 3ow of ri†t,†
Taqwite 3ou / lik† a trewë knyght†,
In eschewynge mortal werre and strif†;
Sith 3e han had / a Prerogatif
As eldest† brother / forto regne afori†:
And thenketh eke / how that† 3e ar sworn
3our oth to kepe / and make no tarying;
Holy adverting / lich a prudent† kyng†,
That* trouth is mor / in comparisonu,

Eteocles at first dissembles and remonstrates.

Than all the tresour / of your Regyoun,  
Mor acceptable / vnto god and man  
Than all richesse / that 3e rekne kan.  
Wherefor in hast / and lat ther be no slouthe,  
Quyteth 3our-silf / Iustly of 3our trouthe  
Vnto 3oure brother / avoyding this Cytë,  
And lat hym regnen / in his Ryaltë,  
\[ The crowne of Thebes / a 3eer to occupie.  
Than wol al Greeë / preise and magnifie  
3oure hegh renoun / and may sey non other  
But 3e han quytt 3ou / Iustly to 3our brother.  
This hool thefecte / of al that I wil seyn,  
Answer expectaunt / what 3e list sende ageyn."  

W
an Tydeus / hadde told his tale,  
Etiocles, trist / and wonder pale,  
his conceyt first / in maner* hath refreyned,  
Dyssimulyng* / vnder colour feyned,  
Shewynge a cheer / in maner debonayre,  
To his entent / wonderly contrayre,  
Inwardly in herte / wood and furious,  
Turnyng his face / toward Yeudeus,  
he gan abraid / and at the last out-brak,  
And even thus / vnto hym he spak.  
\[ "I haue* gret mervaile /" quod he, "in my thoght"  
Of the massage / which * that I in hast broght,  
That my brother / as thow hast expownyd,  

to a king than treasure,  
Eteocles should then quit Thebes,  
and let Polyneices reign his year.  
Eteocles turns pale and dissembles.  
He wonders  
that Polyneices wants Thebes,

Eteocles hoped for help from Polyneices, not banishment.

Desyreth so / in Thebès to be crownyd,
Havyngre reward / to the habundance,
The grete plentè / and the suffisaunce
That: he hath nowe / with the kyng of Arge:
That: me semeth / he shuld lityl charge
To han lordship / or domynacioun
In the boundis / of this lytyl touz,
Sith he regneth / so fresshly in his flours,
Surmountyng: / all his predecessours
Be newe encre / thorugh fortunis myghtt;
wherof in hert: / I am right: glad and light:
Fully trustyling: / if I hadde nede
To his helpè, that: with-outè drede
lik a brother than:* I shulde hym fynde
To meward feithful, trewe, and kynde:
Supposing: pleyntly euermor
Of this regne / he set / but lityl stor,
Nor cast: hym not: / for so short: a while
As for a þeer, his brother to exile,
To lyve in pouertè / and gret: distresse.
he wol not: suffre it: / of his high:* noblesse.
It: were no token as of brotherhede*,
But: a signè rather of hatrede,
To interruptè my possessioun
Of this litil porè Regioun:"

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

Eteocles says he'll never give up Thebes to Polynieces.

As it sempte / the story can you teche,
By the surplus / sothly of his speche:

¶ He myghte nat no lenger hym refreyn
But platly seide / "as a-twen vs tweyne,
I menë thus / Polymytes and me,
Ther is* no bonde / nor no surête,
Nor feith y-made / that* may hym avaylle,
As he cleymeth / to haue* the gounernaylle
Of this Cité, nowther zere nor day.

For I shal lette hym, sothly, zif I may,
That* he shal not* be title of no bonḍ,
Reiöysse in Thebês / half a foot* of* londe.

¶ late hym kepe aH that* he hath wonne!
For I purpoos / as I haue* begonne,
To regne in Thebês / enforth al my lyve,
Maugré al* hem / that* ther-ageynës stryve,
And in despit* / of his frendës aH,
Or the counsaylle / that* hym list* to calle.

lat* hym be sur /, and knowë* this right* wel,
his manacyng* I dredë* never a del.

And sikerly, as to my devis,

As to Tideus,

Eteocles is surprised at the presumption of Tideus.

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

While Eteocles lives,

Polynices shall have nothing to do with Thebes.

Tideus is silent

_It's scheweth wel / that's thow were not wis,
But's supprisèd with a manere rage,
To take on the / this surqueous massage,
And presume / to do so hégh offence,
So boldly / to speke in my presence._

_2016_

_But al yfere / avavles * shalt righte nought!_
_For the tyding * / that thou hast ybroght,_
_Shall vtnto hym / be but disencrees._

_2020_

_He better werë * / to ha ben in ptes,_
_Than of foly / and presumciouz_
_Ageynës me / to seke occasion._

_2028_

_While I lyve / and thereto her myñ honde,_
_As I seide erst / he wynneth her no lond,_
_whyli the walles * / of this toune may stond._

_2032_

_For FYnalo I dy the vnderstond:_
_That t hey shalt first / be betë doune ful lowe,_
_And alle the tourës / to the erthì ythrowe,_
_Er he in Thëbës / haue eny thyngye ado._

_Lo! her is al / . retourne and sey him so!_

_2036_

_W_ 
_Whan Tydeus saugh the fermane Iré_
_Of the kyng / with angre set a-fire,_
_Ful of despit / and malencolye;_
_Conceuyynge / eke / the grete felonye_

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

If "Certës," 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* faithful of thy behest,
Stable of thy word / that* thow hast seid to-forn,=
But* deccyveable / and falsly ek forsworn,
And ek periur / of thyne assuréed oothi.

"But* wher so be / that* thow be lief or loth,
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* vntrouth / and the hegh falsnesse
Which that* thou 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 matere,
And alle the lordes / about* hym envyroun,
That* boundë ben / to his subieccioun;
Prynces / Dukës / and many a noble Knight,
In sustenynge* / of thy brotheres right,
Shal on a day / with sper and* with sheld
Ageynës the be gadered in a fealdi,

Tideus upbraids, threatens, and defies Eteocles.

and prove him knightly to preue / al be on assent,
That thow art fals / and double of entent,
Of thy promys / atteynt and ek outrayed.
And leue me wel it shall not be delayed,
But in al hast / execute in dede.

lik thi desert / thou shalt haue* thy mede.
For god aboue / of his rightwisnesse,
Swich open wrong / shal in hast redresse,
And of his myght / al such collusioun
Reforme ageyn / and al extorsion.
For this the fyn / falslye shal not availe*.
Ageynés* trouth / in feeld* to hold batayle*.
Wrong* is croked / bothen halt* and lame.
And here anoyn / in my brotheres name,
As I that am next* of his * alye
In his querel / I shortly the deffye,
Fully avysed / with al myn hool entent.
And 3e* lordës / that ben her* present,
I 3ow requere / of 3our worthynesse,
To saye trouth / and to ber wittnesse,
whan tymë comëp* / Iustly to recorde
How 3our kyng* / falsly can discorde
From his heest* / of fals variaunce.
And thenk how 3e / of* feith and lygaunce
Ar bounde echon / 3e may not go ther-fro,

Forto obeye / and seruë, bothë* two,
This nexte 3eer / now anoñ folowyng,
As to your lord / and your trewe kyng,
† Polemytes / thogh he be now absent,
By Just accord / maad in parlement,
At 3oure devis / which sitten her a-rowse,
Engrosëd 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 sayë* / but he be vntrewes.
For which I redë / 3our-silf to acquyte.
Lat no tymë / lenger / 3ou respit,
But at onys / with-oute mor tarying,
Of manly force / fetteth hom 3our kyng;
Maugrë his foone / lik as 3e ar bounde,
And lat in 3ow / sluthë* non be founde,
To put hym Iustly* in posciouz
This my consayl in conclusion.

When Tydeus / hadde his massage saide,
lik to the chargë / that was on hym laide : 2112.
As he that list / no lenger / ther soiourne,
Fro the kyng / he gan his face tourne,
Nët astouned / nor in his hert afferde ;
Butë ful proudly / leyde hond on his swerde, 2116

* How many

Tideus leaves Thebes. Eteocles is furious.

Tydeus do-
parts[d] from
be kyng.

And in despit' / who that' was lief or loth,
A sternē pas / thorg th the halle he gothi,
Thorg-out the courte / and manly took his stede,
And out' of Thebēs / faste gan hym spede;

Tideus rides

Enhastyng' hym / til he was at' large,
And sped hym forth / touark the londe of arge.

And sped hym forth / touark the londe of arge.

Tydeus

† Thus leue I hym / ridē forth a while,
whilys that' I retourne ageyn my style
Vnto the kyng' which in the hallē stood
Among' his lordēs / furious and wood,
In his hertē / wroth / and euel apayd
Of the wordes that' Tydeus had* said;
Specialy / havyng' remembrança
On the proude dispitous diffiante
Whilys that' he sat' in his Royal Sec;
Vpon which he wil auengēd be
Ful cruelly, what' euere that' befalle.

Eteocles is

furious.

And in his Irē / he gan to hym calle
Chief constable / of his Chyualrye,
Chargyng* hym / fastō* for to hye
* with al the worthy Choyes* of his housholde,
which as he knewe most' manful and most bolde,

In al hast' Tydeus to swe
To-forn ort* he out* of his lond* remwe,

He bids his

Chief Constable

Eteocles sends Fifty Knights to kill Tideus.

Vp peyn of lyf / and lesyng of her hede,
With-oute mercy / anon that he be dede.
And of knyghtes / fyfteyn weren in nombre,
Myn autour seith / vnwarly hym tencombe
Armed echon in mayle and thikkë* stiel,
And ther-with-al // yhorsëd wonder wiell.

At a Postern / forth they gan to ryde
By a geypath / that ley oute a-side,
Secrely / that no man hem espie,
Only of tresoun / and of felonye.
They hasten hem forth / al the longë day,
Of cruel malys / forto stoppe his way,
Thorgh a forestt / aH of on assent,
Ful couartly to leyn a buッシュment,
Vnder an hiH / at a streite passage,
To falle on hym at mor auantwortage.

The samë way / that Tydeus gan drawe,

At thylke mountt / wher that Spynx was slawe.
He nothing war / in his opynyoun,
Of this compassëd / conspirocioun,

But Innocentt / and lich a gentyl knyght,
Rood ay forth / til that it drowe to nyght,
Sool by hym-silt / with-outë companye,
havyng no man / to wisse hym or to* gye.

If But at the laste / liftyng vp his hede,
Toward Euë / he gan taken hede;
Mid of his way · riȝt as eny lynæ,
þoghþ he saugh / ageyn þe monæ shyne
Sheldes fressli / and platës bornëd brightþ,
The which environ / casten a greþ lyghtþ;
ymagynyngþ / in his fantasye

Ther was treson / and conspiraçye
wroughtþ by the kyngþ / his iourne forto lette.
And of al that / he no thyngþ ne sette,
Butþ wel assuræd / in his manly herte,
listþ natþ onys / a-sydþ to dyueræ,
Butþ kepæ his way /, his sheld vpon his brestþ,
And castþ his speræ / manly in the restþ.
And the firste platly / that he mette,
Thorg the body / proudly he hym smetter,
Thatþ he fillæ ded · chief mayster of hem aþ;
And than atþ onys / they vpon hym falle
On euerþ partþ / be compæ envyroun.
Butþ Tydeus / thorgæ his hegh renoun,
His blody swerde / letæ / aboutþ hym glyðæ.
Sleþæ and kylleþ / vpon euerþ side
In his Iris and his mortal tene,
Thatþ mervæle was he myghtæ so sustæn
Ageyn hem aþ / in euerþ half besætte.
Butþ his swerde was so sharþæ whette,

Tideus defends himself in a narrow Pass.

That his foomen fonde ful vnsoote.
But he, allas! was mad / alight a-foote,
Be force grounded in ful gret distresse;
But of knyghthod and of gret prouesse
Vp he roes, maugre aH his foon,
And as they cam, he slogh hem oon be on,
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 stondynge at his diffence,
As his foomen / proudly hym assaylle,
vpon the pleyn / he made her blode to Raylle
Al enviroun, that the soyl waxe rede,
Now her now ther / as they fillë dede,
That her lay on / and ther lay two or thr.
So mercyles / in his cruelte
Thilk day he was vpon hem founde.

And attynys / his enemies to confounde,
wher as he stood / this myghty champiouzac,
Be side he saughe / with water turnëd down,
An hugë ston / largë / rounde and squar;
And sodeynly / er that thei wer war,
As it haddë leyn / ther for the nonys,
Vpon his foon / he rolled it at onys,
That ten of hem / wenten vnro wrak,

2192 Tideus is beaten to the ground,
2196 but gets up,
2200 and defends himself,
2204 He rolls a huge stone
2208 down on his foes,
kills ten,
Tideus kills all but One of his Fifty Theban pursuers.

And the remnant amasëd drogh a-bak;
For on / by on / they wente to meschaunce.
And fynaly / he broghte to outraunce
Hem euerychoñ / Tydeus, as blyve,
That' non but' on / was* left* of hem* alyue;
hym-silf yhurt* / and ywounded kene,
Thurgh his harneys / bledyng on the grene.
The theban knyghtes / in compas rounde aboute
In the vale / lay* slayën,* all* the route,
which pitously / ageyn the monë gape;
For non of hem, shortly, myght* eskape,
But* dede echon / as thei han deserved,
Sawe oñ excepte / the which was reserved
By Tydeus / of intencioun,
To the kyng / to make relacioun
how his knyghtes / han on her iournè sped,
Euerich of hem / his lyf left* for a wed,
And at* the metyng* / how they han hem born:
To tellen al / he suröd was and sworn
To Tydeus / ful lowly on his kne.
By which ensample / 3e opynly may se
Ageynès* trouthë* / falshed hath no myght.

† Hou trouth
with lityl multi-

with-outë which* / may be no victoyre*.
Therfor ech man / haue* this in memorye*,
That* gret* pouer / shortly to conclude,
Plentë of good / nor mochë* multitude,
Sleightë or engyne / cors / or felonye,
Arn to feble / to holden Chanpartye
Ageynës* trouthë* / who that* list* take hede.
For at* the ende falshe may not* spede
Tendure longe / 3e shul fynde it* thus.
Record I take of worthy Tydeus,
which with his hand / thorugh trouthës excellence,
Fyfty knyghtës / slogh in his dyffence,
But* on except* / as I late* tolde,
Sworn and assured with his honde vpholde,
The kyng* tenformë / how they wern atteynt!
And Tydeus, of bledyng* wonder feynt*,
Maat* and wery / and in gret* distresse,
And ouerlyed / of verray febleness;
But* as he myght* / hym-siluë tho sustene,
He took his hors / stondyng* on the grene,
Worthëd vp / and forth he gan to ryde
An ey sus / with his woundës wyde.
And Sothly / zit* in his opynyoun
he was alway / afferëd of tresoun.
But* anguyshous / 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 hod.

2239. which\) woch Ar. *whom G. victoyre (:\ memoyre 2240) Ar. 2240. ech]\ every Lb. *haue Bo. M. Ad, ha Ar. 2242. moche Bo. M. Ad, moch Ar.
2243. Sleight Bo. and all, except Sleight Ar. E, fors or] force of Ba. (force eke or Ra.) 2245. Ageyns Ar. Bo. ageinst Ad, troupe Ad, trouth Ar. Bo.
2247. To endure Bo. M. Ad, longe Bo. M. Ad, 2250. slowe M. Ad, slowe Bo.
2251. late Bo. M. Ad, E, C. layt* Ar. (as I have latly tolde Ra.) 2253. tenforme Ad, to enforme Bo. to enforme M. 2254. wonder] was wonder Du.
2259. Worthed vp\] worchid vp (sic) S. (And vpp he lyght Ra.) tol] om. Ad, I.
2262. aferde Bo. Ad, 2263. anguyshous Bo. M. anguissous Ad,.
Tydeus rides into the Castle Garden,

And he ful paal / only for lak of blood,
Tydeus saugh / wher / a castel stood,
Strong and myghty / belt vpon a roche,
Toward which / he faste gan approche,
Conveyed thider / be clernesse of the ston,
That be nyght ageyn the mooné* shouñ,
On heghé* toures / with crestés marcyal.
And Ioyneaut / almost to the wal
was a gardyn / lityl out be syde,
Into which / Tydeus gan ride,
Of aventure / be a gatié small.
And ther he fond / forto reke al,
A lusty herbere / vnto his devis,
Soote and fressh / lich a paradys,
Verray heuenly / of inspeccion.

And first of al / he alighte doun,
The goodly placë / whan that be byhelk,
And fro his nek / he voyded hath his shielk,
Drogh the brydyl / from his horses hede,
let hym goon /, and took no maner hede,
Thorgh the gardyn / that encloséd was,
Hym to pasture / on the grene* gras.

In Ad 1, 2268 precedes 2267, but the copyist has marked the lines with b and a;
And Tydeus / mor hevie than is led,
Vpon the herbès / grenè,* whit; and red,
As hym thoughte / that tyme for the best
he leid hym doune / forto tak his rest,
Of werynnesè / desirous to slepe,
And non awayt\* / his body forto kepe;
And with dremès / groechéed euer among;
Ther he lay / til* the larkè song,*
with notès newè / hegh vp in the ayr,*
The gladë morowe / rody and right* fayr,
Phebus also, casting vp his bemes,
The heghè* hylles / gilte with his stremes,
The syluer dwayne / vpon the herbes rounde;
Ther Tydeus lay vpon the ground,
At* the vprist* / of the shenen svinne,
And stoundemel* / his grenè* woundes rvnne
Round* about* / that the soyl was* depeynt*
Of the grenè / with the redè meynt.*
And euery morowe / for hoolsomnesse of eyre*.
Lygurgus doghter / makéd her repeyr,
Of custom ay / among the flourès newe
In this gardyn / of many dyuerse liwe,
Swich Ioyë hadde /, forto taken hede,
On her stalkës / forto sen hem sprede,
In the Allurës / walking* to and fro.

And whan she hadde a litil while* goo

Lycurgus’s Daughter wakes the sleeping Knight. [PT. 14]

She sees a sleeping knight

her-sell allonā* / casting vp her sigh,
She byheld k / wher an arméd knyght
lay to rest hym / on the herbēs colde;
And hym besyddē / she gan ek byholde
his myghty stedē / walkyng her and ther.

and his steed, and his blood.

And she anon / fille in a maner fer,
Specally when she saugh the blood
Sprad al the grene / aboute ther she stood.

But at the laste / she taught hardynesse,

And wommanly / gan her forto dresse
Toward this knyght, havyng a manere drede
And grete doute lest that he were deede,
And of her willē / 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 touchèd hym ful softe,
Ther as he lay / with her honor smale.
And with a facē dedly / bleyk, and pale,
lich as a man adawēd / in a swothī,

He starts up,

Vp he stert / and his swerth he droght,
Nat flyt ou / but put it vp ageyn
Anō as he hath the lady seyn,
Beseching hir / only of her grace,
To han pite / vpon his trespace,

and begs her to pity him.

And rewe on hym of her wommanhede.
For of affray / he was falle in drede
lest he hadde / assayld ben of newe
Of the thebans / prueèd ful vntrewes;

For dref of which he was so rekkelès,
Ful humblyely / hym zeldeyn to the pes,
Tryst in hym-silf / he passèd hadde his boundes.
And when that she saugh his mortal woundes,
She haddë routh / of verrey gentyllesse
Of his desses / and of his distresse,
And bad he shulde / no-thyng be dismayd,
Nor in herte sorouful nor affrayd,
Disconfort hym in no maner thing:
"For I," quod she / "am doghter to the kyng,"
Callyd lygurge / which gretly me delyte
Euyer morowe / this gardyn to visyte;
It is to me so passingly disport."
"Wherfor," quod she / "beth of good comfort;"
For no wight her / touchyng 3our viage,
Shal hynder 3ou / nor do 3ow no damage.
And 3if 3e list / of al 3our aventure
The pleyne* trouth / vnto me discure,
I wil in soth / do my bysynesse
To reforme / 3oure greuous hevyynesse
with al my myght / and hool my dylygence;
That I hope of 3oure greflentoff;
3e shal han helpe in 3our aduersite.
And, as ferfulth / as it lith in me,


THEBES.
Lycurgus's Daughter takes Tideus to a Chamber.  [PT. II.]

Tideus trusts her.

Trusteth right wel / ye shul no fauté fynde."

And when he saugh / that she was so kynde,

So wommanly / so goodly, and benigne
In al her poort / be many dyuers signe,
He vnto hir / be ordre wold not spare
his auenturis / fully to declare,

In Thébes first touching his massage,
And at* the hil / of the woodé* Rage,
Of his woundé / and his hurté sore
(It were but veyn / to reherce it mor)

By and by he told her euerie del,
The which in soth / she likéd neuere a del,
But hadde 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

Richely abouten apparayled

With cloth of gold / al the floor rayled

Of the samé / both in length and brede.

And first this lady / of her wommanhede,

hir wyammen badde / as goodly as they kan,
To be attendaunt on this wounded man.

And when he was vnarméd to his sherte,
She madë first wash his woundës smerte, 2392 washes and dresses his wounds,
And serche hem wel / with dyuers instrumentes,
And madë* fette / sondry oynenïmentes,
And leches ek / the beste she koude fynde,
Ful craftëly to staunce 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 bydding / to his chambre brought. 2400
And for his sakë / she hath after sent
For swich deyntees / as wern conuenyent,
Moost nutrïtyf / be phisikës lore,
hem that wern syk / or wounded / to restore,
Makyng her wymmen / ek to taken kep
And wayt on hym / anyghtës whan he slep,
And be wel war / that no thing asterte
That was or myght be / lusty to his herte. 2408
\* And with al this / she preièd hym abyde
Til he were strong / and myghty forto ride,
In the castel to pley hym / and dispose,
And at leysere / hom ageyn resorte
whan he myght bywelde hym at his large.
But al for nought / : he wil hom to Arge,
Toke his lyeve on the nexte day,
With-out abood / to hast hym on his way,
lowly thonkyng / vnto her goodnesse

Of her fredam / and bounteuous largesse,
So wommanly that'hir' list taken* hede
Hym to refressh in his grete nede,
Beheestynge'hir' / with al his fullé* myght,
He woldé* be hir seruanunt / and hir knyght,
Whyl he leueth, of what* she wold hym charge.

And forth he rood / til he cam to Arge
In ful greth hast / and woldé nowher dwelle.
But what* shuld* I rehercen owther telle
Of his repeir / the coostës or the pleyns,
The craggy Roches / or the hegh mounteyns,
Or al the maner / of his hoom-comyng,
Of the metyng* / or* the welcomyng,
Nor the Ioyé / that Adrastus made,

His wife clasps
Nor how his sustre / and his wif were glade?
Nor how that* they /, wherto* shuld I write,
Enbracëd hym / in her Armes white,
Nor the gadryng* / about* hym / and the pres
Nor of the sorowe / that Polymytês
Mad in hym-silf / to sen hym so forwounded,*
his greuous hurtes / his soorys / ek vnsounded,
His dedly look / and his facë pale?
(Of alle this / to gynne a newé tale

It were in soth / or maner ydylnesse)
Nor how hym-sylf in orde did expresse
First how that he in Thebës hath hym born,
Nor the kyng / falsly was forsworn,
Nor of the awayt / nor tresoun that he sette,
whan fyfty knyghtës / on the way hym mette,
As 3e han herë / al the manëre howe,
With-oute which / my tale is longë ynowe.

But Adrastus / madë* men to seche
In every Coost / for many diuerse leche,
To come in hast / and make no taryng,
Vpon a peyne / be biddynë of the kyng,
To don her craft / that he wer recure
And of his force / in every part assured.
And they echon / so her konnyngë shewe
That, in space / of a daës fewe,
He was al hool / maad of his siknesse.
Tho was ther Ioye / and tho was ther gladnesse
Thorgh-outë the courte / and thorgh-outë al the toun.
For every man / hath swich opynyoun
In Tydeus / for his gentyllesse,
For his manhood and his lowlynesse,
That he was holde / the mostë famous knyght
And best bylouëd / in every manyns sight
Thorgh-outë grece / in every Regioun.

But now mostë I / make a digressiouë,
To tellë shortly / as in Sentement,
Of thilke knyght / thatë Tydeus hath sentë
Into Thebës / only to declare
The grete meschief / and the euel fare

Eteocles is furious when he finds Tideus has slain his Knights.

Vnto the kyng / how it is befallke,
The opyn trouthe / of his knyghtes alle, 2472
how Tideus hath slayn hem euerychon,
That, sauf hym-silf / ther eskapéd nón:
which was reserved / from sheding* of his blood,
The kyng* to tellé pleyñly how it stood.
And when he hadde reherséd euery poynct,
Ethiscles stood / in such disiocyn*.
Of hatful Iré that he wex nye wood.

Eteocles
And in his tene / and his fellé mood,
Of cruel malys / to the knyght he spak,
And felly seidé* / that it was for lak
Only of manhood / thorg her cowardys,
That thei wern slayn / in so mortal wyse.

"And hangéd be he / highé* by the nekke
That of your deth / or of your' slaughter Rekke,
Or you compleyn / outher* on or aH,
Of the meschief / that is 3owe befaH.
I do no force / that' non of you asterte.
But' fye vpon your falsé* couradr herte,
That on knyght' hath, thorg his hegh renoun,
Brought s0w aH into* confusioneu,
Ful gracéles / and ful vnhappy to."

The survivor answers that

"Nay," quod this knyght', "it is no-thing* so.

2475. which Ar. G. C. P. Ew. L2. Ro. Ap. That Bo. and the rest. from (fro]
Eteocles's fifty Knights kills himself.

It is thyn vnhappy / pleynly, and not ourres,
That so many worthy werreoures,
Which al her lif / neuer haddé shame,
Except this quarel / taken in thy name,
That grounded was / and rooted on falsenesse:
This was cause / in verray sikernesse,
Of our vnhappy / I woot wel, and non other,
And the vntrouth* / don vnto thy brother,
And that thow were / so opynly forsworn:
A parcel causé why that we wer lorn
was fals brekyng / of thyn assuréd oth."
And tho the kyng* / almost mad for wroth,
In purpoos was forto sle this knyght,
Oonly for he seidé to hym right,
The which allas / both at eue and morowe,
Supriséd was / with a dedly sorowe,
Renewéd ay, in his remembraunce,
With the pitous / and vnhappy chaunce
Of the meschief / and mysaunture,
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 stryf
That he was very / of his owné lif;
Hent a swen* / and a-sidé sterte,
And rove hym-silf cenu to the herte,

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

Destruction is coming to the Thebans' King and Region. 105

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

¶ Explicit Secunda pars
Joḥ Lydgate

¶ Incipit pars Tercia

Appeal to Mars. Adrastus resolves to conquer Thebes. [PT. III.

Why, Mars,

Cruel Mars / ful of malencolye,

And of thy kynde hoot / combust, and drye,

(As the sperkles* / shewen fro so ferre,

By the stremes / of þ bare stere,

In thy spere / as it aboute goth)

were you so wroth with men of Thebes,

what was causè / that thou were so wroth

with hem of Thebès? / thorgh whoso feruent Ire

whose city was

The Citiè brente and was sette a-fyre,

As bookès oldë / wel rehercë konne,

burnt thru hate,

Of Cruel hatè / rooted and begynne,

And engendred /, the story maketh mynde,

from Original Sin?

Oonly of blood / corrupt and vnkynde,

Of which the meschief / thorgh al grecë Ran.

King Adrastus resolves to conquer Thebes.

And kyng Adrastus / alderfirst began,

which hath hym cast / a conquest for to make

vpon Thebès / for polymytès sake,

In knyghtly wisè / ther to preve his myght,

Of ful entent / to recure his right.

He calls a parliament

And first of al he sette a parliament,

And hath his letters / and massagery sent
Thorogh-outé Greece / to many sondry kyngges,
hem to enhast / and makè no lettyngges.
And rounde about /, as maad is mencioun,
he sent also / to many Regyoun
For Pryncës / Dukës / lordys, and barouns,
To taken vp / in Citezee and in touns,
And chesen out / the moste liklyest,
And swich as werën* / preuèd for the best
As of manhode / and sende* hem vp echon,
And in her honde / receiveyve her pay anon,
with Adrastus to Thebës forto ryde.

And tho lordës / that with hym abyde
In houshold stillë / han her leve take,
To ryden hom / her retenue to make
In ther contrees / as they wern of degré,
To stuffen hem / and taken vp meynë
And make hem stronge / with knyghtës and squyres,
with sperës / bowës / and with ablasters,
In al the hast* possible / that they may,
And to retourne / in their* best* aray,
At* termë sette, ful manly to be seyn,

The kings who share in Adrastus's Expedition. [PT. III.]

at Argos. To-forn Argē / mosten in a pleyn. 2596

| The kings who come are Pro- | Thider cam first / protonolopes, Of Archada / sonē to the kynge. 2600
| tonolope, | The which was, be recorde of wryting;

Cilmithenes, Ther came also / the kynge Cylmythenēs. 2604

Ipomedon, Thider cam ek / the kynge ypemedoun. 2604

Capaneus, And ful prudent founckd in werre and pees

Meleager, etc. And as I fynde / ful famous of renoun

[leaf 44] And passing all / of knyghthode and of name, And excellyng / by worthynesse of fame, And thider kam the kynge Melleager,

M. Lyn. Ar. I. 2609. Cylmytheus / callyd Cylmythen. kam ek to Argē / the story telleth vs, And ek the kynge / callēd Tortolanus. And renomed in many regyon
Ther cam the kyng / ynamëd palemoun,
Oft assayed / and found a manly knyght,
That with hym broght / in steel y-armëd* bright,
Ful many worthy / out of his cuntrue.

2616

And Tideus / most knyghtly forto se,
That manly man / that noble werreyour,
As he that was / of worthynessë flour,
Maister and myrour / by preuëd of his hond,

2620

hath sent also into the myghty lond
Of Calcedoyne / of which he was hayr,
That is a kyngdam / bothë* riche and fayr,
Charyng* his counsale / and officers also,

2624

In al the hast / that it may be do,
To seken out / the beste werreyours,
Of famous knyghtes / and preuëd sawdyours,
Thorrh al the lond / and layde on hem this charge

2628

With-oute aboode / forto come to arge.
And they obeye / ful* lowly his biddyng,
Enhastyng* hem / and madë* no Jettyng,
But spede hem fast / vppon her iournë.

2632

And fro Thebës / the myghty strong Cité,
kam doune knyghtes / with many another man,
Mangrë the kyng* / to helpë* what they Can,
Considred first* / his falsched and tresoun,
Ymeued only / of trouth and of resoun,

2636  From Thebes come many

2640

          Polemon E₁. Palemoun G. 2617. assayed Ar. T₁. M. Ad₁. E₁. assaid Bo. G.
          Calydonye E₁. of which] whereof E₁. 2626. kyngdom Bo. M. Ad₁. bothe Bo.
          M. C. both Ar. Ra. om. Ad₁. Ad₂. I. 2627. counsale Bo. 2628. haste Bo.
          worthy Di. warriours Bo. warriours T₁. warriours Ra. 2630. preued Ar.
          make M. Di. L₂. made Bo. and the rest. 2635. fast Bo. M. Ad₁. 2636.
          myghty strong] stronge and myȝty Di. 2638. helpe M. Ad₁. help Ar. Bo.
to help Polymytēs / as they were sworn of 3ore,
To his Croune / Justly to restore:

And when they were at large out of the touñ,
Vnto Argē / they be descendid doun,
And, lik her oth* / and her asurrance,
As they were bounde / only of lygeaunce,
To hym they Cam / in ful lowly wise,
Redy to doñ / what hym list devise.

And when he hadde / her trouthē * ful conceived,
He hath to gracē / goodly hem receyued,
Assignyng hem / her placē mydde the hoste,
Assembled ther / from many diuerse coste:

That fynaly / in this companye
Ygadred was / the floure of Chyvalrye
Ychosen out of al greskēs lond
The most knyghtly / and manful of her hond:
That I trowē, sith the world began,
Ther was not seyn / so many manly man,
So wel horsēd / with sper and with sheld,
To-gydyre assembled / sothly, in a feld.

Ther men may see many straungē guyses
Of Armyng newe / and vncouth devyses,
Every man / after his fantasye;
That 3if I shuld / in orde specifie
Every pes / longyng to armoure,
And ther-vpon / do my bysy enre,
It wer in soth / almost a dayēs werk;

And the termés also ben to derk, 2668
To reherce hem clerly and to Ryme:
Í passe ouer / only for lak of tyme.
And telle I wil / forth of her loggyng,
How Adrastus / the noble worthy kyng;
Hath euery lord / lik to his degré,
Receyuéd wel / with-Innen his Cytè :
And ther they haddé / lik to her plesaunce,
Of what nedeth / fulsom habundaunce,
For man and hors / plentè of Vitaylle ;
Comaundyng / that no thynge ne faylle
That alle thise noble worthy werreoures,
Both high and loughi / and poorë* soudeoures,
Iseruëd weren of that they haddé nede.
For Adrastus / prudently took hede,
Ful lik a kyng / touching' her termé-day,
That thei to-forne / wer seruëd of her pay.
He was so free / hym liste no thynge restreyñ ;
And no man haddé cause to compleyn
For hunger / thrust / nor for Indygence.
And in a prince / it is ful grete offence,
As clerkës seyn / and a grete repreef,
Suffre his puple / lyven at mescheef.
It is ful hevy / and greuous in her thoght
3if he habout / and they han right noght.
He may not both / possee good and herte,
He to be riche / and Seen his puple smerte.

He may the body / of power wel constreyne, 2696
But her hertö / hath a ful longe Reynye,
Maigrè his myghtö / to louen at her lârge.
Ther may no kyngö / on hertês sette a charge,
Nor hem coarten* / from her lybertê.
Men seyn ful oftö / how thatö thoughtö is fre. 2700
For which eche princë / lord / and gouernour,
And specialy euer Conquerour,
Lat' hym be war / for al his hegh noblesse,
Thatö bountë, Fredom / plentë, and largesse, 2704
Be on accord / that they his brydel lede,
Lestö of his puple / whan he hath mostö nede,
He be defrauded /; whan he is butö allone,
Than is to latë forto make his mone. 2708
Butö in his courte / lat hym firstö devise
To exile scarshed and couetise;
Than is he likly / with fredam zif he gynne,
loue of his puple / euermore to wynne, 2712
To regnë longö in honoure, and contune
Ay to entresse / be fauour of fortune,
And his enemyes manly to oppresse.
For loue is morö / than gold or gret richesse;
Gold faileth oftö / louë* wol abyde

---

For lyf or deth / be a lordys syde;
And the tresour / shortly, of a kyng
Stondeth in loue / abouen* allē* thyngt.
Farwel lordshiphe / bothē* morowe and Eve
Specially / when louē 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 boutevous
Vnto his puple / at al tymēs foundt:}
Which mad hym strongt / his foomen to confoundt;
And loue only / his enmyes to werreye,
Alle grecē made his bidding* to obeye,
Of oon accord / knyghtly be his side,
Al attones / to Thebēs forto ryde,
For tavengē / sith they were so strongt;
The gret Iniurye / and the inportable wrongt
Don to his sone / and his next* allye,
As 3e to-form / han herd me specific.
But* whilē* Grekēs / rest* a whil in pees,
I will resort* / vnto* Ethiccles:
which* in Thebēs warly hath espied,
Be his frendes / as he was certefied,
Of the Grekys / hooly the ordainauce,
Her purpoos ek / and her purseaunce,
And therof had in herte a manere drede.
And first* he took his counsayle and his rede


Greece ready for war against Thebes. Eteocles takes counsel. 113

For lyf or deth / be a lordys syde;
And the tresour / shortly, of a kyng
Stondeth in loue / abouen* allē* thyngt.
Farwel lordshiphe / bothē* morowe and Eve
Specially / when louē taketh his leve!
And who so list / a merour forto make
Of kyngly fredam / lat* hym ensample take
Of Adrastus / the manly kyng famous,
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which* in Thebēs warly hath espied,
Be his frendes / as he was certefied,
Of the Grekys / hooly the ordainouce,
Her purpoos ek / and her purseaunce,
And therof had in herte a manere drede.
And first* he took his counsayle and his rede


THEBES.
Eteocles prepares Thebes against Attack.

Of the lordis / and barons / of the toun,
And of the wisest / of his Regioun,
How he myghte maken resistance,
Manfully / to stonden / at diffence,
To be so strong / that ther wer no doute.

And in the contrees / adiacent aboute,
And ek also in foreyn Regionus,
He hath withhold / all the Championus;
And ther-vpon / he sent out his espies
And his frendis and his next allies
And alle the worthy / dwelllyng environ,
Long / fresh / and lusty / he gadred into toun;
Maskowede his wallys / and his hegh tours,
And stuffed hem / with manly sowdiers.
Round aboute / he sette many Gonnys,
Grete and smale / and some large as tonnys;
And, in his hasty / passing feruent hete,
Vnto konyghtes / and worthy men of name;
And ouerore / to encres his fame,
He spent his tresour / and gaf giftes grete
And in his hast / passing feruent hete,
Vnto konyghtes / and worthy men of name;
And ouerone / to encres his fame,
Clothys of Veluet / of Damask, and of gold,
To gete hym hertes / sothly, as I rede,
To helpe hym now in his grete nede.
And prudently purveyed / hym to-forn
Of flesh and fissti / and of wyn and corn.

Sette his Captayne / erly / and ek la\l
with ful gre\l stuf strong at euery gate. 
And mad also be werkmen / that were trewe, 
Barbykans / and bulwerkês newe, 
Barreris / cheynys / and dichês wonder depe; 
Makyng his Vouh the Cité forto kepe 
Whil he lyuep / despit of all his foon. 
And by his goddys of metal and of ston, 
Ful ofte he swoore / both of herte and thought, 
That it shal first / ful derê* be abouht, 
And many a man with pollex, swerd, and knyff 
To-for this toune / shal first lese his lif, 
And ther shal ek / many sydës blede, 
Or his brother possibly possede 
The toune in pess / lich as Grekës wene. 
But at the ende / the trouthë* shal be sene, 
lat hym be war and wel to-forn provyde! 
For Adrastus / on that other side, 
For his party was not negligent, 
But on a day / helde a parlement, 
Aût his lordës sitting environ, 
To dryvë shortly / a pleyn conclusion 
And vp tapoynt* / the fyn of ther entent, 
But some thoughte / ful expedient, 
Or they procede / to wirkë* be thavice

Adrastus sends for the wise Bishop Amphiorax. [PT. III.

It is thought best to go by the advice of the wise old bishop,

Of on that' was ful prudent' and right' wyce

And circumspecte / in his werkës alle,

'A worthy bishopp / into age falle,

And Callëd was, sothly / by his name

Amphiorax / of whom the grete fame

Thorgh al the londe / bothen est' and south,

Amongës* Grekës / passingly was kouth;

A man, in soth / of olde antiquëtë

And most' acceptid of auctoritë,

First be resoun of his high estat'

And ek for he was so fortunat'

In his werkes, and was also secë

with the goddys, knowyng her pryvetë:

By graunt' of whom / as bookës specifiey,

He hadde a spirit / of trewë propheeye,

And cowde aforne ful opynly dyvyne

Thynggës begonnë / how they shulde* fyne,

And eke, be craft' / of Calculaciouz,

³iue* a dome / of everuy question;

And hadde in magik / grete experience,

And fyndë cowde / be heunely influence

And by mevyng' / of þe heghë* sterrys,

A fynal doome of Contek and of Werrys;

And wistë* wel, as his goddys toldë,

that, ³if Grekës / forth her iournë holde,

It' turnë* shulde* platly /, this no fage,

To gret mishief / and to gret damage
Of hem ychoñ /; and in especial
The moste parte / of the blood Royal
Thorg al Grece, it may not be withdrawe,
In this viage shortly shall be slawe;
And 3if hym-silf / with the Grekës wente,
Who that euer wepte hym / or bymente,
This was the wyn / and may nat be socoured,
Of the erth / he shuld* be deuoured,
Quyk as he was, he knewe it in certeyn.
And for he saugh ther was non oþer gayn
To saue his lif / nor no* bet* diffence,
Than vttrely withdrawéñ his presence;
* Preying* his wiff / for hym to provide,
3if he wer sought* / that* she wold hym hide,
And wommanly / for to kepe hym cloos,
And of trouthe conceleñ his purpoos;
For al his trust* / touchyng* his greuance,
was fully sette / in hir purvyance.
I hope to god / that* he thar not* drede
Of no decteyt* / in hir* wommanhede.
She was so trewe / as wommen ben echion,
And also cloos / and mwit* as a stoñ,
That* she ne wold / as the matier stood,
Discurëñ hym / for no worldly good.

Amphiorax's Wife tells where he is hiding. [PT. III.

118

If But fynaly / the Grekēs, 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 lokkēd vp his cors.
But' for she hadde a maner of remors
In hir-silf / geryng* her conscience,
Dreding' to falle / in ful grete offence,
Lest' her soule' / were in peryl lorn,
whan she be oth* / compellēd was and sworn;
They requeryng' / zif she coude telle
whe' her lord' the bisshope shuldē* dwelle:
Which to discure / hir herte was ful loth,
Til tyme she gan / remembren on her oth*,
And coude a trouth / of Custom not' denye
And hadde also grete conscience to lye,
Wonder hevy / with a sowreful face,
Mangrē hir lust' / taught' hem* to the place
wher as he was / shet' vp in a toure,
Al alonē / havyng' no socour.
They falle on hym / or that' he was war,
And sette hym vp / in a ful richē Char.
A fool he was / to Iuparde 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 hopē / that' her heynesse

2848. his] this Ad2. I. S. Ad1 (t underdotted). her L2. han Bo. M. Ad1. G.
hath Ar. this Ar. Ad2. I. C. T2. E2. pe Bo. G. and the rest. 2849. was] were
Du. 2856. oth] both Ar. 2857. They] there E1. requeryng] required Bo.
P. requeryng her L1. conde] wolde P. 2858. shuld Ar. Bo. shold M. Ad1.
2860. her] the M. Di. both Ar. 2862. hadde] om. Bo. she had Ad1. Ad2. I.
Ra. Ba. had sche S. gret] om. M. Di. a grete Ad3. I. as gret S. to] for to
Ro. 2864. hem] hym Ar. 2865. wheras] Wher pat Di. shet Ra. shit Bo. M.
were Ad2. I. 2868. And sette hym vp] Is take and set Ro. 2869. fool] grete
fool E1. yeoparde E1. E2. Iuparte Bo. iuparte M. T2. iubarte P. iuparten
Ad1. C. iupertin S. 2871. she was] was she M. Di.
Gan asswage ful sonë, by processe,
In short tymé / when that he was gon.
Ther is no tempest / may last euere in on.
But this bishope / be verrey force and myght,
Vnto Grekes / conveyèd was ful right,
This hoorë* gray / in his char syttyng:
And they ful gladë* / wern of his comyng,
havyng a trust / and ful opynyoun
That, thorgh cause and occasioun
Of his wisdom / 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 avised,
he hath pronoucèd / in the Parlement,
To-forn the lordës / and the president,
his Cleer conceyte / in verray sikernesse,
Nat entryked with no doublenesse,
her dysemol daiës / and her fatal houres,
Her auentury / and her sharpe shoures,
The froward soort / and the* vnhappy stoundys,
The compleyntës / of her dedly woundys,
The wooful wrath / and the* contrarioustë
Of fellë Mars / in his crueltë,
And howe, by mene / of his gery mood,

Ther shall be shadde / al the worthy blood
Of the Grekes / it may not ben eschewed,
If her purpoos be execute / and swed.

"Ther is no moré / this shall be the fyñ :
The hegh noblesse shal drawé to declyne
Of Grekès blood / in meschief, sorowe, and woo :
And with al this / I my-silf also,
As my faté hath a-forn dispossyd,
Depe in the grounde / I shall be enclosed,
And lokkéd vp / in the dirkë* vale
Of cruel deth." / lo ! this was the tale
That' the bisshope / to Adrastus tolde,
Hym counsayllyng' / his purpos to withholde,
In eschuyngr of mor meschief and sorowe.
For alle his goddis he took vnto borowe,
3if þe Thebans / and þe grekës mete,
The fyn þerof shall be so vnswete
þat 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 Thebês / and her purpoos leve.

with whos wordes / the lordês gan hem greve,
And ther-Inne haddö* / but ful smal delit',
And euerchoñ / of hertly hegh despit',
They abrayde / and seide he was vntrewre,
A controover / of propheciës newe,
And ek also / for al his longe berde,
An olde Dotard / a coward, and aferde;
And of Rancour / gonne\* to diffye
Both his kalkyng / and his astronomye,
And shortly seide / þei took therof non hede,
Ne wil no-thyng\* / gouerne hem after\* his rede.
This was the clamour / and noyse, in every cost,
Of hegh and lough / þorgh-out all the hoost,
And specialy / of the sowdœours,
And of lordës / regnyng in her flours,
And of thethestates / effectuely, I Mene,
which of agë / were but tendre and grene,
That\* han\* not\* hadde / by martys Influence,
Of the werrë / gretë experience.

If her, zif 3e list\* / 3e may considre and Se
Of conceytes ful gretë diversyte,
How that 3outh / no peril cast\* a-forn
Til he by\* meschief / sodeynly be lorñ*,
Wher as age / provydeth / euer thing
Or he bygynne / to casten the endyng\*.
If 3outh is gouernyd / to be a largë Reyne
To renne forth, and can hym not reffreyñ,
But\* of hede / set on al attonys,
As he that\* hurtleth / ageynës hardë Stonys

2928 call him an old dotard,
and say they\'ll not follow his advice,
specially the young folk.

The Greeks abuse Amphiorax. Youth is rash.

An olde Dotard / a coward, and aferde;
And of Rancour / gonne\* to diffye
Both his kalkyng / and his astronomye,
And shortly seide / þei took therof non hede,
Ne wil no-thyng\* / gouerne hem after\* his rede.
This was the clamour / and noyse, in every cost,
Of hegh and lough / þorgh-out all the hoost,
And specialy / of the sowdœours,
And of lordës / regnyng in her flours,
And of thethestates / effectuely, I Mene,
which of agë / were but tendre and grene,
That\* han\* not\* hadde / by martys Influence,
Of the werrë / gretë experience.

If her, zif 3e list\* / 3e may considre and Se
Of conceytes ful gretë diversyte,
How that 3outh / no peril cast\* a-forn
Til he by\* meschief / sodeynly be lorñ*,
Wher as age / provydeth / euer thing
Or he bygynne / to casten the endyng\*.
If 3outh is gouernyd / to be a largë Reyne
To renne forth, and can hym not reffreyñ,
But\* of hede / set on al attonys,
As he that\* hurtleth / ageynës hardë Stonys

2929. gonne Di. Ad\*, C. P. E\*, Ro. gan M. T\*, gan Ar. Bo. and the rest.
to] hym to Ad\*, hym I. diffye Di. T\*, defye Bo. M. Ad\*. 2930. his\* for his
Ad\*, of his I. kalkynge written on erasure with blacker ink Ad\*,
calcynge E\*, calcuynge Lb. talkynge Ad\*, I. 2932. no-thyng\* in no thynge S.
after] by C. T\*, P. E\*, Lb. Ro. Ap. 2933. Ar. has coste with the final e crossed
out with a verticle stroke. 2935. sowdeours] pour sondeours C. T\*, P. E\*,
2936. lorde\* yong lorde\* S. regnyng Bo. regnyng M. Lb. her\* om. E\*, hygh
Mertys Lb. Marces E\*, 2940. were\* warres T\*, verrey Lb. very P. gret\* ful gret
How\* And hou C. T\*, no\* in Ra. cast\* castith Ra. Ba. Lb. 2944. Till\* to
Du. he by\* (G. T\*, Lb.\* ] he Ar. by Bo. M. Di. he in C. T\*, P. E\*, Lb. Ro.
before Ra. 2945. thinge\* with e underdotted in Ar. 2948. renne Ar. T\*, M. ren Bo. Du.
rinne Ba. \* sterre E\*, hym not\* not him Bo. T\*, Du. Lb. Ad\*, Ad\*, I. Ba. E\*,
hurtlellyth Lb. ageyñ Bo. ayen M. ageyn Ad\*, hard\* altered to harde in Ar.
Broseth hym-silf / vnwarly and parbraketh.  
Butt age experte / no thyng vndertaketh 2952
Butt he to-form / be good discrecioum,
Make a due examynacioun
How itt wil tourne / outhier* to badde or good.  
Butt 3outh, as fast* / as stered is the blood, 2956
Taketh emprises of hasty willfulness,
Ioye at the gynnyng* / the ende is wrecchednesse.  
The oldé, prudent* / in al his gouvernaunce, 2960
Ful longe a-form / maketh purueaunce;
But 3outh alas be counsail wil not wyrke,
For which ful ofte / he stumbleth in the dyrke.
Thus selde is seyne / the trouthë* to termyne,
That* age and 3outhë* / drawë be o lyne.  
2964
And wher that* foly hath domynacioun,
Wisdam is putte / into subieccioun,
lik as this bysshop /, with al his hegh prudence,
For cause he myghte haue* / no audience, 2968
Aȳ his wisdam / and his profecye
Of thogh Plato / and wisē Socrates,
Moral Senek / and Diogenes, 2972
Albumasar / and prudent* Tholomee,
And Tullius / that hadde soureyntë

2951. Brosyth Ro. 
Bruseth Bo. Ad., 
Brisith M. 
whylom in Rome / as of eloquence:
Thogh aht thise / shortly in sentence,
were a-lyve / most konnyng and exper te,
And no man list / her counsel to aduerte,
Nor of her sawés / forto taken hede,
What myght availle / and it cam to nede?
For wher prudence / can fyndë no socour
And prouidenë / haueth no favour,
Farwel wisdam / farwel discreiou n,
For lakke only / of supportacion.
For vsunsupported / with his lokkës hore,
Amphiorax / sighën / gan ful sore
With hede enclyn yd / and many evyl thought,
when that he sauhe his coussayl stood for nought.

For vttrely / the grekis, as I tolde,
han fully cast / her Iournë for to holde,
Made hem redy / and gonnen to hosteye
Toward Thebës / the Cytë to werreye;
And in Greçë / wil no lenger tarye,
And forth with hem / Amphiorax they carye,
Sette in his Char / with a doolful herte,
Whan he wist / he myghte not aster "
Of his fate / the disposicion.
And hosteying / into the Region
Of lygurgus / Grekës gan approche
A sondy londe / with many Craggy roche.

They go thru a sandy desert.
But al the way, sothly, pat pei gon,
For hors nor man / water was per non:

So dryē* were the valēs and the pleynys.
For al pat zeere / they hadden had no reynys 3004
But ful gret* drouht* / as mad is mencioun;
And al the londe / Cerchyng* enviroun
They nowther fondē / wellē nor* Ryver, 3008
hem to refressh / nor water that* was cler,
That* they allas / no refut* ne konne.
So inportable / was the shenē sonne,
So hoot* on hem / in feldēs wher they leye, 3012
That* for meschief / man and hors gan deye,
Gapynge* ful drye / vpward into south;
And somē putten / her swerdēs in her mouthi
And sperys hedes / in story as is told,
Taswage her thirst* / with the yren cold;
And of his lif / ful many oū dispeyred
In this meschief / and hom ageyn repeyred:

Men suck their spear heads
of cold iron.

Tideus and Campaneus
ride out to search for water.

They enter a garden,

Ful of flourēs* / and of herbēs grene,

Wonder hoolsom / 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 kyng / born forto succeed,
Calléd ligurgus / in story as I rede,
Whoso herty Ioye / and worldly ek disport,
Al his myrthë* / plesaunce, and confort;
Was in this child / of excellent fayrnesse.
And this lady / Myroure of semlynesse,
Al sodeynly as she cast vp her sight
And on his stedë / sauh an armëd knyght,
Gretely abasshëd / gan anoñ remwe.
But Tideus after gan to swe
And saydë / “sustir / beth no-thynge dismayed,‘
In 3oure-sif displesëd nor affrayed!
For we ar come / only to pis place
3ow to biseche / 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 worthiest of al Grekes land,
Kynge, Prynces / be * loggëd in the field,

3028. in which is a lady Ipsiphyle,
With a child,
Son of king Lycurgus.
[leaf 51]
The lady moves away.

*Tideus tells her what distress the Argives are in.
And many other / with pollex / speer and sheld, 3052
which in meschief / peryl, and gret dereck,
For want of water / ar likly to be ded.
For ther was noñ / of hegh nor lowgh degré
In all our host /, now passéd daïes thre,
That drank allass / excepting noñ estat;
Our viage / is so infortunat:
Preying 30w / of wommanly pytè,
Benygnely* / and graciously to se
how of Grece aþ þe 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 owenë suster dere.” 3068
And when this lady / Inly vertuous,
The compleynt herde / of worthy Tydeus,
Of verrey pytè / chaungeth cher 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 larg
Touching this child? / of which I hauë charge, 3076
I shuld in hast? / of al that doth 30w grewe

To my pouver / helpen to relieue,
Only of routh / and compassioun,
And leue / al other / occupacioun,
Conveye* 3owe / and be 3oure trewe guyde
To a Ryver / but lityl her be syde.
But I dar not* / so moche me assure
This litil childe / to put* in auenture.
I am so ferdful / from it to departe.
But for 3oure saké / yet* I shal iuparte
My lif, my deth / of trewe affecccion,
To provyde / for 3our saucion."

Took the child* / and laide it* in her lappe,
And richely in clothés / gan it* wrappe,
And Couched it* / amonge the herbes soote,
And leyde aboute / many hoolsom roote
And flourës ek / bothë* blewe and rede.
And supprisëd / with a manner dredre
with Tideus / forth / anon she wente,
As she in tronthë* / that no treson mente,
And on hir way / wolde* neuer dwelle
Til she hym brought / to a right* faire welle
And ta Ryvere / of water full habounde.

He sends to Adrastus, and all the host run to the River.

Some drink sensibly; some too violently,

Some bathed.

And fall dead.

The Argives pitch their tents.

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 doyne descendé / to the Ryver-sydo
with al his host / recur forto hane
At this Ryver / her lyues forto saue.
And pei enhast hem / makyng non abood,
AH attonys / to the Ryver rood *
Forte drynké *; pei hadde so grett lust
Of appetit / forto staunce her thrust;
And somě dronk / and fonde it did hem good ;
And somě wern / so feruentt and so wood
Vpon the water / that in sikernesse,
Thorgh vndiscrett / and hasty gredynesse,
Out of mesur / the watere so pei drynke
That they fille ded / euene vpon the brynke ;
And somě naked / into pe Ryvere ronne,
Only for liete / of the somer sonne,
To bathen hem /, the water was so cold ;
And somě also / as I haue * sow told,
I menē tho that prudentt wern and wise,
The water drunk / in mesurable wyse,
That of pe thrust / they haue * to-form endured
They were refresshéd / fully and recured.

To rest hem ther / in relees of her peyne,
Only the space / of a day or twyne.
And whylys Grekes / upon the Ryuer lay,
This Tydeus / upon the same day
Ful knyghtly / hath don his diligence,
This jonge lady / with grete reverence,
To Adrastus / goodly to presente:
At whoos comynge / ye kynge hym-silvē wente
Ageynēs * hir' / she fallyng down on knees,
Aē thestatēs presente and degrees
Of Grekēs loud /, absent was nat on;
And in his Armēs / took hir' vp anoñ,
Thanking hir' / of her bysynesse,
Of hir' labour / and her kyndēnesse,
Behotyng hir' / lik as he was holde,
If eyny thyng pleynly that she wolde
That he may don / she shuld it redy fynde.
And Grekēs aē /, the story maketh mynde,
Of thestatys / beyng 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,

THEBES.
Why Ipsiphyle had to leave her own Land.

[PT. III.

To be redy platly / and nat' faille.
And her myn outour / makep reherzhaille
That' pis lady / so faire vpon to se,
Of whom pe namë was Isyphië, 3156
To Adrastus told', as 30 may rede,
Lynealy / the stok / of her kynrede,
Whilom how she / a kynnges doghter' was:
Rehershyn' hym / hooly al the cas,
First' why pat' she / out' of her contrè wente,
Shortly for she woldë* not' assente
To execute / a conspiraciously,
Mad by the wyymmen / of that' Regionu,
A thyng contrayr / and ageyn al right',
That eche 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' wyymmen / 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' fro pe deth / preseruëd and wipdawre,

For which, alas! / she fledde pe contrè,
And of a pyrat\t taken in the see,
To kyng lygurgy / brouht\t In al her drede.
And for her troup / and her wommanhede
To hir he took / his jonye child to kepe,
which in the herber / alloñë* she left\t slepe
whan Tydeus / she broghte to the welle.

And by Iason / somë bookis telle
That\t this lady / hadde sonës two,
whan that\t he / and hercules also
Toward Colehos / by hir\t contrè Cam
For tacomplyssh\t / pe conquest\t of the Ram.
But who that\t lyst\t / by and by to se
The story hool / of this* ysypylè,
Hir fadres name / of which also I wante*,
Thou\t somë seyn / he namëd was Thoante,
And somë bokes \t vermës ek hym* calle:
But\t to knowe / pe auentoñës alle
Of pis lady \t Isypylè the faire,
So feithful ay / and inly debonayre,
Lok on the book / that\t Iohn Bochas made
Whilom of wommen / with rethorikës glade,
And directe / be ful souereyn style
To fayrë* Ianë / the queen of Cecile.

Rede ther the rubrich / of ysypylè,

3181. fledde Bo. fled M. Ad.\t 3184. trouthe M. Ad.\t troup Ar. Bo.
and\t and for L.\t Ad.\t her\t om. Bo. wommanhede T. M. Ad.\t wommanhede Bo.\t 3185. Tøj T Ar. yonge Bo. M. yonge Ad.\t child\t sone M. Di.
3186. Which in\t That in T. Withynne Ra. Ba. therber T. M. C. the herber
Lycurgus's Son is poison and kild by a Serpent. [PT. III.

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

And whan that she hap her lieue take
Of Adrastus /, homward in her weye
Tydeus gan hyr to conveye,
To* the gardyne / til* she is repayed.
But now, alas! my mater disepayed

Of alle Ioye / and of alle* welfulnesse,
And destitute* / of myrth and alle gladnesse,
For now of wo / gymne pe sharpe shoures.

For this lady / fond among the flowares
her litil child* / turnedd vp pe face,
Slayn of a serpent* / in pe selue place,
hyr taile* burlyd / with skalis siluer-shene.
The Venym / was / so persyng and so kene,
So perilous ek / the mortal violence
Causéd, alas! / thorg her long absence:
She was to slouyh / homward forto hie.

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

And ofteth sith she gan to seyn, "allas!
O wooful wreche / vnhappy in this cas,
What shal I don / or whider may I tourne?
For pis the fyn / 3if I her* soiourme,
I woot right wel / I may it not escape
The pitous faté / pat is for me shape.
Socour is non / nor ther may be non red,
litch my desert / but that I mot be ded;
For thorhe my slouth / and my neclyence
I haue, allas! don so gret' offence
That my gilt /, I may it nat* excuse,
Shal to the kync / of treson me accuse.

Thorh my defaute / and slouthë* bothë* two,
His sone is ded / and his heir also,
which he louëd mor than al his good:
For tresor non / so nigh his hertë stood,
Nor was so depë / graue / in his corage:
That he is likely to fallen in a Rage
when it is so, mynd odous offence
Reported be vnto his audience;

So inportable shal be his hevynesse.

And wel woot I / in verrey sothfastnesse,
That', when the quenë* hath this ping* espied,
To myn excus / It may nat be denied,
Ipsipyle appeals to Tideus for help.

will be revenged on her,

I doubt it not / ther geyneth no pytè,
With-out respit / she wil avengèd be
On me, alas! / as I ha deserved;
That fro the deth / I may not be preserued
Nowther be bille / ne supplicacione;
For the rage / of my transgressioun
Requereth deth / and noth other mede."

And thus, alas! she, quaking in her drede,
Non other helpe / nor remedye* kan,
But dreynt in sorow / to pe Grekes Ran,
Of hertly woo / face and chere disteyned
And her chekes with wepyng al bereynyd,
In hir affray / distracte and furious.
To-form alle / she cam to Tydeus,
And fille on knees / and gan her compleynt mak,
Toldè pleynly / that for grekes sake
She mot 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 whan that he her meschief vnderstood,
Vnto hire ful knyghtly he behiht
To help and forther / al that enure he myght,
hir pitous woo / to stynten and appese.
And forto fynde / vnto hir dissose
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 bysy cure,
As he was bound / of equyte and riht,
And aduerten / and to han a siyt,
How she qwit her to Grekes her to-forn
whan they wer likly / forto haue* be lorifi,
The socour voide of her wommanhede :
For which he most of knyghthood taken hede
To remedien pis vnhappy thingt.
And Adrastus / lik a worthy kyngt
Taquyt hjm-silt /, the story makep myndt,
To thys lady wille nat be foundt vnkyndt,
Neither for costt / nor for no travaylle,
Butt bysy was / in al pat myghtt availlt
To hir socour / considered alle pingges,
And by thavice / of alle þe worthy kyngges
Of Grekes lond / þei be accorded thus,
Prynces, Dukès / and worthy Tydeus,
To hold her way / and al at onys ryde
To lygurus / dwelling ther be-syde,
Of on entent / zif they may purchase
In eny wisë / forto getë grace
For this lady, Callið ysiphilû ;
They wold assayë* zif it* myghte be.
And to his paleys ful ryal bylt of ston,
Lycurgus promises the Greeks Rooms, [PT. III.

The Greeks ride to Lycurgus's palace.

The worthy Grekes / cam ryding' euerichoñ, 
Evrey lord ful freshly on his stede.
And lygurgus / example of manlihede, 
Anon as he knewe of her comple';
Taquyte hym-silf / lièh a gentil kyng',
Ageyn hem went' / to mete hem on the way,
Ful wel byseyn / and in ful good array,
Receyvyn' hem with a ful kyngly chere.
And to Adrastus seid, as 3e shal here, 

"Cosyn*," quod he / and gan hym to enbrace,
"3e be welcome / to 3oure ownë place,
Thankyng hertly to 3our' hegh noblesse
That so goodly / of 3our' gentillesse
Towardès me / 3e list' 3ou to acquite,
3oure-silf þis day / 3our cosyn to visite,
In this castel to takë 3oure logzyng; 
That neuer 3it' / I was so glad of thyng'
In* al my lif / and thereto her my trouthi.
And ouermorë* / ther shal be no slouthi
That the Chambres / and the largë tours
Shal be deluyered / to 3our herberiours ;
That every lord / as he is of degrë,
Vnto his logzyng' / shal assigned be.
3oure officerës* / lat' hem-silf* devise

3if the howsung / may largely suffice
To 3ow and 3ourēs / strechen and atteyñ,
That noī estaat / haue * causē to compleyn.
And alle 3our' hoost / logged her be-syde,
which in Tentys / vpon 3ou abide,
lai' hem fette / be myñ auctorité,
Vitayle ynoh / her in my Citè.
And alle that may socour hem or saue,
And, at' a word, / al that enere I have
Is ful and hool / at' 3our commaundément.'

\[\text{leaf 56}\]

\[\text{PT. III.} \quad \text{Tents and Food. But they ask for something more.} \quad 137\]

If Quod Adrastus / " that is nat' our' entent',
Nor on no parte / cause ofoure comyng:
For we be come al for anoher thyng';
A certeyn gift / of 3ou to requere,
Benygnely / 3if 3e list' to here,
which may Grekēs / passyngly availle,
Of our* request / 3if* that' 3e nat' ne faille,
which we dar not / opyny expresse,
with-outē that' 3e wold / of gentillesse,
3oure graunte' afor / conferme and ratefye.

Than wer we bold / it' to specifye.'

Lycurgus says he'll give em anything but his life, his son and his wife.

Quod lycurgus / "what-euer thyng it' be,
Nouht' exceptid / but' only pinggës thre:
¶ The first' is this / it' touchë* nat' my lif,
My þonge sonë, pleynly, nor my wyf;
Take al my good / or what' ze list' provyde
Of my tresour / and sette þies thre a-syde,
Al the surplus / I count' nat' at' a myte."

Then Adrastus / astounyd was a lyte
whan lycurgus / in conclusion,
Of his sonë / made excepcioun.

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 lycurgus / born forto ben hayr;
The which, allas! / hath golde vp the brethi,
Of a Serpent* / stonge to the deth
And with his woundë* / newë*, fressh and grene,
In therber lith / that pite is to sene,
And hath so leync / almost' al this day;"

Lycurgus laments; his Queen swoons.

That when lygurgus / herde* this affray, 3372
And wist his child was ded and hath no mo,
Lytil wonder / thogh that he were wo.
For sodeynlly / the importable smerte
Ran anoñ / and hent* hym by the herte

That, for constreynt* / of his dedly payne,
Thorgh-oute he felte koruen euery veyne.
The ragë gan myne in hym so depe
That* he can not* but* sighë* / sobbe, and wepe. 3380

And with the noyse / and lamentaciou
The qwen distrauht* / is descendid doun.
And whan she knewe / the* ground of al this sorowe,
hit* neded* her no teerës / forto borowe 3384

But* twenty tymë ny* vpon a rowe
A-swounë she fille / vnto pe grounde lowe;
And stoundë-melë* / for this hegh meschaunche,
Stille as ston / she lyggheth in a Traunce. 3388

*! And whan the child* / into the courte was brouht*
To-fore lygurgus / allas! I wite hym nought,
Vpon the cors / with a mortal face,
he Fil atony* / and gan it to embraces, 3392

Lycurgus's dead Son is buried.

[PT III.

Sith loos of deth / no man may recure
Thogh he in wo / perpetuelle endure;
Al helpeth nat / when the soule is go.
"And our lif her, who taketh* hed ther-to,
Is but an exile / and a pilgrmage,
Ful of torment / and of bitter Rage,
Licith a See. rennyng to and fro,
Swyng an ebbë / when the flood is do,
Lytle space abidyng at the fulle:
Of whos soiour / the popë jeuëp no bulle.
For* kyng is non, nor* duk, nor Emperour,
That* may hym shroude / ageyn ïe fatal shour
Of cruel deth / when hym list* manace
To marke a man with his mortal mace.
Than geynep nat* to his saucion
Neyther Fraunchysë / nor proteccion,
And lit* / or noght* / may helpen in this caas
Sauffecondit* / or Supersedyas.
For in this world* / who so look a-right,
Is non so gret / of power nor of myght,
Noon so richë / shortly/ nor so bold
But,* he, mot* dey / outher* 3ong* or old.
And who in youthë* / passeth ïis passage,
he is eskapéd / al the woodë* Rage,
Al sorowe and trouble / of this present lyff,

Adrastus begs Lycurgus to forgive Ipsiphylæ.

Repleneshewd* with contek / were and stryff,
which seeld or neure / stont in Suerté.
Wher-for best is, as semeth vnto me,
No man gruché* but, of hegh prudence,
The sonde of goddis / tak in pacience.

And 3e that ben so wis / and manly to,
3oure-sill to drnowe in torment and in woe
For loos of thyng* 3if* that 3e list to se,
which in no wise may recurid be,
Is gret foly and vndiscrecioun." 3448

And thus Adrastus / hath conveyid douñ
The substaunce hool / of that he wold seye:
Til that he fond / a tymé forto preye
Conuenyent / for ysyphilec,
Byseching hym forto han pité
Of pat she hath offended his highnesse,
Not willfully / but of reklesnesse:
First pat he wold / his doomës 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

By hasty Rigour / nat to do vengeaunce, 
But think afor / in his purvyaunce, 
who to wrecches / doth mercy / in her drede, 
Shal mercy fynde / when he hath most nede: 
And Sith he hath power, myght, and space, 

Lat hym tak this lady / to his grace, 
For lack of routhe* / that she nat ne dye. 

But tho the quene / gan agayn replye 
And platly scide / as in this mater, 
Avayleth not requests / nor preyere, 
Pyte, Mercy / nor remyssyoun, 
But 3if it be / by this condicion. 

That the serpent, cause of al pis sorowe, 
Thorgh her labour / lay his hed to borowe. 
This is fynal / and ytter recompense 
To fynde grace / for her gret offence, 
Or eills Shortly / sheed* blood for blood. 

And whan Grekys her answer vnderstood, 
Al of accord / in her beste wise, 
Took on hem / this auenturous emprise, 
For loue only / of Ysyphyle; 
And gan to ryde / enyron pe contré, 
By hillës, valës / Rochës, and ek Cauës, 

He who does mercy, shall find mercy. 
Let Ipsipyle be forgiven. 
But the Queen says, 
either the serpent or Ipsipyle must die. 

The Greeks hunt for the Serpent.
In dychis dirk\(^1\) / and in oldé gravis,
By every cooste / cerchyng\(^2\) vp and doni:
Til at\(^1\) the last\(^1\) / full famous of renoun,
The worthy knyght\(^1\) / parthonolopè
was the first\(^1\) / that\(^1\) happéd for* to Se
This hydous Serpent\(^1\) / by a Ryver-side,
Gret\(^1\) and horrible / stern and ful of pride,
Vndere a Rocchë* / by a banke lowe;
And in al hast\(^1\) / he bent\(^1\) a sturdy bowe,
And ther-In sette an arowe* fyléid kene,
And thróg the body / spotted blew and grene,
Ful myghtily he made it forto Glyde,
Hent* out a swerde / hongyng* be his syde,
Smoot\(^1\) of his hede / and anóñ it hent
And ther-with-al gan the Quene present\(^1\),
wherthorgh her sorowe parcel gan aswage.

And thus, of prowesse / and of hegh corage,
This manly man / parthonolopè
hath reconcilèd faire Isyphilee
Vnto gracè / fully of ãe Quene,
Hir* Ire avoided* / and her oldò tene.

3484. dirk Ad., derke Bo. derk M. 3486. atte last Bo. Ad., at last M.
3487. knyght\(^1\) king Ad, Ad, I. 3488. happed] happonde Lb. happenyde P.
for to Lb. C. T, E, to Ar. Bo. and the rest. 3491. roche Bo. M. Rocch Ar.
roch Ad, bankè Bo. bank M. Ad., 3492. al al the Ad, I. bent] hente Di.
Ba. E, C. T, Lp. 3493. a narowe Ar. 3496. The line begins with And in all the
and of] and Ad, Ad, I. Ra. S. C. 3501. parthonolope] this parthonoloxe C.
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 pardouned to bene. 3507.
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 / þe contrarie telle:
For this autour aftermen? / out of dred
That, whan this child was by the serpent ded,
She durste not / for her gret offence
Neuer after comen in presence
Of lygurgus / but of intencioun
Fledde anoñ / out of that Regioun;
Att? herte she took / the childês deth so sore.
what? fille of hir? / I fynd+i? can no more
Than 3e han herd? / afor me specifye.
And the kyngdam / but jif bookys lye,
Of lygurgus / was ycalliç Trace.
And, as I rede in an other place,
He was þe samë myghty Champioun,
To Athenes / that? kam with Palamoun
Ageyne his brother / that? calliç was arcyte,
Lad in his chaar / with fourë* bookys whyte,
Vpon his hed / a wreath of goldë ful fyn.
And I fynd ek? / how bachus, god of wyñ,
with this kyngr?/ was whilom at debat,
Only for he / pompous and Elat,
Destruccïoun / didë* to his vynys,


THEBES.
And for he firstst settallayson wynys, 3532
Meyntes water / whan they were to strongt.
And this Bachus / for the grete wrongt.
Brak his lymys / and dreynst hym in pe See.
Of lygurgus / 3e gete no more of me. 3536

But the trouth / 3if 3e lyst verrifie,
Rede of goddes / the Genologye,
lynealy / her kynrede be degrees,
I-braunchéd out / vpon twelue trees., 3540
Mad by Bochas / decertaldo called,
Amongst Poetys / in ytaillé stalled,
Next Fraunceys Petrak / swying in certeyn.
Now vnto Grekys / I wil retourne ageyn,
To telle forth shortly, 3if I konne,
Of her Iourné / that they haue* begonne:
how Adrastus / hath his lievë* take
Of ligurgus / with his browës blake;
And departyng, with seynst Iohn to borowe,
Mad his wardës / on the nexte morowe
So wel beseyn / so myghty, and so strong,
Wonder erly / when pe larkë* songt,
With a trumpet* / warned euery man
To be redy / in al the hast they kan,
Forte remwe / and no lettingt make.

And so they han / the righte way I-take
Touard Thebés / the grekês euerychof,
That* such a nombre / gadred everyon,
Of worthy knyghtês neuere aform was seyn,

whan they in feré / monstred in a pleyn.
And they ne stynt‡ by non occasioun

Til they be come even a-for the toun,
And pight* her tentys / proudly, as I rede,
Vnder the wallys / in a grene* mede.

And whan the* thebans / werebesette aboute,
The manly knyghtês / wold han* yssyd ote
And haue* scarmosshed / in her lusty pride,

With her foomen / on the toper side.
But* be byddyng* / of Ethiocles
Alle ūlke* nyght / ūl kepethem-sif in pcs,
Be cause only / that it was so late,

With gret* awayt* / set at* euery gate,
Men of Armys / al the nyght wakyng*
On the wallys / be byddyng* of ūl kyng,
Lest* per wereë / treynys or tresoun.

And on the tours / and in the Chief Dongoun
he sette vp men / to maké mortal sowns
with brasyn hornys / and loudé Clarions,

Of ful entent‡ / ūl wacchês forto kepe,
In his wardë / that* no man ne slepe.

And Grekys proudly / al ūl longe nyght
kyndled* fyrys / and maad ful gret lyght;

3556 Adrastus and his Greeks march
And they han the righte way I-take
Touard Thebés / the grekês euerychof,
That* such a nombre / gadred everyon,
Of worthy knyghtês neuere aform was seyn,

whan they in feré / monstred in a pleyn.
And they ne stynt‡ by non occasioun

Til they be come even a-for the toun,
And pight* her tentys / proudly, as I rede,
Vnder the wallys / in a grene* mede.

And whan the* thebans / werebesette aboute,
The manly knyghtês / wold han* yssyd ote
And haue* scarmosshed / in her lusty pride,

With her foomen / on the toper side.
But* be byddyng* / of Ethiocles
Alle ūlke* nyght / ūl kepethem-sif in pcs,
Be cause only / that it was so late,

With gret* awayt* / set at* euery gate,
Men of Armys / al the nyght wakyng*
On the wallys / be byddyng* of ūl kyng,
Lest* per wereë / treynys or tresoun.

And on the tours / and in the Chief Dongoun
he sette vp men / to maké mortal sowns
with brasyn hornys / and loudé Clarions,

Of ful entent‡ / ūl wacchês forto kepe,
In his wardë / that* no man ne slepe.
The Greeks ravage the Country round Thebes.

Sette vp loggyng [loggynges Du.] lik as they shuld / euers ther abyde,
Compas the toune / ther was no voidë space
But al besette / her foomen to manace.
And whylis they afor pe Cité laye,
On euery cost / they sent out to forraye,
Brente townës / thorpes and vilages,
with grete ravyn makynge theyr pillages,
Spoyle / and robbe / and broûtie [hom vitaille]
And al maner soortes / of bestaylle,
Shep / and neet / and in her cruel rage
with houndës slowe / al that was sauje,
Hert / and hyndë [bothë buk] and doo,
The Blake* beer / and pe wilde Roo,
The fatte swyn / and pe tusshy* boor,
Karying al hom / for the grekës stoore
whete and wyn / for her auantage,
Hay and Otys / fodder / and forage.

With pis kalendis / as hem thynkë* dwe,
Greks gan / the thebans to Salwe,

Mynistring, hem / occasiones* felle,
pe sege sette /, shortly forto telle,
Of ful entent / in their hatful pryde,
For lif or deth / ther-pon tabide,
who so euer / ther-with be a-greued,
Til they fully / her purpoos have acheued.
Ther may therof / be made no reles.

And of al* this / ful war / Ethioclies
Gan in party / gretly to* mervaille
whan that he saugh / pe grete apparylle
Of the Grekes / pe Cite rounde aboute;
And in hym-silf hadde a maner doute,
Now at the poynct / what was best to do.
For thilké* tyme / it stood with hym so
That to some abidyng in pe toun
he hadde in herté / gret suspicioun
list toward hym / that they were vnstable,
And to his brother / in party favorable;
For in the Cite, ther was variance,
which vnto hym was a grete meschaunc;
For in his nedé / shortly / he ne wiste
Vpon whom / pat he myghte triste;
For they wer not* / alle of on entent*:
For which he hath / for his consaye sent,

3624 Eteocles asks the advice of
3620 That the variaunce in Thebes among
hem-silf.
3616 He knows some
Thesbans favour
Polynices.
3612 is in doubt
what to do.
3604 They mean to
press the siege
to the death.
3608 To

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

3603. Mynistring[, Mustrynge Lb. Ad₂, I. P. L₄. occasiones] occasions (occasionis)
Ar. Bo. and all the other MSS. (cf. 4204 and see Notes), 3605. her Bo. M. Ad₁,
3606. to abide Bo. M. Ad₁, 3607. ther-with] herwith Lb. P. theratte
E₄. 3608. Ar. has another pause-bar after they. 3609. maked] made L₁, Ad₁,
om. Ar. Bo. and the rest. And of al this] Of this and Ad₁, Ad₂. I. Ra. Ba. S. Of
pis L₁. And all this while Ro. ful war] ful weel war Ra. C. fulle wele war was
Ba. full warre was L₁, Lb. Ad₂. I. was ware P. 3611. Gan] Wheche ganne
Ra. Ba. hadde] he had Ad₁, Ad₂. I. 3615. atte poynct Bo. Ad₁, at poynct M.
all the poynct Lb. 3616. thilke Bo. Ad₁, thilke M. ther M. that S. 3617. Ar.
has a pause-bar after abidyng. 3619. list Ar. G. lest Bo. M. Ad₁, Ra. (see
Notes). toward hym] to him ward Ad₁, to hym Ad₂. I. him] om. Lb. that]
om. Ad₁, Ad₂. I. Ra. Ra. E₁. P. 3621. the] his Di. ther] the Bo. om. Ad₁,
his] pis Bo. nede] herte Ad₁, I. 3624. might Bo. M. Ad₁, sholde Ad₂, I.
wiste : triste Ar. Ad₁. wist : trist Bo. M. wiste : truste C. 3626. For which] 
his lords and his mother Jocasta, Al his lordes / and the old Queene, which as he dempt / were* pur and clone, 3628
Hoo! of on herte / and not* variable, Of old* expért / and always founde stable;
Requeryng: hem / be-causè they were wys, Al openly to tellen: / ther avis 3632
Wher it was bet / pleynly, in her sight;
With his brother / to tretten or to fight!

Some say 'Fight'; And somé gaf / a ful blun't sentence,
which hadde / of werré / non experience:
Seyde it was best*, / and nat* ben afferd,
To trye his right* / manly with þe Swerd.
And same also / that* wer moor prudent,
Spak vnto hym / by good avisément*
And list* nat* sparë* / but* their conceyte tolde
how hit* was best* / his couenaut* 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 sped,
Be nat* foundë / variant* fro the dede,
For non hatred / rancour, neyther pryde.
And tho / the queenë* / took hym out aside,
Tolde hym pleynly / it* was ful vnsitting

'Keep your promise to your brother.' Swich doublenesse / to fynden in a kyn',

3628. which] Suche Lb. C. T. P. E. deemp] deemdy Ad,. I. S. deputed Ra. deputith Ba. were] that were Ar. E. pur] true S. were pure] were M. Di. ; in L. and Ro. 3628 is much altered: Which that his hert most wold deme Lp. Which in effect he demyd shulde seme Ro. 3630. and] in Dv. 3632.
And seide hym ek / al-thoth he were strong,
To his brother / how he didi* wrong,
"As al the toune / wil record, in dede,
And berë* winnesse / zif it' kam to nede.
Wherfor lat' vs shape another mene
In this materë / whil that' it is grene,
Or this quarel /, gonne of volontè,
Ture / in the fyn / to mor aduersité.
For zif it' be / darreynëd be bataylle,
who tresteth most* / may ful likly faille.
And it' is foly / be short' avisëment',
To putte a strif / in martys Iugëment.
For hard it' is / when a Iuge is wood,
To tret afrom hym / without' loos of blood.
And zif we put our mater* / hool in Marte,
which with the sword* / his lawës doth coarte,
Than may hit' happe / wher ze be glad or lotli,
Thow and thy brother / shal repente both ;
And many a-noper / that' is her present,
Of 3oure trespas / that' ben Innocent,
And many thousand / in cas shal compteyñ
For the debat' / only of 3ow tweyn,
And for 3our strif / shal fyndë ful vnsoote.
"And for thow art' gyynyg, ground, and Roote

he 'll have to account for all who die in the war.

Peace and war,

Life and death, hang in the balance.

He's at the stake,

and must fight or treat.

[Leaf 62]

Jocasta tells

Of this Injurie / and this Gret vnright,
To the goddys / that herof han a sight,
Thow shalt accountys / and a reknyng make
For alle tho / that pershyn for pi sake.
And now the cause / dryven is so ferre,
Sodeyn pees / outher* hasty werre
Moot folwe anom /; for the fatal chaunce
Of lif and deth / dependeth in balaunce.
And no man may / be no craft restreyne
That vpon on / platly of this twyne
The soort mot falli / lik as it doth tourne,
Who so euer lawgh / or ellys mourne.
And thow art dryve / so narowe to pe stake
That thow mayst nat / moo delaies make,
But fight or tret / this quarel forte fyne ;
By non engyn / thou canst / it not declyne.
And hasty cas /, as folk seyn that be wys,
Redresse / requereth by ful short avys :
For trete longe / now avaylleth noghti.
For to the pont / sothly thou art brouht,
Outher* to kepè thy poecession
Or in al haste / devoyde / out of this town,
wher thou therwith / be wroth or wel apayd.”

"Now notè wel / 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 noñ other.
wherfor in haste / trete with thi brother
And agyen hym / make no resistence,
But to thy lordys / fully 3iue* credence:
By whoos counsayl / sith they be so sage,
late Polymyte / reioye se his heritage.
And that shal turnë / most to thyne avail.

lo! her is hool / the fyn of our counsel."

¶ And shortly tho / for verrey Irë wroth,
Thou he therto / froward was and lotli,
Accorded is / hering; al the prees,
3if he algate shal trete for a* pes,
It moste be / by this condicioun
That he wol han / the domynacioun
First in chief / to hym-sill reserved,
As hym thouhté / he hadde wel disserued,
And saue to hym / hool the soureynté;
And vnder hym / in Thebes pe Cité
he to graunte / with a righte good cher,
Polymytës / to regnë for a 3er,
Than tavoyde* / and not résort agyen:
For mor to eleynë / was nat but In veyn.
This wold he doñ / only for her sake,
And other-wise / he wil non ende make
with the Grekys / what fortune euere falle.

And fynally / amonge his lordys alle
Ther was not on / of hñi nor lowgh estal,

3702. haste , trete Bo. with] well with E. 3704. 3if Ar. 3yw G. Du. gyne

Eteocles

3704 to give Poly-
neices his
inheritance.

Eteocles is
wroth,

3712 but agrees to
treat for peace
if he may

remain King,
and Polyncees

3720 reign under him
for a year.

[leaf 62, back]

No Theban lord
will propose
this:
That wolde* gon / on this ambassayt
Out of the toun / nother for bet nor wors;
so Jocasta will.
Jocasta and her daughters,
And cast 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 hourè* / whan it droth to pryme.
And with hyr went / hyr zonge dohtres twyene,
Antigone and Ismene, Of hyr meynè / ful many on aboute,
At the gate / she was conveyéd oute,
And of purpos / she madè first hir went;
Polyneices On hors-bak / to kyng Adrastus tent,
king Adrastus, He and his lordys / beynge al yffere.
who welcomes her. And they receyve hyr / with a right glad chere,
Shewyng hyr / lik to hir degré,
On eury half / ful greth humanytè,
Polyneices Polymytès / rysyng fro his place,
And humblely / his moder gan embrace,
Bassate her and his sisters. Kyssede hyr / and than Antigone,
And ek ymyne / excellyng of bewtè.
And for that they / passyngely were faire,
Gret was the pres / concours, and repaire
Of the ladyes forto han a sight.
Jocasta And Jocasta / procedeth anon ryght

To Adrastus / hit mater to purpose,  
And gan to hym / opynly disclose  
Thentent\ and wil\ of Ethiocles,  
And by what\ men\ he desireth pes,  
To hym reserved / as she gan specifie,  
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 regnen / in the town  
As a Soget, be suffraunce of his brother.  
But\ the Grekës / thouhten al another,  
And Specyaly worthy Tydeus,  
Pleynly affermyng it\ shuld nat\ be thus:  
For he wil haue / no condiciouns,  
But\ sette a-Syde / aff excepciouns,  
Nothyng\ reservid / as in special,  
But\ hool the lordship, Regalye, and al,  
Polymytës it fully to possede,  
In Thebës Crownëd / verrayly in dede,  
As Rightful kyng\ / putte in pocessioun,  
lich the Couenauntys and convencioun  
Imad of olde / assuryd, and asselyd,  
" which shall not\ now of newë be repelyd,  
But\ stable and hool / in his strengthë* stonde.  
And lat\ hym so platly vndyrstone!  
And first that\ he devoyde hym out\ of town,  

\[leaf 63\]  
proposes Eteocles\’ terms:  
that he shall remain King,  
and Polyneices reign under him.  
Tidens rejects them.  
\[ The answer of Tydeus.\]  
Tidens says  
Polyneices must be crownd King in Thebes,  
And Polyneices must leave the town.

And delyuere the Sceptre / and the Croun
To his brother / and mak' therof no more.
And shortly ellys It' shal be boult' ful sore
Or this mater brought be to an ende,
For Grek is non / that' shal hennys wende
Or that' our right' / which is vs denied,
with lif or deth / darreyné d be and tryed :
we wil not' arst fro this towne remewe.

"And 3if hym lyst / al this thynge eschwe
And aI meschief / styntyn and appese,
To either part' / he may do gret' ese :
Thus I mené / for his auauntage,
Delyuer vp hool / the trewó herytage
To his brother / for a 3eer tendure.
And Grekys shal fully hym assure,
By what' bonde that' hym list' devise,
The 3eer compele' / in our beste wise
To hym delyuer / ageyn pocessioun
with-outé strif / or contradicioun.
And to this fyn / Iustly hold* vs to.

"And 3if it' fallé / that' he wil nat so,
Lat' hym not' wayte / but' only after were.
The hour is come / we wil it' notd differre.
If lo! her is al / and thus 3e may reporte
To hym ageyn / whan that 3e resorte ;
Fro which apoynt / we cast' vs not' to varye."

And sht to hym / Amphiorax contrarye
Ful pleunly saide, in conclusioun,
This fynde shall cause a destrucuoiz
Of hem echon / sif it forth procede
To be parfourmed / and execute in deed.
But silke tyme for al his eloquence
He had in soth / but lytyl audience.
For wherso euer / he ment / good or ille,
kyng Adrastus / bad hym to be stille.
Leod the Iocasta / as wisdom did hyr tech,
humle of her port / with ful softe specl,
Gan seeke menys / in hyr fantasaye
sif she myght the Iré modifye
Of the Grekes / to make hem to enclyne
In eny wise / hyr rancour forto fyne.
She dyd hyr dever / and hir bysy cure.
But tho byfel a wonder aventure,
Causes and ground / of grete confusion,
Grekes perturbyng / and also ek the towne,
And it to tellë / may me not asterte.
For which a whil / my stytell I mot dyuerte,
And shortly tellë /, by descriptiouw,
Of a Tigré dwellyng in the towne,
which fro a kyngdam / besyden adiacent,
Out of Egipte / was to Thebes sent:
the whichë best by record of scripture

3806. Amphiorax] Amphorax Bo. 3807. Ar. has a pause-bar after pleyunly.
3808. cause Bo. M. Adj. 3810. Ar. has a pause-bar between fynde and shal.
3821. denuo Bo. M. devour Adj. 3824. par-
turbyng Bo. Adj. perturbling M. parturbing E. also Ar. G. S. L. Ro. om.
Bo. and the rest. 3825. it] yit Adj. L to] omit. E. may] it may Adj. Adj. I.
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 make mention,
with a lion's body, He of body / resembleth the lyoun,
a greyhound's head, and lik a greyhound' / the mosel and the hed,
red eyes, and of Eyen / as eny fyret' red,
and spotted skin. Ek of his Skyn /, wryten as I fynde,

This tiger at Thebes was tame,

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 make mention,
with a lion's body, He of body / resembleth the lyoun,
a greyhound's head, and lik a greyhound' / the mosel and the hed,
red eyes, and of Eyen / as eny fyret' red,
and spotted skin. Ek of his Skyn /, wryten as I fynde,

This tiger at Thebes was tame,

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 make mention,
with a lion's body, He of body / resembleth the lyoun,
a greyhound's head, and lik a greyhound' / the mosel and the hed,
red eyes, and of Eyen / as eny fyret' red,
and spotted skin. Ek of his Skyn /, wryten as I fynde,
PT. III.] This Tiger, the Greeks kill. Thebans try to avenge it. 159

Ther was no ping / did hym mor plesaunc, 3860
That for no tresour / it myght not be bought;
For whan that he was pensif or in thought;
It putt hym out of his hevynesse.
And thilkë* tyme /, the story doth expresse,
That Iocesta treted* for a pes,
This tamë Tygre / in party rekkëles,
Out at the gates / in sight of many a man,
Into the feld / wildely* out ran,
And Casuely renyng to and fro,
In and oute, as doth a tamë Roo ;
Greks wenynyng that wer 3ongs* of age,
That this Tygre / haddë be sauage,
And Cruelly besettyng al the place
Roundë aboutë / gan hym to enchace
Til he was ded / and slayen* in the feld.
The slaufter of whom whan pat they byheld,
The proude Thebans / which on the wallys stood,
They ronnë done ful furious and wood,
enyng he had / be slayen* of despit.
Takyng her hors / with-outë mor respit;
Fully in purpos / with Greks forto fighte,
The Tigres deth / tavengen 3if they myghte.
And out they rood / with-outë gouernaylle,
And ful proudly / Grekës gan assaylle,
And of hatred / and ful hegh desdayne

and slay the

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

Greeks who kild

That many Greke / in the grena mede,
By the force / and the gret myght

the tiger.

Of her Foomen, lay slayën* in pis fight.
The Tigres deth / so derë they aboughte,
So mortal the* Thebans* on hem wrouthe
That al the host, in the feld liggyng,

was astounyd / of this sodelyn thyng:

With them are

And in this whil, of Rancour rekkes,

Eeteocles

Out of Thebës rood Ethiocles,

and King

And with hym ek / the worthy kyng Tremour,

Tremor.

Of his hond a noble werreour,

That madë Grekës to forsak her place,

and to her tenty / gan hem to encheace,

Many on both

And myd the feld / as pei to-gyder mette

sides are slain.

On hors-bak / with sperës sharpe* whette

Ful many on was led on outher syde.

Many on both

If The whichë* thyng / whan Tideus espieth*,

sides are slain.

wood as lyoun / to hors-bak he hietli,

[leaf 65, back]

As he that was neuer a del affere;

\* The manhood

But ran on hem / and met hem in the berd,

of Tydeus.

And Maugrë hem / in his cruelte,

Tideus drives

he made hem fleen / hom to her Cité,

the Thebans

hem pursuyng* of ful dedly hate,

back to their
city.

That many onl / lay slayen* at the gate,
Gapynge vprightys / with her woundys wyde;
That vttrely / they durste not abyde
To-for the swerd of this Tydeus,
he was on hem so passing furius,
So many theban / he roof vnsto the herte
That when Iocasta / the slaughtre gan aduerte,
Polymytos / she gan prey ful fayre
To maké Grekis / hom ageyn repayre,
And that they wolden stynyn to assaylle
For thilké* day / and cessen her bataylle.
At whoos requeste / pleynly and preyere,
And at Reuerence / of his moder dere,
Polymytos, her herte to conforte,
Grekés madé / hom ageyn resorte.
And Tydeus to stynten of his chas.
And they of Thebés hasting a grete pas,
Ful triste and hevy / ben entred into toun.
And for the Tygrce, in conclusion,
As 3e han herd / first began this stryff,
That many theban / that day lost his lyff
And recurlees / hath sonden vp the bretfì,
In thavengynge / of the tygres deñtì.
And al this while / ducly as she ought,
be quene Iocasta / humblye besoughts

3910. slaien Ad1. slayn Ar. and all the rest. at the Ar. atte Bo. Ad1. at M.
wil M. wolden stynyn] stynten wolde Ad2. I. 3920. jilke Bo. Ad1. thilk Ar.
M. that S. P. day] tyme Lb. P. E2. cessen M. Ad1. cessen Bo. cessen E2.
I. he Ad1. made hom] made he hom Lb. P. resorte] to resorte G. M. Ad2. I.
I. vnto the toun S. in-to pe toun Bo. and the rest.

THEDES.
Jocasta returns to Thebes.

Kyng Adrastus / only of his grace,
Some menë way / wisly to purchase

To make peace / atwene the bretheren tweyn,
And the trete / so prudently ordeyne,
On hver party / that no blood be shad.

And this Adrastus / avise and riȝt sad,
For Grekis party / answer gaf anoūn

That other endë / shortly gete* she noūn,
Ich as the lordis / fully ben avisyd,
Than Tydeus hath aforne devisyd.

† And when she saugh it may non oūer be,
She lievē tok / and hom to the Cytē
She is repêred /, hauyng to hyr Guyde
Polymytēs Rydyng* be her syde.

And Tydeus ladde Antigonē,
And of Archadye / prothonolopē,
The worthy kyng, did his byssy Payne
To ben attendaunt / vpon fair ymeye,
Whos hert she hath / to her servisi luryd :
And he ageyn hath purtraiđ and fygyrd
Myd of his brest /, which lightly may not passe,
Hooly the feturis / of her fresshly face.

Hym thought she was so faire a creature ;
And though that he durst hym not discurse,
3it in his hert / as ferforth as he kan,

He hath avowed / to ben) her trwē man,
vnwis to hir / pleyly and vnknowe

How he was markèd with Cupidès bowe,
with his Arwè / sodeynly werreyed.
And to the 3atö / the ladies conueyed
Ben entred In / for it drow* to eve,
Grekys of hem taking thò her leve;
Thogh some of hem wer sory to departe,
3it of wisdam / they durste not iuparte
Vnder a conduit / to entren into town,
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 wilfulnessë / nor of no folye,
Ne wold as tho put in Iupartie
Nowther hym-siff / nor noñ of his ferys.
And the ladies / with her heyunly cherys,
Anglik / of look / and contenance,
Lich as it is / put in remembrance,
At her entryng from Grekes into town,
Polymytës / of gret affeccioun,
The quen bysouhte / thilkë* nyght not fyne
For tasseyë jif she myght enlyne
Ethiocles, of conscience and ryght,

Jocasta in vain urges Eteocles to keep Faith. [PT. III.

To kepē couenaunt/ as he hath behight;
Ful 3ore agon / with the surplesage,
List' the contrarie* / tourné to damage,
First' of hym-silf / and many an oper mo.

And thus fro Thebês / grekys ben ago
To her Tentys / and rest' hem al that nyght.
And Lucyna / the monē,shon ful bright'
with-Inné Thebês / on the chief dongoun,
whan Jocasta made relacioun

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

She advises him
to keep it.

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

But he is
But' al hir counsayl / he set' it at no prys,
he dempt' hym-silf / so prudent' and so wys ;
For he was wilful / and he was indurat',
And in his hert / of malyce obstynat',
resolv'd not to.

And outtrelly / avisēd in his ņouht',
with-Inné Thebes / his brother get right' nouht'.

And in his Error / pus I lete* him* dwelle.
And of Grekis / forth I wil 3ou telle,
which al that* nyghtt kepte hem-silue cloos.
And on the morow / whan Tytan vp aros,
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 / zif they yssen oute.

\[ And Adrastus / in ful thrifty wise, 
In the feld? / his wardys / gan devise, 4020
As he that was / of aH deceytès war.
And richëly I-armyd* / in his char
Amphiorax cam with his meynè,
Ful renomyd of antiquitè,
And wel expert? / be-causë he was old.
And whil that Grekys, as I haue 3ou told,
er bysiest her wardys to ordeyne,
Myd of the feld / bifyl a cas sodeyne, 4028
Ful vnhappy / lothsom, and odyble ;
For liche a thing? / pat? wer invisible,
This oldë* bishop / with char and hors cernet
Disaperyd / and no mor was seyne.
Only of fate / which no man can repelle,
pe erthi opnede / and he fille doun* to helle,
with aH his folk / pat vpon hym abood.
And sodeynly / the grounde on which he stood
Closyd ageyn / and to-gydre shette,

The Devil paid him his wages,  
And thus the devil / for his old outrages,  
licher his deceit, paiéd hym his wages.  
For he ful lowe / is descendid doun  
Into the dirk and blaké* Regyoun  
wher that* Pluto* / is crownyd and ystallyd  
with his quene / proserpina I-callyd.  
with whom this bisshop / ha⁠p made his* mansioun  
Perpetuely / as for his guerdoun.

for his idolatry,  
If lo here the mede / of ydolatrie,  
Of Rytys old / and of* fals mawmetyre.  
lo* what* auayllen Incantaciouns  
Of exorsismës / and coniurisouns ;  
what* stood hym stede his Nigromaneye,  
Calculioun / or astronomye ;  
what* vaylléed hym / the heuenly manciouns,  
Diuerse aspectis / or constellaciouns ?  
The ende / is nat* / bot* sorowe and meschaunce,  
Of hem þat setten / her outre affiaunce  
In swiché* werkës superstitious,  
Or trist* on hem / : he is vngrazious.

Record I také, shortly forto telle,  
Of this bysshop / sonken doun to helle,  
whos wooful ende / about* in every cost*  
Swich a Rumour / hath maked in the host*

PT. III.]  The Greeks all fear that they may go to Hell too.  167

That's the noys / of this vnkouth thyng:  4064
Is yronne / and comē to the kyng,
how this vengeaunce / is vnwarly falle.
And he anōn / made a trumpet calle
Alle his puple / out of the felds ageyn;  4068
And euerychon* assembled on a pleyn
To-fore the kyng: / and also rounde aboute.
Euery man / of his lyf in doute,
Ful pitously / gan to frowne and loure,
līst that the grounde hem alle wil deuoure 4072
And Swalowen hem / in his dirkē* kave;
And they ne can / no recur hem to save.
For notther force / nor manhode may availle
In swiche meschief / the valewe of a maylle.
For he that was wisest / and koude most
To serche and seki / thorsch-out al the host,' 4076
Amphiorax / whan that he lest wende,
To helle is sonken / and coude hym not diffende,
(To hym the tyme vnkownen and vnwist)
In whom whilom was al þe Grekis trist,
hir hoolē* confort / and her affiaunce.
  But aH attonys / for this sodenchaunce
And this meschief / they gan hem to dispeire,  4084

Hom to Grecē / that they will repayre.
This was the purpoos / of hem enunicōn.

And on the wallys / of Thebēs lay her fōn,
Reioysing hem / of this unhappye eure,
wényng therby / gretly to recure.
And on her tourēs* / as they locken oute,
They on Grekys / enviously gan shoute,

And, of despit* / and gret enmytē,
Bad hem foolys / gon hom to her contrē,
Sith they han lost* / her confort* and socour*,
her false* prophete / and her dyvynour:
wherthorgh / her partie / gretly is aperyd.
And in this wisē / Grekys disespeyrd,

Dempē pleynly / be tokens evidente,
This cas was falle / by som enchaunteiment,

By wichēcraft* / or by* fals sorcerye,
Ageynēs* which may be no remedye,
Tristy diffēncé / helpē*, nor socour.

And when Adrastus herde* this clamour,
he bysī was ageyn this perturbauence
To provyde / some maner chevysaunce.

And to hym calleth / such counsayl as he wiste,
For lyf or deth / that he myghte tryste,

Requeryng* hem / but* in wordlys fewe,

In this meschief / heri mocion to shewe,

Lb. M. Ra. vre L_{1}. Ad_{2}. P. E_{2}. vr L_{2}. cure Ba. owre S. 4090. wényng]
Sownyng E_{2}. gretly] om. Ad_{2}. recure] to haue recure M. Di. 4091. toures
M. Di. C. shoute] to shoute Ad_{1}. Ad_{2}. Ra. Ba. C. E_{2}. L_{2}. 4093. despit and
gret] gret dispit and Ad_{1}. Ad_{2}. Ba. S. gret dispit and of Ra. enmyte Ar. Ad_{1}.
enmyte Bo. enmyte M. envite L_{1}. L_{2}. 4094 to 4158 lost in Ad_{2}. 4095.
T_{1}. L_{1}. M. Di. Ra. E_{1}. S. 4096. fals Ar. Bo. M. Ad_{1}. 4098. Grekys] the Grekes
Du. E_{2}. disespeyrd] dispeired Ad_{1}. S. E_{2}. 4099. tokens Bo. M. toknes Ad_{1}.
1411. wichecraft M. Ad_{1}. wichecraft Ar. wyche-craffe Bo. or] and E_{2} by] om.
wichcraft is wh, underdotted. 4102. Ageyns Ar. Bo. M. Ad_{1}. may be] be may
Ba. 4103. helpe Bo. help Ar. M. Ad_{1}. 4104. herde Bo. Ad_{1}. herd Ar. M.
4105. this] the Ad_{1}. 4106. chevysaunce Ad_{1}. chevissheaiune Bo. 4107. such
coumsayl] om. C. he] om. Lb. P. him Ad_{1}. wiste] list Ad_{1}. 4108. mygyst
Bo. M. Ad_{1}. 4109. but in] bouten Bo.
And declare by good avisement,
What to Grekys / was most expedient,
To remedyen / and maken* no delay,
The vncouth noyse / and the grete affray
That Grekys made / with clamour inportune,
And newe / and newe / euere in on contune.

They say it would be cowardice to give up their enterprise:

They say it would be cowardice to give up their enterprise:

And outre hyndryng / vnto grekys name;
And better it wer / to euery werreyour
Manly to deye / 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 renominéd,
3if now of newe / the shyning of her Fame
Eclipsid were / with eny spotte of blame,
It were a thynge vncouth forto here,

The Greeks resolve to fight till Thebes is laid low.  [PT. III.

Of whom renown / the bemis 3it ben clere
Thorgh al the world / wher as they han passyed,
And ben not 3it / dyrkyd nor diffacyd,
By no report / nouthen on se ne londe
thyng to forsakethat they tok on honde.
"And by example / of our progenitours,

as conquerors,
dat wholm worn / so manly conquerours,

To-forn that we into Grece wende,
Of thyngs bygon / lat vs make an ende,
And parte nat / nor Seuere from this toun

Til it be brouht to destruciuon,

wallys / tourrės / Crestyd and batailled
And for werré strongly apparraylled,
Be first doune bethe / that no thyngs be seyn,

But al to-gyder / with the erthi* pleyn
Be lowi* leyde / or that we resorte:
That afterward / men may of vs reporte,
That we bygan / we knyghtly han achieuyd
Vpon our foon /, with worship vnrepreuyd."

This was the counsaylle / shortly, and thavis

To this, all the Greeks agree.

Of the Grekys that manly worn and wys,
That neuere aforon wer markyd with no blame,
And specialy / swich as dred* Shame,
And fully caste / what fortune ever tyde,
On her purpoos / to the ende abyde,
That on no part / her honoure not apalle.

And to this counsail / Grekys, on _and_ alle, 4160

Ben condescendyd / and, for mor happy sped,
In sted of hym / that was so late ded,
Amphiorax / buryed / depe in helle,
That koude whilom / to the Grekys tello 4164

Of thyngges hid / how it shal falle, aforн :
In sted of whom / now they han hym lorн,
They casten hem / wisly to purchase
Some prudent man / to occupye his place,
That is in swich thyng / myght hem most availle
Thorgh mystery of his dyvynaylle,
By craft of sorte / or of profecye,
3if eny swich they couden out espye.

And amonge al /, her purpoos to atteyne,
As I fyndë / they han chosyn tweyne,
Most renomed / of hem euerychon.
And Menolippus / callyd was the toñ,
And Terdimus / ek the tother highte.
And for he hadde most favoure in her sighte,
This Terdimus / was chosen and preferryd.
And in* her chosys / Grekys han not erryd ; 4180

For whilom he / lernyd / his emprse
Of his maister / Amphiorax the wyse,
And was discipile / vndyr his doctorne.
And of ententy / that he shal termyne
Vnto Grekys / thynges that shal falle,
*As a bisschop mytred in his stalle,

1 How Grekes chosen hem / a new dyvynour in stede of Am-
phiorax.

[leaf 70]

Of the two candidates proposed, Melanippus and
Terdymus, the latter, who was
Amphiorax's pupil, is chosen
by the Greeks
in his place.

Terdimus is
made a Bishop.

---

happy sped] after _beste redde E2_  4164. koude whilom to the Grekys] whilom
to Grekes coude Ad1, Ad2. I.  4165. shal falle aforн] sholde be beforн Ad2. I.
one Du_.  4177. Terdynysm Ar. Bo. M. Ad1, Therdyamus G. Tredimus Lb. C.
P. E2, Terdinus Ad1, Tardynyus E2, _pat othre Bo. M. Ad1,  4179. was
chosen] chose was Ad1, Ad2. I. chosen was Ra. Ba.  4180. in] _om. Ar. G. E2,
4184. termyne] determyne P.  4184. _om. in G.  4186. As Lb. C. P. E2,
And as Ar. Bo. and _all the rest._ a] _om. E1, S._ mytred M. Ad1. mytred Bo.
They* don for him* / in many vncouth wyse
In the temple / to goddys sacrifise;
And thus confirmed* / and stallyd in his Se,
A fewe dayës / stood / in his degre,
After his mayster / with ful gret honour,
Of Grekys chosë / to be successour.

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

And Tydeus among hem of the tou
Fro day to day / pleyeth pe lyoun
So cruelly, wher so that* he rood,
That Theban noû / afor his face abood.
He made of hem, thurgh his high renoun,
So gret slaughter / and occasioun*
That* as the deth / fro his swerd they fledde,
And who can nexte / leid his lyf to wedde.
He qwitte hym-sylf / so lik a manly knygght,
That* wher he went / he putte hem to the flight,
And maugré hem, in his cruelë
He droff hem hom / into her Citë,
hem purswyng* / proudly to the gate:

That\(t\) vnto hym / they bar so dedly hate.
That\(t\) they hem caste / by sleyht\(t\) or sone engy\(n\),
To bryngyn hym / vnwarly to hys fy\(n\);
And leyde away\(t\) / for hym day and nyght.
But\(t\) 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\(t\) to the town,
That\(t\) caus\(e\) was of his destruccioun.
For on, allas! / that\(t\) on the wallys stood,
which al that\(t\) day / vpon hym aboord,
With a quarel / sharpe heded for his sake.
Markede hym with a bowe of brake,
So cruelly, makynghe non arost\(t\).
Tyl it\(t\) was passyd both\(e\)* bak and brest.
Wherthorgh, allas! / ther was non oper red
Nor lech\(e\)-craft\(*\). / but\(*\) that\(t\) he mot\(t\) be ded,
Ther may therof be mak\(\ddot{e}\)d non delayes.
And \(3i\)t was he / holdyn / in his dayes.
The beste knyght\(t\) / and most manly man,
As myn Antour / wel reherc\(\ddot{e}\) kan.
But\(t\) for al that\(t\) was ther no dyffence.
Ageyn the strok / of dethys violence.
And Bochas writ\(t\) / er he was fully ded,
he was by Grekes / presentyd with \(\ddot{e}\) hed
Of hym that\(t\) gaf / his laste fatal wounde:
And he was callyd / lik as it is founde,
Menolippus /, I can non other telle.

4213. sleyht\(t\) sum sleight S. crafte L. or some\(r\) or by some Bo. T. or S. of L. P. 4214. bryngen Bo. M. bring Ad. vnwarly\(y\) warly Bo. Du. to]\(t\) vnto Ba. E. 4216. But]\(t\) That Ad. I.; the low point after O is in Ar. O]\(m\). Lb. Ad. I. P. 4222. that]\(t\) the M. Di. Ad. Ad. I. 4226. bothe Bo. Ad. M. both Ar. 4228. Nor] ne Ad. Ad. I. E. leche-craft Bo. M. lech-craft Ar. Ad. but that he L. Lb. Ra. Ba. P. L. but he C. T. that he Ar. G. Bo. Du. M. Di. E. S. E. that he ne T. Ad. Ad. I. mot] must Ba. Ba. S. P. 4229. made Ar. Lb. C. T. E. I. S. that he Ba. Du. L. M. Di. Ad. Ba. E. S. P. maad T. Ad. I. Ra. Ther may be mad ther-of Ad. Therof may be maade Ad. I. 4230. he]\(t\) om. T. \(3i\)t was he] yet he was Lb. P. E. 4231. best Bo. M. Ad. 4237. gaf] gaf hym L. was Lb. last Bo. M. lasto Ad. 4238. callyd] y-called Ad. S. is] was Bo. (in L. is written above was, which is crossed out).
But thilkë* day / Thebans wex so felle 4240
Vpon Greys / that vnder her Cytè
The manly kyngh Parthenolopè
Islayëin* was / euene afer the gatys;
And ther also, Armeyd bright'in platys,
The famous kyngh / callyd ypomedoun,
The samë day /, as mad is mencioun,
On hors-bak / manly as he faught,
At the briggë / euene vpon the draught,
Besette with pres / casually was drownyd.
And thus fortunë / hath on Greys frownyd
On evry 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 thilkë* day / I fynde / as 3e may sen,
whan Phebus / passyd was* merydyen 4256
And fro the south /, westward gan hym drawe,
his gyltre tressys / to bathen in the wawe,

¶ The Theban kyngh / felle Ethyocles,
Rote of vnreste / and causer of vnpes,
The slaughter of Greys / whan that he beheld, 4260
Armyd in steel / he kam out in-to feld,
Ful desirous / in that sodeyn hete
Polymytiës / at' good leyter to mete, 4264
Syngulerly / with hym to han ado.
For in this world / he hatede no man so;
he sat so nygh / emprented in his herte.

whoos coinyng out / his brother gan aduerte
Upon his stede / in the opposit,
And hadde ageynward / also gret delyt

To meten hym / 3if fortune assente.
Thenvious fyr / so her hertys brente
with haate Cankered / of vnkyndé blood.
And lik two Tygres / in her rägi wood,
with speerys sharpë / groundé for the nonys,

So as they ranne / and mettë both attonys,
Polymytës / thorgh platys, mayle, and sheeld
Roof hym thorgh-out / and smette hym in-to feldë.
But when he saufi / the stremys of his blood
Raylle about / in maner of a flood,

Al sodeynly / of compassiou,
From his coursere / he alighte down,
And brotherly, with a pitous face,
To sane his lyf / gan hym to vnbrace*,
And from his wounde / of newe affecioun,

Ful bysy was / to pull out* the trunchoun,

Eteocles kills his brother Polyneices. [PT. III.]

Of loue only / handlyng hym ryght softe.
But O / allas! whil he lay alofte,
Ful yrously / Ethioecles the felle,
Of al this sorowe / verrye sours and welle,
with a dagger / in al his peynys smerte,
his brother smoot vnwarly to the herte:
which al her lyf / haddé be so wrothe.
And thus the Thebans / were yslawe* bot bite
At the entré / euene aforn the toun.

But Grekys / tho / ben availed down
Out of the feldé / the worthy knyghtys alle.
And in Thebès / loud* / as eny shalle,
The Cry aroos / whan her kyng was ded.
And to the gaty's / armyd foot and hed,
Out of the toun / cam many proud Theban.
And some of hem / vpon the wallys ran
And gan to shoute / that pitch was to here.
And they with-out* / of her lyf in were,
with-oute confort* // or consolacioun,
Dispeyryd / ronne* hom to the toun
And Grekys folowen after at the bak,
That many on / that day / goth to wrak.

And as her foemen / proudly hem assaye
Ful many Grek*/ thorg platys and thorg mayle
was shetted thorg-out, pressyng at the wallys,
And betyn of / with grete roundë ballys,
That' her lay on / and another sonder.
And the noysë, hydouser* than thonder,
Of gonnë-shot and of* Arblastys ek,
So loude out-rounge / that' many worthy grek
Ther lost' his lyf /; they wern on hem so felle.

And at the gatys /, shortly forte telle,
As Grekys prees / to entren pe Cyte,
They of Thebës / in her Crueltë
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 verray wonder
how they foyne / with daggers and with swerlys,
Thorg the vyser / amynge* at the berdys,
Perceyng also / thorg the rownde Maylles,
Rent' out' peces / of ther avenytayles,
That nouht' availeth / the myghty Geseran,
and spear. Thorg brest / and nekkë / that the sperys Rañ.
h'er wepnys wern / so sharpe grounde and whet,
In ther armurë / that ther was no let. 4332
For ther laye on / troden vnder foote,
And 3onder* / on / percyd to the herte roote.
Her lith on ded / and ther another lame.
This was / the play / and the mortal game . 4336
Atwens* Thebans / and the Greqys proude,
That the swowys / and the cryës loud
Of hem that lay / and 3olden vp the goost,
was herd ful fer / aboute in many cost. 4340
\[And at the gentyl blood of greece and Thebes was destroyed on / o * / day.\]
How the hand of the Greek lords,
only Adrastus and Campanates live.
The cries of the dying are loud.
Islayën* was / al the blood Royal,
Both of the town / and of Greqys lond,
And aft the worthy knyghtys of her hond. 4344
And of lordys / 3if I shoal not fayne,
On Greqys syde / alvyë wer but twyne,
Kyn Adrastus / and Campanes.
That day to hem / was so vngracios.
And for Titan / westryd was so lowe
That no man myght vnnethys other knowe,
Tho of the town / shet her gatyse faste

Eteocles is buried, mourned by his Mother and Sisters. 179

with barrys rounde / makéd forto laste,

In which no wightë kervë may nor Hewe.

And Adrastus / with a grekys fewe

Repeyrëd is hom vnto his Tentë,

And al thatë nyghtë / he wastyd hath and spentë

For his vnhaappe / in sorowe compleynynge:

And they in Thebes / the nexte day swyngë

her devoyre did / and her bysy cure,

To ordeyne and make / a sepulture

For her kyngë / yslayën* in the feeld;

And offred vp his baner and his sheld,

His helme / his swerdë, and also his penoun,

Ther-Inne of goldë / I-betyn a dragoun,

high in the temple / that men myghte seeë.

And Iocasta / thatë infortunyde quene,

her souës deth / soore* gan compleyne;

And also ek / her zonge doghtres twyne,

Both ymeye / and Antigonee,

Cryden and wepte / thatë pytë was to se.

Butë to her sorowes / thatë was non refutë.

And thus the Cité / bar / and destitutë,

havyng no wightë to gouern hem ne* guye:

For ded and slayn / was al the Chyualrye,

And no wightë leftë almost in pe toun

To regne vpon* hem / by successioun.

But* for they saugh / and tokyn also hed,
with-outé pis / that* they hadde an hed
In the Cytè / þei may not* duré longe:
For though so be Comownerys be stronge
with multitude / and have no gouernaylle
Of an hed / ful lytyl may avaylle:

Therfor they han vnto her socour
ychosyn hem a newe gouernour,
An olde Tyraunt* / pat* callyd was Creon,
Ful acceptable / to hem euerychô,ns
And crownyd hym / with-outé mor lettyng,
To regne in Thebès / and to ben her kyang;
Al-thogh* he hadde no title by descent;
But by* fre choys* / made in parlement;
And ther to hym, lik as it is founde,
By her lygeaunce / of newë they wer bounde,
For to trewë / whyl the Cîte stood,
To hym only / with body and with good.
Thus they wer sworn / and suryd euerychôns;
And he ageynward / to saue hem from her fooân,
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:

Adrastus sends
From the Siege of Thebês the Cytè
A woundyd knyght hom to his contrè,
Thorgh al Grecë / pleynly to declare
Al þe slaughter and the evyl fare

Of worthy Greiks, ryght as it is fallè,
And how that he hath lost his lordys alle
At þe mor meschief / þan eny man can mouthi.

And whan þis thynge / was in grecc couth,
Fyrst to Argyve / and Deyphylee,
And to the ladies / ek in the contrè
And of provynces / aboute hem adjacented
They comë doune / al be on assent;
Worthy queenys / and with hem ek duchessys,
And other ek / that callyd were contessys,
And alle the ladies / and womynn of degre

Ben assembled / in Argë the Cytè,
lik as I rede / and alle in clothës Blake;
That to byhold / the sorrowe that they make,
It were a deth / to eny man alyve.

And þif I shulde* / by and by descriwe
Ther tendre wepyng and ther wooful sownys,
her complainyng / and lamentacions,
her ofte sownyng / with facys ded and pale,
Ther-Of I myghte a newe tale,

4401. in Siege the first e is written above the line, with the usual mark of
insertion Ar. 4402. to] into L. Ra. Ba. 4405. worthy] þe worthy Bo. T.1,
whan] whan that T.2 thynge] om. Ba. was in grece] in grece was Adj. Adj. I.
E.2, 4410. to] om. Ba. 4411. provynces in Ar. corrected from provinces.
4412. come M. Adj. cam Bo. al be on] by oonlie Ba. 4413. ek] om. L. Lb.
in the rubric Ar. has Grecë. 4419. a] om. Adj. I. eny] many Ba. alyve] on
Bo. sholde Adj. shold M. descriwe] bescrywe Bo. 4421. Ther. ther Ar.
Their. her Bo. Their. her Du. Ther. her M. Her. her Adj. sownys sowyns
and her lamentacions] om. E.1. Ro. 4423. ofte Bo. M. Adj. her oft].
Adj. sownes L. her ofte sowynyg] om. E.1. Ro., which W. MSS. thus make
one line out of the former half of 4422 and the latter half of 4423. facys her faces
T.1 face Lb. P. 4424. might Bo. M. Adj.
Almost a day / 3ow to occupye.

And as myn Autour / doth clerly certifie,

Thurgh-ouët Greece / from all the Rigions

Out of Cities / and of Royal touns

Cam alle the ladies / and wymmen of estat,

Ful hevy-cheryd / and disconsolat,

To this assemble /, aforn as I sou tolde,

In purpoos fully / her Iourné forto holde

Toward Thebes / thy sorwful creaturys,

Ther to bywaylle / her wooful auenturys,

Taquyte hem-silf / of trouth in wommanhede

To her lordys / which in the feld lay dede.

And as the story / liketh to declare,

Al this Iourné / they went on foote bare,

lik as they haddë / gon on pylgrymage,

In tokyyn of mowrnyng / barbyd pe visage,

Wympled echoñ / and in burnet weedys.

Nat in charys / drawën forth with stedys,

Nor on palfreys blakë nowther white,

The Sely wymmen koude hem not delite

To hold her way / but barfote forth they wente,

So feithfully / euerychon they ment,

Thorgh heynynes* / diffacyd of her hwe.

And as I fyndë, they weryn alle trwe.

¶ Now was not* pat / a wonder forto se


4438. Iourné] meyne S. on foote Bo. T 2. Ra. T 2. Lñ. on foot M. Ad. 1. on fete Lb. they went on foote bare] the women went foot bare Ad. 2. I (wenyen).

So many trewe / out of a cuntrê, 4452
Attonys gadryd / in a companye,
And feithfull alle, / bookys can not lye,
Both in her port / and inward in menyng?
Vnto my doom / it was an vncoouth thyng,
Among a thousand wymen outhere twyne
To fynden noon / that kowde in hertë fayne.
It was a mervayllye / nat ofte seyn aforini.
For seele / in feldys / groweth eny corû
But zif some wede / spryng vp ertyng.
Men allaye* wynys / whan they be to strong;
But her trouth was meynte wip non allayes,
They were so trewe / founde at alle assayes.

And they ne stynþ / upon her iourné
Tyl that they cam þer as* they wolde be,
wher Adrastus / wrytnyn as I fynde,
lay in his Tent / al of colour ynde ;
Gretly mervaylyd* / whan that he biheld
The nombre of hem / sprad thorgh al þe fekk,
Clad aþt in blak / and barfoot everychoñ.
Out* of his Tent* / he dressyd hym anoi,
Vpon his hand / the kyng Campaneus* ;
Ful trist in herte / and faco right pitous,

The Greek Ladies mourn. Their Husbands' corpses can't be buried.

[leaf 75] Ageyn the wommen / forth they went yfere.

And to byhold / the wooful hevy chere,

They sigh and swoon
The wooful cryës / also, when they mette,
The sorful sighys / in her brestys shette,

The teerys newe / distillyng on her facys,
And the swownyng / in many sondry placys,

when they see their dead lords,
lay stark vpriztës*, pleyly to endite,
with dedly eyen / tournyd vp the white,
who madë sorowe / or felt her hertë Ryve

For hir lorde / but the faire Argyve?

who can now wepë / But Déphylee;
Tydeus / for she ne myghte se?

whoos constreyntys* were so fel and kene

That Adrastus myghte not sustene

To byholde the ladys so compleyne,

wissing* his herte / parted wer on tweyne.

And jët, alas! / bothen* eve and morowe,

O thyngë ther was / thatë doubled al her sorowe,

That Old Creon / fader of fellonye,

Ne woldë* suffre, thorgh his Tyrannye,

The dedë* bodies / be.buryed nowther brente,

The Greek Ladies wait till Theseus comes.

But, with beestis and houndys to be rente. he made hem aLL / vpon an hepe be leyde, whereof the wymmen trist and evyl apeyde, For verry dool, as it was no wonder, her hertys felt almost ryve a-sonder.

"And as my master Chaucer's list endite, Al clad in blak / with her wymples whyte, With grete honour / and duë* reuerence, In the temple / of the goddesse Clemence They abood the space / of fourtenyght" Tyl Theseus / the noble worthy kyght, Duk of Athenys / with his Chyvalrye Repyrëd hom / out of Femynye, And with hym ladde / ful feir vpon to sene, Thorh his manhod / ypolita the queene, And her suster / callyd Emelye.

and whan thises wommen / gonnë first espype

This worthy Duk / as he cam rydynge, Kyng Adrastus /, hem alle conveyinge, The wommen brouht vnto his presence, which hym bysought / to zive hem audience. And aLL attonys swownyng in the place, Ful humblye / preiden* hym of grace To rewe on hem / her harmys to redresse.

But, jif ze list / to se the gentyllesse Of Theseus / how he hath hym born,

Theseus kills Creon and routs his Army. [PT. III.

3if 3e remembre / 3e han herde it to forñ
wel rerersyd / at Depforth in the vale,
In the bygyynnynge of the knyghtys tale:

First how that he / when he herd hem speke,
For verray routhe* felt his hertë / breke;
And her sorowys / when he gan aduerte,
From his courser / dowm anoñ he sterte,
Hem confortyng in ful good entente,
And in his Armys he hem aH vp hente.
The knyghtys tale / reheerseth euer y del
Fro poyn‡ to poyn‡ / 3if 3e lookout* wel,
And how this Duk / with-oute more aboord,
The same day / toward Thebes rood,
Ful lik in soth / a worthy conquerour,
And in his hoost / of Chyualrye the flour.
And lawlyly, to spekyn of thys thing,
with old Creon / that was of Thebes kyng,
how that he fought / and slough hym like a knyght,
And aH his host / putte vnto the flyght.

3it, as some auctours makë mencionu,
Or Theseus entred into touz,
The women first with pikkeys and with mallys,
with gre† labour / betë dowm the wallys.
And in her writyng also as they sayn,
Campaneus / was on the wallys slayñ,
with cast of ston / he was so ouerlade;
For whom Adrastus / such a sorowe made
That no man myght reles hym of his peyne.
And Iocasta / with her doghtres tweyne,

Ful woofullly oppressyd of her cherys, 4552
To Athenës wer sent as prysonerys.
What fil of hem more / can I not seyn.

But Theseus /, myn Autour writ certeyn,
Out of the feld / or he fro Thebës wente,
He bete it downe / and the howsys brente,
The puple slough / for al her cryng loude,
Maad her wallys / and her towrys proude
Rounde aboute / euene vpon a rowe,
with the Soyle / to be laide* ful lowe 4560
That noust was left / but the soyle al bare.
And to the wommen / in reles 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 oldö* 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 Asshes brent,
Nor of the gommës / in the flaumbë spent,
To make the ayre* / swetter of reles,
As fraunc encence / Mirre and Aloës ;
Nor how the wommen / round aboutë stood,
Somë with mylk / and some also with blood,
And some of hem with vnës made of gold,
whan the ashes fully weren made cold,
Tenclosyn hem of greht affeccion
And bern hem hom / into her Regioni ;

And how that other / full deditly of her loke,
For loue only / of the bonys tooke,
Hem to kepē / for a remembrance:
That to rehere / euery observaunce
That was don / in the fyres brighte,
The wakū-playēs / duryng al the nyght,
Nor of the wrastryng / to telle poynť be poynť,
Of hem that weren * / nakyd and enoynť,
how eueriche other luggū gan and shake;
Nor how the wommen han her levē take
Of Theseus / with ful gret humblesse,
Thankyng' hym of his worthynesse
That hym lyst vpon her woo to rewe;
And how that he, his fredam to renewe,
with the wommen, of his hegh largesse,
ypartyd hath / ek of his Richesse;
乏力 And how this Duk Thebēs ek forsoke
And to Athenys / the righte wayē * tooke,
with laurer crownyd / in signe of victorye,
And the palme of conquest and of glorye,
Did his honur / duely to martę;
And how the wymmen weptę when they departę *
with kyng Adrastus / hom ageyn to Arge:
To tellyn al, it * wer to gret a charge,
乏力 And ek also, as 3e shall vnderstande,
At the gynnyng I took no mor on honde
Be my promys, in conclusion,
But to rehere the destruccion

Of myghty Thebês / shortly, and no more.
And thus Adrastus, with his lokkys hore,
Stille abood in Argê his Cytê
Vnto his ende /: ze gete no more of me,
Sauf, as myn auctour / liketh to compyle,
After that he lyuëd but a while;
For he was old er the siegé gan,
And thoughtt and sorowe so vpon hym ran;
The which in soth shortyd hath his dayes.
And, tymë sette, deth makeþ no delays,
And al his Ioyé / passid was and gon,
For of his lordys / alvyé was not on
But slayn at Thebes /, ze knowën al the cas.
and whan this kyng / in Argé buryed was
Ful Ryaly / with gretsolempnytê,
It was aconntyd /, in bookys ze may Se,
† Four hundred zeer /, as mad is mencioun,
To-foor the beelding / and fundacioon
Of gret Rome / so Ryal and so large,
whan the ladies / departyden* from Arge
To her contrês / ful trest / and desolatê.
lo: her the fyn / of contek and debatê.
Lo: her the myght of Mars the froward sterre.
Lo: whatt it is: for-to gynne a werre.
† How it concludeth / ensample ze may se
Firstt of Grekys / and nextt of the Cytê:

For owther parte / hath materre to compleyn.
And in her strif / 3c may se thynge twayne :

And Thebes ek /, of Amphion first bylt,
With-out Recur / brouht vnto Ruyne
And with the soyle made pleyn as a lyn,
To wyldernesse 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 vnto owther syde.

In war,
high and low, both suffer.

Bellona is goddesse of bataill.

Both sides are damaged by war.

But for synne folkis to chastyse.
And as the byble / trewly kan devyse,
Hegh in heuenel / of Pryde and Surquedye,
Lucyfer, fader of Envie,
The olde Serpent✓/ he levyathan,
Was the first✓/ that✓ euer werre gan:
Whan Michael / the heuenely Champioun,
with his Feerys / venquishedyd the Dragonu,
And to helli✓/ cast hym downe ful lowe.
The whiche serpent✓ hath the Cokkyel sowe
Thorgh al erth / of envye and debat;
That✓ vnnethehs / is ther noen estat✓,
with-out† stryfy / can lyve in Charité.
For euer man / of hegh and lough degré,
Envyth now / that† other shulde thryve.

And grounde and cause✓/ why that men so stryve,
Is coveytise / and fals Ambicion;
That† euerich wold han domynacioun
Ouer other, and trede hym vndyr foote:
which of al sorowe / gyannya is and Roote.
And Crist† recordyth /— red luk ✓and 30 may se—
For lak of love / what† meschief per shal be.
For O. puple / as he doth devyse,
Agayn anoper / of hatē shall aryse.
And after tellith what† dyvisions

Ther shall be / atwixë* regyouns
Eueriche bysy / other to oppresse.

Strife starts
And al swich strat /, as he bereth wytynesse,
Kalendys ben /, I take his word to borowe,
sorrow.
And a gymnynge / of meschief and of sorowe:
Men haue it' foundë / be experience.

But War
But the venym / and the violence
Of strif, of werre / of contek, and debat,
That makep londys bare and desolat,
shall cease;
Shal be proscript and voyded out of place,
And Martys swerret / shal no more manacie,
Nor his sperë* / greuous to sustene,
Shal now no morë* / whettyd* be so kene,
Nor he no morë* / shal his hauberk shake.

Love shall
But love and pees / in hertys shal awake,
And charitë /, both in length and brede,
spread.
Of newë shal her bryghte beemys sprede
Thorugh grace / only ' in dyuers naciouns,
Foro reforme / a-twixë* Regyouns
Pees and quyet' / concord and vnytë.

Christ, who is God
And he that is / both on / and two / and thre,
Ek thre in on / and souereyn lord of pes,
Which in this exil / for our sakë ches,
For love only / our troubles to termyme,

and man,
For to be born / of a pur virgyne:

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

4684. be] om. L.4. atwix Ar. Ra. a-twene Bo. M. Ad, betwyxt L2., betwene Lb. 4686. berth Ar. bereth Bo. berith M. Ad, 4687. ben]
Let us pray Christ to give us Peace here, and Heaven hereafter. 193

Which for mankynde shadde his hertë blood,
Thorgh byseching1 / of that heuenly quene,
Wyff and moder and a Maydë clene,
To sende vs pes / her in this lyf present1;
And of our synnys / parfit amendement1;
And Ioye eternal / whan we hennës* wende.
Of my talë / thus I make an ende. Explicit. 4716

Here endeth the destruccioun of Thebes.

4710. Which Ar. G. L1, Ra. L2, Ro. งat Bo. and the rest. mankynd1
Ar. L2, mankend G. mankinde M. Ad1, and the rest, except man-kyn Bo.
T1, shadde Ar. shad Bo. M. Ad1, shed E1, S. Ro. herte T1, hert Bo. M.
Ad1, precious S. 4711. byseching1 पे besechyng Bo. L1, Lb. Di. P. that] the
Mayde Ar. Bo. T1, Ra. E1, L2, Ro. mayden G. L1, and the rest. 4714. amendement Ar.
4715. hennes Bo. Ad1, hennys L2, hens Ar. M. 4716. Of] And of Lb. Ad1,
I. C. T2, P. E9, G (the whole line supplied by a late hand, see Introduction). M.
and T2. add Deo gracias.

THEBES.
dispersio
P. 16 - ling
21 - quaint
P. 26 - medievalization
P. 72 - ascription to the scientists, especially in the context of (for example).
R. Poly character consistent...
PR
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no. 46

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