LYDGATE'S PROLOGUE TO THE STORY OF THEBES.

The Story or Siege of Thebes, a poem of about 4700 lines in five-beat couplets, was written by Lydgate as a supplementary Canterbury tale. In the prologue which he prefixes to it he conceives himself as arriving at the Canterbury inn the night before the pilgrims set out on their return journey, as joining the party, and telling this tale at the Host's command as soon as the riders are outside town the next morning. The material of the story is part of that which Chaucer passed by at the opening of the Knight's Tale, when taking his narrative from Boccaccio. Lydgate begins with the building of Thebes, continues through the history of Oedipus (Part I of the tale), the struggle of his sons (Part II), the siege of the city by the Greeks, the election of Creon, the slaughter of the Greeks, and the expedition of Theseus at the prayer of the Greek widows (Part III). In this last, the vengeance of Theseus upon Creon who denied the fallen Greeks burial, Lydgate reaches the material used by Chaucer; his words are: —

..... old Creon fader of fellony
Ne would suffer through his tyranny
The dead bodies be buried neither brent
But with beasts and houndes to be rent
He made hem all vpon an heape be laid
Wherof the women thirst and euill apaid
For very dole as it was no wonder
Her hertes felt almost riue asunder
And as my master Chaucer list to endite
All clad in blacke with her wimples white

With great honour and due reuerence
 In the Temple of the goddessse Clemence
 They bode the space of a fourthnight
 Till Theseus the noble worthy knight
 Duke of Athenes with his cheualrie
 Repeired home out of Feminie

— and so on as Chaucer has described the supplication of the women, in lines 40—93 of the Knight's Tale; or as Lydgate puts it: —

If ye remember as ye haue heard to forne
 Well rehearsed at Depford in the vale
 In the beginning of the knightes tale.

The imitation of Chaucer by the monk is quite as assiduous, and even more painful, in his prologue. Ten Brink said of it that Lydgate here appeared almost as Chaucer's ape; a dictum which is disputed by Churton Collins, who in a warm defence of Lydgate¹⁾ declares that this prologue is as vivid a picture of contemporary life as is Chaucer's. He praises also Lydgate's humor, here and elsewhere; but when critics select line 76 of this prologue, "My man toforne with a voide male", as an example of the monk's satirical perception, the borrowing of the idea from Chaucer, Canon's Yeoman's headlink lines 13/14, should be noted. Indeed, it were an exercise for the student of Chaucer to trace this prologue, phrase by phrase and idea by idea, to its sources in the *Canterbury Tales*.

The tale of Thebes itself, however, is derived neither from Chaucer nor from the original of Chaucer's Knight's Tale, the *Teseide* of Boccaccio. According to Koeppl²⁾ and to ten Brink, Lydgate's source was one of the French prose narratives based upon the rimed French *Roman de Thèbes*. There is no trace of the monk's having undertaken the work on commission; rather does it seem a labor of love, qualified as such labors usually are by the poet's satisfaction in thus linking his name with that of his master.

Yet it does not appear in many manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales*. I have noted only two in which it follows

¹⁾ *Ephemera Critica*, 1901, page 199.

²⁾ *Lydgate's Story of Thebes: eine Quellenuntersuchung*. Munich 1884.

Chaucer's work, Addit. 5140 and Egerton 2864, both of the British Museum. Other copies known to me are Brit. Mus. Arundel 119, Addit. 18632 (formerly the Denbigh MS.), and Royal 18 D ii; five copies are in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, Bodley 776, Laud 416, Laud 557, Digby 230, and Rawlinson C 48; two are at Trinity College Cambridge, O 5, 2 and R 4, 20; one is at Lambeth Palace and one is owned by Lord Bath (Longleat 557); and four which I have not seen are in the library of Durham Cathedral and in the Pepys, Mostyn, and Gurney collections. According to Ward, *Catalogue of Romances* I: 91, there is a copy in Brit. Mus. Cotton Appendix xxvii; a poem entitled the *Siege of Thebes* is listed by Wanley-Bernard among the contents of a manuscript once in the library of the King Henry VIII School at Coventry, but now lost; a volume said to contain the poem was sold by Sotheby from the Tixall library in 1899, see *Herrig's Archiv* 104: 361; and in 1463 John Baret of Bury bequeathed to "sere John Cleye my cosyn and preest with my maister Prisote" his "boke with the Sege of Thebes in englysh". Garnett and Gosse, in vol. I of their *English Literature, an Illustrated Record*, mark their photograph facing p. 190 as from Lydgate's *Story of Thebes*; the page reproduced is however from Hoccleve's *Regement of Princes*, which is contained in the same volume, Addit. 18632.¹⁾

The *Story of Thebes* was printed by Caxton's successor de Worde, without date, but about 1500. The next print was in 1561, when John Stow (whose MS. copy of the poem exists in Brit. Mus. Addis. 29729) appended it to the edition of Chaucer's works generally known as his; and the editions of Chaucer by Speght in 1598, 1602, and 1687, as well as that by Urry in 1721, printed this poem along with other additions to the Chaucer-canon made by Stow; most of these, including the *Story of Thebes*, were reproduced in volume I of Chalmers' *English Poets*, 1810. An edition has long been announced by the Early English Text Society. From Stow's edition the text of the prologue was given by Wülker in his *Alteng-*

¹⁾ For other fragments of the poem, etc., see my *Chaucer: a Bibliographical Manual*, page 456. The two MSS. first named above are described *ibid.* pp. 178, 197.

lisches Lesebuch, Halle 1879, II: 105. The use of a corrupt sixteenth-century print led Professor Wülker into a few erroneous notes, mentioned below.

My text is from MS. Arundel 119, a volume dated by Ward, *Catalogue of Romances* I: 87, as about 1430. The volume contains only this poem, and bears the arms of William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, husband of Thomas Chaucer's daughter Alice. He became duke in 1415 and died in 1450. I print this with only such departures as are indicated; not having collated the entire poem in all copies, I have few suggestions to make regarding the text-relations of the Prologue. Conjecturally, however, it may be said that the Arundel and Royal on the one hand, the Egerton and the two Addit. MSS. on the other, represent somewhat differing types of source; the Rawlinson and Longleat usually accompany the Egerton group, while the remaining MSS. which I have seen run with the Arundel. For the sake of brevity in the footnotes, I term the Arundel and its allies A, the others B; thus in lines 44, 61, 63, 77, 141, 142, 165, slight group-divergences are pointed out.

Phebus in Ariete	Whan brigt Phebus passed was þe ram Myd of Aprille & in to bole cam	
Saturnus in Virgine	And Satourn old <i>with</i> his frosty face In virgyne taken had his place Malencolik & slowgh of mocioun	5
	And was also in thoposicioun Of Lucina the mone moyst and pale That many shour fro heuene made avale	
Jubiter in capito cancri	Whan Aurora was in þe morowe red And Iubiter in the Crabbes hed	10
	Hath take his paleys and his mansioun The lusty tyme and joly fressh sesoun Whan that fflora the noble myghty quene The soyl hath clad in newe tendre grene With her floures craftyly ymeynt	15
	Braunch & bough wiþ red & white dopeynt ffletinge þe bawme on hillis & on valys The tyme in soth whan Canterbury talys Complet and told at many sondry stage	

	Of estatys in the pilgrimage	20
	Euerich man lik to his degre	
	Some of desport somme of moralite	
	Some of knyghthode loue and gentillesse	
	And some also of parfit holynesse	
	And somme also in soth of ribaudye	25
The Cook the Millere and the reve	To make laughter in þe companye	
	Ech admitted for non wold other greve	
	Lich as the Cook þe millere and the reve	
	Aquytte hem silf shortly to conclude	
	Boystously in her teermes rude	30
	Whan þei hadde wel dronken of the bolle	
	And ek also with his pyllid nolle	
Pardoner	The pardonner beerdlees al his Chyn	
	Glasy Eyed and face of Cherubyn	
	Tellyng a tale to angre with the frere	35
	As opynly the storie kan ȝow lere	
	Word for word with euery circumstance	
	Echon ywrite and put in remembraunce	
Chaucer	By hym þat was ȝif I shal not feyne	
	ffloure of Poetes thorghout al Breteyne	40
	Which sothly hadde most of excellence	
	In rethorike and in eloquence	
	Rede his making who list the trouth fynde	
	Which neuer shall appallen in my mynde	
	But alwey fressh ben in my memoyre	45
	To who be ȝoue pris honnir & gloyre	
	Of wel seyinge first in oure language	
	Chief registrer of þis pilgrimage	
	Al þat was tolde forȝetyn noght at al	
	ffeyned talis nor þynȝ historial	50
	With many prouerbe diuers & vnkouth	
	Be rehersaile of his sugrid mouth	
	Of eche thyng keping in substaunce	
	The sentence hool with oute variaunce	

43. Six MSS. read *trouthe*.

44. A-group MSS. read *Which*, B-group *That*. Cp. line 77.

46. The MSS. vary between *ȝoue* and *ioie*. In each group those furthest from the main stem read *ioie*.

	Voyding the Chaf sothly for to seyn	55
	Enlumynyng þe trewe piked greyn	
	Be crafty writinge of his sawes swete	
	ffro the tyme that thei ded mete	
	ffirst the pylgrimes sothly euerichon	
At þe tabard in Suthwerk	At the Tabbard assembled on be on	60
	And fro Suthwerk shortly forto seye	
	To Canterbury ridyng on her weie	
	Tellyng a tale as I reherce can	
The hoste	Lich as the hoste assigned euery man	65
	None so hardy his biddyng disobeye	
	And this whil 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 entren into toun	70
	The holy seynt pleyntly to visite	
	Aftere siknesse my vowes to aquyte	
Discryving of the Monk	In a Cope of blak & not of grene	
	On a palfrey slender long & lene	
	Wip rusty brydel mad nat for þe sale	75
	My man to forn with a voide male	
	Which of ffortune took myn Inne anon	
	Wher þe pylgrymes were logged euerichon	
	The same tyme her gouernour the host	
	Standing in hall ful of wynde & bost	80
	Lich to a man wonder sterne & fers	
The wordes of þe host to the Monk	Which spak to me and seide anon dan Pers	
	Dan Domynyk Dan Godfrey or Clement	
	Ȝe be welcom newly into Kent	
	Thogh ȝoure bridel haue neiþer boos ne belle	85
	Besechinge ȝou þat ȝe wil me telle	
	ffirst ȝoure name and of what contre	
	With oute mor shortely that ȝe be	

-
61. B-group MSS. read *sothly for to seye*; taken down from line 59?
63. Arundel miswrites *tale* as *take*. A-group MSS. read *as*, B-group
liche as. Taken up from 64? cp. lines 61, 141.
66. All other MSS. read *while*.
67. Arundel miswrites *logged* as *louged*.
77. A-group MSS. *Which*, B-group *That*. Cp. line 44.

	That loke so pale al deuoyde of blood	
	Vpon zoure hede a wonder thred bar hood	90
	Wel araied forto ride late	
Lydgate	I answerde my name was Lydgate	
Monk of Bery	Monk of Bery nyz fyfty zere of age	
	Come to this toune to do my pilgrimage	
	As I haue hight I ha ther of no shame	95
The wordes	Dan Iohn quod he wel broke ze zoure name	
of þe host	Thogh ze be soul beth right glad & light	
	Preiying zou soupe with vs to nyght	
	And ze shal han mad at zoure devis	
	A gret puddying or a rounde hagys	100
	A ffranchmole a tansey or a froyse	
	To ben a Monk sclender is zoure koyse	
	Ze han be seke I dar myn hede assure	
	Or late fed in a feynt pasture	
	Lift vp zoure hed be glad tak no sorowe	105
	And ze shal hom ride with vs to morowe	
	I seye whan ze rested han your fille	
	Aftere soper slepe wol do non ille	
	Wrape wel zoure hede with clothes rounde aboute	
	Strong notty ale wol mak zou to route	110
	Tak a pylow þat ze lye not lowe	
	Ȝif nede be spar not to blowe	
	To holde wynde be myn opynyoun	
	Wil engendre collis passioun	
	And make men to greuen on her roppys	115
	Whan þei han filled her mawes & her croppys	
	But toward nyght ete some fenel rede	
	Annys Comyn or coriandre sede	
	And lik as I pouer haue & myght	
	I charge zow rise not at mydnyght	120
	Thogh it so be the moone shyne cler	
	I wol my silf be zoure Orloger	
	To morow erly whan I se my tyme	

109. Arundel omits *with*.

110. Arundel omits *to*.

112. All MSS. but Arundel and Addit. 18632 read *spar*.

114. In each group, those MSS. furthest from the main stem read *It wil*.

	ffor we wol forþ parcel afore pryme	
	A company parde shal do zou good	125
	What look vp Monk for by kokkis blood	
	Thow shalt be mery who so pat sey nay	
	ffor to morowe anon as it is day	
	And that it gynne in þe Est to dawē	
	Thow shalt be bound to a newe lawe	130
	Att goyng oute of Canterbury toune	
	And leyn aside thy professioun	
	Thow shalt not chese nor pi silf withdrawe	
	Ȝif eny myrth be founde in thy mawe	
	Lik the custom of this companye	135
	ffor non so proude that dar me denye	
	Knyght nor knaue chanon prest ne nonne	
	To telle a tale pleyonly as thei konne	
	Whan I assigne and se tyme opportune	
	And for that we our purpoos wil contune	140
	We wil homward the same custome vse	
	And thow shalt not platly the excuse	
How our host	Be now wel war stody wel to nyght	
spak to Daun	But for al this be of herte lizt	
John	Thy wit shal be þe sharper & the bet	145
	And we anon were to soper set	
	And serued wel vnto oure plesaunce	
	And sone after be good gouernaunce	
	Vnto bed goth euery maner wight	
	And touarde morowe anon as it was light	150
	Euery pilgryme both bet & wors	
	As bad oure hoste toke anon his hors	
	Whan the sonne roos in the est ful clere	
	ffully in purpoos to come to dynere	
	Vnto Osspryng and breke þer oure faste	155
	And whan we weren from Canterbury paste	
	Noght the space of a bowe draught	
	Our hoost in hast hap my bridel raught	

 131. Arundel writes *Caterbury*.

 141. A-group MSS. *the same*, B-group *our*. From line 140? Cp. 61, 63.

 142. A-group MSS. *platly*, B-group *pleynly*. From line 138?

 151. In each group some MSS. read *bothe*.

 153. Arundel writes *clyere*.

And to me seide as it were in game
 Come forth dan Iohn be your Cristene name 160
 And lat vs make some manere myrth or play
 Shet youre portooos a twenty deuelway
 How our host Is no disport so to patere & seie
 bad Daun John telle a tale
 It wol make youre lippes wonder dreye
 Tel some tale and make ther of no Iape 165
 ffor be my rouny thow shalt not eskape
 But prech not of non holynesse
 Gynne some tale of myrth or of gladnesse
 And nodde not with thyn heuy bekke
 Tell vs somme thyng that drawep to effekke 170
 Only of Ioye make no lenger lette
 And whan I saugh it wolde be no bette
 I obeyde vnto his biddynge
 So as the lawe me bonde in al thinge
 And as I coude with a pale cheere 175
 My tale I gan anon as ze shal here
 Explicit prologus

1 ff. *Whan bright Phebus*, etc. The temporal clause describing the season of the year is a favorite mode of opening a poem with medieval writers. Cp. the lines of Nigel Wireker as printed by Wright, *Anglo-Latin Satirical Poets* I: 146.

Postquam tristis hiems Zephyro spirante recessit,
 Grando, nives, pluviae, consulere fugae,
 Terra, parens florum, vires rediviva resumpsit, etc.

Or the *Metamorphosis Goliae* as printed by Wright p. 21 of *Latin Poems attributed to Walter Mapes*.

Sole post arietem taurum subintrante
 Novo terrae faciem flore picturante, etc.

Such modes of beginning must have influenced Chaucer in his Prologue, which of course Lydgate is assiduously imitating here; and cp. Lydgate in the *Pedigree of Henry VI* printed

161. B-group and remoter A-MSS. omit *maner*.

165. B-group reads *a iape*, A-group *no iape*; Arundel omits *no*.

166. The B-group MSS., except Egerton and 5140, and the A-group, except Arundel, read *shalt hit not*.

by Wright in *Political Poems* (Rolls Series) II: 131. Chaucer described the sun as having finished his half-course in Aries the Ram; and Lydgate, wishing to indicate the somewhat later date of the pilgrims' return from Canterbury, says that the sun had passed on into Taurus the Bull, the next constellation of the Zodiac.

Observe the sentence structure of this opening in comparison with Chaucer's. Chaucer's first eighteen lines assure us of his easy command of complex phrasing; his *Than longen folk* in line 12 notifies the most current that the conclusion of *Whan that Aprille* in line 1, of *Whan Zephirus* in line 5, has appeared. Lydgate's endeavor to imitate this poise should be noted by the student, his beginnings and rebeginnings as the clauses follow on one another, and his final exhaustion in line 78 — or 91? — without attaining any principal verb.

His use of the participle as a finite verb, which is partly responsible for the confusion of this opening paragraph, is one of his most baffling and most characteristic ineptitudes. Thus in line 17 we must interpret *Fleting the bawme* as *When the balm was fleeting*; in line 35 Lydgate means that the pardoner was telling a tale; and in 49, 53, 55, 56 the participles describing Chaucer's work should be finite verbs. Even were they such, however, the construction of the paragraph as a whole would not be established; this idiosyncrasy of Lydgate's is an additional complication, not the sole cause of his incoherence. We do not find the trait in Hoccleve, Bokenam, or Burgh; and it may be remarked that the peculiarity is a much surer indication of Lydgate's style than is the use of certain set phrases which were general in the fifteenth century.

3. *Satourn olde with his frosty face.* See Sieper's note to *Reson and Sensualltye* line 1306.

8. *shour — made avale.* Saturn is in Virgo and is in opposition to the Moon; she is therefore in Pisces, directly opposite the sign Virgo. Pisces was, like Aquarius, a "watery" sign.

19. *Compleat and tolde.* Koeppel, in his monograph on the *Story of Thebes*, suggested the emendation *Compleat are tolde*, in order to give the sentence a verb.

33. *The Pardowner*. Lydgate here confuses Summoner and Pardoner, both in description and in conduct.

35. *to angre with the Frere*, to anger the Friar. This construction, instead of "to anger the Friar with" as we would say, is characteristic of earlier English. Chaucer in line 791 of the Prologue has "to shorte with our weye"; Gower, *Confessio Amantis* I: 2172 has "To tendre with the kinges herte"; Langland, *Piers Plowman* (B) VI: 297, has "And profred Peres this present to plesse with hunger"; Lydgate, *Bycorne and Chichevache* 91 has "to breke with my fast"; in *Dance Macabre* 86 we find "To wrappe in my body" instead of "to wrap my body in".

43. *making*, i. e. poetical composition. The same usage is found in Chaucer's *Troilus* V: 1789 and in *Piers Plowman* (B) XII: 16. Cp. also Lydgate's poem on Chaucer's line "This world nis but a thurghfare of woo", which the monk expands into 192 lines, ending with the statement that his theme and refrain were taken from

Hym that was in makyng souerayne
My maister *Chaucier* / chief poete of Bretayne
Whiche in his tragedyes made ful yore agoo
Declared triewly and list nat for to feyne
How this world is a thurgfare ful of woo.

The line is however not in the Monk's Tale, which Lydgate usually means by the word "tragedyes" as applied to Chaucer's works; it is the Knight's Tale 1989.

51. *many a prouerbe*. The Middle Ages set a high value upon proverbs, maxims, or "sentences". The bits e. g. of Cicero and Juvenal which appear and reappear in medieval writers and make up mediaval anthologies are never those of abstract beauty, but are always "auctoritees", scraps of moral wisdom or practical truth. When the second edition of Speght's Chaucer was issued in 1602, it announced on its titlepage, among other improvements, "Sentences and prouerbes noted". This noting is done by tiny pointing hands scattered along the margins of the text, sometimes but one on a page, sometimes (as in the highly moral story of Melibeus) ten or twelve on a page. The difference between the medieval view of literature and the post-Renaissance view is strikingly

illustrated by these notes. In Chaucer's Prologue, where we would mark the opening spring symphony, which as Lowell said still at the thousandth reading lifts the hair upon our foreheads with a breath of uncontaminated springtide; where we quote lines of character-description, — of the Knight's truth and honor, of the Prioress' smiling, of the Shipman with his tempest-shaken beard, of the Man of Law who "semed besier than he was", — the medieval reader made a very different selection. The first line of the Prologue which is marked in the 1602 edition is 443, "For gold in phisik is a cordial"; three lines in the description of the Parson are noted, — "For if gold ruste, what shall iren do?", — and two others, 503 and 505. The remaining lines marked in the Prologue are 563, 652, 731, 741, and 830. This annotation is not retained in the 1687 Chaucer, which is therefore not quite a "reimpression of 1602" as Lowndes says.

52. *his sugred mouth*. The term *sugred* is very common in Lydgate. He talks of sugared flattery, sugared sounds, sugared eloquence, sweet sugared harmony, the sugared aureat liquor of the Muses, the god who sugars the tongues of rhetoricians, etc. Chaucer, when translating the phrase of Boethius, "melliflui canit oris Homeris", rendered it "Homer with the hony mouth, that is to say, Homer with the swete ditees". Apparently it is this same phrase which suggested Lydgate's "sugred ditees of Omere". But the term *sugared* is rare in Chaucer — cp. *Troilus* II: 384 —, nor does Gower make free use of it. We should note that the Latin word *mellea*, "honeyed", would naturally give in fifteenth century English the term *sugared*, since the sugar then known, a very expensive luxury, was not our refined and solid substance, but a viscous liquid or thick sirup, not unlike honey. Such phrases as those of Ausonius in his Epistles, "quam mellea res sit oratio", or "melleum eloquium" would lead direct to "sugared eloquence". The word was used by other than Lydgate. In the *Testament of Love* I: 4 we have "sugred wordes", and in the *Court of Love* 22 "thy sugar dropes swete of Elicon". Cp. also Bokenam's Life of St. Anne 57—59, "of þe sugird welle in Elicona I neuer dede taste".

58. *that thei ded (did) mete*. This use of the verb *do* as an auxiliary is rare in earlier English. Chaucer indeed

has the verb in an auxiliary sense, but in an interrogative construction, Monk's Tale 442, 444. The general weakening of the verb into auxiliary usage is a feature of fifteenth century English; Lydgate has it scarcely at all in its old active force.

55—56. These phrases, and a line from the Prologue, are echoed in Caxton's prologue to his second edition of the *Canterbury Tales* (printed in Flügel's *Neuengl. Lesebuch* p. 6), where he says of Chaucer that "he comprehended hys maters in short / quyck / and hys sentences / eschewynge / prolyxite / castyng away the chaf of superfluite / and shewyng the pyked grayn of sentence / utteryd by crafty and sugred eloquence".

90. *wonder thred bar hood*. See Shirley's allusions to Lydgate's poverty as printed by me *Englische Studien* 43: 12 note.

96. *wel broke ye youre name*, do credit to your name. The earliest example of this idiom given by the New Eng. Dict. under *brook* is of 1587; but lcp. Chaucer, LGW. prologue (B) 194.

100. *hagys*, *haggis*, a kind of pudding. A recipe for *haggis*, preserved in the MS. Sloane 1986 of the British Museum, is as follows: —

pe hert of schepe þe nere þou take
þo bowel noȝt þou shalle forsake
On þe turbilen made and boyled wele
Hacke alle togeder with grete persole
Isop saveray þou schalle take þen
And suet of schepe take in I ken
With powder of peper and egges gode wonne
And sethe hit wele and serve hit þenne
Loke hit be saltyd for gode menne
In wyntur tyme when erbs bene gode
Take powder of hom I wot in dede
As saveray mynt and tyme fulle gode
Isop and sauge I wot by þe rode

For another recipe see *Two Fifteenth Century Books*, EETS. p. 39. The dish, cooked like a large sausage in the maw of the animal, is still used in Scotland. See Burns' *To A Haggis*.

Wülker, in his text above referred to (Introd. to this poem) was led by his use of an incorrect sixteenth-century print of this poem to render this word as *bagis*, bags.

101. *A ffranchmole, a tansey, or a froyse.* A verse-recipe for franche mule, French *franche mulle*, the ruminating stomach of a sheep, — a sort of haggis, — is found in the MS. just cited.

Take swongene eyrene in bassyne clere
 And kreme of mylke þat is so schene
 And myyd bred þou put þer to
 And powder of peper er þou more do
 Coloure hit with safrone in hast
 And kremelyd sewet of schepe on last
 And fyller þy bagge þat is so gode
 And sew hit fast Syr for þe rode
 Whenne hit is sopun þou schalt hit leche
 And broyle hyt on gredel as I þe teche.

For another recipe see the work referred to in note on line 100, p. 39. The same MS. contains a recipe for a tansey cake, viz.: —

Breke egges in bassyn and swyng hem sone
 Do powder of peper þer to anone
 þen grynde tansy þo uise owte wrynge
 To blynde with þo egges with owte lesynge
 In pan or skelet þou shalt hit frye
 In buttur wele skymmet wyturly
 Or white grece þou make take þer to
 Geder hit on a cake þenne hase þou do
 With platere of tre and frye hit browne
 On brode leches serve hit þou schalle
 With fraunche mole or oper metis with alle.

For other recipes see the EETS. cookery-book above cited, pp. 45, 86. The same Sloane MS. contains a recipe for *froyse*, i. e. pancakes.

Sethe porke or vele and hewe hit smalle
 Take swongen egges and hew with alle
 Frye hem in buttur in panne sone
 And styr hit wele þen hase þou done

With trowghtes on þe same aray
 Wele sopun and hakked tesyd in fay
 And frye hom in buttur as I þe kenne
 To serve on fysshe day before gode men.

Gower, *Confessio Amantis* IV: 2732, says of Somnolence that he

brustleth as a monkes froise
 Whanne it is throwe into the panne.

The froise or pancake made with fish was an especially common dish with monks, who were obliged to keep many fast-days.

102. *sc slender is youre koyse*. The word *koyse*, *coyse*, *coise* is very rare in Middle English and Old French. Gower has it in the *Confessio* I: 1734, of the hideous old wife who forces herself upon Florent; the mortified knight brings home in secret "this foule grete coise". Godefroy, in his *Dict. de l'ancienne langue française*, gives a citation from the fifteenth-century play of St. Nicholas which contains the word, and queries as to its meaning, which scholars have not yet interpreted. There also occurs in English, see Hartshorne's *Ancient Metrical Tales* p. 118, the phrase *coisy fish*, meaning apparently coarse or worthless fish. The meaning of the substantive here and in Gower, the only two cases yet known, seems to be "belly" or "body"; and we may surmise either that it derives from Anglo-Norman *coisse*, Old French *cuisse*, "thigh", transferred to mean "body", or that a Low Latin **cutea*, Old French *coise*, meaning "skin, hide", had developed alongside the Old French *cosse*, "pod" and assumed some of its meaning. (These suggestions I owe to Prof. T. A. Jenkins of the University of Chicago, and Prof. Raymond Weeks of Columbia University.) The term "pod" for "belly" is still frequent in dialectal English. *Coisy fish* would then be rough-skinned, coarse fish, and the word here would mean "belly".

The New Eng. Dict. says of *coise* that its etymology and meaning are uncertain; *coisy* is explained as an obsolete form of "queasy" i. e., "causing nausea".

162. *portoos*, a breviary. Old French *portehors*. Cp. Chaucer's Shipman's Tale 131, "For on my porthors here I

make an oath". The portos was carried and valued by other than ecclesiastics; Henry IV bequeathed his portos to Henry V, who left it to Bishop Beaufort, cp. Wylie's history of Henry IV, III: 233. John of Gaunt also bequeathed to Beaufort, then Bishop of Lincoln, "mon messale et mon portheus qe furent a mon seignour mon frere Prince de Gales qe Dieux assoille"; see Armitage-Smith's life of Gaunt p. 428. In catalogues of medieval libraries we frequently find the "porthors" as most elaborately and richly executed.

Wülker, following Stow's 1561 text, printed *portes* here, and misinterpreted it as "gates" or "lips".

169. *bekke*, beak, nose. The earliest example of this word in the New Eng. Dict. is of 1598.

170. *draweth to effekke*, tends to the effect, result. See meaning 69 of *draw* in the New Eng. Dict.

In several of the above notes it is remarked that a word-usage by Lydgate antedates the first example cited by the New English Dictionary. The question of Lydgate's vocabulary is a very interesting one, especially in connection with his French originals. A comparison, for instance, of his *Fall of Princes* with the prose of Laurent de Premierfait from which he worked will occasionally show the Englishman transferring the French term direct to his translation. In an incomplete list of the words which enter English under Lydgate's auspices, — adjacent, adolescence, arable*, attenuate*, bleak*, circumspect, delude*, dismayed*, duplicity, equivalent*, fragility*, fraudulent, humidity*, incur*, indigent, intrusion, irrigate*, perhaps, rebuke, — I have starred those of which his usage is earlier than that cited by the New English Dictionary; and in the case of *adolescence*, *fragility*, and *fraudulent* Laurent has the word in the corresponding French passage. There was no pressure of rime here upon Lydgate as in his translation of the *Dance Macabre*, where he clings to the French rime-words, or at least rime-sounds, and his borrowings here are therefore the more interesting. I hope to deal with the question in the edition of the *Dance Macabre*, accompanied by the French, which I publish in the approaching autumn.

The New English Dictionary, despite the unavoidable oversights which occur in a work so enormous, is an indispensable adjunct to the study of Lydgate. In such a case as the much-disputed line

Daunt in English him self so doth expresse,
which occurs in the list of Chaucer's works given by Lydgate in the opening prologue to the *Fall of Princes*, the Dictionary tells us that no instance of *express* as a reflexive verb has come under its notice earlier than Shakespeare and Jonson. As the use of *himself* in nominative position is common enough in Early English, — cp. Chaucer's *Fortune* line 25, Can. Yeo. Tale 431, Gower's *Confessio* VIII: 2527, etc. — it would seem that for the present our interpretation of Lydgate's cryptic line must be guided by the Dictionary.

CHICAGO.

ELEANOR PRESCOTT HAMMOND.