

LYDGATE AND THE DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER.

In a passage of his *History of English Poetry* Warton has summarized the literary activity of Lydgate in phrases which we can still quote without emendation; Warton says, speaking of the monk's popularity and versatility: — — "His muse was of universal access; and he was not only the poet of his monastery, but of the world in general. If a disguising was intended by the company of goldsmiths, a mask before his majesty at Eltham, a may-game for the Sheriffs and Aldermen of London, a mumming before the Lord Mayor, a procession of pageants from the creation for the festival of Corpus Christi, or a carol for the coronation, Lydgate was consulted, and gave the poetry."

The list of Lydgate's patrons is an imposing one. It reaches from that unknown "worthy citeseyn" of London who commissioned *Bycorne and Chichevache* for the walls of his parlor to the victor of Agincourt himself, for whom, while still Prince of Wales, the *Troy Book* was undertaken; and it includes the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Salisbury, the Countess of Suffolk, and the Duke of Gloucester. For Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, indeed, Lydgate seems to have written not only on commission but spontaneously. His longest task, the translation of a French version of Boccaccio's *De Casibus*, was executed at Gloucester's command; and the duke is frequently alluded to in the prologues to the different books of the work. That prefixed to the third book is an enthusiastic eulogy of Gloucester's generosity to the needy and disheartened poet, and was probably written not long after the appeal to the duke for money, printed by Halliwell in his collection of

Lydgate's minor poems; for the colophons in two MSS. state that the stanzas were sent during the time of the translation "libri Bochasii". In the same two manuscripts, Brit. Mus. Addit. 34360 and Harley 2251, — — manuscripts which are however partial sister-codices and written largely by one and the same hand, — — these stanzas are directly followed by a poem on Gloucester's death; but as there is no ascription of the poem to Lydgate, and as the internal evidence of style is rather against such a supposition, I share Prof. Schick's opinion that this bit is probably not by Lydgate.

There are still extant, however, other and more authentic poems by Lydgate which throw light upon Gloucester's life and character, a poem on the duke's marriage to Jacqueline of Hainault and one of more historical interest censuring Humphrey for his later infidelity to that princess. Both are mentioned in the life of Humphrey contained in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, a sketch which every student of the early Renaissance in England would gladly see supplemented by ampler information concerning the first founder of the Bodleian Library, the English Maecenas of the fifteenth century.¹⁾

As Mr. Tout says in the article just cited, — "There is something almost Italian about (Gloucester), both in his literary and in his political career." His love of letters did not prevent his mingling, with more or less ill-success, in the political entanglements of the stormy and unfortunate years following the death of Henry the Fifth; and one of the many difficult problems interwoven with the French-English struggle of the mid-fifteenth century arose out of the alliance which Gloucester contracted, in defiance of diplomacy, with Jacqueline of Holland. This alliance ended as unfortunately as it began; the duchess

¹⁾ References of interest concerning Gloucester, some of them in addition to the list given in the *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, are Macray in *Bibliographica* 1894 part 3, *Dedications to Englishmen by Foreign Authors*; *Some Literary Correspondence of Humphrey Duke of Gloucester*, printed by the Bishop of Peterborough in the Eng. Hist. Review for 1895, p. 99; Hortis in *Studij sulle Opere Latine del Boccaccio*, pp. 642 and following; the list of Gloucester's books presented to the Bodleian, in *Munimenta Academica* II; and a note in the *Athenaeum* of Nov. 17, 1888, p. 664. See also Einstein: *The Italian Renaissance in England*, New York, 1902.

was succeeded in her husband's affections by Eleanor Cobham, for whom Gloucester's passion became so notorious that popular indignation was aroused, and a formal complaint was made to the Lords in 1428 by a number of representative women of London, requesting the return of the duchess to her proper position.

From all that is known of Jacqueline of Holland, it appears that her personal popularity and sympathy for her misfortunes may have had quite as much share in calling out this remonstrance as did the indignation at Gloucester's open insult to morality. Her character and her career bear many resemblances to those of Mary Queen of Scots, as does her political importance in her own generation. The author of the most extended study of her life, F. von Löher,¹⁾ asserts that her fate was the decisive factor in the French-English wars, was all-important in the history of the Netherlands, and was of moment to Germany and to the Emperor. She was the last of the Holland-Wittelsbach line, and with her fall the power of Germany in Holland and Seeland ended and the dominance of France began. Upon her accession, when still a girl of sixteen, only a part of her father's dominions obeyed her; Holland, which had for years been torn by class-struggles, recognized Jacqueline's uncle, John the Pitiless, brother to Jacqueline's father. The young princess, who had but recently been widowed of her equally youthful husband, the dauphin of France, determined to marry her cousin John of Brabant to strengthen herself against her uncle; and a papal dispensation was obtained for the alliance, after much difficulty. This marriage proved unfortunate in every respect. John the

¹⁾ See his *Beiträge zur Geschichte Jacobäa von Bayern*, printed in *Abhandlungen der bayerischen Acad. der Wissenschaften*, histor. klasse, X, 1—112 and 205—336. See, for two papers on Jacqueline's earlier years and final marriage, the *Messenger des Sciences historiques de Belges*, 1886 pts. 3, 4 and 1887 pt. 2, and *Bijdragen voor Vaderl. Geschiedenis* 3^d. Ser. VIII pts. 1, 2. Wright prints in his *Polit. Songs* a Lament of the Duchess of Gloucester put into the mouth of the penitent Eleanor Cobham; and in the 1578 additions to the *Mirror for Magistrates* are "legends" of her and of Duke Humphrey, in each of which allusion is made to the marriage with Jacqueline. A note gives the comment from Hall's Chronicle, that that marriage "was wondered at of the common people, detested of the nobility, and abhorred of the clergy".

Pitiless swayed the policy of his weak and incapable nephew, and Jacqueline, declaring her intention of seeking a divorce and of soliciting help against her uncle's usurpation, fled to England in 1422. According to von Löher's sources of information, she was not only warmly welcomed in London, and made an honored guest at Henry V's court, but her flight had been encouraged by Henry and his counsellors with the expectation of England's controlling the Continental situation through the sovereign of Holland and Seeland. From England Jacqueline pressed her petition to the Pope for annulment of her marriage with her cousin, a petition the more urgent because of her love for the English king's younger brother, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester. Henry seems to have looked not unfavorably upon his brother's passion, but to have deferred talk of marriage because of the political complications which would result. The king's death, however, left Gloucester unchecked by a stronger hand, and his union with Jacqueline, in 1422, forced England into a most awkward attitude towards the Duke of Burgundy, England's principal support in the prosecution of the French war. Although Burgundy was nearly related to Jacqueline, his feelings towards her were unfriendly because of her marriage, earlier, with the Dauphin of France, the instigator of his father's murder; and it is also comprehensible that the Burgundian power would not regard with favor this further extension of England's Continental sway. But in spite of these strained diplomatic relations with Burgundy, which it required all the exertions of Bedford, Gloucester's elder brother, to keep unbroken, Gloucester and his duchess entered Hainault with an English army, and marched on into Holland with little opposition (1424). John the Pitiless was murdered by one of his own ministers, and success seemed in Jacqueline's grasp when Philip of Burgundy formally denounced the conduct of Gloucester and challenged him to a personal duel. Humphrey, leaving Jacqueline at Mons, returned to England to prepare for the combat; and although the meeting never took place, the cause of Jacqueline was tacitly abandoned by England; Burgundy, entering her dominions, laid hands upon both the government and the duchess herself; and after imprisonment Jacqueline was compelled to accede to Philip's terms, and

accept a small portion of the inheritance which had descended to her, a portion which she enjoyed but a few years before death overtook her. Her marriage with Gloucester she finally acknowledged (1428) as null and void, though for some time after his desertion of her, before her surrender to Philip's terms, she had implored help from England and from her faithless husband. Gloucester's breach of honor was not only political but personal; he had taken back to England with him Eleanor Cobham, one of his wife's own ladies in waiting, whom he scandalized Europe by marrying after the Papal annulment of his marriage with Jacqueline, in 1428. Before the marriage, however, Gloucester's passion was notorious, and led to the protest of the London women above mentioned. Lydgate's protest is contained in the second of the two poems transcribed below.

This protest must have been written between the formal complaint of the Londoners, which it mentions, and the marriage of Gloucester with Eleanor, that is, between the spring of 1428, and the end of 1428 according to von Löher; 1431 according to other authorities. If Professor Schick's dates for the translation of the *Falls of Princes* (1430—1438) be correct, then Gloucester's commission to Lydgate, his gracious reply to the poet's entreaty for money, and Lydgate's rapturous acknowledgments, in the Prologue to Book III, must all post-date the two poems here printed, that in anticipation of Gloucester's union with Jacqueline, written probably in 1422, before the death of Henry the Fifth, and that containing the attack upon Eleanor Cobham, who was Duchess of Gloucester during the years to which Professor Schick assigns the *Falls of Princes*. Dr. Koeppel's earlier dates (1424 ff.) for the *Falls of Princes* seem more likely under the circumstances.

Lydgate's cautious diplomacy leads him, in his protest against the duke's conduct, to construct an explanation which shall relieve Gloucester of blame; and we find ourselves comparing his description of the duties of poets, *Falls of Princes*, III, 18: — —

“Their chief labour is vices to repreue
With a maner couert similitude:

And none estate with their language greue
 By no rebuking of termes dull and rude.
 What euer thei write on vertue ay conclude.
 Appayre no man in no maner wise,
 This thoffices of Poetes that been wise."

I have found two copies of this poem, both in manuscripts written by John Shirley; one is contained in the codex Trinity College Cambridge R. 3, 20, the other in the Bodleian MS. Ashmole 59.¹⁾ They present differences for which I can account only conjecturally. Both are in seven-line stanzas, but the lines of the Cambridge copy have four, those of the Ashmole five accents. Lydgate's natural wordiness and use of padding phrases are so marked that it is not possible to say whether the briefer or the longer version was an afterthought; and moreover, Shirley's own tendency to versify is quite sufficient to explain the existence of a "revised" version alongside the genuine. In choosing one of the two texts for publication I have elected that of the Cambridge manuscript; partly because the Ashmole copy is mutilated by the loss of a leaf from the codex, partly because that manuscript as a whole is so especially careless and garbled, — see note at close. A description of this Cambridge volume, with a list of its contents, may be found in Dr. M. R. James' *Catalogue of the Western MSS. in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge*. My thanks are due again to the Librarian of Trinity, the Rev. Dr. Sinker, for the courtesy and kindness with which he has furthered my work over the Trinity manuscripts and in Cambridge.

From the same Cambridge volume I transcribe the stanzas in anticipation of the marriage of Gloucester and Jacqueline. This poem is also copied in MSS. Brit. Mus. Harley 2251²⁾ and Addit. 29729, both secondary in part to the Cambridge manuscript. Stow, the owner and part-writer of the latter codex, marks a number of the poems as transcribed from "master

¹⁾ Referred to by Ritson as No. 137 of his list; he gives a confused and inaccurate title.

²⁾ Referred to by Ritson as No. 89 of his list, — "On Marriage". In Speght's list.

sherleys booke", and from the headings of his extracts it appears more than probable that the Cambridge codex was Stow's original; the texts themselves, so far as compared, corroborate this; and various marginal notes by Stow in R. 3, 20 show that it passed through his hands. See Sieper's edition of Lydgate's *Reason and Sensuality*, E. E. T. S., for a description and list of contents of the Stow volume. That the Harley volume is not a true Shirley has been pointed out by Foerster in Herrig's *Archiv*, ciii; several of its numbers postdate Shirley's death, and the handwriting bears no resemblance to his; the error of ascribing it to him probably arose from the transcription of some of Shirley's notes and comments, e. g., "Shirley kowde fynde no more for this cople", — — derived from the (Cambridge) Shirley R. 3, 20 from which *Bycorne and Chichevache*, the Corpus Christi "ordenaunce of a processyoun", the *Saying of the Nightingale*, and numerous other poems were copied.

Of this Cambridge codex the most interesting entries are now in print; the *Mumming at Hertford* was printed by me in Anglia XXII, and five other mummings by Brotanek, *Die englischen Maskenspiele*, 1902; ten extracts are printed by the Chaucer Society; and the copy of the *Saying of the Nightingale* should have been used by Glauning in his edition of that poem for the E. E. T. S., but was unfortunately overlooked, and the secondary codices Harley 2251 and Add. 29729 alone utilized.

(p. 158)

(MS. Trin. Coll. Cambr., R. 3, 20.)

And nowe here begynneþe a comendable balade by Lydgate Daun Johan at þe reuerence of my lady of Holand and of my lord of Gloucestre to fore þe day of þeyre maryage in þe desyrous tyme of þeyre truwe lovyng.¹⁾

- (1) Thorough gladde aspectis / of þe god Cupyde
And ful acorde of his moder deere
fful offt sypes / list aforne provyde

¹⁾ Tout's statement in the *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, regarding Gloucester's marriage, that "Lydgate wrote a ballad to celebrate the event" is thus inexact.

- By cours eterne / of þe sterres cleere
 (p. 159) Hertis in loue / for to Joyne in feere
 Thoroughe bonde of feyth perpetuelly tendure
 By influence of god and of nature
- (2) þe heven aboue disposeþe many thinges
 Which witt of man can not comprehende
 þe faatal ordre / of lordes and of kynges
 To make somme / in honnour hye ascende
 And somme al so ful lowe to descende
 And in loue eeke / to lacen and constreyne
 Hertes tenbrace / in *Jubitors* cheyne
- (3) þus cam in first / þe knotte of allyaunce
 Betweene provynces / and worþy regyouns
 ffolkes to sette in pees / and acordaunce
 To beon alloone / in þeyre affeccouns
 And to exclude / alle devysyouns
 Of contekk stryff of batayle and of werres
 þe *first cause* pourtreied in þe sterres
- (4) ffor noman may þordeynaunce eschuwe
 Thinges disposed / by cours celestyal
 Ner destenye / to voyde nor remuwe
 But oonly god / þat lordshipeþe al
 ffor thorughe his might moost Imperyal
 peternal lord / moost discrete and saage
 He brought in first / þordre of maryage
- (5) Ensaumple in bookes þer beon moo þane oon
 þinward pithth whoo so list to charge
 Executid is / of so yoore agoon
 Recorde I take / of *Calydoyne* and *Arge*
 Howe þoo landes / so broode / so wyde / so large
 Were maked oon / þe story list not feyne
 By maryage / wheoche a fore were tweyne
- (6) And in cronycles autentyk and olde
 (p. 160) Many a story / of Antiquytee
 Vn to þis pourpoos / rehersed is and tolde
 Howe maryages / haue grounde and cause be

Betwene landes / of pees and vnytee
And here to forne as made is remembraunce
þe werre stynt of England and of ffraunce

- (7) And as I hope of hert and menyng truwe
þe mortal werre / ceesse shal and fyne
Betwene þoo boope / and pees ageyne remuwe
To make loue / with cleer beemys shyne
By þe meene of hir / þat heeght Katheryne
Ioyned til oon / his deedis can you telle
Henry þe fyfte / of knighthoode sours and welle

- (8) And firperdovne / for to specefye
þe dewe of grace distille shal and reyne
Pees and acorde for to multelye
In þe boundes here of oure brettaygne
To fynde a wey / wherby we may atteyne
þat Duchye of Holand / by hool affeccoun
May beo allyed / with Brutus Albyoun

- (9) þat þey may beo / oon body and oon hert
Rooted on feyth / devoyde of doublesse
And eeke to seen cleerly / and aduerte
A nuwe sonne / to shynen of gladnesse
In boope londes / texcluden al derknesse
Of oolde hatred and of al rancour
Brought in by meene / of oon þat is þe flour

- (10) Thoroughe oute þe worlde / called of wommanheed
Truwe ensauple and welle of al goodenesse
Benyngne of poorte / roote of goodelyheed
Soopefast myrrour of beaute and fayrnesse
I mene of holand / þe goodely fresshe Duchesse

(p. 161) Called *Jaques* / whos birth for to termyne
Is by descent / Imperyal of lyne

- (11) As *Hester* meeke / and as *Judith* saage
fflouring in youþe / lyke to *Polixsene*
Secree feythful / as *Dydo* of *Cartage*
Constant of hert / lyche *Ecuba* þe qweene
And as *Lucesse* / in loue truwe and cleene
Of bountee fredame / and of gentylesse
She may be called / wel lady and maystresse

- (12) ffeyre was *Heleyne* / liche as bookes tellepe
 And renommed as of seemlynnesse
 But sheo in goodnesse / fer aboue excellepe
 To rekken hir trouthe and hir stedfastnesse
 Hir gouuernaunce / and hir hye noblesse
 pat if she shal shortly [be]¹⁾ comprehendid
 In hir is no thing pat might beon amended
- (13) per to she is descreete / and wonder sadde
 In hir appoorte / who so list taake heede
 Right avysee / and wommanly eeke gladd
 And dame *prudence* doope ay hir brydel leede
ffortune and *Grace* and *Raysoun* eeke in deede
 In alle hir werkes / with hir beon allyed
 pat thoroughe þe worlde hir naame is magnified
- (14) To þe poore she is / also ful mercyable
 fful of pytee / and of compassyoun
 And of nature / list not to beo vengeable
 poughe hit so beo / sheo haue occasyoun
 pat I suppose now²⁾ in no regyoun
 Was neuer a better / as alle assayes founden
 So miche vertu / doope in hir habounden
- (15) A heven it is / to beon in hir presence
 Who list consydre / hir governaunce at al
 Whos goodely looke / in verray existence
 (p. 162) So aungellyk and so celestyal
 So femynyne / and in especial
 Hir eyeghen sayne / who so looke weel
 fforoyoven is oure wraththe eury deel
- (16) And hir colours / beon black whyte and rede
 þe reed in trouthe / tookenepe stabulnesse
 And þe black / whoo so takepe heede
 Signefyeth / parfyt soburnesse
 þe whyte also / is taken of clenness
 And eeke hir word / is in verray soope
Ce bien raysoun / al pat euer she doope

¹⁾ Not in the Ms.²⁾ Omitted, and written in margin by Shirley.

- (17) And sith she is / by discent of blood
 þe grettest borne / oone of hem on lyve
 And þer with al / moost vertuous and goode
 þe trouthe pleynly / yif I shal descryue
 Suche grace I hope / of nuwe shal arryue
 With hir komyng / thoroughe al þis lande
 þat þer shal beo / a perpetuelle bande
- (18) Parfourmyng vp / by knott of maryage
 With helpe of god / betweene þis lady bright
 And oon þat is soopely of his aage
 Thoroughe al þis worlde / oon þe best knyght
 And best pourveyed / of manhood and of might
 In pees and werre / thoroughe his excellence
 And is also / of wisdam and prudence
- (19) Moost renommed / for to rekken al
 ffrome Eest to west / as of heghe prowessse
 In daring doo / and deedes marcial
 He passeþ alle / thorughe his worþynesse
 þat yif I shall / þe trouthe cleer expresse
 He haþe deserved / thoroughe his knyghtly name
 To beo regystred / in þe hous of ffaame
- (20) Egally ye with þe worþy nyen
 (p. 163) ffor with *Parys* he haþe comlynesse
 In trouth of loue / with *Troyllus* he dooþe shyne
 And with *Hectour* / he haþe eeke hardynesse
 With *Tedeus* he haþe fredam and gentylesse
 Wal of Bretayne / by manly vyolence
 Ageyne hir foomen / to standen at defence
- (21) Slouth eschuwing / he dooþe his witt applye
 To reede in bookis / wheoche þat beon moral
 In hooly writt with þe Allegorye
 He him delyteþ / to looke in specyal
 In vnderstanding / is noone to him egal
 Of his estate expert in poetrye
 With parfounde feeling of Phylosofye

- (22) With *Salamoun* hape he sapyence
 ffaame of knighthoode / with *Cesar Julius*
 Of rethoryk and eeke of eloquence
 Equypollent with *Marcus Tullius*
 With *Hamibal* he is victorious
 Lyche vn to *Pompey* / for his hyeghe renoun
 And to gouerne / egale with *Cypyoun*
- (23) þis Martys sone / and sooþefastly his heyre
 So wolde god of his eternal might
 He Ioyned were with hir þat is so feyre
 þe fresshe duchesse of whome I speke now right
 Sith he in hert is hir truwe knyght
 ffor whome he wryteþe / in *goode aventure*
Sanz plus vous belle perpetuelly tendure
- (24) þane were þis lande in ful sikernesse
 Ageyne passaute / of alle oure mortell foone
 ffarewell þanne / al trouble and hevynesse
 Yif so were þees landes / were alle oon
 And god I prey / it may be doone anoon
 Of his might / so graciously ordeyne
- (p. 164) þat þees fynal / were sette betweene hem tweyne
- (25) And I dare weel afferme fynally
 Thorughe oute þis lande of hye and lowe degree
 þat alle folkes / prayen ful specyally
 þis thing in haast may executed be
 And þou þat art oon and twoo and thre
 þis gracious werk dispoose for þe best
 ffor to conclude þe fyne of peyre request
- (26) And *ymeneus* / þow fortune þis matere
 Thoroughe helpe of *Iuvo* / nexst of þyne allye
 Maake a knotte feythful and entiere
 As whylome was betweene *Phylogeny*
 And *Mercurye* eeke / so hyegh a bove þe skye
 Wher þat *Clyo* / and eeke *Calyope*
 Sange with hir sustren / in noumbre thryes three

(27) And alle yee goddes beope of oon acorde
 pat haue youre dwelling / aboue þe firmament
 And yee goddesses / devoyde of al descorde
 Beope weel willy / and also dilygent
 And þowe fortune / bee also of assent
 þis needful thing / texecuyt yerne
 Thorugh youre power / which þ^t is eterne

(28) Lenvoye
 Pryncesse of bountee / of fredam Emparesse
 þe verray loodsterre / of al goodelyhede
 Lowly I prey / vn to youre hyeghe noblesse
 Of my Rudenesse / not to taken heed
 And wher so it be / þis bille pat yee reed
 Hafe mercy ay / on myn Ignoraunce
 Sith I it made / bytwix hope and dreded
 Of hoole entent / yowe for tyl do plesaunce

The running titles of the poem are: — Of my lord of Gloucester and of my Ladye of Holand (repeated) — Of my lord and ladye of Gloucester.

The text of the Complaint for My Lady of Gloucester is subjoined.

(p. 363) (MS. Trin. Coll. Cambr., R. 3, 20.)

Here bygynneþe a complaynte of A solitarie persone / compleynyng þabsence of þe moste renommed and best beloued pryncesse þat euer of hire estate in þeos dayes came in to þis Reaume of logres by þe weye of mariage / and so sodeynly vnordynatly departed hens as hit is sayde and spouken in many Regyouns by þe hegheste estates þer

(1) A¹ solytarye / soore compleynyng
 Sat weping by a water syde

¹) I take A from the Ashmole copy. Here there is in its stead a sort of compound capital letter, looking like a fusion of M, A, and R. Perhaps *Maria*? It has a crown drawn above it, and is the same anagrammatic letter which appears, drawn very large, on the first leaf of Ashmole 59. I note Foerster's conjecture, *Archiv* ciii, but do not consider the letter a simple M.

Yeeris and dayes / a wayting
 Which with goode hope / dyd ay abyde
 On folke pat rowe / or forby ryde
 To here typinges / in peyre passage
 pat might / his hertely sorowe aswage

(2) And many a nober creature
 Sat wayting / on pat fresshe ryver
 In feythful hope / for to recure
 At some on daye / of al þe yeere
 pat þe sonne shal shyne clere
 Tenchace awaye / with his brightnesse
 þe cloudes / of alle peyre hevynesse

(3) þer were bope olde / and yonge of age
 Wheche vowed / with hole entencyoun
 To faste / and goon / on pilgrymage
 Til sayntes of al pat Regyoun
 pat god wolde here peyre Orysoun
 To sende hire home amonges peyme alle
 ffor whame so oft pey clepe and calle

(p. 364) (4) þey wepped for hir long absence
 And cryed owte / on fals fortune
 pat sheo not did / hire dilygence
 To glade peyre hertes / in comune
 With sobbing / payre song / þey gane entune
 Preying þe lord of rightwisnesse
 Of mercy / peyre haromes to redresse

(5) And þus compleynyng of pitee
 þe ladyes of pat Regyoun
 Wymmen of heghe and lowe degree
 Gane make / peyre lamentacoun
 And sayde O lord / sende vs nowe downe
 þe pryncesse / to stynten oure woo
 Whiche pat so long / hape beon vs froo

(6) Sende hire soone home / as it is right
 And graunt hire grace / and goode passage
 ffor to rejoysse / hire owen knight

With outen stryff / and al owtrage
Tavoyden / al þe hevy rage
Of folkes moo / þane oon or tweyne
pat sorest for hire sake compleyne

- (7) Whyle þey þeos pytous wordes sayde
Vppon þe stronde / in þeyre distresse
Hem thought / þey saughe a myrmayde
Ressemblyng vn to a Chaunteresse
Of faace lyke / a soreceresse
Vppon a Toure / with a gret route
Of wychches sittying rounde aboute
- (p. 365)
- (8) þey were of courage serpentyne
By apparence / of looke / and sight
Besy to bowe / and tenclyne
With al þeyre power and þeyre might
þe prynces hert / ageynst al right
His noblesse night and day to trouble
His hert in love / to make hit double
- (9) þeos fals circes¹⁾ songe ful lowde
And with hire song / hire wychches alle
Which of coustume / ful weele coude
With þayre sugre / tempre galle
Vengeaunce of right mot on hem falle
ffor whoo supplaunteþe / of equytee
By processe / shal supplaunted be
- (10) þis Cirenes nuwe crafft oute sought
By þayre fals incantacyouns
And fals medecynes / þey wrought
To tempre / þeyre confeccyouns
In metys / and dyuers pocyouns
þe prynce hert / agaynst al lawe
ffrome his promesse / his hande to drawe
- (11) To make him strange / and beo forsworne
Vn to þat goodely fayre pryncesse
Wher thorughe his name / and fame are lorne

¹⁾ in margin: — *i. mirmaydens.*

But god þe sonner / þayme redresse
 As al þis lande / cane bere witnesse
 Yong and olde crying in oone
 Owt on þe wychches euerych oone

(p. 366)

- (12) þe *Solytarye* tooke here of kepe
 Hade pytee of þeyre woful sownde
 In his drem as he laye and slepe
 Herde in alle Citees / and alle townes
 Howe wymmen made þeyre Orysouns
 Desyrouse pat pryncesse to see
 And for hire comyng / raunsoned to be
- (13) God bryng hire home . þus þey gan crye
 And gyff vs grace / to seon hire soone
 Oure Ioye oure gladnesse . to multeplye
 O lorde above / nowe here oure boone
 Or chaungyng of þe nexst moone
 pat with þe noyce þey did make
 He gane owte of his slepe awake

- (14) And so / as he coude vnderstande
 He gane to do / his besy cure
 Tooke towardes morowe his penne on hande
 And thought remembre it by scripture
 þey song lyche to þe Chaunteplure
 þe peoples menyng for tacquyte
 Was cause / why pat he did it wryte

- (15) þis dreame he wrote / of truwe entent
 Off feyth and hoole affeccoun
 Thre hundreþe thousand dyd assente
 Of peples in þat regyoun
 And eke for right conclusyoun
 Alle þe folke boþe yong and olde
 Which pat dwell / in þ^r housholde

- (16) þeyre truwe names shal beo knowe
 Affterwardes with goddes grace
 (p. 367) Whane blake mystes / ar leyde lowe

- And clere trouth shall shewe his face
 Wychches bawdes / away tence
 fflaterieres and al raskayle
 Ageynst trouth . pat may not vayne
- (17) And vnder colour / of pis drewe
 pis Solytarye / berepe witesse
 Ryche and pore of al pis reme
 With hole hert / and al lownesse
 Hem recomaunden / to pat pryncesse
 Preying with al humylytee
 pat pay may it soone see
- (18) Awayting on hire . eche a day
 Affter hir comyng clepe and crye
 pey thenke she is to long awaye
 She is beloued / so entiere
 Thorughe al pe londe / and specyally
 Of hye and lowe / to reken alle
 Hir godsone / affter hire dope calle¹⁾

This Ashmole manuscript, though written by Shirley's own hand, is inferior to the Trinity College and British Museum volumes transcribed by him. Many of its copies, as already pointed out (*Mod. Lang. Notes*, Feb. 1904, p. 36), are hasty, garbled, and scramblingly written; and this carelessness of execution furnishes one reason, as I have above mentioned, for selecting the Trinity College text of a poem in preference to the Ashmole text. We may find a partial explanation of these imperfect copies in the date of the MS. For the heading of this very poem just transcribed, near the close of the codex, is — — "Nowe eondepe here pe dyte of Verbum caro factum

¹⁾ In the margin by this line is written: — — *i. henricus rex quintus*; to which a hand other than Shirley's has added, scrawlingly, — *is not god be pe rode*. Shirley's note is erroneous; Henry VI, not Henry V, was Jacqueline's godson.

The running titles of the poem are: — — A compleynte for my ladye Of Holand; Compleynte for pe departing Of my ladye of Holand. The running titles of the Ashmole copy are similar, except that the first is — — Complainte made by Lydegate; in the margin of stanza 1 in that codex Shirley has also written — — Lidegate daun Johan.

est and nexst foloweþe a pytous complaynte of a Chapellayne of my lordes of Gloucester humfrey &. c. whome gode assoyle þat noble prince." The last phrase should be noted; it indicates that Gloucester was then dead, and fixes the date of that part of the manuscript between 1447 and the year of Shirley's death, 1456. Since, according to tradition, Shirley died at the advanced age of ninety, the inaccuracies and deviations of Ashmole 59 are easily explained.

The term "chaplain of my lord of Gloucester" may perhaps be a true statement of Lydgate's relations to that prince, either at the time of writing this poem or during the translation of the *Falls of Princes*. Or it is quite possible that the term is but a disguise, such as Lydgate hints at in the sixteenth stanza, and the poem an unsigned "round robin" of the household to its absent mistress.

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