Lydgate's Siege of Thebes.
Lydgate's
Siege of Thebes.

EDITED
FROM ALL THE KNOWN MANUSCRIPTS AND THE TWO OLDEST EDITIONS,
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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 ye 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 Ethioles 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 re-
printed 1858 in the "Collection Silvestre," with the title "Sensuyt
de 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

1 See Koeppel, Lydgate's Story of Thebes. Eine Quellenuntersuchung.
München, 1884. Constans, Légende d'Oedipe. Paris, 1881; and Roman de
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).\(^1\) 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 charité . . . shal her bryghte bemes sprede . . . in dyuers naciouns Forto reforme atwixe Regionus Pees and quyet, concord and vnytè," Lydgate clearly had in view certain terms of the treaty of Troyes concluded in May 1420. The 24th paragraph of this treaty says (see Rymer's Foedera, Tom. ix, p. 901):

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

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

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

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Temporary Preface.

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. Ad. M. in the variae 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, 10½ × 7½ 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.

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

7. C. = Cambridge University Library, Addit. 3137.
11. E₂. = in William Thynne’s fol. edition 1561 of the works of Chaucer.
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—788.
Ad₂. 785—788, 4094—4158, 4504 to the end.
Ap. 1681—1746, 3409 to the end.
Ba. 2490—2580, 4432 to the end.
Bo. 1—8, 31—40, 4456—4586.
C. 1—822, 886—951, 1017—1142, 1403—1498, 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.
L. 849—852.
Lb. 65—392, 4597—4658.
M. 147—222.
P. 1669—1672.
Ra. 2099—2294.
S. 1455²—1459¹.
T. 615—726, 1061—1172.
T. 2485—2672, 3634—4209.
Ar. E². G. L¹. are complete.
The Siege of Thebes.


Incipit Prologus.

Han briȝte phebus / passëd was þe ram
Myd of Aprille / and in-to bole 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 morowe red,
And Iubiter / in the Crabbès Hed
Hath take his paleys / and his mansioun;
The lusty tyme / and Ioly fresshi 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 flouréś / craftly ymeynt,
Braunch and bough / wiþ red and whít depeynt,
Fletinge þe bawe / on hillis and on valys:
The tyme in soth / whan Canterbury talys
Complet and told / at many sondry stage
Of estatis // in the pilgrimage,
Euerich man / lik to his degré,
Some of desport / some of moralité,
Some of knyghthode / lone and gentillesse,
And some also of parfit holynesse,
And some also in soth / of Ribaudye
To maké laughter / in þe companye,
(Ech admitted / for noþ wold other greve)
Lich as the Cook / þe millere and the Reve
Aqueytte hem-silf / shortly to conclude,
Boystously / in her teermés Rude,
whan þei hadde / wel dronken of the bolle,
And ek also / with his pyllód nolle
The pardownier / beerdles al his Chyn,
Glasy-Eyed / and face of Cherubyn,
Tellyng a tale / to angré with the frere,

whanne that L. Ad., T. Caunterbery Bo. Caunterbury M. Kannterberi Ad., in
Ad., l. 18 and l. 19 are transposed. 19. many] many a Lb. 20. estatis
estate S. these statis Lb. there astateth P. the] their Bo. T. Du. L. M. T. P. Le.
to] for to P. 30. boysly] boystously] S. 31–40 cut away on back side of
the first leaf in Bo (35. mnce, 40. Breteyne is left at the end of the line). 31. dronken
ballyd L. 33. The pardowner] beerdles] The beerdles pardoner L., (taken from
the rubric, which in this MS. forms the preceding line of the column). a] of Ro.
eyen S., glasy rede 'Du. of] om. Ra. 35. a] to G.
As opynly // the storie kan 3ow lere, written by
word for word / with euery circumstaunce,
Echon ywrite / and put\5 in remembraunce
By hym \pat\ was / 3if I shal not\5 feyne,
Floure of Poëtës / thorghout\5 al breteyne,
Which sothly hadde / most\5 of excellence
In rethorike / and in eloquence
(Rede his making\5 / who list\5 the trouthë* fynde)
Which neuer shal / appallen in my mynde,
But\5 alwey fressh\5 / ben in my memorye*:
To whom\5 be 3ouë / pris/ honoure / and glorye*
Of wel seyinge / first\5 in our e language,
Chief Registrer / of his pilgrimage,
Al \pat\ was tolde / forjetting\5 noght at al,
Feyned talis / nor ping\5 Historical,
With many prouerbe / diuers and vnkouth,
Be reherasile / of his Sugrid mouth,
Of the sentence hool / without\5 variance,
Voydys\5 the Chaf / sothly for to seyn,

36. As opynly\5 [As o. as T. Du. Lb. And o. as L. Al o. as M. 37. for]
b[ L. 38. Echon ywrite\5 Echon written T. Echone wretten M. 39. was] 
through L. T. thorgh T. Ba. P. Ro. through L. S. thorugh out of E. 
41. sothly\5 shortly P. hadde Ad. Ra. T. had Be. M. of\5 om. L. Ro. 42. In] 
bothe in Bo. T. Du. Lb. M. T. rethorike\5 retyrk T. and\5 and eke Ra (eke 
added by later hand). second in\5 om. Ad. I. 43. Rede\5 Redeth Bo. T. Du. 
trouth Ar. Bo. fynde\5 to finde M. Ra (to added by later hand). 44. Which\5 [at 
Ad. Ad. Ra. Ba. S. 45. alwey\5 evir L. fresh ben Ad. fresshe be Bo. M. 
be fressh T. freyshely bene Ap. my\5 om. I. Ro. memorye\5 memorye Ar. 
in my mynde\5 called Geffray Chawer by name P (written by a later hand, partly 
on erasure). 46. whom\5 who Ar. be\5 ben Ra. Ba. 3oue\5 yoven Ba. 
Ap (\5 memory). The scribe of P. wrote honoure glorye and pris, the later hand has 
erased most of pris and written flame across it. 47. seyinge Ad. 48. saynyg Bo. 
seing M. langage G. Bo. 48. Registrer\5 regestrier Bo. Registrer T. 
Ad. I. L. p. o\5 if in E. pis\5 his S. 49. Al\5 Of Ro. forgetyn\5 forgetyn L. Ba. P. 
at\5 om. L. Ro. 50. talis\5 tale I. nor ping\5 ne thing Ad. Ad. I. Ro. 
no thing L. nor nothynge L. Ba. and thing Lb. 51. prouerbe\5 prouerbes 
L. Lb. Ad. Ad. I. Ra. Ba. E. S. P. E. 52. Sugrid\5 sugir Lp. 53. in\5 
be Bo. T. Du. Lb. M. T. P. 54. hool\5 of lofe Ad. of Iove I. 
55. Voyding\5 Wyndyng Ad. I. the\5 om. Ad. Ad. I. sothly\5 softely Lb. 
for\5 om. Ra. Ba. Lp. Ro. for to seyn\5 fro the seyne L. 

PROLOG.] Lydgate's Praise of Chaucer, Flower of Poets.
Enlumynyng / þe trewë pikëd greyn
Be crafty writinge / of his sawës swete,
Fro the tymë / that thei deden* mete
First the pylgrimes / sothly euerichôn,

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

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

And this while* / that the pilgrymes leye
At Canterbury / wel loggëd* on and all,
I not in soth / what I may it call,
Hap / or fortune / in Conclusion,
That me byfil / to entren into touñ,
The holy seynge / pleynly to visite
Aftere siknesse / my vowës to aquyte,
In a Cope of blak / and not of grene,
On a palfrey / slender / long / and lene,
Wip rusty brydel / mad nat for þe sale,
My man to-form / with a voidë male ;

which of Fortunë / took myn Inne anoë

PROLOG.] The Pilgrims' Host asks Lydgate to sup with them. 5

Wher the pylgrymes / were logged euericohan,
The samë tyme / Her guernour, the host,
Stonding in halle: ful of wynde and bost,
Lych to a man / wonder sterne and fers,
Which spak to me / and seide anoi, "daun Pers,
Dawn Domynyk / Dan Godfrey / or Clement,
3e be welcom / newly into kent,
Thogh 3oure bridel / haue neiper boos ne belle;
Bescheinge 3ou / pat 3e wil me telle
First 3oure name / and of whatt contré
With-outë morë* · shorte-ly that 3e be,
That loke so pale / al dewsoyde of blood,
Vpon 3oure hede / a wonder thred-bar hood,
Wel araiëd / for to ridé lute."

I answerde / 'my namë was Lydgate,
Monk of Bery / nyë fyfty 3ere of age,
Come to this toune / to do my pilgrimage,
As I haue hight / I haue* therof no shame.'
"Daun Iohn," quod he / "wel brokë 3e 3oure name !
Thogh 3e be soul / beth right glad and light !
Preiyng 3ou / soupe with vs to-nykth,
And 3eshal haue* / mad at 3oure devis,

A grete puddynge / or a rounde hagys, 
A Franchemole* / a tansey / or a froyse.
To ben a Monk / Scnder is 3oure koyse;
3e han be seke / I dar myn hede assure,
Or latè fed / in a feynt pastyre.

104

Lift vp 3oure hed / be glad, tak no sorowe!
And se shall hom ridè with vs to-morowe!
I seyë, whan 3e rested han 3our finlle.
Aftere super / Slepe wile do noñ ille.

108

Wrappe wel 3oure hede / with* clothês rounde aboute!
Strong notty ale / wol makë* 3ou to* route.
Tak a pilyow / þat 3e yte not* lowe!
3if nedë be / Sparë* not to blowe!
To holdë wynde / be myñ opnyyoun,
Wil engendre / Collikes* passiouen
And makë men to greuen / on her roppys,

112

whan thei han filled / her mawës and her croppys.

But toward nyght / ete some fenel Rede,

eat fennel-seed
at night,

116

and ride home
with em to-
morrow.

He bade me
drink natty ale,

1

frenchemule Ba. franchemule Ro. transmule Ra. franchemele L. franche-
moyle E. E. frauncher Mayle P. 102. ben. Ad. be Bo. M. sklendre Bo.
choysy Ba. 103. han Ar. Ad. Ad. I. L. haue Bo. and the rest. han om.
sicke E. 104. late fed] late I-fedde T. lette fede E. E. latte fede S.
105. take Bo. M. Ad. tak] and take P. In Bo. 1. 105 and 1. 106 have
been transposed. 106. shal] shul Bo. T. Du. M. Ra. T. 2. shold E.
should E. hom ride] ride hom Ad. Ad. I. Ar. has a pause after ride. 107.
S. T. P. E. L. Ro. Ap. restid han] haue restid Ad. I ; Ar. has a pause-
bar after 3e. 107-176 gap in E. 108. Slepe] to slepe Ad. I. wil do non] woll
hand altered to nopyy. mak Ar. make Bo. M. Ad. toj om. Ar. G. 111-337
gap in Du. 111. pat] and P. lowe to lowe L. Ad. Ad. I. P. 112. ill[1
And iff T. Sare] Sare Ar. spaar Ad. toj for to L. Ro. om. Ra. 114. Wil
116. han Bo. Ad. I. haue M. filled] yfyllde wele Ro. her mawes
117. fennel) febell T. venel L. 2. Rede I rede Ad. Ad. I. L. and Ro. have sede, I. has
seed, from 118.
To-morrow is a 119. 118. Orloger collyandir P. I. 133. Thow these Sly look and Caunterbury parse 136 I. 132 Ro. P. 124 ssey 134. I. 132 M. 137. And 132 orlagere shall M. 129. 130. is a LI. 124. 135. coriandre in parcell anoon M. Ad ne 129. 128. and not get up at midnight. He'd call me early; 120 and we'd start before Prime. 124 When we left Canterbury, 132 I was to tell a merry tale, 136

We leave Canterbury at sunrise, to dine at Ospringe. [PROLOG.]

To telle a taël / pleylyn as thei konne,
When I assigne / and se tyme opportune.
And for that we / or our purpos wil contyne,
We wil homward / the samé custome vse,
And thow shalt not / platly the excuse.
Be now wel war / Stody wel to-nyght!
But, for al this / be of herté liȝt!
Thy wit shal be / þe Sharper and the bet.'
And we anon / were to Soper set,
And seruëd wel / vnto our epleasance;
And sone after / be good gouernaunce
Vnto bed goth eueriy maner wight.
And touare morowe / anoñ as it was light,
Euery Pilgryme / bothé* bet and wors,
As bad oure hostē / toke a-noñ his hors,
When the sonnē / roos in the est ful clyere,
Fully in purpoos / to come to dyne
Vnto Ospringe / and brekē þer ouer faste.
And when we were / from Canterbury paste
Noghō the space / of a bowē draught,
Our hostē in hast / hab my bridel rauht,
And to me seide // as it were in game,
"Come forth, daun Ioñ / be your Cristene name,
And lat vs make / some manere myrth or play!

Shet, 3oure portoo / a twenty deunelway!
It* is no disport / so to patere and seie.
It wol make 3oure lippès / wonder dreye.
Tel some tale / and make ther-of a* Tape!
For be my Rouncy / thow shalt 7ot\(\text{e}\) esepe.
But preche not / of non holynesse!
Gynne some tale / of myrth or of gladnesse,
And noddé not\(\text{e}\) / with thyne heuy bekke!
Telle vs some thyng\(\text{e}\) / that\(\text{e}\) drawep to effecte
Only of Ioyë /! make no longer lette!"
And when I saughi / it woldē be no bette,
I obeyēd* / vnto his biddynge,
So as the lawē / me bonde in al thinges;
And as I coude / with a pale cheere,
My tale I gan / anon / as 3e shal here.

\textbf{Expli}{\textit{c}} Prologus.

\textit{Incipit} Prologus. \textit{Per &c}. 

162. Shet\(\text{e}\) Shet vp Bo. T\(\text{i}\), L\(\text{i}\), Di. P. leve Ad\(\text{e}\), I. portoo] portos G. Bo. Di.
Ra. P. portas L\(\text{i}\), portes E\(\text{p}\), portoys Ba. portoyses S. E\(\text{p}\). a] on
P. in a Ba. 163. It is T\(\text{e}\), L\(\text{i}\), Di. Ad\(\text{a}\), Ad\(\text{a}\), I. Ra. Ba. T\(\text{e}\), L\(\text{p}\), Ro. Hit is Bo.
P. Is (om. it) Ar. G. E\(\text{p}\) Ap. Is it S. no disport] no sporte L\(\text{i}\), T\(\text{e}\) none sporte
Di. a disport S. so] om. P. to] om. Ad\(\text{a}\), Ad\(\text{a}\), I. Ra. Ba. seie] to seye Bo. P.
so to seye T\(\text{e}\). 164. In T\(\text{e}\), 163 and 164 are transposed. 164. wonder] om. G. dreye]
om. Ar. G. 166. not] it not Bo. L\(\text{i}\), Ra. S. T\(\text{e}\), P. E\(\text{p}\), Ad\(\text{a}\), not it Di. Ba.
Gyf Bo. yeve T\(\text{e}\), Gyff vs L\(\text{e}\), or of] G. and of Bo. T\(\text{e}\), L\(\text{i}\), Ro. and Di. P.
bekke Ar. G. L\(\text{i}\), Ad\(\text{a}\), S. E\(\text{p}\), becck Ba. Ap. bek Bo. T\(\text{e}\), Ra. T\(\text{e}\), P. L\(\text{p}\), bece
Di. beke Ro. neke Ad\(\text{a}\) I. 170. vs] om. I. some thyng\(\text{e}\) merithing Di
(written by later hand, the original reaing being effaced). drawep\(\text{e}\) touchip\(\text{e}\) Di.
to]\om. G. til Ad\(\text{a}\), I. electrque Ar. L\(\text{i}\), Ad\(\text{a}\), I. S. P. E\(\text{p}\), electr Ba. effekke
G. Ad\(\text{a}\), efek Bo. T\(\text{e}\), Di. Ra. T\(\text{e}\), L\(\text{p}\), to effecte] of to speke Ro. In Ar. electrque
has been altered by a later hand into effekke.
171. make] and make Bo. T\(\text{i}\), L\(\text{i}\), Di. T\(\text{e}\), P. L\(\text{p}\), Ro. 172-176 in Di. almost effaced and partly filled in by a
later hand. 172. Wolde] woll P. 173. obeyed T\(\text{i}\), Di. Ra. Ad\(\text{a}\), I. P. E\(\text{p}\).
L\(\text{p}\), Ro. obeyde Ar. G. Bo. L\(\text{i}\), S. Ap. obehid Ad\(\text{a}\), Ba. T\(\text{e}\) (cp. 408). 174.
So] And I. Ro. And so G. (with And underdotted) om. Bo. T\(\text{i}\), L\(\text{i}\), Di.
lawe] haue (by later hand) Di. bonde] bonde L\(\text{i}\), S. Ro. allowid Ad\(\text{a}\), I. 175.
And] om. Ro. coude] couthe Bo. T\(\text{e}\), Ba. a pale full Ro. 176. I gan
anon] I began anon Ap. anon I gan S. began P. anon as] so as T\(\text{e}\), shal] shul
T\(\text{i}\), T\(\text{e}\), P. may G. om. Ra. here] aftir here P.
Lydgate will tell the Tale of the Siege of Thebes. [PT. I.

As I am now one of your company,

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

A city built by King Amphion.

How he raised the walls,

Prima Pars.

Irs / quod I \ sitli of your curtesye*

I entred am / in-to your companye,

And admitted / a talë for to telle

By hym hatō hap powere to compelle,

I mene our hoste, gouernour and guyde

Of 3ow echon / ridying her be-side;

Thogh that my wit / byarayn be and dul,

I wol rehece / a story wonderful,

Towchinge the siege / and* destructioune

Of worthy Thebees / the myghty Royal toun,

Byltē and begunne / of olde antiquitē,

Upon the tyme / of worthy Tione,

Be dyligence / of kyng Amphio n,

Chief cause first / of his fundacioun,

For which his fame / which neuere shal away,

In honoure floureth / 3itv vnto this day,

And in story / remembred is and preised.

But how the wallys / weren on heghte reised,

It v is wonder / and merveil forto here.
But if ye list / I shall sow platly here
The maner hool / shortly in sentence,
Vnder support / of 3oure pacience,
As writ myn auctour / and bochas both two,
Rede her bookes / and 3e shal fynde it so,
How this kyng / thus prudent Amphyoun,
With the sweetnesse / and melodious sound
*And armony / of his sweet song*
The Cytè bylts / that whilom was so strong,
Be vertue only / of the werbles sharpe
That he made / in Mercuries harpe,
Of which the strenges / were not touchd softe,
Wherby the wallës / reisëd weren a-lofte,
With-outë craft / of emyn mansy hond,
Ful seow agow / myd of Grekës loud;
which is a ping / of Poetës told,
Neuere yseyln / neither of some nor old.

*But, as Bochas / list to specifie,*
Cler expownying / this derkë poisye,
*Seith* Mercury / god of Eloquence,
3af, be the mght / of heuenly influence,
Vnto this kyng / at His natuittë
Thorgh glade aspectës / that he shuldë* be
Most excellent / be craft of Rethorik,
That in this worldë / was noo to hym lik ;
Which signifieth / to hem that be prudent,*

Amphion's Song was his crafty Speech, his sweet Words. [PT. I.

Alleged as being a corruption of the name Amphion, referring to the mythical musician who built Thebes. The passage describes the beautiful and harmonious qualities of his song, likening it to the lute, a musical instrument. The text contains various poetic constructions and references, typical of 16th-century English literature.

---

The Musical / the lusty instrument,  
I mene the harpe / most melodious,  
yové to this kyng / be Mercurius,  
And his song / this auctour can 30w teche,  
was no thyng / but the crafty speche  
Of this kyng / ycalléd Amphioun;  
Wher-by He made / the contrés envoyroun

To han such lust / in his wordés swete,  
That were so plesaunt / fauourable, and mete

In her Eerys / that shortly ther was noon

Disobeysaunt / 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 exortacioun

With hym they went / to byldé* first this toun,

And forsook / ecchi man his contré,

Be on assent / to maké this Cyté

Royal and riche / that lich was nowher noon.

And thus the wallis / made of lȳm and stoon,

Were Reyséid first / be syngyng of this kyng,'

lich as Poetys / feyne in her writyng,'

Passyng Rich / and Royal of entaille.

Her may 3e See / how myche may avaylle

The goodlihed / and lownesse of a kyng,'
And speechealy / in cher and in spekyng,
To his lyges and to berñ hym fayre

In his apport / and shewe hym debonayre,
And nat to bene / to straungë ne soleyn
In coñtenaunce / outwaerd / be disdeyn;
Which causep ofte / who that Can aduerte,

Grete hatred / in the puples herte,
And ther-vpon / priuely wol rowne,
When a pryncë / doth vp-on hem frowne,
Shortly deme / for al his excellence,
Amongst hem-silf / out of his presence,
Euerych condomï / lich ës fantasye.
And thus ful ofte / gendred is Envye
In folkës hertes / of soleynë and pryde,
For swich as list / nat onys loke a-syde
To Rewarde hem / when they lowë loute.

And ageyn kynde / it is · out of doute,
That eny hed / be recorde of the wyse,
Shuld the foot / of disdeyn despyse
Which berep hym vp / who so can takë hede,
And Susteneth / in his mostë* nede
As his Pyler / and his sowpowayle.

For fynaly, ne werë* the porayle
her berer vp / and Supportacioun,
Farwel lordshyp / and domynacioun
Thorgh-oute the world / of euer hagh estat!
Wherefor me seme^ / mor is Fortunatis

Of Mercurye / pe soote sugred harpe:
Than Mars / swer^ / whetted kene and sharpe,
Mor accepted / wi^ aspectis goode
Than is this god / with his lokês woode.

For humble speche / wi^ glad contenauce
May a pryncé / sothly mor avauncé
Among' his puple / Hertês forto wynne
Of inward louë / which that* wol not twyne,
Than gold / rychessë / pride / or tyranye,
Outher* disdeyne / daunger / or surquedye.
For of lorde /, as* Clerkês can reporte,
But' that* loue / her crownë do supporte,
The fyn ys noght* / in conclusion.

I Takë record^ / of kyng* Amphyoun,
That' byltë Thebês be his eloquence
Mor than of Pride / or of violence,
Noble and riche / that'lik was nowther non,
And thus the wallês / mad of lym and stoon
Were reisëd first / be syngyng of this kyng',
lich as Poetês / feyn in her wryting'*

How after the

But' sothly 3it^ / Some expositours,
Groundyng hem / vpon olde auctours,

268. For] And Bo. T3, L3, M. Di. were Bo. M. Ad1, wer Ar. 269. berer]
world] londe E2, lande E2, hegh] om. Ad1, Ad2, I. 271 and 272 transposed
in Ad1, Ad2, I. 274. Than] Thanne is T3. Whan Di. whetted] whet Bo. T3, L3, M. Di. T5, P. ground Ro. 277. speche Bo. M. Ad1, spech Ra. 280. which
that T3, which all the other MSS. 282. Outher Ar. G. outher Ro. Other Bo. M.
either Ad1, Ra. disdeyne] this deyne Ra. 283. For] Or E2, S. om. Ro. of] Of
T1, M. Di. T2, P. Ro. Ap. That but if L3 (see Notes), louë] om. Bo. crowne]
coroun T3, do] doth Ba. T2, Ro. to G. om. Ad1, Ad2, I. 285. noght]
nat Ar. G. Ap. not E2, E2. 287. bilt Bo. G. M. Ad1, 290. mad] y made
294 om. in Ba.
Cadmus sets out the site of Thebes with bull's-hide strips.

Seyn that Cadmus / the famous olde man,
Ful longe afor / this Cité first began
And the grounde / of the bieldyng sette,
And the boundes / be compas out-mette*
With thonge out-korve / of a boolyss hyde,
Whychi envyroun / strechē myghtē* wyde
To gete Inne londe / a ful largē space
Wher-vp-on to byld / a dwellyng place,
And callew was the Soyle / þus geten Inne,
¶ Whylym Boece / of the boolyss skynne.
The name after / into Thebēs turned.
¶ But Cadmus ther / hath longe not soiuerned,
lik in Story / as it is compiled;
For shortly he from thennys was exiled,
Neuer after to dweluen* in this town,
Be the knyghthode of this Amphioun,
Which vp parformeth / rihe for the noonys
The Cité Thebes / of myghty squarē* stonys,
As I sow tolde / a litil here to-forn;

16 I'll not talk longer of Cadmus as my Tale 'll last for 7 miles. [PT. I.

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

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

† Now have I told / vnto 30u / ground of al,
That ye wel knowe / be Informacioun
Cleerly the pith / and exposicion
Of this mater / as clerkës can 3ou telle.

It 'ere were but veyn / lenger for to dwelle,
To tary 3ow / as in this matiere,
Sith my talë / which that ye shal here,
Vpon our waie / wil lasten a longe while,
The space* / as I suppose / of vii. myle.

And now ye knowë* / first how Amphion
Bylt and began / this Cite and this toun,
Regnyng ther / longe aftere, as I rede.
Of hym no morë / ; for I wil procede
To my purpoos / that I first began:
Not* tellyng here / how the lynë Ran
From kyng to kyng / be successiou,
Conveying douñ / ye stok of Amphion
Cereonsly be lynëal* discents;
But leue al this /, pleynly of entent
To tellë forth /, in bookës as I rede,
† How layus be processe / gan succes
[leaf 6, back]
To bere the Croune / in this myghty Londe,
holdyng the Sceptre of thetës in his hond,
Manly and wys / duryng al his lift.

And Iocasta / calléd was his wyff,
Ful wommanly / the story seith certeyn,
For a tymé / thogli she were bareyñ,
Tyl Layus / in ful humble wise
To haue a child / didé* Sacrifice,
Fyrst to* apollo / in his char so bri3t,
And Juba / that am a myght,
Besechyng hem / with denouët reverence,
To graunt one / thorghli 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 / thorghli his rytyys olde,
Eveyn lik / as his hertë wolde,
The queene Iocasta / hatli anon conceuyed ;
Which whan the kyng / fully hatli perceuyed*
He made in hast /, hym lyst not to abide,
Thorghi hys kyngdom / Massagerës ryde
Fro Coost to Coost / the story can devyse,
For dyvynoures / and phylosophres wise,
For suchi as weren / famous physicians
And wel expert / Astronomyens,
To Come* in hast / vnto his presence
To fynden* out / shortly in sentence,


THEBES.
Astronomers calculate the fate of the child Edippus. [PT. I.]

By Craft only / Of Calculacioun,
The Chyldes fate* / and disposicioun;
And ther-vpon / to zvee / a Figemment;
The Root* ytaken* / at the ascendent;
Trewly sought* out / be mynut* and degré
The silfè* hour / of his natyvtye;
Not forsete / the heuenly mansious
Clerly Cerched / be smalè fracciouns,
First* be Secoundës / tiers and ekè quartes,
On Augrym stoonës / and on white caartes,
ypreuëd out* / be diligent* labour,
In tables correcte / devoyde of al error
Iustly soght* / and founde / out* bothe* twoo,
The zeerës collecte* / and expance also,
Consyrd ek / be good inspeccioun
Every hour* / and constellacioun
And eche aspecte / and lookës ek dyners,
Which were good / and which also pervers,
Wher they were touard / or ellys at debat,
*happy, welful / or infortunat.
And fyanal / in conclusyoun,
They founde satourn / in the Scorpioun,
Hevy-chered / malencolik / and lothi

And woodē* Mars / furious and wroth,
holdynge his Sceptre / in þe Capricorn,
The samē hourē* / whan this chylde was born,
Venus deicete / and Contrarious
And depressēd / in Mercuryes hous;
That the dome / and Iugēmentē fynal
Of thies Clerkēs / to speke in special,
Be Fatal sortē / which may notē be wipdrawe,
That with his swerē / his fader shal be slawe;
Ther may no man helpe itē / nor excuse.

On whiche thynge / the kyngē gan soreē muse,
And castē he wolde / on that other side
Agayn her doomē / for hym-silfe provide,
Shape a way / and remedy to-forūn,
Biddynge the QUEENÉ / whan the chyld were born,
With-oute Mercy / or moderly pytē
That he be dedē / itē may noñ other be.
And in al hastē / lik as he hathē sentē,
She obeyēd / his commaundēmentē.

With wooful herte / and a pitous loke
And facē pale / her ʒongē sone she toke,
Tendre and grenē / both of flessh and bonys,
To certeyn men / ordeynēd for þe noonyes,
Thinking on

From poynt to poynt / in al manerē þing
To execute / the biddynge of the kyng.

They durste not delay it / nor abide,
But to a Forest / that stood fer bysde, 416
They took Her wey and faste gan hem sped
The kyngges wille / to perforne in dede,
Havyng 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 anoñ ful hygh / vpon a tre,
In a placé / that no man myght se,
They henge hym vp / the story kan rerehe.
But first* his feet* / porgh / they gan to perce,
And on bowës tendre / tough, and smale,
They knet* hym vp / shortly ïs is no tale,
Hym to preserue / from bestys wild* and Rage.
And after that* / they* token her viage
Toward Thebës / in alle the hast they may.

The same day
King Polibon's huntsmen

Thorgh the forest* / gamë forto fynde,
Some aforn / and somë / cam behyndë,

And gan serch / and seke wonder sore
Among' the hillës / and the holtës* hore.

And as they Reenge / the trenchis by and by,
They herde a noyse / and a pitous cry
Of thy chyl'd / hangyng' on the tre;
And alt at onys / drowë forto se,
And lefte not til* they han hym founde;
And toke hym doune / and his fete vnbounde,
And bare hym hom / vnto Polybou
Kyn' of Archadye / the famous Regioun.

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

And first' the kyn'g in his Royal halle*
Made his men / an norys for-to calle,
This zonge 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 succeed;

440. the hilles] hilles P. holtes] haltes Ar. G. 441. they] the Ar. renge
Edippus grows up proud, and is askt why he is so.

[PT. I.

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

¶ But by processe / of dayēs and of 3eeris,

This Edyppus / among his pleying feiris
was in his port' / passyng ful of pride,
That' noñ with hym / myght in pees abide.
In hert' he was / so Inly Surquydows,

Malencolik / and Contrarious,

Full of despyt' / and of hegh disdeyn,

That no wight' durstē* / shortly hym with-seyn;
Til on a day / he gan with oon debate
To whom he hadde / specyaly grete hate,

Which of Rancour / and of hasty tene,
As he that' myght / His pridē not' sustene,

Gan vpon hym / cruelly abrayde,

And vnto hym felly / thus he saide:

"wherto," quod he / "artow so proude of port',
Contrarie also / euer / in oure disport',
Froward and felle / lastyng euere in oon,

As thow were lord / of vs euerichon,

And presumest' fully in wyrchynge,
Lik as thow were sone / vnto the kyng,

And descended / of His Royal blood?

Di. L 1. P. L 2. Ro. 471. he was] was he M. Di. so] om. S. 472. and] and eke
M. Di. T 2 474. durste Di. Ra. durst Ar. dorst Bo. T 1. M. Ad., shortly
hym] him shortli Ad., hym] om. Ad. 1. 476. specyaly] grete and
odyous Ro. 478. might His pride not] might not his pryde Bo. T 1. Du. L 1.
arthow T 3 ar tow Du. 485. presumest fully] fully presumest Bo. alone.
oure Bo. Ra. to the I. to a Lb.
But wher so be / thow be wroth or wood,
Thow art no thing / and thow list takë hede,
Apportenyng / vnto his kynrede,
But in a Forest / founden and vnknewe,
whan thow were zonge / therfor bere the lowe!

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And vttrelly* remembre, zif the lyst,
Thy byrth and blood / ar bothe two vnwist.

This the fyne / shortly / of my tale.

Wherwith Edippus / gan to weë* pale,
And chaunge also cheer and contenance,
And gan a-point / in his* remembraunce
Word be word / and forget* right nouz't,
And felly / musëd* / in his ownë thouz't,
And cast he wold / with-oute more tarying*
The trouthe enquire / of polibonz the kyng.

And whan he saugh / opportunë space,
And the kyng* / in a* sycë place,
He hym bysoghte / lowly on his kne
To his request* // benignely* to se,
And that he woldë / pleylny / and not spare
Of his byrth / the trewë ground* declare,
And make hym sure / of this thyng* anoûn
zif he were / his verrey sone or no.

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[leaf 9]

Edippus is taken
aback by this,

And Polyboun / only of gentilles, 512
when he beheeld / the greté hevynesse
Of Edippus / and the wooful peyne,
he gan dissimule / and in manere feyne,
ilk as he had be / verrely his heyre.
But mor and mor / he falleth in dispeir,
And doune on kneës / eti a-geyn gan falle,
Hym conjuring 1/ be the goddes alle
To tellö trouth / and no thyngë to hide;
Affermyng ek / he woldë* nat' abide
Lenger with hym / but ryden and' enquire,
Til tyme he may / the verrey sothe lere
In any part' of hap or of fortune.
And for that he / was so inportune
In his desire, the kyngë with-out' abood
Seriusly / tolde hym* how it' stood,
In a Forest t first / how he* was founde
Vpon a tre / be the feet ybounde,
And how he caste, in conclusioun,
To make hym kyng / of that' regioun
After his day / shortly forto telle.
But Edippus / wil no lenger dwelle,
But took lieve / and in hast' gan ryde
To a temple / faste ther be-syde

Of Appollo / in storie as is tolde, 536 538 whom statue is in a chariot of gold, 541 but un unclean
Whos statue / stood / in a char of golde 538 541 spirit is inside it.
On* whelos four / bornyed bright and shene; 540
And with-In a spirit / ful vnclene, 536
Be fraude only / and fals collusioun, 537
Answere gaf / to euery questioun, 540
Bryngyng the puple in ful gret erroour, 544
Such as to hym dyden fals honour 544
Be Rytyes vsed in the oldë dawes 544
Aftere custome / of paganysmes* lawes. 544
And Edyppus / with ful humble chere, 547
To Appollo makëd His preiire, 547
Besechyng hym on his kneës lowe, 548
Be some signë / that he myghte knowe, 548
Thorg Evidencë Shortly comprehendyd, 548
Of whatë kynredë / that he was descendyd. 548
If And whan Edyppus be gretë deuocioun, 552
Fynysshëd hath / fully his orysoun, 552
The fend* anoñ / with-Innen Invisyble, 552
With a vois dредful and horrible, 556
Bad hym in hastë / taken his viage 556
Towardë Thebës / wher of his lynage 556
He herën shal / and be certeied.
And on his way / anoñ he hap hym hyed, 556
by hasty Iournë / so his hors constreyned

Day be day til he hāp atteeyned
Vnto a castel / Pylotes ycall
Rich and strong / and wel aboute walled,
Adiacent / be sytt of the contrē
And perteynent* to Thebes the Cytet:

If kyng Layvs / beyng ther present,
For-to holde a maner tournement
With his knyghtēs / songe and coraious,
And other folkēs / that were desyrous
To preue hem-sylf / shortly for-to telle,
Who by force / other myght excelle,
Or gete a namē / thorgh his hēgh prouesse.
Euerich of hem / dyd his bysynesse
On hors-bak / and also ek on footē,
Al be that somē founde ful vssoote,
Rather a plye of werē / than of pees;
Wher Edyppus put hym-silf in prees,
As he that was / ay redy to debat,
Enforsyng hym / to entren at the gate,
Mangre ah tho / that hym woldē* lette.

And in the pres / of aventure he mette
Kynes layvs / and cruelly hym slogh,
Thow the story / writ not the maner how bi,
Ne no wight can / of alle the companye

Be no signë / verrely espys\[584\]e
By whos hond / that\[588\] the kyng\[592\] was slawe ;
For Edip\[599\]us in hast\[602\] / gan hym with-drawe;
And kepy\[602\] hym Coy / of entencioun.
Gret was the noys\[588\]e / and the pitous soun\[599\].
In the Castel / for slaughter of the kyng\[599\],
Dooel and compleyn\[602\] / sorowe and wepy\[588\]nt.

† But\[584\] for they sey\[602\]g / hevynesse and thog\[592\]t\[599\]e
Ageyns\[596\]s deth \[604\] / vayleth lit or noght\[599\],
They ord\[602\]eyn\[592\]e with Ryytys ful Roy\[596\]al
For the feste / callï\[600\]d / Funerall.
And lik the custom / of the day\[596\]s olde,
The corps they brent\[602\] / into asshe\[596\]s colde,
And in a vessel / rounde, mad as a bal,
They closed hem in gold \[604\] and in metal.
And after that did her bys\[596\]e Cure
In Theb\[596\]ës to make a seply\[596\]e
And richely, hem list no lenger lette,
The asshe\[596\] dide\[599\] * they enclose and shette.

Of this mater\[602\]e / ther ys* no mor to seyn.
But to Edip\[596\]us / I wil retourn\[596\]e ageyn\[596\],
Which hym enhaste\[596\]p / ay fro day to day
Towardës Theb\[596\]ës / in al that\[602\]e euere he may,
Brennyng in herte / hoot\[596\] as eny fire,
The fy\[596\]n to knowe / of his fatal desire.

†† But, for that he fail\[608\]ëd / of a Guyde,
Out\[608\] of his waye / he wente fer be-side,
Thorg a wylde / and a waast contre,
By a mounteyni / that stood vpon the see,
Wher that\(t\) monstres / of many dyuers kynde
Were conuersant\(t\) / in story as I fynde;
Amonges* which / sothly ther was o\(n\),
So Inly cruel / that\(s\) no man durst\(t\)\(g\)o\(n\),
For drede of deth / forby that passage,
This monstre was so mortal in his rage,
which hadde also, be descriptioun,
Body and feet\(t\) / of a fers lyoun;
And lik a mayde in soth was hede and face,
Fel of his look / and cruel to manace,
And odyous of countenaunce and sight;
And as I red\(e\) / Spynx / this monstre hight,
Wors than Tygre / dragon / or serpent,
And I suppose\(t\) / by enchaunte\(t\)\(m\)\(e\)
He was ordeyn\(o\) / on the hyl tabyde,
To sleen a\(l\) tho / that\(s\) pass\(e\)den be-syde,
And specially / a\(l\) that\(s\) diden* fayle
To expowne / his mysty dyvynaile,
His problem ek / in word\(e\)s pleyn and bare
With-oute avys / opynly to* declare,
Or with the lif / he myghte not\(e\) eskape.
This verray soth platly and no Iape.
And zif that\(s\) he, be declaracioun,
3af ther-vpon / cleer exposicioun,
He shuld in hast / there was no\(n\) oper mene,

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

But of al this Edyppus ignoraunte,
This dredeful hiß / stondyng on a roche,
Er he was war / gan ful nyghi approche,
More perilous platly / than he wende.
And sodeynly / the monster* gan* descende,
To stoppen his way / and letten his passage,
Thus abraydyng^2 • with a fel corage:

¶ "I have in herte Inly gret^1 disport
That^1 fortune / ha^2 broght^1 the to my sort;
To make a proef^1 / 3if thou mayst endure,
The fatal ende / of this aventure,
Set at^1 a fy^n / sothly be daës olde."

And by and by / al the caas hym tolde,
Charging^1 hym to be wel war and wise,
Gete the palme / and bere away the pryse
Touchyng^1 this thyng^1 / sette a-twene vs tweyn,
with lyf or deth / which we shal dareyn.

¶ And this Monstre / with a despitous chere
his program gan / thus as ze shall here.

¶ "Ther is a beest^3 mervelous to se,
The which in soli at^1 his natiuyte
Is of his myght^1 / so tender and so grene,
That he may hym-siluë* nat^1 sustene
Vpon his fete / thogh he hadde it sworn,
But 3if that^1 he / be / of his moder born.

And afterwardes / be processe of age,
On fourte fete / he makep his passage;
After on thre / if I shal not feyne,
And alderlast / he goe vpriight on tweyne;
Dyneers of port / and wonderful of cherys:
Til, be length / of many sondry 3eeres,
Naturally / he goth ageyn on thre,
And sith on foure, it may non oper be,
And Fynaly / this the truthë* pleyn,
he retourneth / kyndëly ageyn
To the matere / which thate he kam fro.
¶ loo / her is al /. my problem is I-do.
Muse her-vpon / with-outé werre or stryff
It to declare / or ellis lese thy lyff."
And whan Edyppus / gan this ping aduerte,
Wel assured in his manly herte,
Gan in his wytt cerchen vp and doun, 
And of prudence / cast in his resoun, 
Be grete avis / whate thyng this may be;
Seyng also / thate he may not flee,
and how ther was / counsel noon ne rede,
But tellë trouthe / or ellys to be dede. 
And be ful good / deliberaciaun
Thus he answerd / in conclusion, 

‘Thowe Spynx’ quod he / ‘fals and fraudulent’!
Thow foule* Monstre / thow dragon, thow serpent’!
which on this hyl / lich as I conceyve,
ylst in a-waite / folkës to deceyve,

665. afterwaerdes Bo. afterward M. Ad1. 668. vpright] vpritht Ar. vp-rygh
probleme, is all ido E2. In Ar. a third pause-bar after problem. 677. without 
Bo. withoute M. Ad1. 679. gan] can E2. 681. his] om. G. 684. also 
L2. to Bo. Du. and I. 686. tell] to telle Du. 688. Thus] This Lb. 
answerd Bo. M. Ad1. Ra. answered Lb. answerd Di. 690. foule] vyle Ar. G. 
Edippus solves the Problem the Sphinx set him.

But trust wel / for al thy sleighty wit,
Thy falsë* fraudë / shal anoñ be qwyt.
Me list not nowe whisper neither rowne,
But thy problem / I shal anoñ expowne
So opynly / thou shalt not go ther-fro.
Ioo! this it is / tak good hede therto!
¶ Thilkë* best thou spak of herto-forn,
Is every man / in this world yborñ,
Which may not goñ / his lynës be so softe,
Bot as his moder / bereth hym alofte
In her armes / when he doth crye or* wepe.
And after that / he gynnethi forto crepe
On fourë*.feet* in his tendre yOUTH,
Bexperience / as it is ofte kouth,
A-forn yrekned / his hondës bothë* two.
And by processe / thow 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 walkëp vpon tweyn:
Til it so be / thorth agë / he atteyn,
That lust of yOUTH the wasted be and spent;
Than in his hond / he taketh a potent,
And on thré fete / thus he goth ageyn,

32 Edippus has solved the Problem and will kill the Sphinx. [pt. 1.

I dar affermre / thow maist it not\* withseyen,
And some ather / thorghini hi\$ vnweldy myght,
By influence / of naturys right\*,
Bexperience / as every man may knowe,
Lich a child\* / on four he crepeth lowe.
And for he may no whyl\* here soiourne,
To erth ageyn / he most in hast\* retoure,
Which he kam fro /, he may it not\* remewe\*.
For in this world / no man may eschewe,
This verryay soth / shortly and no doute,
Whan the wheel of kynd\+ cometh aboute,
And naturally hath his cours y-Ronne
Be circuete / as doth the shen\$ sonne,
That\* man and\+ chylde\* of hegh and lowe estat;
It\* geyneth nat\* to make\+ / mor debat,
His tym\+ sette / that\* he moste* fyne,
When Autropos / of malice doth vntwyne
His lyv\+s thred / by Cloto first compounded.
Loo / her thy problem / fully is expowned,
At\* oure metynge / as I took on honde,
To the lawe / that\* thou most ned\+s stonde
And in al hast / of myn hond\$ deye,
But of reson / thow can it\* ought\+ withseye.'
And so this Spynx / awapyd and amaat',

PT. I. \ Having killd the Sphinx, Edippus reaches Thebes. 33

Stood / disamayëd / and dysconsolaaat,
With Chier doune-cast' / Muët, pale, and ded.

And Edippus anôi smote of the hed
Of this fende / stynkyng* and vnswe,te,
And the Contrè sette holy in quyete;
Wherby he hath / such a pris ywonne
That his fame is euery cost' yronne

Thorgh al the londe / that' he the monstre hath slawe.

And lyné-right / to Thebës he gan drawe,
Wel receyuëd / for his worthynesse,
For his manhode / and his grete* prouesse.
And for they segh / he was a semly knyght,
Wel fauourëd / in euery manny's sight,
And sawh also Thebës the myghty toun,
Not only they / but al the Regioun,

Weren destitut / of a gouernour,
Aȝeyst* her foon / hauyn' no socour
Hem to defendë* / but' the queene alloñ;
Among* hem-self / makyng' ful gret moñ,
For heire was non / as bookës specifie,
The Sceptre / or crownë forto occupie:
For which the lordës aht be on assent
with-Inne the toun / set a parlémte,

Shortly concludyng / if it' myghte ben,

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

And thorugh counsayl / of the lordes alle
To her desyre / pleynly / she is falle,
And accorded / with-oute mor tarying,
That of Thebés / Edippus shall be kyng,
By ful assent / was noñ that* seide* nay.
And tymé set / ageyn a certeyn day
Among' hem-silf / and finaly devisyed,
The weddyng was / in Thebés solempnyzed

Ful ryally, which nedës most' vnthryve,
Only for he his moder / toke to wyve,
Vnwist' of bothë* / he was of her blode,
And ignoraunt' / shortly, how it' stode,
That he to-forn hadde his fader slawe,
For which this weddyng' was ageyn the lawe.

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

And holy write; recordeth in sentence
How herode’s / falsly in his lyff,
By violence toke his brother wyf,
For she was faire / and plesaunt to his sight,
And kepe her stille / be force* / jorgh his myght,
Al be to her* / he haddé / title noñ;
And for her sake / the holy man seynt: Ioñ
For his truth / in prison lost’ his hede.

Therfor I rede / every man take hede,
Wherso he be Pryncë, lorde, or kyng,
That he be* war teschewë such weddyng,
Er that the swerde / of vengeaunce hym manace,
lest he lesë / hap, fortune, and grace;
Takyng ensample / in al manere thynge
Of Edyppus / in Thebës crownëd kyng*;
Al be that he wroght of ignoraunce,
Ful derk and blynde / of his woful chaunce.

And 3if wynist* / he of Innocence,
As 3e han herde, fil in such ofence,
For which he was punishëd* and brought* lowe,
What* ar* they worthy that her error knowe,
And fro the knottë / list not to abstone
Of such spousale / to god and man vneclene?
I can not* seyn / nor mor therof devise.

Demeth your-silf that* prudent ben and wise,
And Edippus / hath amongst in mynde,


* The wedding of Edipus
No Muse was at Edippus's unhappy Wedding.  [PT. I.

was unhappy.

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

I am very mor therof to write.
The hatful processe / also to endyte
I passe owe, fully of entent.
For ymenëus / was not ther present,
Nor lycyna / list not ther to shyne,
Ne ther was none / of the musys nyne
By on accord / to makë melodye;
For ther songe not be heenenly Armony
Neither Clyo / nor Calyopë,
On of the sustren / in nombre thriës thre,
As they dysë* whan philolegye
Ascendid vp hegh above the skye
To be weddid / this lady vertuous
Vnto hir lord / þe god mercurius;

None of the Nine Muses was at it,

as they were at Philology's marriage in Heaven to Mercury:

see Martianus de Capella.

[leaf 14, back]

The poete, that whilom was so sage,
That this lady, callëd sapience,
I-wedded was vnto eloquence;
As it sat wel, by heenenly puruëaunce,
hem to be ioyned / be knot of Aliaunc.

But bothë* two, sothly, of entent

At the weddye / in Thebes were absent;
That caused after / grete aduersitie.
For fynal eende / of that solemnpyt
was sorowe / and wo / and destruccion,
Vtter ruyne / of this Royal toun.
Ther may no man helpe it nor socoure,
For a tyme / in Ioye / thoug they floure.
But at this weddye / 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 brouws 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,
Tresouz · pouerte / Indigence, and nede,
And cruel detli / in his Rentë Wede,
Wretchednesse / compleynt* / and eke Rage,
Fer ful pale / derknesse / croked age,
Cruel mars / as eny Tygre wood,
Brennyng Ire / of vnkyndë blood,
Fratal hatë / depë sett th' rote,
Sauz only death / that ther nas not bote,

The dread Guests at Edippus's Wedding.

Edippus's wedding brought about the ruin of Thebes.

† The Infortunat
† folk put weren at ye weddyng.
† Cerberus
† Herebus
† Nyght & her thee doghtren

† Drede
† Fraude
† Trecherie
† Tresouz
† Pouerte
† Indygence
† Nede
† Deth
† Cruel Mars

† Alle pise folk weren at the wedding of
Edyppus's Reign in Thebes was prosperous at first. [PT. I.

Edyppus and Iocasta
Edyppus reignd long in Thebes,

Thebes was prosperous at first, and Edyppus had two sons and two daughters by Iocasta, and led at first a merry life.

But when Edyppus was most famous, Fortune cast him into woe.

One night

Jocasta sees the Wound-marks on Edippus's feet.

Or he was war / Jocasta gan byholde
The Carectys of his woundës olde,
Vpon his fete / enprented wonder depe ;
Turnyng' her face / brast out forto wepe
So secretly / he myght' it not espie.
And she anon / fille into a fantasie,
Ay on thys thynge'/ mnsynge mor and more,
And in her bed / gan to sighe sore.

And when the kyng' / conceuyetli her distresse,
He gan enquire / of her hevynesse
Fully the cause / and occasional ;
For he wil wite / in conclusioun,
What her eilep / and why she ferde so.

"My lorde," quod she / "withoute wordës mo,
Parcel cause / of this sodeyn rage
Is for that I in my tender age
had a lorde / I-named Layus,
kyng of this toune / a man rïst vertuus,
Be whom I hadde / a sonë / wonder-fair' ;
likly tabene / his successour and hair' ;
But' by causë / his dyvynours tolde
At his birthë / sothly that he sholde,
3if he haue lyf / be fatal destanyè,
Sleen his fader / it may non òper be ;
For which the king' / his fatë to eschewe,
Bad me in hast' / as hym thoghte dewe,
To sle the childe / and haue therof no routh :
And I anûd bad with-outë slouthi

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,

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

Layus bade

Jocasta kill her babe.
told to do it,

bored the child's feet, and hung him on a tree.

There, hunters found him.

Of late, Layus was slain

*Certeyn men / vp peyne of Iugémente, To* executë / the commaundemente

Of the king / as I gaf hem in charge.
And forth they gon / to a forest, large,
Adiacent /-vnto this contrè,
Percen his fete / and honge hym on a tre,

Nat parfourmyng / theexecuciuon.
On hym they haddë / such compassioun.

lefte hym ther / and hom resort' ageyn,
Beyng' in doute / and in noñ certeyn,

At theyre repeire / as they tolden alle,
Of this childe / whatâ afterward is falle;

Sauë they saidë / huntys han hym founde,
Which lad hym forth / and his feet vnbounde;

But to whatâ coostâ they coude notâ declare.

Which parcel is of myn evel fare,

Grounde and cause / of myn hevy chere,

Considred ek the woundës that appere

Vpon 3oure fete /, and woot' notâ whatâ they mene.

And on thyng / ay / is at myn herte grene,

My lord, alasâ: butâ of newë date:

kyng Layus / slayën* was butâ late

At a Castel / nyghi by this contré,  
vpon whose comýng / into this Cité.  
Al this yweied / and rekned into on,  
Maketh myn herté / hevy as a stoñ,  
So that I can counsel / non / nor Rede.”  
And with that word the kyng lift vp his hede,  
And abrayd / with sharpe sighês smerte,  
And al this thing be ordre / gan aduerte,  
Ceriously / be good avisëment';  
And by signës / cleer and evident  
Conceuyeth wel /, and sorë gan repente,  
It was hym-silf / that Iocasta mente.  
And whan the Quene / in manere segh hym pleyñ,  
By her goddes / she gan hym to constreyne  
To shewen out the cause of his affray,  
And it expowne / and makë no delay,  
Crop and root / shortly, why that he  
Entred first / into that contré,  
Fro when he kam / and fro what region.  
But he hir put / in dilusioñ,  
As he haddë* done it for the nonys.  
Til at the* laste / he brak out atonys  
Vnto the queene / and gan a processe make  
First how he was / in the forest take,  
wounded the feet / and so forp euery thyng;  
Of his Chershingt / with Polyboun the kyng;  
And hool the causë / why he hym forsoke,

when Edippus came into the land.

Jocasta asks why Edippus came to Thebes.

Edippus sighs.

He says he was taken, with his pierat feet,

to King Polibon:

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

And in what wise / he the weyke 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 when it was ful* late,
And how to Thebes that he gan hym spede
To fynden oute / the stok of his kynrede:
which vnto hym gan to wexo* couth;
For by processe / of his grene south
he fonde out 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 newe sorowe:
Which vnto me were tedious to telle;
For ther-vpon /3 If I shulde dwelle,
A long space it wolde occupie.
But I may reden in a Tragedye
Of Moral Senyk fully his endynghe,
His dool, his meschiff / and his compleynyngs;
How with sorow / and unweselde age
This Edippus / fille into dotage,
lost his wit / and his worldly delit,
And how his sonës* / had hym in despit,
And of disdeyn / tok of hym no kepe.
And bookës seyn / his eyen out he wepe,

And as myn auctour liketh to devise,
As his sones rebuke hym and dispise,
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,
Fully devoidë / both of lone and drede.

And whan Edippus / for meschief was thus dede,
with-Inne a pytte / made in the erthe* lowe,
Of cruelte / / his sonës / han hym throwe,
Wers* than serpent* / or eny tigre wood.
Of Cursid stok / cometh vnkynde blood,.
As in story / 3e may rede her to-forn;
Al be the Roosë* / grow / out* of a thorn.
Thus of Edippus /, whan he was blynde and old,.
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.
To do honur* // and duë* reuerence
To fader and* moder / of what estat thei be,
Or certeyn / elles / they shul neuere the.

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<td>1004</td>
<td>And as myn auctour liketh to devise, As his sones rebuke hym and dispise, 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, Fully devoidë / both of lone and drede. And whan Edippus / for meschief was thus dede, with-Inne a pytte / made in the erthe* lowe, Of cruelte / / his sonës / han hym throwe, Wers* than serpent* / or eny tigre wood. Of Cursid stok / cometh vnkynde blood, As in story / 3e may rede her to-forn; Al be the Roosë* / grow / out* of a thorn. Thus of Edippus /, whan he was blynde and old, 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 To do honur* // and duë* reuerence To fader and* moder / of what estat thei be, Or certeyn / elles / they shul neuere the.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1008</td>
<td>and tore his eyes out; and how his corpse was thrown into a pit by his sons.</td>
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<td>1012</td>
<td>From cursed stock comes un-natural child.</td>
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<td>1016</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
For who that is not to hem debonayr
In spechi, in port/ / for to trete hem fair,
Hem to obeye / in honestè and dredre,
And to cherisssh* / of what they han nede,
That he shall first be infortunat
In alle his werk / both on see and lond,
And of what thyngh that he take on honde
Fortuné froward / to hym and contrayre*,
Waanst* of his good /, pleynly and appaire,
Fyndé plenté / of contek / werre, and striff,
Vnhappy ende / and shortnesse of liff,
And gracelees / of what he hath to* do,
Hatred of god / and of man also.

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

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

Secunda pars.

1031. werk] werkus Lb. on] on Je G. in Lb. 1032. of] after M. Di. thyng]
1033. Fortune froward] For the tyme forward Eò. to hym and] and to hym Eò,
contrayre Lb. Eò. Eò. Lò. contrayre Ar. Bo. and the rest, except S., that has
to do] at do Ar. G. a do Tò. a dò Ap. addo P. he hath to do] that he haje
Lò. recochele M. Di. 1042. thyng] thinges Eò. caas Lb. gretyly* gretlich Ar.
were] was Lb. gretyly were] wer gretyly Ra. Ba. P. 1043. 3e] he G. here Ar.
Secunda Pars.

Assèd the throp / of Bowtoun on þe ble,
By my chilyndre / I gan anoñ to se,
Thorg þe sonnë / þat ful cler gan shyne,
Of þe clok that it drogh to nyne;
And saugh also þe siluer dropês shene
Of þe dewe / lich peerlys* / on þe grene,
Vapoured vp in-to the eire* alofte,
when zephyrus / with his blowing softe
þe wedere madë lusty / smoth / and feir,
And right* attemprè / was the hoolsom eir*;
The same hour / aþ the hools* Route
Of the pylgrymes / rydyng* roundê aboute,
In my tælê / when I gan procede,
Rehercynþ forth / as it was in dede,
When Edippus / buryed was and graue;
How his sones / the kyngdam for to haue,
Amongþ hem-silf / be ful mortal hate

46 Edipus's Sons, Eteocles and Polyneices, quarrel. [PT. II.

For the crownē / gonnē to debate 1064
which of hem / Iustly / shal succede,
And the Sceptre / of the toune possede;
Advertyng nought / neither to right
But eche of hem / to make her partie stronge,
And his querele / proudly to sustene:
From whos hertēs / was devoyded* clene
Of brotherhode / the faithful alliaunce.
Fals Couetise / so made hem at distaunce,
Fully worcyng into destruccions
And Ruyne / of this noble toune.
So hootē brente the hatred and envie
Of bothe two / thorgli pompous Surquedeye,
That nowther woldē* / pelynly in a poynē
Other forbern* / they stod in such disioynte
as thow* they hadde / of berthē* be foreyns.
Tyl of the toune / the noble Citezeyns,
knyghtēs, Barounes / with many worpi lord,
Shope a way / to mak' hem of accord,
And to set' hem / in quyet / and in pees.

But for his part' / this Ethiocles
Alegge gan that' he was first yborn;

Each lookt to his own interest only.

Neither of Edipus's sons would give way to the other,
[leaf 18, back]
so the citizens of Thebes settled that the
elder, Eteocles,

But polymyte / of ful hegh disdeyn,
Al opynly gan replie ageyñ
And for his partt / seide, in special,
Reson was non / that he shuld haue alle
Regaly and domnacioun,
And the lordship hooly of the toun,
And he rightt noughtt /, out of the Cytè
But* lyve in exile / and in pouertè,
Ful concludyng1, with-oute feer and dred,
Rather than suffre that /, he wil be ded.
And thus, allass / thorgh her envious strif,
At the ende / euerych loste his lif,
Att grett mischief / as 3e shal after here.
Butt thyldt tyme the lordès al yfere
Ful bysily did her dyligence,
By grett avis / and ful high prudence,
To setten hem in quyete and in Reste;
Conselynyng2 hem pleynly for the beste,
To leve her strif / of wisdam and resoun,
And condescende / to somme conclusioun

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 convencion of the bretheren.

They shall change yearly.

Both Eteocles

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

To for the goddys / be oth of sacrament,
Neuer after to grochē* ne to varye,
But a-complisshēn Shortly / and not tarye,
lich as thaccord / enrolled in the toune,
From poyntt to poyntt / madē mencioun.

But alderfirstt / be reson of his age,
Ethyycles / haddē thauauantage
To regne aform / and to were a crowne,
Polymytē / hym hastyng outt of toune
Duryngt that 3eer / itt may non other be,
Whil his brother /sat/ in his Royal Se

Ful richēly vpon fortunē wheel;
And rode hym forth / armēd bright in stele,
This Polymyte / sothly as I rede,
Hym-silf allone / on a Ryal Stede,
With-oute guyde / al the longē day,
Beyngs aferd / to kepe the heghē* way,
In his herte / haunyg suspicion
To his brother / of malice and tresoun,
lest he pursuēd / thorg fals vnkyndē* blood
To haue hym ded / for couëtise of good,
That he alloī / myghtē haue* possessiou

Polyneices comes to a Forest by the Sea.

Duryng: his lif / fully of the toun.
For which in hast /, havyng: no felawe,
Polymyte a-sidé gan hym drawe
By a forest / Ioynying to the See,
knowyng: right: nought: the syyt of the contré,
Ful of hillës / and of hegh mounteyns,
Craggy Rochës / and but fewë playns,

And ther-with-al / ful of beestis rage ;
holdyng: his way of hertë* no thyng: light',
Maat: and wery / til* it: drowe to nyght:
And al the day / beholdyng: enviroun, 
He neyther saugh castel, toure, ne toun ;
The whiche ping: / greuëd hym ful sore.

A tempest rises;
And sodeynly / the se began to Roe,
wynde and tempest* / hidously tarise.

The Reyn doune bete / in ful grisly wise,
That* man and beest* / therof were adrad,
And negh for ferë* / gan to wexë mad,
As it semptë / by the wooful sownes
Of Tygres / berës / boorës / and lyounes,
which for refut* / hem-silëuë* forto saue,
Euerich in hast* / drogh vnto his Cane.

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

1160. hast Bo. hast M. haste Ad1. 1162. drawe] to drawe M. Di. with-
Nor hym to schrowe / saugh nowher no socour
Til it was passèd / almost mydnyght hour
A largè spacè / that the sterrès clere,
The clowdès voyde, / in heune did appere;
So that this knyght / out of the forest large
Gan approchen / to the londe of arge,
Seyng a palays myghty of beeldynge,
Of which Adrastus / callèd was the kyng,
A manly man / riche and wonder sage,
And ronnè was / somdel / into age,
Born of the Ile / which callèd is Chysoun,
And whylom some / of the kyng' ChalOUN ;
And for his witt' / in story as is kouth,
he chosen was / in his tendre 3outh,
Of alle Argè / to be crownèd kyng';
Chief of alle Greece / by record of wryting',
Not be dissent' / nor succession,
But al only / of fre eleccioun
To* holde of Arge / the sceptre in his hond,
As most' worthy / of alle* grekès lond,
 louèd and drod / for wisdom and Justice.
And as the story / pleylnly can devise,
This worthy kyng' haddè doghtres two,

Near midnight the clouds clear off.

* How Poly-
mytys cam into
the lond of
Arge.

Adrastus is king
of Arge,

and has 2 fair
daughters,
Adrastus dreams of his two Sons-in-law.

Passyng fair / and right good also.
It were to longe / her beautè to discryve.
And the eldест / callèd was Argyve,
Défyfylè named the seconde.
And Adrastus, lich as it is founde,
This worthy kyng / haddè sonè noñ,
To succeed / after he be goñ;
For which he was duryng al his lyff
Trist in hert / and* passingly pensif.
But hool his trust / and his hopè stod,
Be Alliaunce / of some worthy blood
Brouȝt Inne by mene / of his doghtres tweyn,
That he shal be releśéd / 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 vision,
Shewèd to hym / vpon a certeyn nyght.
For as hym thoght / in his inward sight,
whyl he slept /, by cleer inspecioun,
A wyldè boor / and a fers lyoun
Possedè shal, thise bestës in her Rage,
His doghtres two / be bond of mariage
In shorte tymè / with-In a certeyn day;
which broght his herte / in ful grete affray.
But ping in soth / that destinè hath shape,

PT. II.] Polyneices enters Argos city and goes to the Palace. 53

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

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

Thilkë* tyme / helde his Royal see.
The trouble nyghtt / myrk, and ful obscure,

Wher Adrastus / ful statly of degre,
Thowght the Cité, enclosed with a wal,
Vnto the paleys / chief and principal,
Wher as the kyuge / in his chambre alofte
lay in his bed / and slepte wonder softe.

Eke alle his folk / hadde her chambers take,
luk as Fortune / peraunter haddë shape,
The silfe* tyme / be-cause itt was so late ;

And Casually / no porter / at the gate,
As itt haddë* be right for the nonys.

And in a porche* / bilt of squarë stonys,
Ful myghtïly enarched envyroun,
wher the domys / and plees of the touñ
werten executt / and lawës of the kyng;

And ther this kyght / without* mor taryngt,
Wery and maat / from his stede alightt;

And for this caas / he cam first to Arge,
Into the porche / wher polymyte slepe,
Of auenture / ere he toke eny kepe, 1284
The samé nyght hidously beseyn
With the tempest / of thonder / wynde / and reyn;
And filt also / anoy / and gret damage,
Thorgh the Forest holding his passage, 1288
As Polymyte hadde do to-forni,
In peryl ofté / likly to be lorn,
With beestés ragé / set on euery side,
Til of grace with-outen eny guyde 1292
He rode thorgh Arge / the grete myghty touñ,
Streght upon the paleys / and the chief dongoun,
Lich as I tolde / wher polymyte lay;
And at his comyng / made a gret affray, 1296
For he was blynde / porgh derknesse of the nyght,
And hym to gwyé* / he ne fonde no lišt
when he cam Inne / of priket nor of torche,
Til he vnwarly / entred the porche, 1300
And wold han také ther / his herbygaje.
But Polymyte / stert vp in a rage,
Sodeynly awaké / as I rede,
with the nyinge / of his proudé stede. 1304
And first of al / whan that he byhelde
A knyght y-armed / vpon his brest a shelde,

And gan the maner / of his aray aduerte,
Of verrey Ire / vpon his hors he sterte, 1308
And cruelly gan tydingës enquire,
Whennys he cam / or what he dedô there,
And bad in hastö / his answer to devise. 1312
And Tydeus, in ful humble wise,
Answerë ageyn / of verrey gentillesse,
And seid in soth / that of hegh distresse,
Of the tempest / and the derke nyghtö,
he dryven was / lich an erraunt knyyght, 1316
Of rede only / and of* necessite
And high constreyntö / of his adversite,
To takë loggynö / wher so that he myghtö;
And in thatö courte / therfor he alightö
With-outö morë*; thenkyngö non outage
Nor to no wightö / noyeng* ne damage.
Than Polymyte / of malys / and hegh pride
Tolde hym shortly / he shuldë* notö abide,
Nor loggë ther / thogh he had itö sworn.
"For I," quod he / "take itö vp to-forn
And wil itö kepë duringë al this nyghtë;
I seie the platy / maugre al thy myghtë." 1320
1324

Tideus says
Polynæices
"If Quod Tydeus / 'that is no curtesie

1328

Me to deuyde / but rather vileynye, 3if 3e take hede / that sem a gentil knyght.
And I suppose / 3e han / no title of right
To this lognyng / be way of heritage,
More than haue I, for alle 3oure felló rage.
And pardè / 3it it shall be no desese,
Til to morowe thogh 3e do me ese,
Of gentillesse / only with 3oure leve ;
To suffre me / it shal litil greue.'

But Polyneice

Polymyté was froward / and contrayre,
And shortly seide / it geyneth not to stryve ;
That of force he shal devoidé blyve,
Or vttrely / a-twen hem bote the two
This thyng to Trié / he most haue ado.

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

Adrastus wakes, and sends his men to them.

Adrastus's folk tell him two knights are fighting in his palace.

And* as they hurtle / that all \( \text{\textit{ye}} \) paleis shake,
And made in hast' his chamberleynes calle,
And porgh the courte / his worthy knyghte alle,

Comaundyng hem to descende and se,
And reporte / what' it myghte be,
This wonder noyse / in his courte by nght.

And when they saugh two strauung* knyghte's fight\( ^1 \)
In platys bright\( ^1 \) / and in thikk\( ^1 \)* maile,*
with-out\( ^1 \) Iug\( ^1 \) /, they hadde grete mervale*;
And disamay\( ^1 \)d / of this vnkouth \( \text{\textit{jing}} \)\( ^1 \),
As they fond / told\( ^1 \) to the kynge.\( ^1 \)

¶ And Adrastus / for derknesse of the nght,
From his Chambre / with many torch\( ^1 \) * light\( ^1 \)
He comes down,
Into the courte / is descended down,
AH his meyn\( ^1 \) / stondyng en-vroun,

Of thyse knyghte's having* ful gret wonder.
And of manhode / he put* hem first* a-sonder,
Hem comaundyng / lich a gentil kynge;
To leu\( ^1 \)n her strif and sesen of her* fighting*;
And entred Inne with a knygthly loke,
And first* fro hem / her swerd\( ^1 \)s both he took,

1375. And] om. in all the MSS. (see l. 1358 and Notes). hurtle] hurtled L\( _1 \), P. L\( _2 \) that] om. Ra. Ba. P. L\( _2 \) Ro. 1358. kynge] And kynge all the MSS. out] om. Ra. Ba. his] om. G. 1359. chamberleyns Bo. M. Ad\( _1 \), 1362. And] And to P. And make Lb. reporte Bo. M. Ad\( _1 \), what] what that M. Di. T\( _2 \), Ro. mighte Ad\( _1 \), might Bo. M. 1364. They] The Ar. two] the G. 1365. and in] and Ad\( _1 \), Ad\( _2 \) I. thikke Bo. T\( _1 \), Di. Ad\( _1 \), Ra. T\( _2 \) thik Ar. G. Lb. M. Ba. C. maile] male Ar. 1366. mervale] mervale Ar. T\( _1 \), 1367. And] And were E\( _2 \), disamay\( ^1 \)d] dismaied L\( _1 \), Lb. M. Di. C. T\( _2 \), P. E\( _2 \), L\( _2 \) Ro. Ap. 1368. As] And as L\( _1 \), Lb. E\( _2 \), Lyke as S. foud Ar. G. Ba. fonde Bo. Du. T\( _1 \), Lb. M. Di. Ap. founde L\( _1 \), Ad\( _1 \), Ad\( _2 \) I. S. C. T\( _2 \), E\( _2 \), L\( _2 \) Ro. tolde G. C. E\( _2 \), Ro. Ap. toolde Lb. told Ar. T\( _2 \), L\( _2 \) tolde be\( ^1 \) Bo. Du. E\( _1 \), talde thei T\( _1 \), tolde they M. Di. tolde alle Ro. be\( ^1 \) tolde L\( _1 \), Ad\( _1 \), Ad\( _2 \) I. Ba. S. to\( ^1 \) vnto L\( _2 \), T\( _2 \) om. S. Ro. to the on to Ap. And as they founde hit, tolde hit to \( \text{\textit{be}} \) kynge P. As thei we fonde the told to the kynge Ra. 1370. with] went with L\( _1 \), many] many a Ad\( _1 \), Ad\( _2 \) I. Ra. om. L\( _1 \), torche M. Ad\( _1 \), Ra. torch Ar. torches Bo. T\( _1 \), Du. Lb. E\( _1 \), E\( _2 \) 1373. full] om. M. Di. C. T\( _2 \), P. E\( _2 \), 1374. he] om. L\( _1 \), P. first] om. Bo. both L\( _1 \), put hem first] first putt hem T\( _2 \) a-sonder] on sonder L\( _1 \), in sonder L\( _2 \) 1375. gentil] getil (miswritten) Ar. 1376. leven Ar. Bo. T\( _1 \), Du. Lb. Ad\( _1 \), E\( _2 \), leune M. Ra. C. T\( _2 \), P. L\( _2 \) Ro. sesen Ar. Ra. P. cessen Ad\( _2 \), T\( _2 \), E\( _2 \) cese Bo. Du. Lb (seese). L\( _2 \) (seese). cesse T\( _1 \), M. Ad\( _1 \), C. of] om. Ba. her] om. Ar. G. T\( _2 \), E\( _2 \), fighting] fight Ba. 1378. her swerd\( ^1 \)s both] both her swerd\( ^1 \)s M. Di. C. both] om. Ad\( _2 \), I. Ra. Ba. S. he] om. P.
Affermyng ek, as to his fantasie,
It was a Rage / and a grett folye
So wilfully / her lyvês / to Iuparte,
with-outë Inge / her querel to departe,
And specialy / in the derkë* nyght
When neither myght of other han no sight,
Charging* hem vpon payne of her lif
To disseuer and styntyn of her strif.

And Tydeus in al the hast he myght,
Ful humblely* from his stede alight,
And right mekely / with cheer and contenance,
Put hym hooly in the gouernance
Of Adrastus / in al maner ping.

And Polymeyle / mad ek no tarying* 
To light also / and wold* wipsey
The kyngges biddyng / lowly to obey,
So as hym ought* / with due* reuerence.
And as thei stoodë* / both in his presence,
He gan enquerë first* / of her estaat,
The cause also why they were at debat,
Of her cuntrees / sothly and her age,
I-axed ek / touching* her lynage,
Be disenct of what* stok þei were born.

And Tydeus his answer / gaf to-forn;
Toldë pleynly / and madë no lesyng;

---

1380. and a] and G. 1382. Inge] a Inge Ad. 1383. derke Bo. Ad. 
alight] he light Du. 1389. right] righ Ar. 1392. tarying] 
also between thei and stood. stode Bo. T. M. Ra. stood Lb. stood Ar. G. Ad. 
1398. Between also and why in Ar. qui crossed through. werren Ar. G. were Bo. Ad. 
Ar. G. He asked Bo. T. Du. L. Lb. M. Ad. Ad. I. Ra. E. S. And axed C. 
also C. 1408 to 1468 lost in C. 1463. made Bo. M. mad Ad. 

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Tideus

[leaf 23, back]

Adrastus

 submits to

and so does

Polymeices.

Tideus says

Adrastus asks

them who they are.
he's son to Caledonia's king, and is banished.

How that he was / sonë to the kyng
Of Caledyoun / and righful heir thereto;
And of his exile / the soth he told also,
As he han herde / in the storye rad.

Polynice[s] says Jocasta was his mother,

And Polymye / with cheer and facë sad,
vnto þe kyng / touching his contré,
Seyde he was born / in thebis þe Cité, And Jocasta, 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 fayne, his fader was / and brother bothë* tweyne:
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 hawe no shame;

For hool the caas / and maner every dell, Touchyng* his kynne / he knewe þe ground ful wel, lich as it* was, by ful clier report*;

Enforsyng* hym forto do comfort*, with aH his myght* / and his bysy payne,
This manly kyng* / to the knyghtë tweyne,
And to hem seide*/ aforo hym as they stood, He wiste wel / þat of ful worthy blood
They were dysceded / touchyng* ther kynrede.

Still, Adrastus knows all about it.

He has the princes
And made in hast* / his officerës* lede

The straungë knyghtës / beyng at debat,
Thorgh his paleys / to chambres of estat,
Eche by hym-sif' / forto take his ese.
And euer ping', in soth, that myghtë hem plese,
was offred hem / lich to her estates.

And whan they weren / disarméd of her platis,
Cusshewës / Gremës / and her sabatons,
her harneys voyded / and her habergons,
Tueynë* mantels / vnto hem wer broght,
Frett with peele / and riche stonys, wroght
Of cloth of golde / and veluyt cremysyn,
Ful richely furrëd with hermyñ,
To wrap hem Inne / ageyn the colde morowe,
After the rage / of her nyghtë's sorowe,
To take her reste / til* pe sonne* arise.
And than pe kynge / in ful prudentë wise,
First of alle / was not rekkëles
pe knyghtës 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 broþerhede*.

And Adrastus / pe worthy kyng famous,
A feeste madé / riche and plenteous,

To this knyghtes, hym-silf ther-at present.

And after mete ful goody he hap sent,

This noble kyng for his doghters dere,

Of gentylness to forto make chere

To the knyghtes come fro so ferre.

And lik in soth as lucyfer the sterre

Gladeth the morow at his vprysing,

So thoo ladies at her In-coynge,

With the stremes of her eyen clere,

Goodly apport and womanly manere,

Contenaunce* and excellent Fayrenesse,

To alle the court / broghten In gladnesse.

For the freshnesse of Her hevenly cheres

So agreeable was to the straun-gers,

At her Entré that in especial*

hem thought it lik a thynge Celestial;

Enhastyng hem in ful knyghtly wise

ageynés 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 have leyser non nor space

To reherce / and put in remembraunce,

Hoo ly the maner / of her daliaunce.

It were to longe / for sothe to abide.

---

But wel I woot / that the god Cupide,
By influence / of his myghty hond?
And the feruence / of his firy brond,
Her metynge first / fortunéd hath so wel,
That' his arowes* / of gold, and not of stiel,
Percéd han / the knyghtés hertés tweyn,
Thorg the brest / with such a lusty peyn
That ther abood / sharpe / as sperre or launce,
Depe yfichéd / the poyn't of remembraunce,
which may not / lightly / racéd ben away.
And thus in Ioye / they dryvéd forth þe day
In Play and Reuel / for the knyghtés sake.
And towards nyght / they her chambres take
At dué* tyme / as her fader bad,
And on her way / the knyghtés han hem lad
Reuerently vp be many staire;
Takyng lievē / gan anoñ repaire
To her logging* / in a ful statly toure,
Assignéd hem / be the barberyoure.

And after spicés / pleynly, and the wyñ
In Coppe's greté / wroght of gold ful fyñ,
With-out e taryng* / to beddé* streght they goñ.
Touchyng her reste /, wher thei slepte or noñ,
Demeth 3e louers / that in such maner thing' 
Bexpereine han fully knowleceyng;  

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

For it is nat declarèd / in my boke.

Adrastus lies awake, Thoghtful in herte / the story specifies,

And how thei weren y-come of Royal blode. 1512

But as I fyndë / the kyngs al nyghtt woke,

Al this he ganne / to reuelue aboute,

Thoughtful / to the kyng / the kyngs al nyghtt woke,

Ay in his herte / hauynge a maner doute,

A-twenë two / hangyng / in balaunce

where he shuldë* / maken an aliaunce

A-twene his doghtren / and the knyghtës tweyn. 1516

For on thyngë / ay / his hertë gan constreyn,

The remembrance / of his avisioun,

Which to-forn / I madë mencioun, 1520

Wild Boar and Touchyngë / pe lyon / and the wilde boor,

The dirke dreme /; this was hid and cloos.

the Lion, p. 52. It' nedeth nat' / to reherce it' mor,

But' on the morowe / Adrastus vp aroos,

Casting alway / in his Fantasie,

And to the temple / the rïte way he took,

What' it' myghte / cleery signyfie,

And gan preie / deuoutly on his book

This dirke dreme /; this was hid and cloos.

To the goddes / his dreme to speecifie.

And they hym bad homward fortto hye,

Next day he And to beholde / in the knyghtës sheldys

sees these Beasts painted on the knights' shields,

1506. alnyght Ar. 1512. weren Ar. Bo. Tj. Du. E. were (wer) all the rest.

PT. E] Adrastus sees his Dream-beasts, on the Princes' Shields. 65

The fellé beestys / peynted in the feeldys;
Which shal to hym / be cler inspecioun,
Ful pleynly / maké declaracioun
Of his dreme / which he hadde in the nyght.
And Adrastus / enhasted hym ful riȝt
In her Sheldës wisly to beholde.
Wher that he saugh / as the goddes tolde,
In the Sheldës / hangyng vpon hokys,
The beestës ragë / with her mortal lokys *.
And to purpos, lik as writh Bochas,
Polymyte / ful streghtë enbracëd was
In the hyde / of a feerce lyoun.
And Tydeus / abouen his haberioun
A Gypon hadde / hidous / sharpe and hoor,
wroght of the bristels / of a wylde boor.
The whichë * beestis / as the story lerys,
wer wrought / and bete / vpon her banerys,
Displaied broodë * / whan they shulde fight.
werof the kyng / whan he hadde a sight
Att hys repeir / in herte was ful glad,
And with a facé / ful demur and sad
with his lorde, that he about hym hadde,
To the temple / he thys knyghtës ladde.
And whan they hadde / with all circumstaunces
Of Rytys oldë / don her observaunces,


THEBES.
Hom to the court\footnote{1560} / they resort\footnote{1560} ageyn.  
And in an hallë / riche and wel beseyn,  
This worthy kyng\footnote{1564} of herte lyberal,  
Made a feeste / solempne \textit{and} Royal,  
Which in deyntees\footnote{1568} / surly dyd excelle.  
But it\footnote{1568} were veyn / enery cours to telle,  
er her straungë sewës / and her sotyltees,  
Ne how they sat\footnote{1578} / lik to her degrees ;  
For lak of tyme I lat\footnote{1578} it* ouerslyde.  
And after mete / Adrastus toke a-syde  
The knyghtës two / and lik a prudent\footnote{1580} man  
In sykrë wisë / thus his tale he gan.  
"
Sir's," quod he / "I ne doute it' nouz\footnote{1580}t  
pat it is fresshë / and grene / ay in you\footnote{1570}r thoz\footnote{1580}t  
How that\footnote{1572} first\footnote{1572} / by goddys ordynance,  
And after next\footnote{1573} / thorgh fatys purveaunce,  
And be workyng\footnote{1576} / of fortunës hond,  
How that\footnote{1576} se werën brouz\footnote{1576}t\footnote{1576} into this lond  
Bothë* tweyn / But\footnote{1576} now this lastë* nyght\footnote{1576}:  
Of whoos comyng\footnote{1576} / I am ful glad \textit{and} light\footnote{1576}.  
First\footnote{1580} in my-self /, shortly to expresse,  
when I considre / and se the liklynesse  
Of you\footnote{1580}r personys / with the Circumstancys  
And hool the maner / of you\footnote{1580}r gouernancys ;  
Seyng\footnote{1580} ful wel /, wherto shulde I feyne,  
3e likly be her-after to atteyn

feest Bo. feste Ad\footnote{1560}, deyntees Bo. Lb. Ad\footnote{1560}, deyntys Ar. deyntes M. C.  
deynteis Lb. Ba. surly] shortly Ro. 1563. and her] and other C. T\footnote{1565}. E\footnote{1565}.  
and] om. M. Di. 1558. In and in Bo. T\footnote{1560}. L\footnote{1560}. M. Di. seere G. Bo. Lb. M. T\footnote{1562}.  
Ap (cecre). secret Ad\footnote{1570}. Ra. E\footnote{1570}. Ra. secrett S. thus] and thus C. this Lh.  
3our] my P. In M. the illuminated capital S of l. 1569 having been cut in l. 1572.  
1571. goddys] the goddis Ra. 1572. thorg[i] bi Ad\footnote{1572}, Ad\footnote{1572}. I. honde with a dot \textit{under} e in Ar. 1574.  
last Ad\footnote{1575}, lastAr. Bo. 1578. liknesse G. 1579. with] and Di. the] alle Ra. Ba  
Circumstancys] Circumstauence (:governamise) P. 1582. likly] lik Ad\footnote{1582}, Ad\footnote{1582}.
PT. II ] Adrastus will give his Daughters & Land to the Princes. 67

To* grete estat / and * habundaunce of good, 1584
Thorgh 3oure birth / and 3our Royal blood ;
3e may not faylë / but 3e hauë wrong;
For 3e are bothë* manly / and right* strong:
And forto sette 3oure hertës mor at' reste
My purpoos is / I hopë for the beste,
So that: in 3ou be no variance,
To make a knotte / as be allyaunce,
Atwixë* 3ow and my doghtres two,
3if 3oure hertes / accorde wel therto.
¶ And for I am fully in dyspeyr
To succeedë for to han heir',
Therfor 3e shal han possessiouñ,
Duryng* my lyf / of half this Regiouñ,
Forthwith* in hond* / and hool after my day.
Ther is no man / that' therto shal sey nay.
And sothly after / when that' I am graue,
Eche of 3ow / shal his party haue
Of this kyngdam, as I haue provided ;
This to seyn / it' shal be devyded
A-twen 3ow two, euerich to be crowned,
3oure pourparties / be equyté compowned
So egally / in euery mannys sight;
That echi of 3ow / reioysë shal his ryght.
And by 3our wit / 3e shal the lond amend,
And of manhode / knyghtly it diffenç
Ageynoure enmyes / and our mortal foñ.


As Tidues and Polyneices are
of Royal blood,

Adrastus proposes that

they shall wed

his daughters,

have half his land during his life,

and all after.

Each shall have

an equal share,
Tydeus accepts Adrastus's offer.

And for the daiës / passëd ben and gon
Of my desyrës / and my lusty 3outh,
I am ful set / forto makë kouth

That' 3e shal han / lik myn opynyoun,
The gouernaunce / of this Regioun.
To this entente / me semetli for the beste,
3e to gouerne / and I to lyve in reste,
Fully to folowe / the lust of my desyris,
Hunte and hanke / in wodës and Ryvërys
when so euer / I hauë* therto plesaunce,
And for to han / noñ other attendance
Vnto no thing* / but* vnto myñ ese.
For which shortly / 3if it agrë and plese
That* I haue seid / to 3ou / that* be so wis,
And be according* / vnto 3oure avis,
Delaieth not* / but* in wordës pleyñ,
What* 3ow semeth / gif answere ageyñ.”

Tydeus

And when Adrastus / hadde his talë fyned,
Tydeus / with hed / ful lowe enclyned,
As he that was / a verry gentyl knyght,
With al his power / and his fullë* myght
Ful humblely / thankëdë* the kyng'
Touchyng* his profre of so high a thynge.

And for his parte / seide he wolde assente
Fully of hertë / neuere to repente,
To aë thät* euer the kyng* hap sayd.

[leaf 27, back]
accepts Adrastus’s offer,
And Polymyte / was also wel apayd,
In the story / as it is comprehendid.
And so they ben / bothē* / condescendyd
The kynggēs willē / to fulfille in dede
From poynthat to poynthat / and ther-vpon procede,
wherso euer / that they wyinne or lese.

And Tydeus / made / his brother cheze,
Of gentillesse and of curtesye,
which that was / most / to his fantasiese
Of the sustren / for to han to wyve.
And he in soth / chosen hath arguye,
which eldést was / ful womanly to se.

And Tydeus / tok than* Dēphylle,
Of her beaute / most souereyn excellent.

And Adrastus / thорgh-oute his lond haeth sent
For his lordēs / and his baronage,
To be present at the mariage
Of the knyghtēs / and make no lettyng:
And they echoñ / cam at his bidding,
In goodly wysē / meke and ful benigne,
Ageyn the day / that he dide assigne.

And thyder cam ful many lusty knyght,
Ful wel beseyn / and many lady briñt,
From euer Coost / and many frecess sh sqwyre,
be Story seith / and many comunere,

To byholde the grete Ryaltē
And the maner / of thys solempnytē.
Butō to telle / alt the circumstances
Of Iustēs / Reuel / and the dyuers daunces,
The feestēs riche /, and the gyftēs grete,
The pryvē sighēs / and the feruent hete
of louys folk / brennyng as the glede,
And devyses / of many sondry wede,
The touches stole / and the* ameros lookes,
By sotyl craftĀ / leyd oute* lyne and hokes,
The Ialous folk / to traysshen and begyle
In their awayt / with many sondry wile:
Al this in soth / descryven I ne can.
ButŌ wel wote I / the newē famē ran,
This menē while* / with ful swiftō passage
Vnto Thebēs / of this mariage.
And by reportō trewe and notō yfeyned,
The soune therof the eerēs hath atteyned,
Myn auctour writō /, of Ethyocles,
Touchyngō thonour / and the gretē encres
Of Polymytē / heghly magnyfied,
And how thatō he / newly was allied
With Adrastus / in the londe of Arge.
The whiche thyngō / he grety gan to charge,

Eteocles fears Polyneices will attack him.

Dredyng Inly / that this mariage
Shal after tunne / vnto his damage,
Sore* musyng* / and castyng vp and doun
The gret pover / and the heigh renoun
Of Adrastus / the which of grekes lande
Haddal the power / soget to his hande:
Lest that he / for Polymytës sak
wold vpon hym / a newe werrè make,
But jif that he, lik the convencioun,
At tymë sette / delyuerèd the toun
To his broder / by bond of oth* I-sworn*,
Be couenauntes* / assurèd her to-forn,
Jif 30 remembre / late as I thou told:
which he was nat / in purpos forto hold,
But from his heste / Caste forto varye.
And ther-vp-on list no lenger tarye,
Lich his desire / to shapë remedies.
And first he sente for his next allies
In whom he hadde / most his affiancë, For his lordës / that hadde gourneance
Of his kyngdome / to come to hym anoñ.
And when they werën present euercëoñ,
he seide pleylyn /, wenyng for his best,
That his hert / shall neuer lyve in rest,
But in sorowe / and in a maner drede,

1688. Eteocles thinks that, backt by Adrastus,
[leaf 22, back] Polyneices will attack him,
unless he resigns his crown at the end of his 1st year.

So he sends for his allies and lords,
and tells em he can never rest
Eteocles is exhortd to be True, and keep his Oath. [PT. II]

Till his brother is dead.

Tyl his brother / outrely be dede;
That he in Thebe's / in his Royal sete
Myght allone / regnën in quiete;
he mente hym-silt / shortly, and noñ other,
Vnperturbed / of Polymyte his brother.

And at this counsayl / diuers of entent,

I fyndë writ / thre folkës were present.
Some in soth / that' faithful were and trewe,
And some also / that can chaunge of newe,
And other ek / that' be-twixe* twyen
Courlyt kowde / vnder colour feyn.

The firste seide, abouen* allë* thynge
Trouthe* shuldë* / longë to a kyng;
Of his worke / notë be variable,
But plyen / and hool / as a Centre stable.

For trouthe* firstë / withoutë* eny wene,
Is Chief Pyler / that' may a kyng* sustene,
In Ioye and honour / for to lede his lyff.

For trouth whilom / hadde a prerogatiff,
As of Esdre / the book can specyfie,
Record I take / of Prudent* Neemye,
That worthy kyngges / for al her grete pride,

Wyn / and wymmen / ben ek set' a-syde,

With all her power / and dominacioun,

havynge reward / in comparisoun

To trouthe's myght / and trouthe's worthynesse.

For as Esdrē / pleynly / doth expresse,

Who taketh heed / in the same place,

Be* the Influencē / sothly / and the grace

Of trouthe allof / this oldē Neemye

Gat hym licence / to reedifie

The wallys newe / of Jerusalem.

Which trouthe is tresour / chief of every rewme,

For Salamon writ / how that thyngēs tweyne,

Trouthe / and mercy / lynked in a cheyne,

Preserve a kyng / lik to his degré,

From all meschief / and aduersitē

Allas therfor / that eny doublenesse,

Variaunce or vsnicrenesse,

Chaunge of word / or mutabilitē*,

fraude / or deceitē / or vnstabiletē*,

Shuld in a kyng / han dominacioun,

To causen after / his destruccioun.

Of kyngges / redeth the story doune be Rowe,

And seth / how many / han ben overthrowe

Thorgh her falshede / fro* fortunes whel*.

For vnto god / it* pleseth neuer a del,

A kyng to ben / double of entent*;

For it* may happē / that the world is blent*

Truth is above all.

By truth, Nehemiah got leave to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

If Truth and mercy preseruen a kyng from al aduersayte.

If Chaunge nor doublenesse shal not be in a kyng.

See how many kings have been overthrown by falseness!

1734. reward [no reward Ad. 1. comparisoun Bo. T. comparacion Du.
1735. To trouthes] To trouth his P. The trouthes E. and] om. E. and

Eteocles wouldn’t be True, and so destroyd Thebes. [PT. 1]

God sees all.

Ful oftē sith / be slectē of her werkyng.

But this the trouthe* / god seep every thyng

Right as it is / for ther may be no cloude

To-form his sight / trouthe* forto shrowde.

If it may be clipped / and derkēd be disceythe,

By fals engyfe / liggyng in a-weyte,

As a serpent / forto vndermyne ;

But at the last / it wol clerly shyne,

Who that seith nay / shew his bries te bemes.

For it in soth / of kynge mates and of Reawmes

Is berer vp / and conservatrice

From al Meschief / sothfast mediatrice

To god aboue / who so list to se,

To kepe a kyng / in Prosperité

On euery side / as I afferm dar.

For which se kyngges and lordēs beth wel war

3our bihestēs / Iustly forto holde !

And* thenk how Thebes / with his wallēs* olde

Distroied was / platly / this no les,

For doublenesse / of Ethiocles,

Which his puple / after sore abouht :

Only for he nat by counselfe wroght

Of hem that were / bothe trewe and wis :

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

and he ought to give up the crown to Polyneices,

Of couenaunte / he shulde voide his place, 1808

And Polymyte ek / his iourné make

Toward Thebés / possession to take

Of dué* title / But* he haddé wronge:

Which thought in soth / the 3eer was wonder longe 1812

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* founde

taunye hym-silfe / lik as he was boundé,

asks Adrastus

To Adrastus / he gan declar his herte,

Beseching hym / this mater* to aduerte,

And ther-vpon / to jiue a counsayl sone,

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

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

Or liche a knyght* manfully to Ryde

hym-silfe allone / and maké no massage,

or claim Thebes.

For to Chalaunge / his rightful heritage

with Inne Thebès / outhere* be pees or stryf,

And ther-vpon / to Iuparte his lif.

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

But Adrastus / sothly / thought a-ther

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

Lest he were trapped among his mortal foñ;

Havynge his brother / suspecte in this cas

That* be fraude / or be some fallas,

He woldé* werk / to his destrucioune,

3if he wer hardye to entre in-to toun.
For which he bad hym / prudently tak hede,
Ful concluyng / how it was mor spede
That some other be / to Thebes sent,
To apparecyvē fully the entent
¶ Of Ethiocele / outwancl be some signe,
And wher that he / his crowē* wil resigne
For thilke* zeer / lik as he made his ooth:
And whan he knewe / how his purpoos goth
THER-vpon to werken / and procede.

Thus Adrastus / wisely gan hym rede.
¶ And whil they trete / vpon this matere,
Tydeus with a manly chere
Saide* vttrely / for his broder sake,
This massage / he wold vndertake
with hool thempris / of thenbasyat,
wer it wilful / or infortunat:
He wil not sparē / what so that betide.
¶ But Adrastus / on the tofer syde,
And Polymyte / in conclusion,
Weren contrarye / to that opynyoun,
And seidē sothly / as hem thoght right,
Sith that he was / so wel / a preued knyght
And descended of so worthy blood,
Tideus rides to Thebes, and goes to the Palace.

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

But all this thyng / auayled hem* riȝt' noȝt;
For he wol forth / how dere that it be boȝt,
Takyng lievey / first of all thestatys,
And arméd hym in Mayle / and suré platys,
And Shope hym forth / upon his Tourné.

who made sorowe / but Dèymphylé,
with bitter teere / dewed al her face,
Ful ofte sithe / swownyng in the place,
Trist and mourning / in her blake* wede,
When she saugh / that he took his stede;
So inwardly gan encres* her mone,
Seyng her lord / so ride forth alone
Vpon his way / this worthy Tydeus.

And in al hast, the story telleth vs,
He spedde hym so, makynge no delayes,
That in space / of a fewe daies
The hegli toures of Thebes / he gan se,
And entred is / into the Cité,
Wisly enqueryng / wher the Paleys stood;
And lik a knyght / thidere streght he* rood,
Markyd ful wel / in many mannys sight,
lich Mars / hym-silfe / in stiel y-arméd* bright,
Til he atteyned hath the chief* dongoyn,
wher as the kyng* helde his mancyoun.

And though the paleys / with a knyghtly look
Into the hað / the righte way he took,

armed] armeth G. sure] in sure M. Di. 1866. The rubric begins with Who mad
sorowe, but these three words have been crossed out with red ink. 1869. blake Bo.
gan encresen Ba. gan tencresen Ra. gan to in-crease S. 1872. ride] ridying
L. M. Di. T. E. 1876. in space] in he space Ad. I. Ad. I. T. E. L. Ro. a
1880. streght he] he streght Ar. G. Bo. Du. T. Lb. 1882. y-arméd] I-armed
Ap. armed Ar. Bo. and all the other MSS. (cp. 1306, 2618). 1883. Ar. has
a pause-bar between atteyned and hath. 1884. Wher as] ther as Bo.
From his stede / when he lighte doun,
Not afered / but hardy as lyoun,
Wher as the kynge / with lordes a gret route
In the halle sittynge / rounde aboute,
he entred Inne / most manful of corage,
To* execute / the fyn of his* massage.
And as hym thougght / conueniency and due
Ful konnyngly / he gan the kynge salue
Requiring hym / of kyngly excellence,
In goodly wise / to* jeve hym audience,
And not disdeyne / neither in port ne cheer,
Sith he was Come / as a messagere
From Polynyte / his owne brodere dere;
Gynnyng his tale / thus, as 3e shal here.
"Sir*", quod he, "vnto your worthynesse
My purpoos is breefly to expresse
Theffecte only, as in sentence,
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 eschewynge of prolixite,
And voyde away / al superfluyte,
Sith 3oure-silf best ought to* vnderstonde
The causse fully / that we han on hond,
And ek conceyve / retent of my menynge,
Of rightwisnesse / longgyng to a kyenge
First considerd / 3if that 3e tak hede,

Tideus meets Eteocles and his Lords.

1892
where Eteocles sits with his lords,

1896
Requiring of kyngly excellence,

1900
and speakes to them.

1904
Tideus did his massage.

1912
First considered, 3if that 3e tak hede,

when Edippus / the oldē* kyng' was dede,
how that youre silf / and youre brother blyve
For the crowne / contagiously gan stryve
As mortal soon / by ful grete hatrede,
which of sow two / shulde* first succeed:
Til that 3e were / be meenys reconeyled,
3e to regne / and he to be exiled
Out of this towne / for a 3eer's space,
And than ageyn / resorte to his place,
To regne as kyng', and 3e to voyden oute,
So as 3our tourne / be processe kem aboute;
Euerich of 3ow / paciently tendure
Thenterchaungyngt / of his Auenture,
Who were put out / or stood in his estat,
Ther-vpon to make no debat,
Lich the Couenaunt / and convencioun,
Enrolled vp / by lordys of this town,
Which of reson may not be denied.
And sith 3e han / a 3eer / y-occupied,
Polidymytès / requerep 3ow of riht,
Taqwite 3ou / lik a trewe knight,
In eschewing of mortal werre and strif;
Sith 3e han had a Prerogatif
As eldest' brother / forto regne afor ēn:
And thenketh eke / how that 3e ar sworn
3our oth to kepe / and make no taryng,
Holy aduynting / lich a prudent' kyng,
That* trouth is mor / in comparisoun,

and

Eteocles at first dissembles and remonstrates.

Than aH the tresour / of 3our Regyoun, Mor acceptable / vnto god and man Than aH richessé / 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 Cyté, And lat' hym regnen / in his Ryalté, ¶ The crowne of Thebes / a 3eer to occupie. Than wol al Grecé / preise and magnyfie 3oure hegh renoun / and may sey noth other But' 3e han quytt' 3ou / Iustly to 3our brother. 1952
This hool theeffecte / of al that I wil seyn, Answer expectant' / what' 3e list' sende ageyn.'

\[\text{W}^{\text{W}}\]\n
Eteocles / hadde told' his tale, his conceyt first' in maner* hath refreyned, Dyssimulyng' / vnder colour feyned, Shewyng' a cheer / in maner debonayre, To his entent' / wonderly contrayre, Inward' in herte / wood and furious, Turnyng' his face / towarde Tydeus, he gan abraid' / and at the last' out-brak, And even thus / vnto hym he spak. 1964
¶ "I have* gret mervailé /" quod he, "in my thought' Of the massage / which* that' thow hast' brough't, That' my brother / as thow hast' expowynd, that Polyneices wants Thebes,


THEBES.
Desyreth so / in Thebès to be crownyd,
Havynge reward / to the habundance,
The grete plente / and the suffisaunce
That t' he hath nowe / with the kyng of Arge :
That t' me semeth / he shuld lityl charge
To han lordship / or domynacioun
In the boundis / of this lityl town,
Sith he regneth / so freshly in his flours,
Surmountyng / aH his predecessours
Be newe encrees / thorph fortunis myght;
wherof in her t' / I am right glad and light:
Fully trustyng / zif I hadde rede
To his helpë, that t' with-outë drede
lik a brother than* I shuld hym fynde
To meward faithful, trewe, and kynde :
Supposing t' pleynly euermor
Of this regne / he set / but t' lityl stor,
Nor cast t' hym not / for so short t' a while
As for a 3eer, his brother to exile,
To lyve in pouëte / and gret distresse.
he wol not t' suffre it / of his high* noblesse.
It t' were no token as of brotherhede*,
But t' a signë rather of hatrede,
To interruptë my possessiou
Of this litił porë Regionu."

Al that t' he spak /, who that t' couth aduerte,
Of verrey scorn, Rooted in his herte ;
Eteocles says he'll never give up Thebes to Polyneices.

As it sempte /, the story can 3ou teche,
By the surplus / sothly of his speche:

"If he myghte natv no lenger hym refreyne
But platly seide / "as a-twene vs twyne,
I menë thus / Polymytes and me,
Ther is* no bonde / nor no surëte,
Nor feith y-made / thatv may hym avaylle,
As he clemeth / to haue* the gouernyllle
Of this Cité, nowther 3ere nor day.

For I shal lette hym, sothly, 3if I may,
Thatv he shal notv be title of no boné,
Reiøysse in Thebës / half a footv of* londe.

"If late hym kepe aH thatv he hath wonne!
For I purpoos / as I haue* begonne,
To regne in Thebës / enfroth al my lyve,
Maugrè al* hem / thatv ther-ageynës stryve,
And in despitv / of his frendës aH,
Or the counsylle / thatv hym listv to calle.

latv hym be sur /, and knowë* this rightv wel,
his manacyng! I drede* neuer a del.

And sikerly, as to my devis,

Eteocles is surprised at the presumption of Tydeus.

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

While Eteocles lives,

Polynices shall have nothing to do with Thebes.

Tydeus is silent

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

"Ceriës," quod he / "I conceyve of newe
Aboute the, thy counsel is vntrewe,
I dar it seyn and vowen at the best*,
Nor thow art not faithful of thy beheste,
Stable of thy word / that thow hast seid to-forn,
But deceyveable / and falsly ek forswn,
And ek perir / of thyne assured oath.

"But vther so be / that thow be l耶f or lothi,
I seye the shortly / hold it for no fage,
Al shal turn / vnto thy damage,
Trust it wel / and in ful cruel wyse.
Alle Grekēs londe / shal vpon the ryse,
To ben avenged / and manly to redresse
The gret vntrouthe / and the hgh falsnesse
Which that thow hast / ageyn thy brother wroght.
It shal ful dere / after this be bought.
And vrelre in dede, as thow shalt lere,
kyng Adrastus / wil medle in * this matere,
And alle the lorde/ about hym envyroun,
That boundē ben / to his subieccioun;
Prynces / Dukēs / and many a noble Knight,
In sustenynge / of thy brotheres rigte,
Shal on a day / with sper and with sheld,
Ageynēs the be gadered in a felte,
and prove him false.

knyghtly to preue / al be on assent,
That thow art fals / and double of entent,
Of thy promys / atteynst and ek outrayed.
And leue me wel it shal not be delayed,
But in al hast / execute in dede.
lik thi desert / thow shalt hane* 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 extorsioun.
For this the fyn / falsly de shal not avaiyle*,
Ageynēs* trouth / in feeld* to hold batayle*.
Wrong* is croked / bothen halt and lame.

And here anoī / in my brotheres name,
As I that I am next of his * alye
In his querel / I shortly the deffye,
Fully avysed / with al myn hool entent.
And 3e lordēs / that ben her* present*.
I 3ow requeire / of 3our worthynesse,
To sayē trouth / and to ber witnesse,
whan tymē comēp* / Lustly to recorde
How 3our kyng* / falsly can discorde
From his heest* / of fals variaunce.
And thenk how 3e / of* feithi and lygance
Ar bounde echoñ / 3e may not* go ther-fro,

Forto obeye / and serueé, bothé* two,
This nexte 3eer / now anoñ folowyng',
As to your lord / and your̄ trewe kyng;
\( \vdash \) Polemytes / thogh̊ he be now absent,
By Iust accordé / maad in parlement',
At ̄ 3oure devis / which sitten her a-rove,
Engroséd vp / as it is wel knowe,
And enrolld / only for witnesse
In 3oure registres / to voyden al falsnesse,
That̊ non of 3ou / vary may of newe
Fro that̊ I sayé* / but̊ he be vntrewe.
For which I redé / 3our-silf to acquyte.
Lat̊ no tymé / lenger / 3ou respit',
But̊ at onys / with-oute mor tarying',
Of manly forcé / fetteth hom 3our̄ kyng',
Maugré his foon̊ / lik as 3e ar bounde,
And lat̊ in 3ow / slouthe* noñ be founde,
To put̊ hym Instly* in posessiou̇
This my consayl in conclusionû."

W̊ hen Tydeus / hadde his massagé saide,
\( \text{[leaf 35, back]} \)
lik to the chargé / that̊ was on hym laide : 2112
As he that̊ list̊ / no lenger / ther soiourne,
Fro the kyng̊ / he gan his face tourne,
Nat̊ astouned / nor in his hert̊ afferė;
But̊ ful proudly / leyde hond on his swerde, 2116

Tydeus departe[d] from the kyng.

And in despit' who that was liefe or loth,
A sternè pas thorgh the halle he goth,
Thorph-out' the courte / and manly took his stede,

Tydeus rides towards Argos.

And out' of Thebës / faste gan hym spede,
Enhastyng' hym / til he was at large,
And sped hym forth / tournd the londe of arge.
¶ Thus leue I hym / ridë forth a while,
whilys that I retourne ageyn my style

Eteocles is furious.

Unto the kyng which in the hallë stood
Among' his lordës / furious and wood,
In his hertë / wroth / and euel apayd
Of the wordes that Tydeus had* said;

Specialy / havyng' remembrance
On the proude dispituous diffiannce
Whilys that he sat' in his Royal See;
Vpon which he wil auengëd be

Ful cruellly, what' euere that befalle.

And in his Irë / he gan to hym calle
Chief constable / of his Chyualrye,
Chargyngr* hym / fastë* for to hye

with al the worthy Choys* of his housholde,
which as he knewe most manful and most bolde,

He bids his Chief Constable pursue Tideus.

In al hast Tydeus to swe
To-forne or* he out' of his londe remwe,
Vp peyn of lyf / and lesynig of her hede,
With-oute mercy / anon that he be dede.
And of knyghtes / fyfty weren in nombre,
Myn autou seith, vnwarly hym tencombe
Armèd echin in mayle and thikke* stiel,
And ther-whel / yhorèsd wonder wiél.
At the Posteire / forth they gan to ryde
By a gympath / that ley outhe a-side,
Secrely / that no man hem espie,
Only of tresoun / and of felonye.
They haste hem forth / at the longe day,
Of cruel malys / forto stoppe his way,
Thorgh a forest / aH of on assent,
Ful courtly / to leyn a bussheiment
Vnder an hill / at a streite passage,
To falle on hym at that mor auauntage,
The samé way / that Tydeus gan drawe,
At thylke mount / wher that Spynx was slawe.
He nothing war / in his opynyoun,
Of this compassiónd / conspiracioun,
But Innocent / and lich a gentyl knyght,
Rood ay forth / til that it drowe to nyght,
Sool by hym-silf / with-outé companye,
havyng no man / to wisse hym or to* gye.

*T But at the laste / liftyng vp his hede,
Toward Enō / he gan taken hede;
Mid of his way riȝt as eny lyne,
poght he saugh / ageyn pe monē shyne
Sheldēs fresshī / and platēs bornēd bright,
The which environ / casten a gret lyght;

He puts his spear in rest,
But kepeth his way / his sheld vpon his brest;
And cast his sperē / manly in the rest.
And the firste platly / that he mette,
Thorgh the body / proudly he hym smette,
That he fille ded · chief mayster of hem aH;
And than at onys / they vpon hym falle
On euery part / be compas envryoun.
But Tydeus / thorgh his hegh renoun,
His blody swerde / letē / about hym glyde,
In his Irae and his mortal tene,
Thate mervale was he myghte so sustene
Ageyn hem aH / in euery half besette.
But his swerde was so sharpe whette,
That his fomen fonde ful vssoote.
But he, allass! / was mad / alight* a-foote,
Be force grounded in ful gret* distresse;
But of knyghthood and of gret* prouesse
Vp he roos, maugre all his fooñ,
And as they cam, he slogh hem oon be on,
lik a lyon / rampaunt in his rage.
And on this hille / he fond a narrow passage,
which that he took / of ful high prudence;
And liche a boor stydyng at his* diffence,
As his fomen / proudly hym assaylle,
vpon the pleyn / he made her blode to Raylle
Al enviroun, that the soyl wex rede,
Now her now ther / as they filli dede,
That her lay on / and ther lay two or thre.
So mercyles / in his cruelté
Thilke day he was vpon hem founde.

And attonys / his enemys to confounde,
wher as he stood / this myghty champioune,
Be side he saugh / with water turnid down,
An hugé ston / largé / rounde and squar;
And sodeynly / er that thei wer war,
As it haddé leyn / ther for the nonys,
Vpon his foon / he rollid it at onys,
That ten of hem / wenten vnto wrak,
And the remnaunt amasœd drogh a-bak; 2216
For on / by on / they wente to meschaunce.
And fernaly / he broghte to outrance
Hem euerychoñ / Tydeus, as blyve,
That non but on / was* left of hem / alyne;
hymsilf yhurt* / and ywounded kene,
Thurgh his harneys / bleyng on the grene.
The theban knyghtes / in compas rounde aboute
In the vale / lay* slayèn* aht the route,
which pitously / ageyn the monë gape;
For non of hem, shortly, myght* eskape,
But* dede echon / as thei han deserved,
Saue on excepte / the which was reserved
By Tydeus / of intencioun,
To the kyng / to make relacioun

This one knight
Tydeus kep,
to tell Etecoles
[leaf 37, back]
how his knyghtes / han on her iournè sped,
Euerich of hem / his lyf left* for a wed,
And at* the metynge / how they han hem borni:
To tellen al / he surèd was and sworn
To Tydeus / ful lowly on his kne.
By which eusample / 3e opynly may se
Ageynès* trouthe* / falshed hath no myght*.
Fy on querilis / nat* grounded vpon riʒt,*

with-out which* / may be no victorye*.
Therfor ech man / haue* this in memorye*.
2240. That* gret* pouer / shortly to conclude,
Plentë of good / nor mochë* multitude,
Scleight or engyne / fors / or felonye,
Arn to feble / to holden Chanpora\yo\nye 2244
Ageynës* trouthë* / who that* list* take hede.
For at the ende falsished may not* spede
Tendurë longe / 3e shul fynde it thus.
Record I take of worthy Tydeus,
which with his hand / thorogh trouthës excellence,
Fyfty knyghtës / slogh in his dyffence,
But* on except* / as I late* tolde,
Sworn and assurid with his honde vpholde,
The kyng* tenformë / how they were atteynyt.
And Tydeus, of bledynë wonder feynyt,
Maat* and wery / and in gret* distresse,
And ouerleyd / of verray feblenesse ;
But* as he myght* / hym-silue tho sustene,
He took his hors / stondynëg on the grene,
Worthëd vp / and forth he gan to ryde
An esy pas / with his woundës wyde.
And Sothly / 3it* in his opnyoun
he was alway / afferëd of tresoun.
But* anguysshous / and* ful of bysy peyne
He rode hym forth / til he did atteyne
2264. Into the boundës / of lygurgus lond,
A worthy kyng* / and* manly of his hond.


Tideus hath enure in the fyng victory of falsished.
The rest of the 50 Tideus slew
mounts his horse and rides away.

[leaf 38] Tideus rides into the land of King Lygurgus,
Tideus rides into the Castle Garden,

And he ful paal / only for lak of blood,
Tydeus saugh / wher / a castel stood,
Strong' and myghty / belt'pon a roche,
Touand' which / he faste gan approche,
Conveyed thider / be clernesse of the ston,
That' be nyght' ageyn the moon* shoon,
On heghé* toures / with crestës marcyal.
And Ioyneauxé' almost' to the wal
was a gardyn / lityl out' be syde,
Into which / Tydeus gan ride,
Of aventuré / be a gatë smal.
And ther he fond / forto reke al,
A lusty herbere / vnto his devis,
Soote and fresshi / lich a paradys,
Verray heuenly / of inspeccioun.
And first' of al / he alyghte doun,
The goodly placé / whan that' he byheld,
And fro his nek / he voyded hath his shelt,
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.

And Tydeus / mor hevie than is led,
Vpon the herbes / grene,* whit, and red,
As hym thoughte / that tyme for the best
he leid hym doun / forto tak his rest,
Of weryness / desirous to slepe,
And non awayt / his body forto kepe;
And with drems / grochid euer amongi,
Ther he lay / til* the larkë songi
with notës newë / hegh vp in the ayr,*
The gladë morowe / rody and right fayr,
Phebus also, castingi vp his bemes,
The heghë* hyllës / giltë with his streemes,
The syluer dewe / vpon the herbes rounde;
Ther Tydeus lay vpon the ground,
At the vpri\* / of the shenë svnne,
And stoundëmele* / his grene* woundës rvnne
Roundë abouti / that the soyl was* depeynit
Of the grene / with the redë meyn\*it.
And euery morowe / for hoolsomnesse of eyre*,
Lygurgus doghter / maked her repeyr,
Of custom ay / among the flourës newe
In this gardyn / of many dyuerse hwe,
Swich Ioyë hadde / forto taken hede,
On her stalkës / forto sen hem sprede,
In the Allurës / walking to and fro.

And when she hadde a litil while* goo

Lycurgus's Daughter wakes the sleeping Knight. [PT. L]

She sees a sleeping knight

her-self allonë* / casting vp her sight,
She byheld / wher an armèd knyght
lay to rest hym / on the herbes colde;
And hym besydë / she gan ek byholde
his myghty stëdë / walkyng her and ther.

And she anon / fille in a maner fer,
Speecally when she saugh the blood
Sprad al the grene / aboute ther she stood.
¶ But at the laste / she kaught hardynesse,
And wommanly / gan her forto dresse
Toward this knyght, havyng a manere drede
And grete doute lest that he were dede.
And of her willë / sothly this was chief,
That she thoughte forto mak a prief
how that it stood / of this man, ful ofte.

She touches him gently

And forth she gooth / and touchëd hym ful softe,
Ther as he lay / with her hondes smale.
And with a face dedly / bleyk', and pale,
lich as a man adawëd / in a swogh,
Vp he stert / and his swern he drogh,
Nat fully out / but put it vp ageyn
Anon as he hath the lady seyn,
Beseching hir / only of her grace,
To han pitë / vpon histrespace,
And rewe on hym of her wommanhede.
For of affray / he was falle in drede
lest he hadde / assayled ben of newe
Of the thebans / preued ful vntrewè;

For dread of which he was so recklesse,
Ful humbly / hym 3eilding to the pes,
Tryste in hym-silf / he pass'd hadde his boundes.
And when that she saughe her mortal wouned,
She hadde routh / of verrey gentyllesse
Of his desese / and of his distresse,
And bad he shulde / no-thing be dismayd,
Nor in herte sorful nor affray'd,
Disconfort hym in no maner thing.
"For I," quod she / "am doghter to the kyng,
Callyd lyurgeon / which gretel me delyte
Euer morowe / this gardyn to visyte;
It is to me so passingly disport."
"Wherfor," quod she / "it be good comfort;"
For no wight her / touchyngs 3our viage,
Shal hynder 30u / nor do 30w no damage.
And 3if 3e list / of al 3our auenture
The pleyne* trouth / vnto me discure,
I wil in sothi / do my bysynesse
To reforme / 3oure greuous hezynesse
with al my myght of / and hool my dylygence;
That I hope of 3oure gret offence
3e shal han helpe in 3our aduersite.
And, as ferforth / as it is lithe in me,
Lycurgus's Daughter takes Tideus to a Chamber. [PT. II.

Tideus trusts her.

Trusteth right wel / *3e shul no faute fynde,"
And when he saugh / that she was so* kynde,
So womanly / so goodly, and benygne
In al her poort / be many duryers signe,
He vnto hir / be ordre wold not spare
his auenturis / fully to declare,
In Thebês first touching: his massage,
And at* the hil / of the woodës* Rage,
Of his woundës / and his hurtës sore
(It were but* veyn / to reherce it mor)

Tideus tells Lycurgus's daughter all his story.

By and by he told her evry del,
The which in soth / she likëd neuere a del,
But haddë routh and compassioun
Of his meschief / wroght* be fals tresoun:
Byddying in hast / that he shuld hir swe,
And wommanly / as her thoghte dwe,
To a chambe / she ladde hym vp alofte,
Ful wel beseyn / ther-in a bed right softe
Richëly abouten apparrayled
With cloth of gold /, al the floor yrayled
Of the samë / both in length and brede.
And first this lady / of her wommanhede,
hir* wymmen badde / as goodly as they kan,
To be attendauwt on this wounded man.

unarrays him,

And when he was vnarmëd to his sherte,

She made first wash his woundes smerte,
And serche hem wel / with dyuers instrumentes,
And made* fette / sondry oynemementes,
And leches ek / the beste she koude fynde,
Ful craftely to staunche hem / and to bynde.
And euery thing / that may do hym ease
Taswage his peyn / or his woo tapeze,
Was in the courte / and in* the Castel sought,
And by her byddyng / to his chambr e brought,
And for his saké / she hath after sent.
For swich deyntees / as wern coneyent,
Moost nutrityf / be phisikés lore,
hem that wern syk / or wounded / to restore,
Makyng her wymmen / ek to taken kep
And wayt on hym / anyghtes whan he slep,
And be wel war / that no thing asterte
That was or myght be / lusty to his herte.

And with al this / she preiéd hym abyde
Til he were strong / and myghty forto ride,
In the castel to pley hym / and disporte,
And at leyser / hom ageyn resorte

whan he myght bywelde hym at his large.

But al for nought /: he wil hom to Arge,
Toke his lyewe on the nexte day,
With-out abood / to hast hym on his way,
lowly thonkyng / vnto her goodnesse

Tideus returns to Argos, to his Wife.

Of her freedam / and bounteuous largesse,
So wommanly that hir list taken* hede
Hym to refreshe in his grete nede,
Behestyng hir / with al his fullë* myght,
He woldë* be hir servaunt* / and hir knyght,
Whyl he leueth, of what she wold hym charge.

And forth he rood / til he cam to Arge
In ful grete hast / and woldë 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 the maner / of his hoom-comesynge,
Of the metynge / or* the welcomesynge,
Nor the Ioyé / that Adrastus made,
Nor how his sustre / and his wif were glade?
Nor how that they /, whereto shuld I write,
Enbracéd hym / in her Armës white,
Nor the gadrynge / about hym / and the pres
Nor of the sorowe / that Polymytës
Mad in hym-silf / to sen hym so forwounded,*
His greuous hurtes / his soorys / ek vnsounded,
His dedly look / and his face pale?
(Of alle this / to gynne a newë tale

[leaf 41]

It were in solthi / a maner ydylnesse)
Nor how hym-silf in orde did expresse
First how that he in Thebès hath hym born,
Nor how 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 diserse leche,
To come in hast / and make no tarying,
Vpon a peyne / be biddyng of the kyng,
To do her craft / that he wer recured
And of his force / in every part assured.
And they echon / so her konnyng shewe
That, in space / of a daisë fewë,
He was al hool / maad of his siknesse.
Tho was ther Ioye / and tho was ther gladnesse
Thorgh-out the courte / and thorgh-out 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 byloued / in every mannys sight
Thorgh-outë grece / in every Regioun.

But now most I / make a digressioun,
To tellë shortly / as in Sentement,
Of thilke knyght / that Tydeus hath sent
Into Thebès / only to declare

The grete meschief / and the euel fare

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

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

Eteocles says his knights were cowards, and to let one man kill 50 of em.

The survivor answers that

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

It is thyn vnhappe / pleynly, and not owes, That so many worthy werreoures,
Which al her lif / neuer haddē shame,
Except this quarel, / taken in thy name,
That grounded was / and rooted on falsenesse:
This was cause / in verray sikernesse,
Of our vnhappe / I woot wel, and non other,
And the vntrouthe* / don vnto thy brother,
And that thow were / so opynly forsworn:
A parcel causē why that we wer lorn
was fals brekyng' / of thyng assured oth."
And tho the kyng' / almost mad for wroth,
In purpooes was forto slee this knyght;
only for he seidē to hym right,
The which allas / both at cue and morowe,
Suprisēd was / with a dedly sorowe,
Renewed ay, in his remembrance,
With the pitous / and vnhappy chaunce
Of the meschief / and mysantyre,
Touching the deth / and discomfiture
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 wery / of his ownē lif;
Hent' a swerd' / and a-sidē sterte,
And rove hym-silf even to the herte.
The corpses of the slain Knights are burnt and buried.  

The friends of the dead knights

Be with us as we'ren* / Ioyned by lynage
To the knyghtes / slayen* at the hille;
That all atones / of oon herde and wille,
They wold han rysen / thorugh-out the Cité,
Upon the kyng / avenged forto be,
Which of her deth / was chief occasion.

but the lords
[Ful busy wern / this Rumour to dysesse,
Of high prudence / to stynten and appese,
In quyete / euer thyng* to sette.
And after that the bodyes hom they fette
Of the knyghtes / lik as Þe han herde,
Aforyn yslawe / with the blody swerde
Of Tydeus / ful sharpē whet* and grounde.
And in the felde / so as they hem founde,
Only of loue / and affeccioun,
Solempnēly* they brought hem into town.
And, lik the maner / of her rytis olde,
They weren first* brent* / into Asshes colde,
Euerich buryed / lich to his dregē.

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

Lo her kalendys / of aduersité, 2544 Ruin is to fall
Sorowe vpon sorowe / and destruccioun, 2548 on king and
First of the kyng / and aſt the Regyoun; realm,
For lak oonly / lik as I 3ow tolde, 2548 as troth was not
That biheestës / trewly worn not holde:
þe Firste grounde / and Roote of this Ruyne, 2552 as troth was not
As the story / shal clerly determyne,
And my tale / her-after shal 3ow lere,
þif that 3ow list / the remenaunt for to here.

 Explicit Secunda pars

Joh Lydgate

Explicit pars Tercia

is þe kalendes L₁. 2548. and] and after Lb. all] om. Bo. of S. Ro. the] his
Ad₂, I. Ra. E₁, S.; in Ar. þe is written before the line. first Bo. M. Ad₁, Ra.
Appeal to Mars. Adrastus resolves to conquer Thebes. [PT. III.

Why, Mars,

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Cruel Mars / ful of malencolye,
And of thy kynde hoot\(^1\) / combust\(^1\), and drye,
(As the sperkles\(^*\) / shewen fro so ferre,
By the stremsë / of \(\text{t} \) redë sterre,
In thy spere / as it \(\text{t} \) aboute goth)\n
what\(\text{t} \) was causë / that\(\text{t} \) thow were so wroth
with hem of Thebës? / thorgh whoos feruent\(\text{t} \) Ire
The Cité brent\(\text{t} \) and was sette a-fyre,
As bookës oldë / wel rehercë konne,
Of Cruel hatë / rooted and begynne,
And engendred /, the story maketh mynde,
Oonly of blood / corrupt\(\text{t} \) and vnkynde,
Bynfeccioun / calleë Orygynal,
Causyn'g a strif / dredful and mortal,
Of which the meschief / thorgh al grece Ran.

And kyng Adrastus / alderfirst\(\text{t} \) began,
which hath hym cast\(\text{t} \) / a conquest\(\text{f} \) for to make
vpon Thebës / for polymytës sake,
In knyghtly wisë / ther to preve his myght\(\text{t} \),
Of ful entent\(\text{t} \) / to recure his right\(\text{t} \).

He calls a parliament
And first\(\text{f} \) of al he sette a parlement,

2554. \(\text{t} \) om. Bo. G. C. \(\text{t} \)e L\(_1\). 2555. spercles Bo. T\(_1\), Du. E\(_1\), S. sparkles M. Ad\(_1\), and the rest, except sperkes Ar. G. I. fro so ferre] from the fire Ra. 2556. \[ Ar. G. \(\text{t} \)y L\(_2\), Ro. Ap. the Bo. and the rest. 2557. \(\text{t} \)e L\(_1\), Ad\(_1\), I. Ra. L\(_2\). 2558. cause] \(\text{t} \)e cause Di. L\(_2\), Ro. that\(\text{t} \) om. Ra. P. L\(_2\), Ro. 2560. \[ Te Ar. brent and was] was brent and Ad\(_1\), Ad\(_2\), I. brent was and Lb. E\(_2\), a-fyre] on fyre Du. L\(_1\), Lb. Ra. E\(_2\), L\(_2\). 2565. Bynfeccioun] By enfeccion Du. Bo (enfencioun). M. T\(_1\), Ad\(_1\). 2669. Which\(\text{t} \) That Bo. T\(_1\), Du. L\(_1\), Lb. M. Di. Ad\(_1\), Ad\(_2\). I. Ra. E\(_1\), S. hath\(\text{t} \) om. L\(_1\), forte] to M. Di. 2571. his\] her Ad\(_1\), Ad\(_2\), I. ther S. 2572. recure\(\text{t} \) rekouere Du.
Adrastus's Lords prepare for the Theban Expedition.

And hath his letters / and massagerës sent
Thorgh-outë Grece / to many sondry kyngges,
hem to enhast / and makë 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 Citees and in touns,
And choosen out' / the moste liklyest',
And swich as werën* / preuëd for the best'
As of manhode / and sende* / hem vp echon,
And in her honde / receyve her pay anon,
with Adrastus to Thebës forto ryde.

And tho lordës / that' with hym abyde
In houshold stilë / han her levë take,
To ryden hom / her reteneue to make
In ther contrees / as they wern of degrë,
To stuffen hem / and taken vp meynë
And make hem strongë / with knyghtës and squyers,
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,

to muster soon

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

The kings who come are Pro-2608
tono-lope, which was, be recorde of wryting;
Thider cam first / protonolope, Of Archada / sonē to the kyng. 2600

Ipomoden, Ther came also / the kyng{ Cylmythenës.

Cylmithenes, And as I rede / ful worthy of degrè

Ther cam ek / the kyng{ ypemedoun.

Climithenes, And passing a[ ] / of knyghthode and of name,

And excellyng / by worthynesse of fame,

Melleager, etc. The noble kyng / callyd Campaneus,

And thider kam the kyng{ Melleager,

And ek the kyng{ / callëd Tortolanus.

And renamed in many regyoun

Tideus sends to Chalcedon for Warriors. Thebans join him.

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

Ther was a manly man / that noble werreyour,
As he that was / of worthynesse flour,
Maister and myrou / by prouesse of his hond,
hath sent also into the myghty lond
Of Calcedoyne / of which he was hayr,
That is a kyngdam / bothë* riche and fayr,
Chargyng his counsale / and officers also,
In al the hast / that it may be do,
To seken out / the beste werreyours,
Of famous knyghtes / and preued sawdyours,

With-oute aboode / forto come to arge.
And they obeye / ful* lowly his biddyng,
Enhastyng hem / and madë* no lettyng,
But spedde hem fast / vpon her iourne.

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

to help Polyneices,

as they are bound by oath to do.

In Adrastus’s army is the flower of the Chivalry of Greece.

To tell you all their new and quaint arms

would be a day’s work,

And the termès also ben to derk,
To reheere hem clerly and to Ryme:
I passe ouer / only for lak of tyme.

And telle I wil / forth of her loggyng1,
How Adrastus / the noble worthy kyng2;
Hath every lord / lik to his degré,
Receyued wel / with-Innen his Cytè:
And ther they haddé / lik to her plesaunce,
Of what nedeth / falsom habundance,
For man and hors / plêtè of Vitaylle;
Comaundyng3 / that no thyng ne faylle
That alle thise noble worthy werreoures,
Both high and lough 4 and poor* soudoures,
Iserued weren of that they haddé nede.

For Adrastus / prudently took hede,
Ful lik a kyng / touching her termè-day,
That thei to-form / wer serueèd of her pay.

He was so free / hym list no thyng restreyñ;
And no man haddé cause to compleyn
For hunger / thrust / nor for Indygence.

And in a prince / it is ful gret5 oppose, 
As clerke seyn / and a gret6 reproach,
Suffre his puple / lyven at mescheef.
It is ful heavè / and greevous in her thought7
If he habound8 / and they han right9 noght.
He may not both / possedè good and herte,
To be riche / and Seen his puple smerte.

Kings must give freely if they wish to be loved.

He may the body of power wel constreyne, 2696
But her herté hath a ful longé Reyne,
Maurgre his myghté to louen at her large. 2705
Nor hem coarten* from her lyberté.
Ther may no kyngé on herté sette a charge,
For which eche prince lord and gouernour,
And specialy every Conqueror,
Men seyn ful ofté how thaté thought is fre. 2700
For Thought is free.

Let kings be liberal,
Laté hym be war for al his hegh noblesse,
Thaté bounté, Fredom plente, and largesse, 2704
Be on accord that they his brydel lede,
Lest of his puple when he hath most nede,
He be defrauded; when he is butt alone,
Be to exile scarshed and courtise;
Than is he likly with fredam zif he gynne, 2712
loue of his puple euermore to wynne,
To regne longé in honoure, and contune
Ay to encrasse be fauour of fortune,
And his ennemyes manly to oppresse.

For loue is mor than gold or gret richesse;
Gold faileth ofté loue* wol alyde

2695. power] pore Ad1, poore Ad2, I. E., poor Ra. poor Ba. the power L.
For lyf or deth / be a lordys syde ;
And the tresour / shortly, of a kygig
Stondeth in loue / abouuen all* thyng*:
Farwel lordship / bothe* morowe and Eve
Specially / whom louë taketh his leve !
And who so list / a merour forto make
Of kyngly fredam / lat hym ensample take
Of Adrastus / the manly kyrng famous,
So liberal and so bounteuous
Vnto his purple / at al tymës found ;
Which mad hym strong* / his foomen to confound ;
And loue only / his enmyes to werreye,
Alle grecë made his bidding* to obeye,
Of oon accord / knyghtly be his side,
Al attones / to Thebës forto ryde,
For tayngë / sith they were so strong*.
The gret* Iniurye / and the inportable wrong*;
Don to his sone / and his next* allye,
As 3e to-forn / han herd me specifie.
But* whilë* Grekës / rest* a whil in pees,
I will resort* / vnto* Ethiocles :
which* in Thebës warly hath espied,
Be his frendes / as he was certesfled,
Of the Grekys / hooly the ordinaunce,
Her purpoos ek / and her purueance,
And therof had in herte a manere drede.
And first he took his cousayle and his rede

2720. aboven alle] aboue al (all, alle) Ar. Bo.
and all the other MSS.
2721. bothe M. Ra. bope Tj. both Ar. Bo. bothe at Adt., Adp. I.

Greece ready for war against Thebes. Eteocles takes counsel.
Eteocles prepares Thebes against Attack. [PT. III.

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 stronge / that ther wer no doute.
And in the contrees / adiacont aboute,
And ek also in foreyn Regiouns,
He hath withhold / aH the Champiouuns ;
And ther-vpon / he sent' out' his espies
And his frendis and his next allies
And alle the worthy / dwellyng environ,
3ong / fressh / and lusty / he gadred into toun ;
Maskowede his wallys / and his heghö* tours,
And stuffed him / with manly sowdœurs,
Round aboute / he settë many Gonnys,
Grete and smale / and somë large as tonnys ;
And, in his hasty / passingf eruent' hete,
He spent' his tresour / and gaf giftës grete
Vnto knyghtes / and worthy men of name ;
And ouermorë* / to encre his fame,
he zaf to lordes / Iuellis many-fold,
Clothës of Veluet / of Damask, and of gold,
To gete hym hertës / sothly, as I rede,
To helpe hym now in his grete nedë.
And prudently purveiëd / hym to-forñ
Of flesch and fissh / and of wyn and cornë.

Sette his Capteyes / erly / and ek late
with ful gret stuf strong at eyery gate.
And mad also be werkmen / that were trewe,
Barbykans / and bullwerkës newe,
Barreris / cheynys / and dichës wonder depe;
Makyng his Vouht the Citè forto kepe
Whil he lyuep / despit of aH hisfoon.
And by his goddys of metal and of ston,
Ful ofte he svoor / both of herte and thought,
That it shal first / ful derë* be abouht,
And many a man with pollex, sword, and knyff
To-for this toune / shal first lese his lif,
And ther shal ek / many sydës blede,
Or his brother possiblly possede
The toune in pees / lich as Grekes 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 parliment,
Aß his lordës sittiing® enviroun,
To dryvé shortly / a pleyen conclusiou
And vp tapoyntt / the fyn of ther entent.
But somë thoughte / ful expedient,
Or they procede / to wirkö* be thavice

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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 circumspecete / in his werkês alle,
A worthy bishopp / into age falle,
And Calléd was, sothly / by his name
Amphiorax / of whom the grete fame
Thorg al the londe / bothen est and south,
Amongês* Grekês / passingly was kouth ;
A man, in soth / of olde antiquytê
And most acceptid of auctorité,
First be resoun of his high estat*
And ek for he was so fortunat*
In his werkes, and was also secre
with the goddys, knowynge her pryvetê :
By graunt of whom / as bookês specifye,
He hadde a spirit / of trewe prophekeye,
And cowde afrom ful opynly dyvynye
Thynggês begonnê / how they shuldê* fyne,
And eke, be craft / of Calculacioun,
3iue* a dome / of euery questiou ;
And hadde in magik / grete experience,
And fyndê cowde / be heunely influence
And by mevyng / of þe heghe* sterrys,
A fynal doome of Contek and of Werrys ;
And wistê* wel, as his goddys tolde,
that, 3if Grekês / forth her iournê holde,
It turnê* shuldê* platly / this no fage,

To get mischief / and to get damage
Of hem ychon /; and in especial
The moste parte / of the blood Royal
Thorsh 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 fyn / and may nat be socoured,
Of the erth / he shuld* be devoured,
Quyk as he was, he knewe it in certeyn.
   And for he saugh ther was non oper geyn
To saue his lif / nor no bet* difficence,
Than wrrtyre withdrawen 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 troubl conelcen 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 deceyt* / in hir wommanhede.
She was so trewe / as wommen ben echon,
And also cloos / and mwet* as a ston,
That* she ne wold / as the matier stood,
Discurën hym / for no worldly good.

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

To fyndly / the Grekes, of entent;
In al his drede / han* for this bishop sent;
Thogh it were longe / er they myght hym fynde,
For cause his wif / was to hym so kynde,
That ful seurly / hath lokkëd vp his cors.
But* for she hadde a maner of remors
In hir-silf / grevyng* her conscience,
Dreding* to falle / in ful grete offence,
Lest* her soule / were in peryl lorñ,
whan she be oth* / compellëd was and sworn;
They requeryng* / 3f she could tell
wher her lorñ the bishop shuldë* dwelle:
Which to discourse / hir herte was ful lotñ,
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 sorowful face,
Maugre hir lust / taught hym* to the place
wher as he was / shet vp in a toure,
Al alone* / havyng no socour.
They falle on hym / or that* he was war,
And sette hym vp / in a ful richë Char.
A fool he was / to Iupardë his lif
Forte discourse his counsel to his wif;
And 3t she was ful sorry for his sake,
Specially / whan she saugh hym take.
Bot I hopë / that* her hevynesse

Gan asswage ful sonë, by processe,
In shortë tymë / whan thatë he was gon.
Ther is no tempestë / may lastë euere in on.

| But this bishope / be verrey force and myght, |

Vnto Grekes / conveyëd was ful right,
This hoorë* gray / in his char syttyng.
And they ful gladë* / wern of his comyng,
havynge a trustë / and ful opnyouw
Thatë, thورgh 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 circumspectë / and rihtë wel avised,
he hath pronouncëd / in the Parlement,
To-forn the lordës / and the presidentë,
his Cleer conceyte / in verray sikernesse,
Natë entrykëd with no doublenessë,
her dysemol daiës / and her fatal houre,
Her auenturyss / and her sharpe shoures,
The frowardë soortë / and the* vnhappy stoundys,
The compleytës / of her dedly woundys,
The woofil wrath / and the* contrariousë
t Of fellë Mars / in his cruelë,
And howe, by mene / of his gery mood,

Ther shall be shadde / al the worthy blood 2900
Of the Grekes / it may not* ben eschewed,
If her purpoos be execute / and swed.

"Ther is no moré / this shal be the fyñ:
The hegh noblesse shal drawë to declynë
Of Grekës blood / in meschief, sorowe, and woo:

Amphiorax himself

And with al this / I my-sílf also,
As my fatë hath a-form disposed,
Depe in the grounde / I shall be enclosed,
And lokkíd vp / in the dirkë* vale
Of cruel deth." / lo! this was the tale

Hym cousayllyng* / his purpoos to withholde,
In eschuynge / of mor meschief and sorowe.
For alle his goddis he took vnto borowë,
3if þe Thebans / and þe grekës mete,
The fyñ þeroof shall be so vnswetë

for all Greece shall rue it.
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 Thebës / and her purpoos leve.

with whos wordes / the lordës gan hem greve,
And ther-Inne haddë* / but ful smal delít,
And euerechoñ / of hertly hegh dispit;
They abrayde / and seide he was vntrewë,
A controover / of prophëciës newë,
And ek also / for al his longe berde,

An olde Dotard / a coward, and aferde; call him an old dotard, And of Rancour / gonnë* to diffye and say they'll not follow his Both his kalkyngr / and his astronomey, advice, And shortly seide / pei took therof non hede, This was the clamour / and noisy, in every cost, Ne wil no-thyng* / gouerne hem after' his rede. Of hegh and lough / porh-out all the hoost, And specialy / of the sowdeours, And of lordes / regnyng in her flours, specially the And of thestates / effectuely, I mene, young folk, which of age / were but tender and grene, Of the werré / grete experience. That han* not' hadde / by martyrs Influence, If her, zif 3e list / 3e may considre and Se Of conceytes ful grete dinersyté, But Youth of Youth (leaf 49, back) How that 3outh / no peril cast' a-forñ is rash, Til he by* meschief / sodeynly be lorn*, Wher as age / provydeth / every thing Or he bygyynne / to casten the endyng: "How age and youth ben of diverscopeynyons But of hede / set on al attonys, runs its head As he that hurtleth / ageynës hardë stony's

Broseth hym-sifl / vnwarly and parbrakethi.
But' age experte / no thynge vndertaketh
But' he to-forri / be good discreciouw
Make a due examynacioun
How it wil tourne / outhere* to badde or good.
¶ But' 3outh, as fast1 / as stered is the blood,
Taketh emprises of hasty wilfulness,
Ioye at the gynnyng* / the ende is wretchedness.
¶ The oldi, prudenti / in al his gounenaunce,
Ful longe a-form / maketh purueaunce ;
But 3outh allass be counsail wil not wyrke,
For which ful ofte / he stumbleth in the dyrke.
Thus sedle is seyne / the trouthe* to termyne,
That' age and 3outhë* / drawë be o lyne.

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,
AH his wisdam / and his profecye
Of the Grekes / was holden* but folye.
For thoghe Plato / and wisë Socrates,
Moral Senek / and Diogenes,
Albumasar / and prudenti Tholomee,
And Tullius / that' haddë souereynte

whylom in Rome / as of eloquence:
Thogh all thise / shortly in sentence,
were a-lyye / most konnyng and experite,
And no man list / her counsel to aduerte,
Nor of her sawes / forto taken hede,
What myght availle / and it cam to nede? 2980
For wher prudence / can fyndē no socour
And prouidence / haueth no favour,
Farwel wisdam / farwel discretioun,
For lakke only / of supportacioun.
For vs unsupported / with his lokkēs hore,
Amphiorax / sighen / gan ful sore
With hede enclynyd / and many evyl thouht,
whan that he saufhe his counsayl stood for nought. 2988
For vttrely / the grekes, as I tolde,
han fully cast / her Journē for to holde,
Made hem redy / and gonnen to hosteye
Toward Thebes / the Cytē to werreye;
And in Grece / wil no longer tarye,
And forth with hem / Amphiorax they carye,
Sette in his Char / with a doolful herte,
Whan he wist / he myghte not asterte
Of his fate / the disposicioun.
And hosteying / into the Region
Of lygurges / Grekes gan approche
A sondy loude / with many Craggy roche.

avail Ar. and all, and] if Tj. M. Di. Ra. whan Ba. 2982. prouidence]
werry L. werre (hostee) Lb. waste P. 2995. char Tj. M. Ad. chare Bo.
Ra. C. T. chair Ba. doollfull dulfull Ra. woful Ad. Ad. I. Ba. 2997. the]
his Bo. Du. Lb. E. and Tj. om. P. 3000. many a Bo. M. Ad.;
But al the way, sothly, þat þei gon,
For hors nor man / water was þer non:
So drye* weren the valeþ and the pleynys.
For al þat þeere / they hadden had no reyny
But ful grete drouht / as mad is mencioun;
And al the londe / Cerchyng* enviroun
They nowther fonde / wellë nor* Ryver,
hem to refressh / nor water that was cler,
That they allass / no refut ne konne.
So inportable / was the shenë sonne,
So hoot on hem / in feldës wher they leye,
That for meschief / man and hors gan deye,
Gapynþ ful drye / vpward into south;
And somë putten / her swerdës in her mouth
And sperys hedes /, in story as is told,
Taswage her thirst / with the yren cold;
And of his lif / ful many on dispreyd
In this meschief / and hom ageyn repayed:
Tyl on a day / worthy Tydeus,
And with hym ek the kyng* Campaneus,
Of purpoos rood / þorgh-outë the contrë
þif they myght eny water? See,
Fro Coost to cost / bothë* fer and ner;
Til of fortune / they entred an herber,
with treës Shadowed for the somne Shene,
Ful of flourës* / and of herbës grene,

Wonder holsom / both of syyt and ayr*;
Ther-Inne a lady / which passingly was fayr,
Sittying as tho / vnder a laurer tre;
And in her Armes / a litil child hadd she,
Ful gracious / of loke and of visage,
And was also / wondre tendre of age,
Sone of the kynge / born forto succede,
Calléd ligurgus / in story as I rede,
Whoos hertly Ioye / and worldly ek dispens,
Al his myrthë* / plesauncce, and confort;
Was in this child / of excellent payrnesse.
And this lady / Myrour of semlynesse,
Al sodeynly as she cast vp her sight
And on his stedé / sahn an armé knyght,
Gretely abasshëd / gan ano ñ remwe.
But Tides after gan to swe
And saydë / "sustir / beth no-thyng dismayed,"
In 3oure-silf 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 Grekës landë,
Kygges, Prynces / be * loggëd in the feld,

[leaf 51]

The lady moves away.

Tides tells her what distress the Argives are in

And many other / with pollux / speer and sheld, 3052
which in meschief / peryl, and gret dreck,
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 allas / excepting noñ estat; 3056
Our viage / is so infortunat:
Preying 30w / of wommanly pytè,
Benygnely* / and graciously to se
how of Grece all þe Chýuralye
Of her lyüës / stont in Iupartie;
That 3e wold / of wommanhedë telle
3if 3e knowë* Ryver / spryng, or welle,
Specially / now in al oure Care,
Of gentillesse vndo vs declare.
lo: her is alle / 3if 3e list to here,
That I wol seyn / myn ownë suster dere.” 3068
And whan this lady / Inly vertuous,
The conpleynt herde / of worthy Tydeus,
Of verrey pytè / chaungeth cher and hewe,
And in her herte / vpon her woo gan rewe, 3072
And ful goodly / seyng his distresse,
Seyde vndo hym: in al his hevynesse,
“Certës,” quod she / “3if I were at large
Touching this child / of which I hauë charge, 3076
I shuld in hast / of al that doth 30w greve

To my pouter / helpen to relieue,
Only of routh / and compassion,
And lenue / al other / occupacion,
Conveyë* 3owe / and be 3oure trewe guyde
To a Ryver / but* lityl her be syde.
But* I dar not* / so moche me assure
This litil child* / to put* in aventure.
I am so ferful / from it* to departe.
But* for 3oure sakë / yet* I shal iuparte
My lif, my deth / of trewe afeccion,
To provyde / for 3our saucion."
Took the child* / and laide it* in her lappe,
And richëly in clothës / gan it* wrappe,
And Couchëd it* / among* the herbës soote,
And leyde aboutë / many hoolsom roote
And flourës ek / bothë* blewe and rede.
And suprisëd / with a maner drede
with Tideus / forth / anoi she wente,
As she in trouthe* / that no treson mente,
And on hir way / wolde* neuere dwelle
Til she hym brouht / to a right* faire welle
And ta Ryvere / of water ful fairely

3378. helpe[n] helpen you M. Di. helpe you E₂, to helpen L₁, to relieve[ ]
and relieve E₂, to my releue Ad₂. 3079. Only of routh[ ] Of routh only T₃, and[
and of T₁, Lb. Ad₂, I. E₂. 3081. Conveye Bo. M. Ad₁, Convey Ar. trewe Bo.
aboutë] aboute it L₁, Lb. Ra. Ba. aboute him Ad₁, Ad₂ I. many Lb. M. Ad₁,
Hasted Adj. the

But* who was glad / and who was tho Iocounde 3100

But* Tydeus / Seyng the Ryver!

which in al hast* / sente his messenger

To Adrastus / and bad hym nat* abide,

But* doune descendē / to the Ryver-syde

with al his host* / recur forto haue

At* this Ryver / her lyuës forto saue.

And þei enhast* hem / makyn gö abood,

All attonys / to the Ryver rood *

Forto drynke* / ; þei hadde so gret* lust∗

Of appetit* / forto staunche her thrust∗.

And somē dronk / and* fonde it* did hem good ;

And somē wern / so feren* and so wood

Uppon the water / that* in sikernesse,

Thorgh vndiscret* / and hasty gredynesse,

Out* of mesur / the watere so þei drynke

and fall dead.

Some bathe.

That* they fille ded / euene vpon the brynyke ;

And somē naked / into þe Ryvere ronne,

Only for hete / of the somer sonne,

To baten hem / , the water was so cold ;

And some also / as I haue* 30w told,

I menē tho that* prudent* wern and wise,

The water drank / in mesurable wyse,

[leaf 52, back]

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

They were refresshëd / fully and recured.

3124

The Argives pitch their tents

And Grekës than / of hegh and lowe degré,

For high profit and great commodities,
Compas the Ryuere / cristalyn of sighte,
Of oon accordé / they her tentys pytth,
To rest hem ther / in relee of her peyne,
Only the space / of a day or twyne.

And whyllys Grekes / vpon the Ryuer lay,
This Tydeus / vpon the same day
Ful knyyghtly / hath don his diligence,
This 3onge lady / with gret reverence,
To Adrastus / goddly to presente:
At whoos comynge / pe kynge hym-sylve wente
Ageynés * hir / she fallyng douñ on knees,
AH thestatés present* and degrees
Of Grekés lond / absent was nat* oñ;
And in his Armés / took hir vp anóñ,
Thanking* hir / of her bysynesse,
Of hir* labour / and her kyndeness,
Behotyng* hir / lik as he was holde,
If eny thyng pleyly that she wolde
That* he may don / she shuld it* redy fynde.
And Grekés aß / the story maketh mynde,
Of thestatys / beyng tho present*;
Thankéd hir / with al her hool entent,
For refresshyng / don to many Grek;
And for her part* / they biheght hir ek,
With her body / and goodês bothë* two,
What* her list* / commaunde hem forto do,
Why Ipsiphyle had to leave her own Land.

To be redy platly / and nat' faille.
And her myn autour / makep reheresaille

That' pis lady / so faire vpon to se,
Of whom pe namë was Isyphilë,
To Adrastus told /, as 3e may rede,
Lycale / the stok / of her kynrede,
Whilom how she / a kyngges doghter' was :
Rehersyng' hym / hooly at the cas,

First' why pat' she / out of her contrè wente,
Shortly for she woldë* not assente
To execute / a conspiraciouw,

Mad by the wymmen / of that' Regioun,
A thyng contrayr / and ageyn al right',
That echë of hem / vpon a certeyn nyght',
Be on accord / shal warly taken kepe,

Fader / brother / and husband in her slepe,
With knyvys 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 conclusion.

That' wymmen / myght' han domynacioun
In pat kyngdam / to regne at libertè
And on no partie / Interrupted be.

But for pis lady / passing' debonayre,
To pis mordre / was froward' and contrayr,

In killing all the men,

so that women might rule.

Ipsiphyle

But for pis lady / passing' debonayre,
To pis mordre / was froward' and contrayr,

saved her father,

Kept' her fader / pat' he was not' slawe
But fro pe deth / preseruëd and wipdrewa,

For which, alas! / she fledde þe contré,
And of a pyrat' / taken in the see,
To kyng lygurgus / brouht In al her drede.
And for her troupp / and her womanhede
To hir he took / his young child to kepe,
which in þer herber / allone* she lefte slepe
when Tydeus / she brought to the welle.

And by Iason / somé bookis telle
That this lady / hadde sonës two,
when that* he / and hercules also
Toward Colchos / by hir' contré Cam
For tacomplysshí / þe conquest of the Ram.
But who that* lyst / by and by to se
The story hool / of this* ysypylé,
Hir fadres name / of which also I wante*,
Thouh somé seyn / he naméd was Thoante,
And somé bokës * vermes ek hym* calle:
But to knowe / þe auenturës alle
Of þis lady · Isypylé the faire,
So faithfull ay / and inly debonayre,
Lok on the book / that* Iohn Bochas made
Whilom of woman / with rethorikës glade,
And directe / be ful soureyyn style
To fayre* Ianë / the queen of Cecile.
Rede ther the rubrich / of ysypylé,

Lycurgus's Son is poisoned and killed by a Serpent. [PT. III.

She is taken back to the garden by Tydeus,

...and finds Lycurgus's boy dead,

If How he child was slayn wip the Serpent.

poison by a serpent.

Ipsiphyle tears her hair,

Of her trouth / and her hegh bountë,

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 repayedred.

But> now, allas! my mater dispeyred

Of alle Ioye / and of alle* welfulnesse,

And destitute* of myrth and alle gladnesse,

For now of wo / gynnê pe sharpe shoures.

For this lady / fond among the flouris

her litil child / turned vp pe face,

Slayn of a serpent / in pe seluê place,

hyr tailê* burlyd / with skalis siluer-shene.

The Venym / was / so persyng' and so kene,

So perilous ek / the mortal violence

Causêd, allas! / thorgh her long absence:

She was to sloun / homward lerto hie.

But> now can she / but> wepe, wayle, and crye;

Now can she nouht> / but> sighen and compleyn

And wofully wryngit her handys tweyn,

Dedly of look / pal of face and chere;

And gan to rende / her giltë* tresses clere,

...and of Bo: and the rest.


3207. compiled Bo: 3208. that]


3212. is despeyred G. is dispayed Ad1. I. C. T2. P. Es. Ro. dispeired Ad1. S. ys dispayedred L1. dispeyred Ar. Bo: and the rest. 3213. second, alle]


Bo: and the rest (in P. welfulnesse has been erased, and replaced by gladnesse by a later hand). 3214. of myrth] of all myrth L1. Es. and alle] and of all Lb: and of M. Di. Ra. Ba. S. C. and Ad1. L2. Ro:* And restitute of all heynesse P (the last word written by later hand, on erasure).


And oftē sith she gan to seyn, "allas!
O wooful wrec / vnhappy in this cas,
What shal I don / or whider may I tourne?
For pis the syn / 3if I her* soiourne,
I woot right wel / I may it not eskape
The pitous fatē / patē is for me shape.

Socour is non / nor ther may be non red,
lich my desert / but that I mot be ded;
For thorhe my slouth / and my neclyence
I haue, allas! don so gret offence
That my gilt /, I may it nat excuse,
Shal to the kyng / of treson me accuse.

Thorh my defaute / and slouthē* bothē* two,
His sone is ded / and his heir also,
which he louēd mor than al his good:
For tresour non / so nygh his hertē stood,
Nor was so depē / graue / in his corage:
That he is likly to fallen in a Rage
when it is so, myn odysyous offence
Reported be vnto his audience;
So inportable shal be his hevenesse.

Lycurgus's heir
is kild.
[leaf 54, back]

And wel woot I / in verrey sothfastnesse,
That, when the quenē* / hath this ping* espied,
To myn excus / It may nat be denied,

The Queen too

Ipsiphyle appeals to Tidues for help. [PT. III.

I doubt, it: not, / ther gyneth no pyte, 
With-out, respit, / she wil avenged be 
On me, alas! / as I ha deserved; 
That; fro the deth / I may not, be preserved 3256
Nowther be bille / ne supplicacionn;
For the rage / of my transgressioun 
Requereth deth / and non other mede." 
   And thus, alas! she, quaking in her drede, 3260
Non other helpe / nor remedy* kan,
But dreyn over sorow / to be Grekés Ran, 3261.
Of hertly woo / face and chere disteyned
And her chekes with wepyng al bereynyd, 
In hir affray / distracte and furious.

To-forn alle / she cam to Tydeus,
And fille on knees / and gan her compleynt mak,
Tolde pleynly / that for grekés 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 when that he her meschief vnderstood,
Vnto hire ful knyghtly he behiht'
To help and forther / al that' euere he myght;
hir pitous woo / to stynten and appese.
And forto fynde / vnto hir disesse
Hasty comfort, he went a ful gret pas

To Adrastus / and told hym al the cas 3280 and tells Adrastus,
Of pis vnhappy / wooful aventure,
Beseching hym to don his bysy cure,
As he was bound\(^6\) / of equyt\(e\) and ri\(t\)\(^4\),
And aduerten / and to han a si\(t\)\(^4\)
How she qvit her to Grek\(e\)s her to-forn
when they wer likly / forto haue\(^*\) be lorni,
The socour voide of her womanhede:
For which he most\(^2\) of knyght\(h\)thod taken hede
To remedien pis vnhappy thing:
And Adrastus / lik a worthy kyng\(^3\) who resolves to aid Ipsiphyle,
Taquyt\(v\) hym-silf /, the story make\(p\) mynd,
To thy\(s\) lady wille nat\(^e\) be found\(e\) vnkynd,
Neither for cost\(^e\) / nor for no travaylle,
But\(^2\) bysy was / in al \(p\)at\(^2\) myght\(^2\) availle
To hir socour / considered alle \(p\)ingges,
And by thavice / of alle \(p\)e worthy kyngges
Of Grek\(e\)s lond / \(p\)ei be accorded thus,
Prynces, Duk\(e\)s / and worthy Tydeus,
To hold her way / and al at onys ryde
To lygurgus / dwelling ther be-syde,
Of on entent\(^e\) / 3if they may purchase
In eny wis\(e\) / forto get\(e\) grace
For this lady, Called yspilhil:\(^2\) [leaf 55, back]
They wold assaye\(^*\) 3if it\(^*\) myghte be.

And to his paleys ful ryal bylt\(^e\) of ston,

3280. he\(^e\) om. Du. 3284. And\(^e\) om. P. aduerten\(^e\) aduert\(e\) L\(^e\), Ro. to aduerten M. Di. P. T\(^e\). eke aduertise E\(^e\), and to\(^e\) and T\(^e\) 3286. whan\(^e\) That Lb. C. T\(^e\). P. E\(^e\). L\(^e\), Ro. Ap. they\(^e\) om. Lb. P. forto\(^e\) to M. Ad\(^e\), Ad\(^e\), I. S. C. T\(^e\). E\(^e\), L\(^e\), elles to Lb. P. ha\(^e\) Ar. C. Ap. haue Bo. M. Ad\(^e\), Iorn\(^e\) forlorne Lb. M. Di. C. T\(^e\). L\(^e\). 3288. For\(^e\) Of Bo. Du. 3292. thys\(^e\) thy Ar. Ap. Ar. ha\(s\) a pause-bar after wille. 3293. Neither \(n\)or Ar. Bo. Du. L\(^e\), Lb. Ra. Nother \(n\)or E. C. T\(^e\). L\(^e\), Ap. Neither \(n\)e T\(^e\). Ba. S. P. E\(^e\). Nother \(n\)e Ro. Neither \(n\)or neither Ad\(^e\). Neither \(n\)outhir Ad\(^e\), I. Nor \(n\)or M. Di. for\(^e\) om. Ba. no\(^e\) om. M. Di. Ad\(^e\), Ad\(^e\), I. Ra. Ba. S. C. T\(^e\) P. L\(^e\). Ro. 3295. his\(^e\) peyre Lb. considered\(^e\) considreth Ad\(^e\), I. considre S. concydere Ro. 3298. and\(^e\) and with hem Lb. C. T\(^e\) P. E\(^e\). L\(^e\), Ap. worthy\(^e\) om. Lb. T\(^e\) P. E\(^e\). Ap. 3299. al\(^e\) om. Du. al at onys\(^e\) altonys\(^e\) Ar. 3304. assaye Bo. Ad\(^e\), assay Ar. M. 3305. his paleys\(^e\) pis place L\(^e\), ful ryal bylt\(^e\) full rially bylt Lb. E\(^e\), ryght rallyly bild S. for royallie bilt Ba. royall bylte P. wel biled\(^e\) Ad\(^e\), I. bit\(e\) L\(^e\), of stone\(^e\) of lyme and stone L\(^e\), P.
Lycurgus promises the Greeks Rooms,

The worthy Grekes / cam ryding* euerichon,
Every lord ful fresshly on his stede.
And lygurgus / example of manlihede,
Anon as he knewe of her comyng;
Taquyt* hym-silf / lich a gentil kyng,
Ageyn hem went to / to mete hem on the way,
Ful wel byseyn / and in ful good array,
Receyyvyng* hem with a ful kyngly chere.
And to Adrastus seid, as je shul here,
"jl "Cosyn*", quod he / and gan hym to enbracce,
"Je be welcome / to 30ure owne place,
Thankyng* herly to 3our hegh* noblesse
That* so goodly / of 3our gentillesse
Towardes me / 3e list* 3ou to acqyte,
30ure-silf his day / 3our cosyn to visite,
In this castel to takë 3oure loggyng*;
That* neuer* 3it* / I was so glad of thyng*
In* al my lif / and ther to her my thoruth.
And ouermorë* / ther shal be no slouth
That* the Chambres / and the largë tours
Shal be deluyered / to 3our herberioures;
That* euer* lord / as he is of degré,
Vnto his loggyng* / shal assignëd be.
30ure officerës* / lat* hem-silf* devise

If the howsnyg / may largely suffice
To sow and sowés / streecchen and atteyn,
That non estaat / haue * cause to complexyn.
And alle your / hoost / logged her be-syde,
which in Tentyse / vpon you abide,
lat hem fette / be myñ auctorite,
Vitayle ynoñ / her in my Cité.
And alle that may socour hem or saue,
And, at a word / al that euere I haue
Is full and hool / at your commandement."

Quod Adrastus / " that is nat' our entent,
Nor on no parte / cause of our comyng.
For we be come al for anoher thynge,
A certeyn gift / of you to requere,
Benignely / if 3e list to here,
which may Grekës / passingly availle,
Of our* request / if* that 3e nat ne faille,
which we dar not / opynly expresse,
with-out that 3e wold / of gentillesse,
3oure grante aforn / conferme and ratefye.
Than wer we bold / it to specify."
Lycurgus is told of his Boy's Death. [PT. III.]

Quod lycurgus / "what-euer thyngeth it be,
Nouthe exceptid / but only pinggēs thre:
The first is this / it toucheth nat my life,
My yonge sonē, pleynly, nor my wyfe;
Take al my good / or what ye liste provyde
Of my tresour / and sette pies thre a-syde,
Al the surplus / I count nat at a myte."

Than Adrastus / astounyd was a lyte
whan lycurgus / in conclusion,
Of his sonē / made excepcioun,
And whils they / entreten þus yfere,
Ther cam forth on / with a wooful chere,
Of face and look / pal and no-thing rede,
A-lowdē crieth / "the kyngēs* sone is dede,
Allas the whyl! / that whilom was so fayr,
After lycurgus / born forto ben hayr;
The which, allas! / hath 3olden vp the breth,
Of a Serpent / stonge to the deth
And with his woundē* / newē*, fressh and grene,
In therber lith / that pitē is to sene,
And hath so leyne / almost al this day;"

That when lygurgus / herdi* this affray,
And wist his child was ded and hath no mo,
Lytil wonder / thogh that* he were wo.
For sodeynly / the importable smerte
Ran anon / and hent* hym by the herte
That, for constreyn* / of his dedly peyne,
Thorgh-oute he felte koruen eyery veyne.
The rage gan myne in hym so depe
That* he can not* but sigh* / sobbe, and wepe.
And with the noys / and lamentacioun
The qwen distrauht* / is descendid doun.
And whan she knewe / the* ground of al this sorowe,
hit neded* her no teere* / forto borowe
But twenty tymé ny* vpon a rowe
A-swoune she fille / vnto pe grounde lone;
And stounde-méli* / for this hegh meschaunce,
Stille as ston / she lyggeth in a Traunce.
¶ And whan the child / into the courte was brouht
To-fore lygurgy / alas! I wite hym nought,
Vpon the cors / with a mortal face,
he Fil atonys / and gan it to embrace,
Lycurgus’s dead Son is buried.

The Greeks weep too.

I should never have done, if I tried to describe their sorrow.

The boy is buried.

Adrastus reminds Lycurgus and his wife

That so to sorowe / avayllë may right' noght',
To mordre hym-silf / with his ownë thought,


3414. hym-silf] them-self S. with] in Ra. S.
Adrastus reminds Lycurgus that all folk must die.

Sith loos of deth / no man may recure
Thogh he in woo / perpetuellly endure;
Al helpeth nat' / when the soule is go.
"And our lif her, who taketh* hed thet-to,
Is but' an exile / and a pilgrymage,
Ful of torment' / and of bitter Rage,
Ly<he a See· rennyng to and fro,
Swyn an ebbé / when the flood is do,
That may hym shroude / ageyn pe fatal shour
Of cruel deth / when hym list' manace
To marke a man with his mortal mace.

Neyther Fraunchysé / nor proteckioun,
And lit' / or noght' / may helpen in this caas
Saff-condit' / or Supersedyas.

For in this world' / who so look a-right',
Is noñ so gret' / of power nor of myght',
Noon so riche' / shortly/ nor so bold
But' he·mot' dey / outher* 3ong' or old.
And who in 3outhé' / passeth pis passage,
he is eskaped / al the woodé* Rape,
Al sorowe and trouble / of this present lyff,

[i.e., Ageynes deth may be no recure, that no one can avoid death:
That may hym shroude / ageyn pe fatal shour
Of cruel deth / when hym list' manace
To marke a man with his mortal mace.

Neyther Fraunchysé / nor proteckioun,
And lit' / or noght' / may helpen in this caas
Saff-condit' / or Supersedyas.

For in this world' / who so look a-right',
Is noñ so gret' / of power nor of myght',
Noon so riche' / shortly/ nor so bold
But' he·mot' dey / outher* 3ong' or old.
And who in 3outhé' / passeth pis passage,
he is eskaped / al the woodé* Rape,
Al sorowe and trouble / of this present lyff,

Adrastus 

Repleneshid * with contek / wree and stryff, 
which seeld or neure / stonti in Suertè.

Wher-for besti is, as semeth vnto me, 
No man gruchis* / but, of hegh prudence, 
The sonde of goddis / tak in pacience.

And 3e that ben so wis / and manly to, 
3oure-silf in drowne in torment and in woon 
For loos of thynge / 3f* that 3e list to se, 
which in no wisë may recureid be,

Is gret* foly and vndiscrecioun."

And thus Adrastus / hath conveyëd doun

The substaunce hool / of thati he wolde seye:
Til that he fond / a tymi forto preye
Conuenyent* / for ysphilie,
Bysechyng hym forto han pitë
Of pati she hath offended his highnesse,
Noti wilfully / buti of reklesnesse:
Firsti pati he woldi / his doomës so* dyvide,
Mercy preferre / and settë* righti a-side,
At the* requesti and preier of hem alle,
Of this vnhaappe / and meschief thati is falle

By hasty Rigour / nat' to do vengeaunce,
But' thynk afor / in his purvyance,
who to wrechês / doth mercy / in her drede,
Shal mercy fyndê / whan he hath most' node:
And sith he hath power, myght', and space,
Lat hym tak this lady / to his grace,
For lak of routhês* / that she nat' ne dye.
¶ But tho the quenê / gan agayn replye
And platly seide / as in this matere,
Avayleth not' requests / nor preyere,
Pytê, Mercy / nor remyssyoun, 
But if it' be / by this condicioun
That the serpent', cause of al 'pis sorowe,
Thorgh her labour / lay his hed to borowe.
This is fynal / and vtter recompense
To fyndê græcê / for her gret' offence,
Or ells Shortly / sheedê* blood for blood,
And whan Grekys her answer vnderstood,
Al of accord? / in her beste wise,
Took on hem / this aventurous emprise,
For loun only / of Ysyphylee;
And gan to ryde / envyron þe contrê,
By hillês, valês / Rochês, and ek Cauês,


He who does mercy, shall find mercy.
Let Ipsiphyle be forgiven.
¶ How the quen will algate han þe serpent dode.
But the Queen says,
either the serpent or Ipsiphyle must die.
The Greeks hunt for the Serpent.
The Serpent is shot, and Ipsiphyle is forgiven. [PT. III.]

In dychis dirk / and in oldë gravis,
By every cooste / cerchyng vp and doun:
Til at the last / ful famous of renoun,
The worthy knyght / parthonolopè
was the first / that hapèd for * to Se
This hydous Serpent / by a Ryver-side,
Gret and horrible / stern and ful of pride,
Vndere a Rocchë* / by a banke lowe;
And in al hast / he bent a sturdy bowe,
And ther-in sette an arowe* fylèd kene,
And thorby the body / spotted blew and grene,
Ful myghtily he made it* forto Glyde,
Hent* out a swerde / hongynè be his syde,
Smoot* of his hede / and anoon it hent
And ther-with-al gan the Quene present,
wherthorph her sorowe parcel gan aswage.
And thus, of prowesse / and of hegh corage,
This manly man / parthonolopè
hath reconciled faire Isyphilee
Vnto gracè / fully of þe Quene,
Hir* Ire avoided* / and her oldë tene.
And by Adrastus mediacioun,
Kyng lygurgus / graunted a pardoun
To this lady, that* from al daunger fre,
She was restorèd to her libertè,
In his paleys / al her lif to dwelle.
Thogh Iohn Bochas / þe contrarie telle:
For this autour affermed / out of dred
That, when this child / was by the serpent ded,
She durste not / for her grete offence
Neuer after comen in presence
Of lygurgus / but of intençion
Fledde anoñ / out of that Regioun;
Att' herte she took / the childès deth so sore.
what' fille of hir* / I fyndë* can no more
Than 3e han hert / aforne me speçifiye.
And the kyngdam / but 3if bookys lye,
Of lygurgus / was ycallëd Trace.
And, as I rede in an other place,
He was þe samë myghtye Champioun,
To Athenes / that kam with Palamoun
Ageyne his brother / that' callëd was arcyte,
Lad in his char / with fourë* bookys whyte,
Vpon his hed / a wreth of golde ful fyn.
And I fynd ek / how bachus, god of wyñ,
with this kyngg:/ was whilom at debat,
Only for he / pommous and Elat,
Destruccioun / didë* to his vynos,


THEBES.
And for he first\^ sett\^ allay on wynys,
Meynte water / when they were to strong\^.

And this Bachus / for the grete wrong\^.
Brak his lymys / and dreynt\^ hym in \^pe See.

Of lygurgus / 3e gete no more of me.

\^[Note de xii arboribus in libro Bochacii de genealogia deorum.]
See Boccaceio on the Genealogie of the Gods.

He was next poet to Petrarch.

[leaf 59, back]
To tell\^e forth shortly, 3if I konne,
Of her Iourn\^e / that\^y they haue\^* begonne :
how Adrastus / hath his liev\^e* take
Of ligurgus / with his brow\^es blake ;
And departyng, with seynt\^ Iohn to borowe,
Mad his ward\^es / on the nexte morowe
So wel beseyn / so myghty, and\^ so strong,
Wonder erly / when \^pe lark\^e* song,
With a trumpet\^ / warn\^d everuy man
To be redy / in al the hast\^ they kan,
Forto remwe / and no letting\^ make.

And so they han / the righte way I-take  
Toward Thebes / the grekês euerychoñ,  
That's such a nombre / gadred into ôn,  
Of worthy knyghtês neuere afern was seyn,  
when they in ferê / monstred in a pleyn.  
And they ne styntê by non occasioun  
Til they be come euen a-for the town,  
And pightê her tentys / proudly, as I rede,  
Vnder the wallys / in a grene* mede.  

And when the * thebans / were besette aboute,  
The manly knyghtês / wold han* yssyd oute  
And haue* scarmossed / in her lusty pride,  
With her foomen / on the topter side,  
But be byddyng* of Ethiocles  
Alle pilkê* nyght / pei kepê hem-silf in pes,  
Be cause only / that it was so late,  
With gret* awaytê / set at every gate,  
Men of Armys / al the nyghtê wakynê  
On the wallys / be byddyng* of pe kyng,  
Lestê þer werê / treynys or tresoun.  

And on the tours / and in the Chief Dongoun  
he sette vp men / to makê mortal sowns  
with brasyn horns / and loudê Clarions,  
Of ful ententê / þe wacchéês forto kepe,  
In his wardê / that's no man ne slepe.  

And Grekys proudly / al þe longe nyghtê  
kynbled* fyrys / and maad ful gret lyghtê,  

The Greeks

3556. right Bo. M. Ad1, way Bo. M. Ad1, weye Di. om. Lb. I-take Ar. 
Lb. Lp. take Bo. and the other MSS. 3560. in fere| yfere C. T2, to-gidre Ra. 
Ba. monstred Bo. mostred M. monstred] mostren Lq. Adj. 
moustren Ad1. I. E1. mustren Ra. were monstred Ewp. to mustre S. in] on Lq. Ad1. Ad2. I. 
3565. whan] whan þat Bo. om. Lq. the Thebans| Thebans Ar. Lp. besette] sett 
all S. 3566. han Bo. Ad1, an Ar. haue M. 3567. haue Bo. M. Ad1, ia 
Ar. scarmysshed Bo. Adj. scarmessed M. scyrmysshed Ad2. Lp. lusty] hasty 
Lb. C. P. Ewp. Lq. 3568. þat oþre Bo. M. Ad1, 3570. þilke Bo. þilke Ar. 
M. Ad1, 3571 and 3572 are transposed in Ad1. Ad2. I. 3576. on] in M. Di. 
3577. to] ta Ar. 3578. brasen Bo. 3580. ne] om. Ad1. I. Ra. Ba.; in Ad1. ne is written, but it has 
been underdotted with black ink and crossed with red ink (= with the rubric ink). 
ful] om. S.
The Greeks ravage the Country round Thebes. [PT. III.

Sette yp loggyng/ vpon every Syde
lik as they shuld / euery ther abyde,

Compas the toune / ther was no voidé space

But al besette / her foomen to manace.

And whyls they afor þe Cité laye,

Brent townés / thorpés and vilages,

with grete ravyn makynge therillagees,

Spoyle / and robbe / and brouȝte* hom vitaille

And al maner sortes / of bestaylle,

Shep / and neet/ / and in her cruell rage

with houndés slowe / / al that was saugue,

Hert and hyndé* / bothë buk and doo,

The blake* beer / / and þe wilde Roo,

The fatte swyn / and þe tusshy* boor,

Karying al hom / for the grekes stoor,

whete and wyn / for her auantage,

Hay and Otys / fodder / and forage.

With þis kalendis / as hem thynké* dwe,

Greky's gan / the thebans to Salwe,

Mynistring hem / occasionēs* felle,
þe sege settō / shortly fortō telle,
Of ful ententō / in their hatful pryde,
For lif or deth / ther-vpon tabide,
who so euer / ther-with be a-greuéd,
Til they fully / her purpoe haue acheued;
Ther may therof / be maked no relee.

And of al* this / ful war / Ethioicles
Gan in party / gretly to* mervaille
when that* he saugh / þe gretė apparylle
Of the Grekes / þe Cité rounde aboute;
And in hym-silf hadde a maner doute,
Now at* the poynť / what* was best* to do.
For thilkē* tyme / it* stood with hym so
That* to some abidyng* in þe toung
he hadde in hertē / gretō suspicioûn
list* toward hym / that* they were vnstable,
And to his brother / in party fauorable ;
For in the Cîte / ther war variance,
which vnto hym was a gret* meschaunce;
For in his nedē / shortly / he ne wiste
Vpon whom* / þat* he myghte triste;
For they wer not* / alle of on entent* :
For which he hath* / for his counsale sent;


3604 They mean to press the siege to the death.

Eteocles is in doubt what to do.

He knows some Thebans favour Polyneices.

The variance in Thebes among hem-silf.

Eteocles asks the advice of the Thebans.
In the Theban Council, some say 'Fight,' others 'Yield.'

150

his lords and his mother Jocasta.

Al his lordes / and the old Quene,
which as he dempte / were pur and clene,
Hool of on herte / and not variable,
Of old expert / and alway founde stable;
Requering hem / be-causè they were wys,
Al openly to tellen / ther avis

Wher it was bet / pleynly, in her sight,
With his brother / to treten or to fight!

And somé gaf / a ful blunt sentence,
which hadde / of werre / non experience:
Seyde it was best / and nat ben afferd,
To trye his right / manly with pe Swerd.
And some also / that wer Moor prudent,
Spak vnto hym / by good avisement
And list nat spare / but their conceyte tolde
how hit was best / his couenaunt forto holde,
And to parform / 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 founde / variant fro the dede,
For non hatred / rancour, neyther pryde.
And tho / the queene * took hym out aside,

Tolde hym pleynly / it was ful vnsittyng.

Swich doublenesse / to fyenden in a kyng,

And seide hym ek / al-thoh he were strong',
To his brother / how he didē* wrong',
"As al the tounė / wil recorde, in dede,
And bere* witnesse / zif it' kam to nedec.
Wherfor lat' vs shape another mene
In this materē / whil that' it' is grene,
Or this quarel / gonne of volunete,
Tune / in the fyn / to mor aduersiteit.
For zif it' be / darreynd be batayle,
who tresteth most' / may ful likly faliell.
And it' is foly / be short' avisement,
To putte a strif / in martys Iugement.
For hard it' is / when a Iuge is wood,
To tret' aforn hym / with-out' los of blood.
And zif we put our mater* / hool in Marte,
which with the swerd* / his lawes doth coarte,
Than may hitt happe / wher ze be glad or lotli,
Thow and thy brother / shal repente bothi ;
And many a-noper / that' is her present',
Of joure trespass / that' ben Innocent',
And many thousand / in cas shal compteyñ
For the debat / only of 3ow tweyni,
And for 3our strif / shal fyndē ful sultoote.

"And for thow art' gynnyng, ground, and Roote

Of this Injurie / and this gret vnright,
To the goddys / that herof han a sight,
Thow shal accoountys / and a reknyng make
For alle tho / that pershyn for pi sake.
And now the causé / dryven is so ferre,
Sodeyn pees / outher* hasty werre
Of lif and deth / dependeth in balanuence.
And no man may / be no craft restreyne
That vpon on* / platly of this twyne
The soort mot fallé / lik as it doth tourne,
Who so euer lawgh / or ellys mourne.
And thow art dryve / so narowé to pe stake
That thow mayst nat / moo delayés make,
But fighte or treté / this quarel forto fyne ;
By non engyn / thow canst / it not declyne.
And hasty cas /, as folk seyn that be wys,
Redresse / requereth by ful short avys :
For treté longe / now avayleth noght,
For to the paynté / sothly thou art brouht,
Outher* to kepé thy possessioun
Or in al haste / devoyde / out of this town,
wher thow therwith / be wroth or wel apayd."

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

The tyne is come / it may be noñ other.
wherfor in haste / trete with thi brother
And ageyn hym / make no resistance,
But to thy lordys / fully žue* credence :
By whoos comsayl / sith they be so sage,
late Polymyte / reiøyse his heritage.
And that* shal turnè / most to thy avail.
loo! her is hool / the fyn of our cousnail."
¶ And shortly tho / for verrey Irë wroth,
Thouh he therto / froward was and loth,
Accorded is /, heryng al the prees,
̣if he algate shal trete for a* pes,
It moste be / by this condicio[n
That* he wol han / the domynacio[n
First* in chief / to hym-silf reserued,
As hym thought* / he haddi wel disserued,
And saue to hym / hool the souereyntè;
And vnder hym / in Thebès pe Cité
he to graunte / with a right* good cher,
Polymyüs / to regnè for a 3er,
Than tavoysed* / and not* reso[rt* ageyn :
For mor to cleymè / was nat* but In veyn.
This wold he doñ / only for her sake,
And other-wise / he wil non endè make
with the Grekys / what* fortune euere falle.
And fynally / among* his lordys alle
Ther was not* on / of hii nor lowgh estat,

Jocasta and her Daughters go to Adrastus & Polynices. [PT. III.

That woldē* gon / on this ambassyat* 3728
Out of the toune / nouter for bet nor wors;
so Jocasta will.
Til Jocasta / madē sadyl her hors,
And cast her-silf / to gon for this tretē,
To make an endē / 3if it woldē be. 3732
Jocasta and her daughters,
And this was don / the morowe right be tyme,
Vpon the hourī* / when it drio to pryme.
And with hyr went* / hyr 3onge dohtres tweyne,
Antigone and Ismene,
Antygonē / and the feyr ymyyne,
Of hyr meynē / ful many on aboute,
At the gate / she was conveyed oute,
And of purpos / she madē first hir went;
ride to King Adrastus,
On hors-bak / to kyng Adrastus tent,
He and his lordys / beyng al yffere.
who welcomes her.
And they receyve hyr / with a right glad chere,
Shewynge hyr / lik to hir degrē,
On every half / ful gret humanytē,
Polyneices / rysynge fro his place,
And humblely / his moder gan embrace,
kisses her and his sisters.
Kyssede hyr / and than Antigonē,
And ek ymyne / excellingly of bewtē.
And for that they / passyngly were faire,
Gret was the pres / concours, and repaire
Of the ladyes forto han a sight:
Jocasta
And Jocasta / procedeth anon ryght∗ 3752

PT. III.] Tideus rejects Eteocles's terms. Polynéices must be King. 155

To Adrastus / hir mater to purpose,
And gan to hym / opynly disclose
Thenent / and whi of Ethiocles,
And by what" mené he desireth pes,
To hym reserued, / as she gan specific,
The honour hool / and the regalye,
with Sceptre and Crouné fro hym not devyded,
But hool to hym / as he hath provided;
¶ And Polymyte, be this condicioun,
Vnder hym to regnen / in the toun
As a Soget, be suffraunce of his brother.
But† the Grekés / thouhten al another,
And Specyaly worthy Tydeus,
Pleynly affermyng it shuld nat be thus:
For he wil haué / no condiciouns,
But† sette a-Syde / aff excepiouns,
Nothyng reservid / as in special,
But† hool the lordship, Regalye, and al,
Polymytés it fully to possede,
In Thebés Crownié / verrayly in dede,
As Rightful kynge / putte in pocessioun,
lich the Couenaunts and commencioun
Imad of olde / assurryd, and asselyd,
"which shall not now of nwé be repelyd,
But stable and hool / in his strength* stonde.
And lat* hym so platly vndyrstonde!
And first that he devoyde hym out of toun,

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 / darreynd be and tryed :
we wil not’ arst fro this townere remewe.

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

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

And 3it to hym / Amphiorax contrarye
Ful pleynly saide, in conclusion,
This fyn shall cause a destruccion,
Of hem echon / 3if it forth procede
To be parfourmed / and execute in deed.
But the thilke 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.

And tho Jocasta / as wisdom did hyr tech,
humble of her port / with ful softe spech,
Gan seke menys / in hyr fantasye
3if she myght the Irē modefyte
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 aventur,
Cause and ground / of gret confusioune,
Greks perturbyng / and also ek the town,
And it to tellē / may me not asterte.
For which a whil / my styetft I mott dyuerte,
And shortly tellē / by descriptioune,
Of a Tigre dwellyng in the town,
which fro a kyngdam / besyden adiacent,
Out of Egipē / was to Thebēs sentt:
the* whichē* beest by record of scripture.

3806. Amphiorax] Amphorax Bo. 3807. Ar. has a pause-bar after pleynly.
3808. cause Bo. M. Ad., Ar. has a pause-bar between fyn and shal. 3810.
parfourmed Bo. performed Ad., 3811. thilke Bo. Ad., thilk M. 3813.
softe Bo. soft M. Ad7, 3821. deuer Bo. M. devour Ad7, 3824. par-
turbyng Bo. Ad7, perturbling M. pertourbing E7, also Ar. G. S. L7. Ro. om.
Bo. and the rest. 3825. it yt Ad7. I. to] om. E7, may] it may Ad7. Ad6. I.
whicke Bo. M. which Ar. Ad7. (see Notes).
The wondrous tame Tiger of Thebes.

The tiger is savage,
Is most swift / as of his nature,
And of kyndd also most savage,
And most cruel / when he is in his rage,
And, as Clerkys make mencious,
with a lion's body,
He of body / resembleth the lyoun,
And lik a greyhound / the mosel and the hed,
And of Eyen / as eny fyret red,
Ek of his Skyn /, wryten as I fynde,
and spotted skin.
lieh a panter / conuersant in ynde,
with al maner hwys and colours;
And is ful oft / deceuyed with merours
[leaf 64, back]
By fraud of huntys / and fals apparell
Shewyd in glas / and withouten existence,
when his kyndles / arn be sleight ytake*,
And he decoysd / may no rescus make.

This tiger at Thebes was tame,
Ageynys kynde /, myn autour writ the same.
† And this beest, mervailous to se,
was sent to * ymeye and antygoned:
which vnto hem / did* grete confort,
And Cowde playe / and maké good * disport,
lik a whelp / that is but song of age;
never did any damage,
And to no wight did* no damage,
No mor in soth / þan doth a litil hound;
And it was worth many hundred pound
and used to amuse Eteocles.
Vnto the kynge /, for ay in his greuaunce

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

Ther was no ping' / did hym mor plesaunce,
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 thilkö* tyme /, the story doth expresse,
That' Iocesta treted* for a pes,
This tamė Tygre / in party rekkéles,
Out' at the gates / in sight of many a man,
Into the felde / wildely* out ruån,
And Casually rennyng to and fro,
In and oute, as doth a tamė Roo;

Grekys wenyng' that' wer 30ng' of age,
That' this Tygre / haddē be sàuage,
And Cruelly besettyng al the place

Roundë aboutë / gan hym to enchace
Til he was ded / and slayen* in the feld.
The slaughteryer of whom whan pat' they byheld,
The proude Thebans / which on the wallys stood,
They ronnë doune ful furious and wood,
wenyng he had / be slayen* of despìt.
Takyng' her hors / with-outë mor respît,

Fully in purpos / with Grekys 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

Fyl vpon hem / that han the tygre slayne, 3884
And cruelly qwitten hem her mede,

That many Greke / in the grene mede, 3888
By the force / and the grete myght
Of her Foomen, lay slayen* in his fight.
The Tigres deth / so dere they aboughte,
So mortally the* Thebans * on hem wroughe
That al the host, in the feld liggyng,
was astounyed / of this sodeyn thyng. 3892

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

Many on both sides are slain.

With them are Ethioles

and King Tremor.

With them are Ethioles

and King Tremor.

Many on both sides are slain.

With them are Ethioles

and King Tremor.

With them are Ethioles

and King Tremor.

Many on both sides are slain.

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Many on both sides are slain.

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and King Tremor.

Many on both sides are slain.
That many on / lay slay'n* at the gate,
Gapyng' vprightys / with her woundys wyde;
That vttrely / they durste not abyde
To-for the sword of this Tydeus.
he was on hem so passing furius,
So many theban / he roof vnto the herte
That whan Iocasta / the slauhtre gan aduerce,
Polymytês / she gan prey ful fayre
To makë Grekis / hom ageyn repayre,
And that they wolden styntyn to assaylle
For thilké* day / and cessen her bataylle.
At whoos requeste / pleynly and preyere,
And at Reuence / of his moder dere,
Polymytês, her herte to conforte,
Grekês madê / hom ageyn resorte
And Tydeus to stynten of his chas.

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

And al this while / duely as she ought,
þe quene Iocasta / humblye besought

Jocasta beggs
Polynéees
to recall the
Greeks.

He does so.
Jocasta returns to Thebes.

Kynge Adrastus / only of his grace,
Some mené way / wisly to purchase

To make peace;
To make a peas / atwene the bretheren tweyn,
And the treté / so prudently ordeyne,
On eiper party / that no blood be shad.

but he will
And this Adrastus / avisè and rít saddle,
For Greki party / answer gaf anoni
Thaté other endé / shortly gete* she noin,
lích as the lordis / fully ben avisyd,
Than Tydeus hath aftorn desisyd.

If and when she saugh it may non óper be,
She lievè tok / and hom to the Cyte
She is repeirèd /, haunyng to hyr Guyde
Polymytés Rydyng* be her syde.

And Tidesus ladde Antigonē,
And of Archadye / prothonolopè,
The worthy kyngt, did his bysy panye
To ben attendaunt* / vpon fair ymeye,

Whos hert* she hath / to her servisè luryd :  
And he ageyn hath purtraied and fyguryd
Myd of his brest* /, which lightly may not passe,
Hooly the feturis / of her fresshly face.

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

He hath avowed / to ben her trwè man,
vnuist to hir / pleylyn and vnuknowe

King Prothomolope rides
with Ismene,

and in his heart pledges his
tróth to her.

PT. III. ] Tideus will not risk an entry into Thebes. 163

How he was markèd with Cupidès bowe,
with his Arwè / sadelynly werreyed.
And to the ʒatē / the ladyes conueyed
Ben entred In / for itv drow* to eve,
Greys of hem taking\tho her leve;
Thogh some of hem wer sory to deporte,
3it of wisdam / they durste not\iu parte
Vnder a conduit / to entrjen into toun,
est\tv turned to her confusion.

Thouli somé bookès / the contraye seyn:
But\t myn Autour / is platly ther-ageyn,
And affermeth / in his opynyoun,
That Tydeus / of hegh discreciouw,
Of wilfulnessë / nor of no folye,
Ne wold as tho put in Iuapartie
Nowther hym-silf / nor noñ of his ferys.
And the ladyes / with her heuenly cherys,
Angelyk / of look / and contenance,
Lich as it\t is / put\t in remembrance,
At\t her entryng\t from Greys into toun,
Polymytes / of gret\t affeccioun,
The quen bysouhte / thilkē* nyght\t not\t fyne
For tassyeō jif she myght\t enclyne
Ethiocles, of conscience and ryght,\t

[leaf 66, back]

3964 Jocasta and her daughters enter Thebes.
The Greeks take leave.

3972 My author is clear,
that Tideus

3976 would not risk lives by entering Thebes.

3980 Polynætis begs Jocasta
Eteocles keep his word.

3984 to try and make

3965. Ben[ And bethe P. drowe Bo. droweth Ar. drow M. Lg. drough Ad1. G. drowe E₁, E₂, it]\t to Ro. drow to eve\t drowe night to eve Lb. drew nye Eve P. drowe to night Ro. 3966. taking tho\t tho takyng Ra. P. tho taken Ba. taken han L₃, taking tho her leve\t ther leve toke right Ro. 3969. conduit Ar. G. Bo. M. condit Ad1, conduct L₃, entren Bo. M. entre Lb. entere Ro. entyr L₃, into toun Ar. G. Ro. in the toun L₃, vnto the toun S. in-to \ße toun Bo. and the rest. 3970. turned\t turne Ra. Ba. to] vnto M. Di. 3972. platly\t pleyuly Lb. S. P. playne L₁, E₂, 3973 and 3974 omitted in Du. 3975 and 3976 transposed in Du. 3975. wilfulnesse] wofullnes L₁, nor of no] or of no Ra. Ba. neither of M. Di. nere off P. nor of high Ro. more of G. 3976. as tho] as then S. 3977. nor\t ner Bo. Du. ne M. Ad1, 3978. the] tho Bo. her\t om. Ad₂, E₁ heuvely\t hevy S. 3981. Greys\t pe Greys Du. Lb. P. into toun Ar. G. L₃, Ro. into \ße toun Bo. T₁, Du. L₁, Lb. M. Di. Ad₁, Ad₂, Ra. Ba. E₁, E₂, vnto \ße toun S. 3982 in Ad₁, and Ad₂ begins with fro Greks, which is left out of 3981. 3982. Polymytes\t Pollimte besouyte Di. 3983. bysouhte\t besought \at E₂, om. Di. pilke Bo. Ad₁, this Ar. that M. Di. S. om. P. nyght\t om. Lb. P. not fyne\t ne fyne M. not to fyne S. not for to fyne P. \at she ne fyne Di. nat feine Ad₁, Ad₂, Ra. Ba. 3984. tasseye Ar. to

3984. to try and make

3986. Ben[ And bethe P. drowe Bo. droweth Ar. drow M. Lg. drough Ad₁, G. drowe E₁, E₂, it]\t to Ro. drow to eve\t drowe night to eve Lb. drew nye Eve P. drowe to night Ro. 3966. taking tho\t tho takyng Ra. P. tho taken Ba. taken han L₃, taking tho her leve\t ther leve toke right Ro. 3969. conduit Ar. G. Bo. M. condit Ad₁, conduct L₃, entren Bo. M. entre Lb. entere Ro. entyr L₃, into toun Ar. G. Ro. in the toun L₃, vnto the toun S. in-to \ße toun Bo. and the rest. 3970. turned\t turne Ra. Ba. to] vnto M. Di. 3972. platly\t pleyuly Lb. S. P. playne L₁, E₂, 3973 and 3974 omitted in Du. 3975 and 3976 transposed in Du. 3975. wilfulnesse] wofullnes L₁, nor of no] or of no Ra. Ba. neither of M. Di. nere off P. nor of high Ro. more of G. 3976. as tho] as then S. 3977. nor\t ner Bo. Du. ne M. Ad₁, 3978. the] tho Bo. her\t om. Ad₂, E₁ heuvely\t hevy S. 3981. Greys\t pe Greys Du. Lb. P. into toun Ar. G. L₃, Ro. into \ße toun Bo. T₁, Du. L₁, Lb. M. Di. Ad₁, Ad₂, Ra. Ba. E₁, E₂, vnto \ße toun S. 3982 in Ad₁, and Ad₂ begins with fro Greks, which is left out of 3981. 3982. Polymytes\t Pollimte besouyte Di. 3983. bysouhte\t besought \at E₂, om. Di. pilke Bo. Ad₁, this Ar. that M. Di. S. om. P. nyght\t om. Lb. P. not fyne\t ne fyne M. not to fyne S. not for to fyne P. \at she ne fyne Di. nat feine Ad₁, Ad₂, Ra. Ba. 3984. tasseye Ar. to
To kepē couenaunt: / as he hath beighth:
Ful zore agon / with the surplusage,
List: the contrarie* / tournē to damage,
First: of hym-silf / and many an oper mo.
And thus fro Thebēs / grekys ben ago
To her Tentys / and rest: hem al that nyght.
And Lucyna / the monē, shon ful bright:
with-Innē Thebēs / on the chief dongoun,
when Jocasta made relacioun

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

hym counsaillinge /, 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 cousayl / 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;
And outtrely / avisēd in his pouht,
with-Innē Thebēs / his brother get right: nouht.

3988. List Ar. G. lest Bo. M. Ad.1, Ra. contrarie G. Bo. T.1, Du. L.1, Lb. M. Ad.1,
Ad.2, Ra. E.1, S. P. L.9]Ro. contrayre Ar. E.2, tourne] come E.2. 3989 to 3430 gap in
Ro. 3989. of] on Bo. Du. L.1, Ad.1, Ad.2, E.1, and: and sith of M. Di. and syth on
3990. thus] om. L.1, grekys Ar. L.1, L.2 be grekes Bo. and the rest: ben ago] he
go Ad.1, Ad.2, gan goo Ba. 3991. rest] om. Ra. that: be L.1, Di. Ra. Ba. E.1,
3996. Grekys] be Grekes Du. E.1, 3997. his] A L.1, collusioun] conclusion L.1,
3999. engroced Bo. engroced M. Ad.1, 4001. they fynaly wil Ar. Lb. P. E.2,
L.2 fynaly þei wil Bo. and the rest: (wold Ad.2), except þei will fynally G. 4002.
counsaillinge Ar. M. counsellēd Ad1. conselyng Bo. boght Bo. M. þouhtē
Ad.1, 4003. conforme] conforme T.1, conferme Lb. Ra. Ba. E.1, confryme S.
was] and Lb. Ad.1, Ad.2, Ra. Ba. S. P. 4008. Ant Ar. 4009. vttcery Bo. M.
Ad.1, 4010. with-in Bo. M. Ad.1.
And in his Errour / pus I lete* him* dwelle.
And of Grekis / forth I wil 3ou telle,
which al that* nyght* kepte hem-silue cloos.
And on the morow / when Tytan vp aroos,
They arnyd hem / and gan hem redy make,
And of assent* / han the felde I-take,
With the Thebans / that day, out* of doute,
Forto fighten / 3if they yssen oute.

And Adrastus / in ful thrifty wise,
In the feld* / his wardys / gan devise,
As he that* was / of all deyectës war.
And richëly I-armyd* / in his char
Amphiorax cam with his meynë,
Ful renomyd of antiquëtë,
And wel expert* / be-causë he was old.
And whil that* Grekys, as I haue 3ou told,
wer bysiest* her wardys to ordeyne,
Myd of the feld / bifyl a cas sodeyne,
Ful vnhappy / lothsom, and odyble;
For liche a thing* / pat* wer invisible,
This oldë* bishop / with char and hors certeyn
Disaperyd / and no mor was seyne.
Only of fate / which no man can repelle,
ce erth opned / and he fille doun* to helle,
with aH his folk / pat* vpon hym abood.
And sodeynly / the grounde on which he stood
Closyd ageyen / and to-gy dre shette,

AmpMorax

of 4045.

4042.

4056

4053.

4062.

4054.

4052

4040.

4048

4058.

Ba.

Pluto*

re

Pluto

on

makiens

P.

Lg.

stode

4044

4057.

4060

The Devil paid him his wages,

ich his decert, paiëd hym his wages.

For he ful lowe / is discendid down

Into the dirk and blakë* Regyou

wher that' Pluto* / is crownyd and ystallyd

with his quene / proserpina I-callyd.

with whom this bishop / hap made his* mansioun

Perpetuely / as for his guerdoun.

for his idolatry,

¶ lo here the mede / of ydolatrie,

Of Rytyl old / and of* fals mawmetyre.

[leaf 65]

lo' what' auaylles Incantaciouns

Of exorsismës / and coniurisouns ;

what' stood hym stede his Nigromancye,

Calculacioun / or astronomye ;

what' vayllid hym / the heunely manciouns,

Diuerse aspectis / or constellaciounes ?

The ende / is nat' / bot' sorowe and meschaunce,

Of hem þat setten / her outre affiaunce

In swichë* werkës supersticious,

Or trist' on hem / : he is vngracius.

Record! I takë, shortly forto telle,

Of this byshop / sonken down to helle,

whos wooful ende / about' in eueri cost'

Swich a Rumour / hath maked in the host'

That the noys / of this vnkouth thyng:

Is yronne / and comë to the kyng;

how this vengeaunce / is vnwarly falle.

And he anon / made a trumpet calle

Alle his puple / out of the field ageyn ;

And euerychon* / assembled on a pleyñ

To-fore the kyng; / and also rounde aboute.

Euery man / of his lyf in doute,

Ful pitously / gan to frowne and loure,

list' that the grounde hem alle wil denoure

And Swalowen hem / in his dirkë* kave;

And they ne can / no recur hem to save.

For noughter force / nor manhode may availle

In swiche meschief / the valewe of a maylle.

For he that was wisest / and koude most'

To serche and sekë / thorth-out' al the host',

Amphiorax / whan that he lest' wende,

To helle is sonken / and coude hym not' diffende,

(To hym the tyme vnknownen and vnwist)

In whom whilom was al þe Grekis trist;

her hoolë* confort' / and her affiaunce.

But alþ attonys / for this sodeyn chaunce

And this meschief / they gan hem to dispeire,
The Thebans mock the Greeks. Adrastus's Council. [PT. III.

and want to go home.

Hom to Grecë / that they wil repeyre.
This was the purpoos / of hem euerichon.

And on the wallys / of Thebës lay her son,
Reioysing hem / of this vnhappy eure,
wenyng therby / gretly to recure.
And on her tourës* / as they loken oute,
They on Grekys / enviously gan shoute,
And, of despit* / and gret eunytë,
Bad hem foolys / gon hom to her contrë,
Sith they han lost* / her confort and socour*.
her false* prophete / and her dyvynour:
wherthorgh / her partie / gretly is aperyrd.

Adrastus sum-moms his Council

And in this wisi / Grekys disespyryd,
Demptë pleyndy / be tokens evidente,
This cas was falle / by som enchaunistement,
By wichecraft* / or by* fals sorcerye,
Ageynis* which may be no remedye,
Tristy diffëncë / helpë*, nor socour.

who think that witchcraft works against them.

And whan Adrastus herde* this clamour,
he bysy was ageyn this perturbauzce
To provyde / some maner chevisaunce.
And to hym calleth / such counsayl as he wiste,
For lyf or deth / that he myghte tryste,
Requeryng hem / but* in wordys fewe,
In this meschief / her mociont to shewe,

And declare by goodavisément the best remedy 
What to Grekys / was most expedient, for this trouble. 
To remedyen, and make* no delay, [leaf 69]
The vncouth noyse / and the gret* affray
That Grekys made / with clamour importune, They say it
And newe / and newe / euere in on contune. would be cow-
¶ And they that* wern / most manly and most wise, ardise to give
Shortly saide / it wer a cowardyse, up their enter-
The high emprise / that* they han vndirtake prise:
For drede of deth / so sodeynly forsake. soldiers had
It* wer to hem / a perpetuel shame better die
And outre hyndryng* / vnto grekys name; than live as
And better it* wer / to euery weyreyour cowardas,
Manly to deye / with worship and honour, 4124
Than lik a coward / with the lyf endure. Adрастus’s
For onys shamyd / hard is to recure Council say that
his name ageyn / of what estat* he be. as Grekes of old
And sith Grekes / of old antiquyte, were so fand
As of knyghthode / who so list* tak hod, 4128
Ben so famous / and so renome, Adрастus’s
¶f now of newe / the shynyng* of her Fame Council say that
Eclipsid were / with eny spotte of blame, as Grekes of old
It* were a thymg* vncouth forto here, were so fand

4112. was Ar. G. L., were Bo. and the rest. most] more Ba. 4113. make Bo.
M. Ad., mak Ar.; Ar. has delaye with the final e underdotted. 4114. vncouth
Bo. Ad., vnonthe M. 4115. clamour] labour M. Di. importune Bo. Ad., importune M. 4116. And newe and newe Ar. Lb. P. and now and now Bo. and
the rest, except now and S. euere in on] neuer in on Ba. in ener P. contune]
contyne Bo. Du. Lb. S. 4117. first most] more Ba.; before most is an under-
wer] was Ad., I. a cowardyse Ar. G. Lb. C. P. E., L., a grete cowardise Bo.
and the rest. 4119. The high emprise Ar. G. Lb. C. P. E., L., The emprise
Bo. and the rest, that] om. P. 4119 and 4120 are transposed in I. 4120. so] om.
Ra. forsake] to forsake Lb. C. P. E., 4122. And] An L., at Bo. Du. T.,
old Ad., I. 4129. who so] whos M. C. take Bo. M. Ad., tak Ar. 4130.
renomed Ar. Bo. renomec M. Ad., (in P. a later hand has altered renomed to
renomyd, but the original spelling is perfectly legible). renomed] worthi of deede
E., 4132. eny spotte of blame] spot of ony shame M. Di.
The Greeks resolve to fight till Thebes is laid low. [PT. III.

Of whose renown / the bemōs 3it ben clere
Thorth al the worldt / wher as they han passyd,
And ben not 3it / dyrykyd nor diffacyd,
By no report / nouther on se ne londe
thyngt to forsakē / thatt they tok on honde.
"And by example / of our progenitours,
as conquerors,
pat whilom wern / so manly conquerours,
To-forn thatt we into Greecē wende,
Of thyngs bygon / latt vs make an ende,
and parte nat / nor Seuere from this toun
Til itt be brouht to destruccion,
wallys / tournēs / Crestyd and batailled
And for werre strongly apparyled,
Be first doune betē / thatt no thyngs be seyn,
But al to-gyder / with the erthē* pleyn
Be lowē* leyde / or thatt we resorte:
Thatt afterward / men may of vs reporte,
Thatt we bygan / we knyghtly han achieuyd
Vpon our foon /, with worship vnpreuyd."
This was the counsaylce / shortly, and thavis
To this, all the Greeks agree.

Of the Grekys that manly wern and wys,
Thatt neure aforr wer markyd with no blame,
And specialy / swich as dredē* Shame,
And fully caste / whatt fortune euer tyde,
On her purpoes / to the ende abyde,
Thatt on no partt / her honoure not apalle.

And to this counsaille / Grekys, on and alle, 4160
Ben condescendyd / and, for mor happy sped,
In sted of hym / that was so laté ded,
Amphiorax / buryed / depe in helle,
That koudé whilom / to the Grekys telle
Of thynggës hid / how it shal falle, aforñ:
In sted of whom / now they han hym lorn,
They casten hem / wisly to purchase
Some prudent man / to occupye his place,
That in swich thynge / myght hem most' availle
Thorgh mystery of his dyvynaylle,
By craft of sorte / or of proffecye,
3if eny swich they couden out espye.

And among al /, her purpoos to atteyne,
As I fyndé / they han chosyn tweyne,
Most renomed / of hem euerychoñ.
And Menalippus / calydyd was the ton,
And Terdymus / ek the tother highte.
And for he hadde most' fauour in her sighte,
This Terdymus / was chosen and preferryd.
And in* her choys / Grekys han not erry;
For whilom he / leryd / his emprise
Of his maister / Amphiorax the wyse,
And was discipile / vndyr his doctrine.
And of entent / that he shal termyne
Vnto Grekys / thyngës that shal falle,
*As a bishopp mytred in his stalle,

Terdynus is made a Bishop.
They* don for him* / in many vncouth wyse
In the temple / to goddys sacrifise;
And thus confirmed* / and stallyd in his Se,
A fewé dayës / stood / in his degré,
After his mayster / with ful gret honour,
Of Grekys chose / to be successour.

The Thebans suffer;
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 outhier part /, of fortune as they mette :
her mortal swordys / wer so sharpe whetthe.
¶ And Tydeus among hem of the toun

Fro day to day / pleyeth þe lyoun
So cruelly, wher so that he rood,
That Theban noû / afont his face abood.
He made of hem, thorth his high renoun,
So gret slaughter / and occisioun*
That as the deth / fro his sword they fledde,
And who cam neste / leid his lyf to wedde.
He qwitte hym-sylf / so lik a manly knyght;
That wher he went / he putte hem to the flight,
And maugre hem, in his crueltë
He droff hem hom / into her Citë,

hem purswyng / proudly to the gate :

4187. They doon for hym Lb. C. P. E₂. Don þei for him Bo. T₁, Du. L₁,
M. Di. Don for him Ad₁, Ad₂, I. Ra. Ba (frö). E₁. S. Don for hem Ar. G. L₁,
4188. to] to do Ad₂. I. goddy[ys] the goddes M. Di. C. 4189. confirmed]
few L₃ by fele Bo. T₁. Du. And fele Ad₁, Ra. Ba. And fell E₁. S. And many
Ad₂. I. 4192. bose Bo. M. chosen Ad₁. 4194. thrust Ar. thrust Bo.
thorst M. þirst Ad₁. 4196. slayn Ar. Bo. and all the rest. the route] the grete
route Ra. 4197. outhier Ar. either Bo. M. Ad₁. 4198. sharp Bo. M. Ad₂.
4200. pleyeth] he pleyeth Ad₂. I. 4201. wher so that[] that where so Ad₁, Ad₂,
I. where so cuer P. where so cuer þat Lb. 4204. occision Bo. Ad₂, I.
S. E₂. occasion Ar. Bo. and the rest (in P. altered to occasion by a later hand) ;
in T₁, occasion is underlined, and occasion written in the right margin by a later
S. 4207. so] om. Ad₂. I. so lik a manly[ly] so manly a Ad₁. 4208. the]
on. Lb. Ad₁, Ad₂, I. Ba. P. 4210. droff T₂. drofe Bo. drof M. Ad₁. droue
E₂. 4211. hem] And Bo.
That they sent them / they bar so sedly hate
That they sent them / by sleyhet or some engyn,
To bryngyn hym / vnwarly to his fyñ ;
And leyde awayt / for hym day and nyght.
But O. allas ! / this noble manly knyght,
Vpon a day / as he gan hem enchace,
And mortally / made hem lese her place
And sued hem / almost to the toun,
That causë was of his destruccion.
For on, allas ! / that on the wallys stood,
which al thatt day / vpon hym abood,
With a quarel / sharpe heded for his sake,
Markede hym with a bowe of brake,
So cruelly, makyng non aрест.
Tyl it was passyd bothë* bak and brest.
Wherthorph, allas ! / ther was non oper red
Nor lechë-craft*/ but * that* he mot be ded,
Ther may therof be makëd non delays.
And it was he / holdyn / in his dayes
The beste knyght / and most manly man,
As myn Autour / wel reherecë kan.
But for al that was ther no dyffence
Ageyn the strok / of dethys violence.
And Bochas writ / er he was fully ded,
he was by Grekys / presentyd with he hed
Of hym that gaf / his laste fatal wounde :
And he was callyd / lik as it is founde,
Menolippus /, I can non other telle.

\( \text{But thilk\* day / Thebans waxe so felle} \)

Vpon Grekys / that, vnder her Cytè

4240

The manly kyng, Parthanolope

4244

Islayën* was / euene afor the gatys;

And ther also, Armyd bright, in platys,

The famous kyng / callyd ypomedomun,

The samè day, as mad is mencioun,

On hors-bak / manly as he faught,

At the briggë / euene vpon the draught,

Besette with pres / casuely was drownyd.

And thus furtonë / hath on Grekys frownyd

Fortune frownd on the Greeks.

On euery sydè / thilk vnhappy day.

But at the maner / tellyn I ne may

Of her fightynge / nor her slaughter in sothi,

Mor to declarë / than myn Autour doth.

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

whan Phebus / passyd was* merydyen

And fro the south / westward gan hym drawe,

his gylte tressys / to bethen in the wawe,

\( \text{The Theban kyng* / felle Ethyocles,} \)

Rote of vnreste / and causer of vnpes,

4260

The slaughte of Grekys / whan that he beheld,

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

\( \text{ful desirous / in that* sodeyn hete,} \)

4264

Eteocles rides forth
to fight Polyneices,

\( \text{But thilkë* day / I fynde / as 3e may sen,} \)

whan Phebus / passyd was* merydyen

4256

And fro the south / westward gan hym drawe,

4248

his gylte tressys / to bethen in the wawe,

4248

The slaughte of Grekys / whan that he beheld,

4260

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

4264

\( \text{But thilkë* day / I fynde / as 3e may sen,} \)

whan Phebus / passyd was* merydyen

4256

And fro the south / westward gan hym drawe,

4248

his gylte tressys / to bethen in the wawe,

4248

The slaughte of Grekys / whan that he beheld,

4260

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

4264

\( \text{But thilkë* day / I fynde / as 3e may sen,} \)

whan Phebus / passyd was* merydyen

4256

And fro the south / westward gan hym drawe,

4248

his gylte tressys / to bethen in the wawe,

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The slaughte of Grekys / whan that he beheld,

4260

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

4264

\( \text{But thilkë* day / I fynde / as 3e may sen,} \)

whan Phebus / passyd was* merydyen

4256

And fro the south / westward gan hym drawe,

4248

his gylte tressys / to bethen in the wawe,

4248

The slaughte of Grekys / whan that he beheld,

4260

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

4264

\( \text{But thilkë* day / I fynde / as 3e may sen,} \)

whan Phebus / passyd was* merydyen

4256

And fro the south / westward gan hym drawe,

4248

his gylte tressys / to bethen in the wawe,

4248

The slaughte of Grekys / whan that he beheld,

4260

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

4264
Syngulerly / with hym to han ado.
For in this world / he hate no man so;
he sat so nygh / emprented in his herte.
whoos comynge out / his brother gan aduertere
Upon his stede / in the opposite,
And hadde ageynward / also gret deynto
To meten hym / zif fortune assente.
Thenvyous fyr / or her hertys brente
with haate Cankered / of vnkyndé blood.
And lik two Tygres / in her râge wood,
with speerys sharpe / grounde for the nonys,
So as they ranne / and mette both attony,
Polymyte / thorg platys, mayle, and sheeld
Roof hym thorg-out / and smette hym in-to feld.
But when he saufi / the streemys 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 saue his lyf / gan hym to vnbrace*,
And from his wounde / of newe affeeccioun,
Ful bys was / to pull out* the trunchoun,
who is ready to meet him.

Eteocles and Polyneices attack one another.

* How euerich of the Theban brethren slagh other to-form [e] Cyte.
Polyneices runs Eteocles thru,

And then dismounts.

to pull his spear out of his brother.
Eteocles kills his brother Polyneices. [Pt. III.]

On which Eteocles stabs Polyneices to the heart;

[Leaf 72]

so both die.

The Thebans mourn their king's death.

Of loue only / handlyng hym ryght softe.
But O / allas! whil he lay alofte,
Ful yrously / Ethioclles the felle,
Of al this sorowe / verraye sourns and welle,
with a dagger / in al his peynys smerte,
his brother smoot vnwardly to the herte:
which al her lyf / haddë be so wrothe.
And thus the Thebans / were yslawë* bothic
At' the entre' / euene aform the toun.

But Grekys / tho / ben availled down
Out of the feld' / the worthy knyghtys alle.
And in Thebës / loud* / as eny shalle,
The Cry arroos / when her kynge was ded.
And to the gatyys / 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' pite was to here.
And they with-out' / of her lyf in were,
with-out 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 foomen / proudly hem assaylle
Ful many Grek* / thorg hot platys and thorg maylle
was shette thorg-out', pressyng at the wallys,
And betyn of / with grete roundë ballys,
That her lay on / and another 3onder.
And the noysë, hydouser* than thonder,
Of gonne-shot and of* Arblastys ek,
So loude out-ronge / that many worthy grek
THER lost' his lyf / ; they weren on hem so felle.
And at the gaty's / shortly fortly telle,
As Greys prees / to entren þe Cyte,
They of Thebês / 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 swordys,
Thorg the vyser / amyng* at' the berdys,
Percyng' also / thorg the rownde Maylles,
Rent out' peeces / of ther aventaylles,

That nouht* avalleth / the myghty Geseran,

Many Greeks
were shot.
The noise of
the guns was
hideous.

At the gates


second  thorg]  om.  Lj.  Ad.  Ad.  I.  Ra.  Ba.  S.  T.  Eo.  4311.  was]  were
S.  P.  Lj.  shoten  Ra.  Ba.  þorh-oute  Bo.  M.  þorh-ouht  Ad.  j;  in  Ar.  (also  in  Bo.)
there  is  a  pause-bar  dividing  thorg  and  out.  thorg-out]  thorh  Ad.  I.  Ra.  Ba.
at  the  Ar.  atte  Bo.  Ad.  at  M.  to  the  Ba.  4312.  grete  Bo.  Ad.  gret
M.  rounde  Bo.  round  Ad.  M.  4313.  her]  ther  Ad.  Ad.  I.  Ba.  S.
4314.  hydouser  Lj.  hydouser  Ar.  G.  more  hidous  Bo.  and  the  rest.
[leaf 72, back]

[leaf 72, back]

4320.  the  Thebans
fight  the  Greeks

with  dagger,
sword

4324.  how  they  foyne
with  daggers

4328.  That  nouht
avalleth

second  thorg]  om.  Lj.  Ad.  Ad.  I.  Ra.  Ba.  S.  T.  Eo.  4311.  was]  were
S.  P.  Lj.  shoten  Ra.  Ba.  þorh-oute  Bo.  M.  þorh-ouht  Ad.  j;  in  Ar.  (also  in  Bo.)
there  is  a  pause-bar  dividing  thorg  and  out.  thorg-out]  thorh  Ad.  I.  Ra.  Ba.
at  the  Ar.  atte  Bo.  Ad.  at  M.  to  the  Ba.  4312.  grete  Bo.  Ad.  gret
M.  rounde  Bo.  round  Ad.  M.  4313.  her]  ther  Ad.  Ad.  I.  Ba.  S.
4314.  hydouser  Lj.  hydouser  Ar.  G.  more  hidous  Bo.  and  the  rest.
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4320.  the  Thebans
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second  thorg]  om.  Lj.  Ad.  Ad.  I.  Ra.  Ba.  S.  T.  Eo.  4311.  was]  were
S.  P.  Lj.  shoten  Ra.  Ba.  þorh-oute  Bo.  M.  þorh-ouht  Ad.  j;  in  Ar.  (also  in  Bo.)
there  is  a  pause-bar  dividing  thorg  and  out.  thorg-out]  thorh  Ad.  I.  Ra.  Ba.
at  the  Ar.  atte  Bo.  Ad.  at  M.  to  the  Ba.  4312.  grete  Bo.  Ad.  gret
M.  rounde  Bo.  round  Ad.  M.  4313.  her]  ther  Ad.  Ad.  I.  Ba.  S.
4314.  hydouser  Lj.  hydouser  Ar.  G.  more  hidous  Bo.  and  the  rest.
[leaf 72, back]

[leaf 72, back]
and spear. Thorg brest\* / and nekk\ö / that the sperys Rañ.
her wepnys wern / so sharpe grounde and whet,
In ther armur\ö / that ther was no let. 4332
For ther laye on / troden vnder foote,
And zonder* / on / Percyd to the herte roote.
Her lith on ded / and ther another lame.
This was / the play / and the mortal game 4336
Atwen\ö Thebans / and the Grekys proude,
The cries of the dying are loud.
That\ö the swowys / and the cry\ös loud
Of hem that\ö lay / and solden vp the goost,
was herd ful fer / aboute in many cost. 4340
If And at\ö the gaty\ös / and sayllylng of pe wal
Islay\ön* was / al the blood Royal,
Both of the toun / and of Grekys lond?,
And at\ö the worthy knyghtys of her hon\öt. 4344
Of the Greek lords, And of lordys /, jif I shall not\ö feyne,
only Adrastus On Grekys syde / alvy\ö wer but\ö twye\öne,
and Capanens Kyng\ö Adrastus / and Campaneus.
That\ö day to hem / was so vngracius. 4348
And for Titan / westryd was so lowe
The Thebans Tho of the toun / shet\ö her gaty\ös faste
bar their gates, That\ö no man myght\ö vnmethys other knowe,
with barrys rounde / makest forto laste,
In which no wight t' kervê may nor hew.

And Adrastus / with a grekys fewe
Repeyréd is hom vnto his Ten$, 
And al that t' nyght / he wastyd hath and spent$.
For his vnhappe / in sorowe compleynyng.

And they in Thebes / the nexte day swyn$:
her devoyre did / and her bysy done,
To ordeyne and make / a sepulture
For her kyng$ / yslyayen* in the feild ;
And offred vp his baner and his sheld,
His helme / his swerd$, and also his penoun,
Ther-Inne of gol$ / I-botyn a dragoum, 
high in the temple / that men myghte sen.

And Ioesta / that t' infortunyd quene, 
her sonës deth / soorë* gan compleyne ;
And also ek / her yonge doghtres tweyne, 
Both ymeyne / and Antigonee,
Cryden and wepte / that t' pytë was to se.
But$ to her sorowes / that was non refut$.
And thus the Cite / bar / and destitut$;
havyng no wight$ to gouern hem ne* guye :
For ded and slayn / was al the Chyalrye,
And no wight left$ almost in þe toun

To regne vpon* hem / by successiou.

But for they saugh / and tokyn also hed, with-outé pis / that* they hadde an hed
In the Cyté / ëai 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 newë gouernour,
An olde Tyrant/ that callyd was Creon,
Ful acceptable / to hem euerichon,
And crownyd hym / with-outé mor lettyng:
To regne in Thebës / and to ben her kyng,
Al-thogh* he hadde no title by descent'
But by* fre choy* / made in parlement.
And ther to hym, lik as it is founde,
By her lygeaunce / of newë they wer bounde,
For to be trewë / whyl the Cytë stood,
To hym only / with body and with good.
Thus they wer sworn / and suryd euerichon;
And he agynward / to saue hem from heroon,
And hem dyffende / with al his fullë* myght,
And meynten hem / in al manere ryght.
This was thacord / as in sentencet.
From the Siege of Thebès the Cytè
A woundyd knyght hom to his contré,
Thorgh al Grecè / pleynty to declare
Al þe slaughter and the evyl fare 4404
Of worthy Grekys, ryght as it is falle,
And how that he hath lost his lordys alle
Att' mor meschief / þan eny man can mouth.

And whan this thyng / was in grecé south, 4408
Fyrst to Argyve / and Dephylee,
And to the ladies / ek in the contré
And of provynces / aboute hem adiacent',
They comë donn / al be oñ assent,'
Worthy queenys / and with hem ek duchessys,
And other ek / that callyd were contessys,
And alle the ladys / and wymmen of degré
Ben assembled / in Argë the Cytè,
lik as I rede / and alle in clothês blake;
That' to byholdt / the sorowe that' they make,
It' were a deth / to eny man alyve.

And þif I shuldë* / by and by descyve
Ther tendre wepyng* and ther wooful sownys,
her complayntys / and lamentacions,
her ofte swounyng* / with facys ded and pale,
Ther-of I myghte make a newë tale, 4424

4401. in Siege the first e is written above the line, with the usual mark of
insertion Ar. 4402. toj into L₁, Ra. Ba. 4405. worthy] þe worthi Bo. T₁,
whan] whan that T₂, thyng] om. Ba. was in grecë in grecë was Ad₁, Ad₂, I.
T₂' south] knowne well S. 4409. and] and to Lb. Ad₁, Ad₂, I. Ra. S. T₂,
E₂. 4410. toj om. Du. 4411. provynces in Ar. corrected from provinces.
4412. come M. Ad₁, cam Bo. al be on] by onllic Ba. 4413. ek] om. L₁, Lb.
in the rubric Ar. has Grece. 4419. a] om. Ad₂, I. eny] many Ba. alyve] on
Bo. sholde Ad₁, shold M. descyve] descyve Ba. 4421. Ther . ther Ar.
Their . per Bo. Their . her Du. Ther . her M. Her . her Ad₁, sownys] sowynyng
Bo. bale E₂, Ro. 4422. and] and her Bo. T₁, Du. L₁, M. Di. Ad₁, Ad₂, I. Ra. Ba.
S. T₂, and her lamentacions] om. E₂, Ro. 4423. ofte Bo. M. Ad₁, her ofte]
With ofte Lb. P. Of her L₁, sownyng] sownyng L₂, sownynges Lb. Ad₁,
Ad₂, sownys L₁, her ofte sownyng] om. E₂, Ro., which two MSS. thus make
one line out of the former half of 4422 and the latter half of 4423. facys] her faces
T₁, face Lb. P. 4424. might Bo. M. Ad₁.
Almost a day / 30w to occupye.
And as myn Autour / doth clerly certifie,
Thurgh-outë Grece / from aft pe Rigions
Out of Cities / and of Royal towns
Cam alle the ladies / and wymmen of estat,
Ful heav-y-cheryd / and disconsolat,
To this asamble / afor as I 30u tolde,
In purpoos fully / her Iournë forto holde
Toward Thebës / thyss sorwful creaturys,
Ther to bywaylle / her wooful auenturys,
Taquyte hem-silf / of trouth in wommanhede
To her lordys / which in the field lay dode.
And as the story / liketh to declare,
Al this Iournë / they went on foote bare,
lik as they hadde / gon on pylgrymage,
In tokyn of mournyng / barbyd pe visage,
Wympled echoñ / and in burnet wedys.
Nat in charys / drawen forth with stedys,
Nor on palfreys blaké nowther white,
The Sely wymmen koude hem not delite
To hold her way / but barfote forth they wente,
So faithfully / euerychon they ment,
Thorch hevynesse* / diffacyd of her hwe.
And as I fyndë, they weryn alle trwe.

So many trewe / out of a cuntrè, 4450. 
Attonys gadryd / in a companye, 4451. 
And feithful allè, / bookys can not lye, 4452. 
Both in her port / and inward in menyng? 4453. 
Vnty my doom / it was an vncouth tryng, 4454. 
Among a thousand wymen outhere twyne 4455. 
To fynden noon / that knowde in hertè fynne. 4456. 
It was a mervaylle / nat ofte seyn aforî. 4457. 
For seelde / in feldys / groweth eny corn 4458. 
But zif some were / spryng vp þer-amongt. 4459. 
Men allaye* wynys / whan they be to strong; 4460. 
But her trough was meynte wip noñ allayes, 4461. 
They were so trewe / founde at þe alle assayes. 4462. 
And they ne stynt/ vpon her iournè 4463. 
Tyl that they cam þer as* they wolde be, 4464. 
wher Adrastus /, wrytyn as I fynde, 4465. 
lay in his Tent/ al of colour ynde; 4466. 
Gretly mervaylyd* / whan that he biheld 4467. 
The nombre of hem / sprad thorigh al þe feld, 4468. 
Clad aþ in blak / and barfoot everychon. 4469. 
Out of his Tent/ he dressyd hym anoñ, 4470. 
Vpon his hand / the kyng Campaneus*; 4471. 
Ful tristv in herte / and face right pitous, 4472. 

Agayn the wommen / forth they went\(^1\) yfere.

And to byhold\(^2\) the wooful hevy chere,

They sigh and swoon

The wooful cryës / also, when they mette,
The sorful sighys / in her brestys shetted,

The teerys newe / distilling on her facys,

And the swownynge\(^3\) / in many sondry placys,

when they her lordys / alyvé not\(^4\) ne founde,
But\(^5\) in the feeld\(^6\) / thorgh-girt\(^7\) with many wounde,

lay stark vprijtës\(^8\) /, pleynly to endite,
with dedly eyën / tournyd vp the white,

who madë sorowe / or felt\(^9\) her hertë Ryve

For hir lorde / but\(^{10}\) the faire Argyve?\(^{11}\)

who can now wepë / But\(^{12}\) Delyphyle\(^{13}\),
Tydeus / for she ne myghte se?

whos constreyntys\(^{14}\) were so fel and kene

That\(^{15}\) Adratus myghte not\(^{16}\) sustene

To byholde the ladys so compleyne,

wissing\(^{17}\)* his herte / parted wer on tweyne.

\(\text{?}\) And 3it\(^{18}\) allass! / bothen\(^{19}\) eve and morowe,

O thynge\(^{20}\) ther was / that\(^{21}\) doubled al her sorowe,

That Old Creon / fader of fellonye,

Ne woldë\(^{22}\) suffre, thorgh his Tyrannye,

The dedë\(^{23}\)* bodies / be buried nowther brente,

---

4473. forth\(^{24}\) om. Ad\(^{1}\), Ad\(^{2}\). I. forth they went\(^{25}\) went forth P. yfere\(^{26}\)
in feere L\(^{1}\), Lb. Di. Ra. S. E\(^{2}\), 4476. sorful Ar. M. sorghful Ad\(^{1}\), sorowful L\(^{1}\), woful Lb. P. ferful S. sighes\(^{27}\) sightes Lb. S. brestys\(^{28}\) brest Di. hertis L\(^{1}\), shetted S. (\textit{vex} mctt). 4478. the\(^{29}\) so E\(^{2}\). sondry\(^{30}\) om. Ad\(^{1}\), Ad\(^{2}\). I. placys\(^{31}\) place (\textit{vex} face) Ad\(^{2}\). I. 4479. her lordys alyvé\(^{32}\) on lyve her lordis L\(^{1}\), not om. S. ne om. Lb. Ad\(^{2}\), Ad\(^{3}\). I. Ra. P. L\(^{2}\). 4480. in\(^{33}\) on L\(^{2}\) thurgh P. thorg-girt\(^{34}\) thorgh-gert M. gyrt P. many\(^{35}\) om. Di. many a L\(^{1}\), Lb. Ad\(^{2}\), I. Ra. S. E\(^{2}\), L\(^{2}\). 4481. stark\(^{36}\) straught E\(^{2}\), vprijt Ar. T\(^{1}\), Ad\(^{2}\), M. and all. 4483. hertis\(^{37}\) om. Ad\(^{2}\). I. 4484. the\(^{38}\) om. Ad\(^{2}\). I. 4485. who\(^{39}\) And who Ad\(^{2}\), Ad\(^{3}\). I. But who Ra. S. can\(^{40}\) ganne M. T\(^{2}\). now\(^{41}\) om. Ad\(^{2}\), Ad\(^{3}\). I. 4486. Tydeus for\(/\) For Tidesus\(^{42}\) pat L\(^{1}\), ne myghte\(^{43}\) myght nat M. Di. P. se\(^{44}\) fele E\(^{2}\), Ro (\textit{both the copyists pronounced : Delyphyle}). 4487. constreyntys\(^{45}\) constretyse Ar. G. T\(^{2}\), S. constreyte\(^{46}\) L\(^{2}\), compleynytis Ad\(^{4}\), fel and om. E\(^{3}\), Ro. 4488. myghte not\(^{47}\) ne myght nat M. Di. myght it not Ra. S. myght not hygm. 4490. whissing\(^{48}\) Ar. his\(^{49}\) her Ad\(^{4}\), Ad\(^{5}\), I. Ra. E\(^{4}\), S. Ro. hert T\(^{1}\), M. hertes Ad\(^{4}\), Ad\(^{5}\), I. Ra. S. parted\(^{50}\) coruen Lb. T\(^{2}\), P. E\(^{2}\), corvid L\(^{2}\), wer om. L\(^{1}\), Ad\(^{2}\), I. S. on twayne\(^{51}\) atweyne Lb. S. T\(^{2}\), P. in twayne L\(^{1}\), Ad\(^{2}\), Ra. E\(^{2}\), L\(^{2}\). 4491. And\(^{52}\) But T\(^{1}\), L\(^{1}\), M. Di. Ad\(^{2}\), Ad\(^{3}\). I. Ra. E\(^{4}\), S. P. L\(^{2}\), Ro. both Ar. Ad\(^{4}\), bothe T\(^{1}\), M (\textit{cp. 2801}). eve\(^{53}\) even L\(^{1}\), Lb. Ad\(^{2}\), I. S. E\(^{2}\), 4492. al om. Ad\(^{2}\). I. 4493. Old Ar. olde M. Ad\(^{2}\), 4494. wolde Ad\(^{4}\). wold Ar. M. 4495. The\(^{54}\) Tho Ra. ded Ar. M. Ad\(^{4}\), dede Lb. Ra. be buryed\(^{55}\) to buried be Ad\(^{1}\), to be buried Ad\(^{2}\). I. brente y-brente Lb. E\(^{2}\), Ro.
But with beasts and houndys to be rente.
he made hem all / vpon an hepe be leyde.
wherof the wymmen trist' and eyvl aperyde,
For verrey dool, as it was no wonder,
her hertys felt almost ryve a-sonder.

And as my mayster Chaucer' list' endeite,
Al clad in blak / with her wymples whyte,
With grete honour / and dut* renuerence,
In the temple / of the goddesse Clemence
They aubod the space / of fowntenyght'
Tyl Theseus / the noble worthy knyght,
Duk of Athenys / with his Chyvalrye
Repeyrød hom / out of Femynye,
And with hym ladde / ful feir vpon to sene,
Thorgh his manhod / ypolita the quene,
And her suster / callyd Emelye.

_and when this wommen / gonne first esp'yne
This worthy Duk / as he cam rydyng,
Kynge Adrastus /, hem alle conveyninge,
The wommen brouht* vnto his presence,
which hym bysought* / to give hem audience.
And all attynys swownyng in the place,
Ful humblye / preiden* hym of grace
To rewe on hem / her harmsy to redresse.
But if 3e list* / to se the gentyllesse
Of Theseus / how he hath hym born,

4496 the corpses to be torn by dogs.

As Chaucer says,
[leaf 75, back]
4504 the ladies stay in the Temple
till Theseus comes with

Hippolita and Emily.

They pray

Theseus
to redress their grievance.

4520
Theseus kills Creon and routs his Army.  

3if 3e remembre / 3e han herde it to forn 
wel rehersyd / at Depforth in the vale,

In the bygynnyng / of the knyghtys tale:

4524

First how that he / when he herd hem speke,
For verray rothi* felt his herté / breke;
And her sorowys / when he gan aduerte,
From his courser / doun anoñ he sterte,

4528

Hem confortynge in ful good entente,
And in his Armys he hem aH vp hente.
The knyghtys tale / reherseth euery del
Fro poyn† to poyn† / 3if 3e looki* wel,
And how this Duk / with-oute more abood,

4532

The samé day / toward Thebès rood,
Ful lik in soth / a worthy conquerour,
And in his host† / of Chyualrye the flour.

4536

And fynally, to spekyn of thys thing,
with old Creon / that was of Thebès kynge,
how that he fought† / and slogh hym lik a knyght†,

4540

And aH his host† / putte vnto the flyght†.

¶ 3it, as some auctours makê mencioner,
Or Theseus entred into town,
The women first with pikkeys and with mallys,
with gret† labour / betê doun the wallys.

4544

And in her wrytyng also as they sayn,
Campaneus / was on the wallys slayn,
with cast of ston / he was so ouerlade;
For whom Adrastus / such a sorowe made

4548

That† no man myght† reles hym of his payne.

And Iocesta / with her doghtres twyne,

PT. III. ] Theseus destroys Thebes. The Greek Lords are buried. 187

Ful woofully oppressyd of her cherys,
To Athenes 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 Thebes wente,
He bete it downe / and the howsys brente,
The puple slough / for al her crying loud

Maad her wallys / and her towrys proude
Rounde aboute / euene vpon a rowe,
with the Soyle / to be laide* ful lowe

That nouȝt 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 oldë* Rytyys / by and by to telle,
Nor thossequies / in ordre to devise;
Nor to declare / the manere and the Guyse
how the bodys / wer to Asshes brente,
Nor of the gommês / in the flaumbe spent,
To make the ayre* / swetter of reles,
As fraunc encence / Mirre and Aloës;

Nor how the wommen / rounde aboute stood,
Some with mylk / and some also with blood,
And some of hem with vrnês made of gold,
whan the asshes fully weren made cold,

Tenclosyn hem of gret affecion

And bern hem hom / into her Regioun;

4553. of vpon P. more Ar. G. Lb. C. T. P. E. L. om. T. and the rest. can I]
I can T. I. P. (see Notes). 4558. second her om. Ad., I. 4559. aboute M. Adj.,
4560. laide Ar. 4563. bonys bodys Lb. M. Di. C. T. P. E. (see Notes). her]
lenger L. M. Adj., I. E. S. Ro. lenger thanne T. Ra. lenger now Di. 4566.
olde M. Adj., old Ar. 4567. Nor] For Di. the obsequies M. Adj.,
flanne G. E., T. flame S. flawmes Ra. 4571. ayr M. Adj., hayre Ar.
were M. Adj., 4577. To enclosen Adj. To enclose M. gret] ful gret C.
4578. bern Ar. bere Adj., borne M. Di.
Theseus returns to Athens, and the Argives to Argos. [PT. III.

And how that other / ful deddy of her loke,
For loue only / of the bonys tooke,
Hem to kepę / for a remembrance:
That to reherce / euery observaunce
That was don / in the fyres bright',
The wakę-playęs / duryng al the nyght',
Nor of the wrestlęng / to telle poynę be poynę;
Of hem that weręn* / nakęd and enoynt',
how eueriche other luggę gan and shake;
Nor how the wommen han her levę take
Of Theseus / with ful gret humblesse,
Thankyng hym of his worthynesse
That hym lyst upon 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;
¶ And how this Duk Thebęs ek forsoke
And to Athenys / the righte wayę* tooke,
with laurer crownyd / in signe of victorye,
And the palme of conquest* and of glorye,
Did his honur / duelye to marte;
And how the wymmen wepte whan they departę* 4600
with kyng Adrastus / hom ageyn to Arge:

To tellyn al, it* wer to gret a charge,
¶ And ek also, as 3e shal vnderstande,
At the gynnyng I took no mor on honde
Be my promys, in conclusion,
But to reherce the destruccioun

Adrastus dies. Thebes destroyed 400 years before Rome founded. 189

Of myghty Thebês / shortly, and no more.
And thus Adrastus, with his lokkys hore,
Stille abood in Argô his Cytè
Vnto his ende /: 3e gete no more of me,
Sauf, as myn auntour / liketh to compyle,
After that he lyued 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 makep no delayes,
And al his Ioyé / passid was and gon,
For of his lordys / alyvè was not on
But slayn at Thebes /, 3e knowen al the cas.

and when this kyng / in Argô buried was
Ful Royaly / with gretër solemnqytê,
It was acountyd /, in bookys 3e may Se,

¶ Four hundred seeër /, as mad is mencioun,
To-foor the beelídngt / and fundacïoun
Of gretër Rome / so Ryal and so large,
whan the ladies / departyden* from Arge
To her contreâ / ful trest and desolatê.
lo: her the fyn / of contek and debatê.
Lo: her the myghtê of Mars the frowardë sterre.
Lo: what it is: for-to gynne a werre.

¶ How itt concluthd / ensample 3e may se
Firstt of Grekys / and nextt of the Cytê :

4608 Adrastus stays in Argos,
4609 Adrastus stays in Argos,
4610 Adrastus stays in Argos,
4611 Adrastus stays in Argos,
4612 the trouble of the Siege shorts his life.
4613 He dies,
4614 and is buried.
4615 and is buried.
4616 and is buried.
4617 and is buried.
4618 and is buried.
4619 and is buried.
4620 and is buried.
4621 and is buried.
4622 and is buried.
4623 and is buried.
4624 and is buried.
4625 and is buried.
4626 and is buried.
4627 and is buried.
4628 and is buried.
4629 and is buried.
4630 and is buried.
4631 and is buried.
4632 and is buried.

[leaf 77, back] COCC *ere to-fore he fundacion of Rome was Thebes destroyed.
190 Grecian Worthies are all slain. All Folk suffer in War. [PT. III.

For owther parte / hath materie to compleyne.

And in her strif / 3e may se thynge twyne:

" The worthy blood of Grecse was destroyed at the siege and the Cyte fynaly brought to nought.

And Thelis ek / of Amphion first bylt,

With-oute Recur / brouht vnto Ruynye

And with the soyle made pleyne as a lyne,

To wyldernesse turndy / and desert,

And Grekis 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.

For in the werre is non excepioues

In war,

high and low, both suffer.

Of hegh estat / nor lowd condicioun,

But as fortune / and faté, both yffere,

List to disposi / with her double chere,

And Bellona* / the goddes in hir char

Aform provydeth / ; wherfor eeh man be war

Vnavysed / a werré to bygymne.

For no man woote who shal lese or wynne.

And hard it is whan eyther party leseth.

And doutles / nowther of hem cheseth

That / they most / in al swich mortal rage,

Maugre her lust /, felyn gret damage.

It may nat be by mannys myght restreyned.

And werre in soth / was neuer first ordeyned.

[leaf 78]

Bellona is goddess of bataill.

Both sides are damaged by war.

But for synne folkis to chastyse.
And as the byble / trewly kan devyse, 4660 *
Hegh in heuene / of Pryde and Surquedye,
Lucyfer, fader of Envie,
The olde Serpent) / he levyathan,
Was the first* / that euer werré gan:
Whan Michael /, the heueney Champion,
with his Feerys / venquished the Dragoun,
And to hellé / cast hym downe ful lowe.
The whiche serpent* hath the Cockkyl sowe
Thorgh al erth / of envye and debat,
That* vnnethys / is ther none estat,
with-outé stryf / can lyve in Charité.
For eyery man / of hegh and lough degré,
Envyneth now / that oþer shulde thryve.
And ground* and causé / why that* men so stryve,
Is covytyse / and fals Ambicioun,
That* euerich wold han domynacioun
Ouer other, and trede hym vndyr foote:
which of al sorowe / gynnyng* is and Roote.
And Crist* recordyth — red luk* and se—
For lak of love / what* meschief þer shal be,
For O. puple / as he doth devyse,
Agayn anoþer / of haté shal arye.
And after tellith what* dyvisions

192 Your War shall cease, and Love and Peace shall spread. [PT. III.

Ther shall be / atwixé* regyouns, 4684
eueriche bysy / other to oppresse.

Strife starts
And al swich strif /, as he berth wytnesse,
Kalendys ben /, I take his word to borowe,
sorrow.
And a gynnyng / of meschief and of sorowe:
Men haue it foundè / 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 swerde / shal no more manace,
Nor his speré* / greuous to sustene,
Shal now no moré* / whettyd* be so kene,
Nor he no moré* / shal his hauberk shake.

Love shall
But loue and pees / in hertys shal awake,
And charité /, both in length and brede,
spread.
Of newé shal her bryghte beemys sprede
Thorgh grace / only : in dyuers naciouns,
Forto reforme / a-twixé* Regyouns
Pees and quyet* / concord* and vnytè.

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 sakè ches,
For loue only / our troubles to termyne,
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, atwix Ar. Ra. a-twene Bo. M, Ad3, bytwyxt Lp,
Let us pray Christ to give us Peace here, and Heaven hereafter. 193

Which for mankynde shedde his herte blood, Thorgh byseching / of that heuenly quene, Wyff and moder and a Mayde clene,
To sende vs pes / her in this lyf present, And of oure synnys / parfit amendement,
And Ioye eternal / when we hennës* wende.
Of my talë / thus I make an ende. Explicit. 4716

Here endeth the destrucioiw of Thebes.

deformities
P.16 - long
21 - quarts
P.26 - mediaevalization
P.72 - mechanism. He's the quoted, I'm obscure
no characterization (No, please...)
A Poly character consistent...