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### **The History Of English Poetry**

From The Close of the Eleventh To The Commencement of the Eighteenth  
Century

**Warton, Thomas**

**London, 1781**

A Dissertation On The Gesta Romanorum.

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A DISSERTATION ON THE

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A  
DISSERTATION

ON THE

GESTA ROMANORUM.

**T**ALES are the learning of a rude age. In the progress of letters, speculation and enquiry commence with refinement of manners. Literature becomes sentimental and discursive, in proportion as a people is polished: and men must be instructed by facts, either real or imaginary, before they can apprehend the subtleties of argument, and the force of reflection.

Vincent of Beauvais, a learned Dominican of France, who flourished in the thirteenth century, observes in his *MIRROR of HISTORY*, that it was a practice of the preachers of his age, to rouse the indifference and relieve the languor of their hearers, by quoting the fables of Esop: yet, at the same time, he recommends a sparing and prudent application of these profane fancies in the discussion of sacred subjects\*. Among the Harleian

\* *SPECUL. HIST.* Lib. iii. c. viii. fol. 31. b. edit. Ven. 1591.

VOL. III.

a

manuscripts

manuscripts in the British Museum we find a very antient collection of two hundred and fifteen stories, romantic, allegorical, religious, and legendary, which were evidently compiled by a professed preacher, for the use of monastic societies. Some of these appear to have been committed to writing from the recitals of bards and minstrels: others to have been invented and written by troubadours and monks<sup>b</sup>. In the year 1389, a grand system of divinity appeared at Paris, afterwards translated by Caxton under the title of the COURT OF SAPPYENCE, which abounds with a multitude of historical examples, parables, and apologues; and which the writer wisely supposes, to be much more likely to interest the attention and excite the devotion of the people, than the authority of science, and the parade of theology. In consequence of the expediency of this mode of instruction, the Legends of the Saints were received into the ritual, and rehearsed in the course of public worship. For religious romances were nearly allied to songs of chivalry; and the same gross ignorance of the people, which in the early centuries of christianity created a necessity of introducing the visible pomp of theatrical ceremonies into the churches, was taught the duties of devotion, by being amused with the achievements of spiritual knight-errantry, and impressed with the examples of pious heroism. In more cultivated periods, the DECAMERON of Boccace, and other books of that kind, ought to be considered as the remnant of a species of writing which was founded on the simplicity of mankind, and was adapted to the exigencies of the infancy of society.

Many obsolete collections of this sort still remain, both printed and manuscript, containing narratives either fictitious or historical,

— Of king and heroes old,  
Such as the wise Demodocus once told  
In solemn songs at king Alcinous' feast<sup>c</sup>.

<sup>b</sup> MSS. HARL. 463. membran. fol.

<sup>c</sup> Milton. AT A VACATION EXERCISE, &c.

Among

But among the antient story-books of this character, a Latin compilation entitled *GESTA ROMANORUM* seems to have been the favorite.

This piece has been before incidentally noticed: but as it operated powerfully on the general body of our old poetry, affording a variety of inventions not only to Chaucer, Gower, and Lydgate, but to their distant successors, I have judged it of sufficient importance to be examined at large in a separate dissertation: which has been designedly reserved for this place, for the purpose both of recapitulation and illustration, and of giving the reader a more commodious opportunity of surveying at leisure, from this intermediate point of view, and under one comprehensive detail, a connected display of the materials and original subjects of many of our past and future poets.

Indeed, in the times with which we are now about to be concerned, it seems to have been growing more into esteem. At the commencement of typography, Wynkyn de Worde published this book in English. This translation wasre printed, by one Robinson, in 1577. And afterwards, of the same translation there were six impressions before the year 1601<sup>d</sup>. There is an edition in black letter so late as the year 1689. About the year 1596, an English version appeared of "Epitomes des cent HISTOIRES TRAGIQUES, partie extraictes des ACTES DES ROMAINS et autres, &c." From the popularity, or rather familiarity, of this work in the reign of queen Elisabeth, the title of *GESTA GRAYORUM* was affixed to the history of the acts of the Christmas Prince at Grays-inn, in 1594<sup>e</sup>. In Sir GILES GOOSECAP, an anonymous comedy, presented by the Children of the Chapel in the year 1606, we have, "Then for your lordship's quips and quick jests, why *GESTA ROMANORUM* were nothing to them". And in George Chapman's *MAY-DAY*, a comedy, printed at London in 1611, a man of the highest literary taste for the pieces in vogue is cha-

<sup>d</sup> See supr. vol. ii. p. 18. seq.

<sup>e</sup> Lond. Printed for John Windet. 1606.

<sup>f</sup> Printed, or reprinted, in 1688. 4to. 4to.

rafterised, "One that has read Marcus Aurelius, *GESTA ROMANORUM*, the Mirrour of Magistrates, &c.—to be led by "the nose like a blind beare that has read nothing<sup>g</sup>!" The critics and collectors in black-letter, I believe, could produce many other proofs.

The *GESTA ROMANORUM* were first printed without date, but as it is supposed before or about the year 1473, in folio, with this title, *Incipiunt HISTORIE NOTABILES collecte ex GESTIS ROMANORUM et quibusdam aliis libris cum applicationibus eorundem*<sup>h</sup>. This edition has one hundred and fifty-two chapters, or *GESTS*, and one hundred and seventeen leaves<sup>i</sup>. It is in the Gothic letter, and in two columns. The first chapter is of king Pompey, and the last of prince, or king, Cleonicus. The initials are written in red and blue ink. This edition, slightly mutilated, is among bishop Tanner's printed books in the Bodleian library. The reverend and learned doctor Farmer, master of Emanuel college in Cambridge, has the second edition, as it seems, printed at Louvain, in quarto, the same or the subsequent year, by John de Westfalia, under the title, *Ex GESTIS ROMANORUM HISTORIE NOTABILES de viciis virtutibusque tractantes cum applicationibus moralisatis et mysticis*. And with this colophon, *GESTA ROMANORUM cum quibusdam aliis HISTORIIS eisdem annexis ad MORALITATES dilucide redacta hic finem habent. Quæ, diligenter correctis aliorum viciis, impressit Joannes de Westfalia in alma Vniuersitate Louvaniensi*. It has one hundred and eighty-one chapters<sup>k</sup>. That is, twenty-nine more than are contained in the former edition: the first of the additional chapters being the story of Antiochus, or the substance of the romance of APOLLONIUS of TYRE. The initials are in-

<sup>g</sup> Act iii. pag. 39.

<sup>h</sup> Much the same title occurs to a manuscript of this work in the Vatican, "Historiæ Notabiles collecte ex Gestis Romanorum et quibusdam aliis libris cum explicationibus eorundem." Mont-

fauc. Bibl. MANUSCR. tom. i. pag. 17. Num. 172.

<sup>i</sup> Without initials, paging, signatures, or catch-words.

<sup>k</sup> The first is of king Pompey, as before. The last is entitled *De ADULTERIO*.

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serted in red ink<sup>1</sup>. Another followed soon afterwards, in quarto, *Ex GESTIS ROMANORUM Historie notabiles moralizatae*, per *Girardum Lieu*, Goudæ, 1480. The next edition, with the use of which I have been politely favoured by George Mason esquire, of Aldenham-Lodge in Hertfordshire, was printed in folio, and in the year 1488, with this title, *GESTA RHOMANORUM cum Applicationibus moralisatis et mislicis*. The colophon is, *Ex GESTIS ROMANORUM cum pluribus applicatis Historiis de virtutibus et viciis mystice ad intellectum transumptis Recollectorii finis. Anno nre salutis MCCCCLXXX viij kalendas vero februarii xvij*. A general, and alphabetical, table, are subjoined. The book, which is printed in two columns, and in the Gothic character, abounding with abbreviations, contains ninety-three leaves. The initials are written or flourished in red and blue, and all the capitals in the body of the text are miniated with a pen. There were many other later editions<sup>m</sup>. I must add, that the *GESTA ROMANORUM* were translated into Dutch, so early as the year 1484. There is an old French version in the British Museum.

This work is compiled from the obsolete Latin chronicles of the later Roman or rather German story, heightened by romantic inventions, from Legends of the Saints, oriental apologues, and many of the shorter fictitious narratives which came into Europe with the Arabian literature, and were familiar in the ages of ignorance and imagination. The classics are sometimes cited for authorities; but these are of the lower order, such as Valerius Maximus, Macrobius, Aulus Gallius, Seneca, Pliny, and Boethius. To every tale a *MORALISATION* is subjoined, reducing it into a christian or moral lesson.

Most of the oriental apologues are taken from the *CLERICALLIS DISCIPLINA*, or a latin Dialogue between an Arabian Philo-

<sup>1</sup> It has signatures to K k.

<sup>m</sup> For which see supr. vol. ii. p. 15.

fopher

fopher and Edric<sup>o</sup> his son, never printed<sup>o</sup>, written by Peter Alphonfus, a baptized Jew, at the beginning of the twelfth century, and collected from Arabian fables, apothegms, and examples<sup>o</sup>. Some are also borrowed from an old Latin translation of the CALILAH U DAMNAH, a celebrated sett of eastern fables, to which Alphonfus was indebted.

On the whole, this is the collection in which a curious enquirer might expect to find the original of Chaucer's *Cambuscan* :

Or,—if aught else great bards beside  
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,  
Of turneys and of trophies hung,  
Of forests and enchantments drear,  
Where more is meant than meets the ear<sup>o</sup>.

Our author frequently cites *GESTA ROMANORUM*, the title of his own work. By which I understand no particular book of that name, but the Roman History in general. Thus in the title of the *SAINT ALBANS CHRONICLE*, printed by Caxton, *Titus Livyus de GESTIS ROMANORUM* is recited. In the year 1544, Lucius Florus was printed at Paris under the same title<sup>r</sup>. In the British Museum we find “*LES FAIS DE ROMAINS jusques a la fin de l’empire Domician, selon Orose, Justin, Lucan, &c.*” A plain historical deduction<sup>s</sup>. The *ROMULEON*, an old manuscript history of Rome from the foundation of the city to Constantine the Great, is also called *de GESTIS ROMANORUM*. This manuscript occurs both in Latin and French: and a French copy, among the royal ma-

<sup>o</sup> EDRIC was the name of ENOCH among the Arabians, to whom they attribute many fabulous compositions. Herbelot, in V. Lydgate's *CHORLE* and *THE BIRD*, mentioned above, is taken from the *CLERICALIS DISCIPLINA* of Alphonfus.

<sup>r</sup> MSS. HARL. 3861. And in many other libraries. It occurs in old French verse, MSS. DIGB. 86. membran. “*Le*

“*Romaunz de Peres Aunfour coment il aprist et chastia son fils belement.*” [See *supr.* vol. ii. *EMEND.* and *ADD.* at pag. 103.]

<sup>s</sup> See Tytwhitt's *CHAUCER*, vol. iv. p. 325. seq.

<sup>o</sup> Milton's *IL PENSEROSO*.

<sup>r</sup> Apud Vascofan. 4to.

<sup>s</sup> MSS. REG. 20 C i.

nuscripts,

nuscripts, has the title, "ROMULEON, ou des FAIS DE RO-  
" MAINS !." Among the manuscript books written by Lapus  
de Castellione, a Florentine civilian, who flourished about the  
year 1350, there is one, *De Origine URBIS ROMÆ et de GESTIS*  
*ROMANORUM*". Gower, in the *CONFESSIO AMANTIS*, often  
introduces Roman stories with the Latin preamble, *Hic secundum*  
*GESTA*. Where he certainly means the Roman History, which  
by degrees had acquired simply the appellation of *GESTA*.  
Herman Korner, in his *CHRONICA NOVELLA*, written about  
the year 1438, refers for his vouchers to Bede, Orosius, Vale-  
rius Maximus, Josephus, Eusebius, and the *Chronicon et GESTA*  
*ROMANORUM*. Most probably, to say no more, by the *CHRO-*  
*NICON* he means the later writers of the Roman affairs, such as  
Isidore and the monkish compilers; and by *GESTA* the ancient  
Roman history, as related by Livy and the more established  
Latin historians.

Neither is it possible that this work could have been brought  
as a proof or authority, by any serious annalist, for the Roman  
story.

For though it bears the title of *GESTA ROMANORUM*, yet  
this title by no means properly corresponds with the contents of  
the collection: which, as has been already hinted, comprehends  
a multitude of narratives, either not historical; or, in another  
respect, such as are either totally unconnected with the Roman  
people, or perhaps the most preposterous misrepresentations of  
their history. To cover this deviation from the promised  
plan, which, by introducing a more ample variety of matter,  
has contributed to encrease the reader's entertainment, our col-  
lector has taken care to preface almost every story with the name  
or reign of a Roman emperor; who, at the same time, is often  
a monarch that never existed, and who seldom, whether real or  
suppositious, has any concern with the circumstances of the  
narrative.

\* MS. 19 E. v.

\* See *supr.* vol. ii. p. 19.

But

But I hasten to exhibit a compendious analysis of the chapters which form this very singular compilation: intermixing occasional illustrations arising from the subject, and shortening or lengthening my abridgement of the stories, in proportion as I judge they are likely to interest the reader. Where, for that reason, I have been very concise, I have yet said enough to direct the critical antiquarian to this collection, in case he should find a similar tale occurring in any of our old poets. I have omitted the mention of a very few chapters, which were beneath notice. Sometimes, where common authors are quoted, I have only mentioned the author's name, without specifying the substance of the quotation. For it was necessary that the reader should be made acquainted with our collector's track of reading, and the books which he used. In the mean time, this review will serve as a full notification of the edition of 1488, which is more comprehensive and complete than some others of later publication, and to which all the rest, as to a general criterion, may be now comparatively referred.

CHAP. i. Of a daughter of king Pompey, whose chamber was guarded by five armed knights and a dog. Being permitted to be present at a public shew, she is seduced by a duke, who is afterwards killed by the champion of her father's court. She is reconciled to her father, and betrothed to a nobleman: on which occasion, she receives from her father an embroidered robe and a crown of gold, from the champion a gold ring, another from the wise man who pacified the king's anger, another from the king's son, another from her cousin, and from her spouse a seal of gold. All these presents are inscribed with proverbial sentences, suitable to the circumstances of the princess.

The latter part of this story is evidently oriental. The feudal manners, in a book which professes to record the achievements of the Roman people, are remarkable in the introductory circumstances. But of this mixture we shall see many striking instances.

CHAP. ii. Of a youth taken captive by pirates. The king's daughter

daughter falls in love with him; and having procured his escape, accompanies him to his own country, where they are married.

CHAP. vi. An emperor is married to a beautiful young princess. In case of death, they mutually agree not to survive one other. To try the truth of his wife, the emperor going into a distant country, orders a report of his death to be circulated. In remembrance of her vow, and in imitation of the wives of India, she prepares to throw herself headlong from a high precipice. She is prevented by her father; who interposes his paternal authority, as predominating over a rash and unlawful promise.

CHAP. vii. Under the reign of Dioclesian, a noble knight had two sons, the youngest of which marries a harlot.

This story, but with a difference of circumstances, ends like the beautiful apologue of the Prodigal Son.

CHAP. viii. The emperor Leo commands three female statues to be made. One has a gold ring on a finger pointing forward, another a beard of gold, and the third a golden cloak and purple tunic. Whoever steals any of these ornaments, is to be punished with an ignominious death.

This story is copied by Gower, in the *CONFESSIO AMANTIS*: but he has altered some of the circumstances. He supposes a statue of Apollo.

Of plate of golde a berde he hadde,  
The wiche his brest all ovir spradde:  
Of golde also, without fayle,  
His mantell was, of large entayle,  
Besette with perrey all aboute:  
Forth ryght he straught his synger oute,  
Upon the whiche he had a rynge,  
To seen it was a ryche thyng,  
A fyne carbuncle for the nones  
Moste precious of all stones \*.

\* Lib. v. fol. 122. b.

In the sequel, Gower follows the substance of our author.

CHAP. x. Vespasian marries a wife in a distant country, who refuses to return home with him, and yet declares she will kill herself if he goes. The emperor ordered two rings to be made, of a wonderful efficacy; one of which, in the stone, has the image of Oblivion, the other the image of Memory: the ring of Oblivion he gave to the empress, and returned home with the ring of Memory.

CHAP. xi. The queen of the south sends her daughter to king Alexander, to be his concubine. She was exceedingly beautiful, but had been nourished with poison from her birth. Alexander's master, Aristotle, whose sagacity nothing could escape, knowing this, entreated, that before she was admitted to the king's bed, a malefactor condemned to death might be sent for, who should give her a kiss in the presence of the king. The malefactor, on kissing her, instantly dropped down dead. Aristotle, having explained his reasons for what he had done, was loaded with honours by the king, and the princess was dismissed to her mother.

This story is founded on the twenty-eighth chapter of Aristotle's *SECRETUM SECRETORUM*: in which, a queen of India is said to have treacherously sent to Alexander, among other costly presents, the pretended testimonies of her friendship, a girl of exquisite beauty, who having been fed with serpents from her infancy, partook of their nature<sup>r</sup>. If I recollect right, in Pliny there are accounts of nations whose natural food was poison. Mithridates, king of Pontus, the land of venomous herbs, and the country of the forceress Medea, was supposed to

<sup>r</sup> [See supr. vol. i. p. 132.] This I now cite from a Latin translation, without date, but evidently printed before 1500. It is dedicated to Guido Vere de Valencia bishop of Tripoly, by his most humble Clerk, Philippus: who says, that he found this treatise in Arabic at Antioch, *quo carebant Latini*, and that therefore, and

because the Arabic copies were scarce, he translated it into Latin.

This printed copy does not exactly correspond with MS. Bodl. 495. membr. 4to. In the last, Alexander's miraculous horn is mentioned at fol. 45. b. In the former, in ch. lxxii. The dedication is the same in both.

eat poison. Sir John Maundeville's Travels, I believe, will afford other instances.

CHAP. xii. A profligate priest, in the reign of the emperor Otto, or Otho, walking in the fields, and neglecting to say mass, is reformed by a vision of a comely old man.

CHAP. xiii. An empress having lost her husband, becomes so doatingly fond of her only son, then three years of age, as not to bear his absence for a moment. They sleep together every night, and when he was eighteen years of age, she proves with child by him. She murders the infant, and her left hand is immediately marked with four circles of blood. Her repentance is related, in consequence of a vision of the holy virgin.

This story is in the SPECULUM HISTORIALE of Vincent of Beauvais, who wrote about the year 1250<sup>a</sup>.

CHAP. xiv. Under the reign of the emperor Dorotheus, a remarkable example of the filial piety of a young man, who redeems his father, a knight, from captivity.

CHAP. xv. Eufemian, a nobleman in the court of the emperor of Rome, is attended by three thousand servants girt with golden belts, and cloathed in silken vestments. His house was crouded with pilgrims, orphans, and widows, for whom three tables were kept every day. He has a son, Allexius; who quits his father's palace, and lives unknown seventeen years in a monastery in Syria. He then returns, and lives seventeen years undiscovered as a pilgrim in his father's family, where he suffers many indignities from the servants.

Allexius, or Alexis, was canonised. This story is taken from his Legend<sup>a</sup>. In the metrical Lives of the Saints, his life is told in a sort of measure different from that of the rest, and not very common in the earlier stages of our poetry. It begins thus.

Lesteneth alle and herkeneth me,  
Zonge and olde, bonde and fre,

<sup>a</sup> Lib. vii. cap. 93. seq. f. 86. b. edit. Ven.

<sup>a</sup> See Caxton, GOLD. LEG. f. ccclxiii. b.

And ich zow telle sone,  
How a zought man, gent and fre,  
By gan this worldis wele to fle,  
Y born he was in Rome.

In Rome was a dozty man  
That was y cleped Eufemian,  
Man of moche myzte;  
Gold and seluer he hadde ynouz,  
Hall and boures, oxfe and plouz,  
And swith wel it dyzte.

When Alexius returns home in disguise, and asks his father about his son, the father's feelings are thus described.

So sone so he spake of his sone,  
The guode man, as was his wone,  
Gan to fike fore <sup>b</sup>;  
His herte fel <sup>c</sup> so colde so ston,  
The teres felle to his ton <sup>d</sup>,  
On her berd hore.

At his burial, many miracles are wrought on the sick.

With mochel fize <sup>e</sup>, and mochel song,  
That holy cors, hem alle among,  
Bischoppis to cherche bere.

Amyddes rizt the heze strete <sup>f</sup>,  
So moche folke hym gone mete  
That they resten a stonde,  
All the fike <sup>g</sup> that to him come,  
I heled wer swithe sone  
Of fet <sup>h</sup> and eke of honde :

<sup>b</sup> Sigh.  
<sup>d</sup> Feet.

<sup>c</sup> Felt.  
<sup>e</sup> Sighs.

<sup>f</sup> High-freet.  
<sup>g</sup> They fighed.

<sup>h</sup> Feet.

The

The blinde come to hare <sup>1</sup> fize,  
 The croked gonne sone rizt <sup>2</sup>,  
 The lame for to go :  
 That dombe wer fonge <sup>3</sup> speche,  
 Thez herede <sup>4</sup> god the sothe leche <sup>5</sup>,  
 And that halwe <sup>6</sup> also.

The day zede and drouz to nyzt,  
 No lenger dwelle <sup>7</sup> they ne myzt,  
 To cherche they moste wende ;  
 The bellen they gonne to ryngge,  
 The clerkes heze <sup>8</sup> to synge,  
 Everich in his ende <sup>9</sup>.

Tho the corse to cherche com  
 Glad they wer everichon  
 That there ycure wer,  
 The pope and the emperour  
 By fore an auter of seynt Savour  
 Ther sette they the bere.

Aboute the bere was moche lizt  
 With proude palle was bedizt,  
 I beten al with golde <sup>10</sup>.

The history of Saint Alexius is told entirely in the same words in the *GESTA ROMANORUM*, and in the *LEGENDA AUREA* of Jacobus de Voragine <sup>1</sup>, translated, through a French medium, by Caxton. This work of Jacobus does not consist

<sup>1</sup> Their.

<sup>2</sup> Strait.

<sup>3</sup> Found.

<sup>4</sup> The true physician.

<sup>5</sup> Heried. Blessed.

<sup>6</sup> Hallowed.

<sup>7</sup> Tarry.

<sup>8</sup> High.

<sup>9</sup> At his seat in the choir.

<sup>10</sup> MSS. Coll. Trin. Oxon. Cod. 57.  
*supr. citat.*

<sup>1</sup> *HYSTOR.* lxxxix. f. clviii. edit. 1479.  
 fol. And in Vincent of Beauvais, who  
 quotes *GESTA ALLEXII. SPECUL. HIST.*  
 Lib. xviii, cap. 43. seq. f. 241. b.

solely of the legends of the saints, but is interspersed with *multis aliis pulcherrimis et peregrinis historiis*, with many other most beautiful and strange histories<sup>1</sup>.

CHAP. xvi. A Roman emperor in digging for the foundation of a new palace, finds a golden sarcophagus, or coffin, inscribed with mysterious words and sentences. Which being explained, prove to be so many moral lessons of instruction for the emperor's future conduct.

CHAP. xvii. A poor man named Guido, engages to serve an emperor of Rome in six several capacities, or employments. One of these services is, to shew the best way to the holy land. Acquitting himself in all with singular address and fidelity, he is made a knight, and loaded with riches.

CHAP. xviii. A knight named Julian is hunting a stag, who turns and says, "you will kill your father and mother." On this he went into a distant country, where he married a rich Lady of a castle. Julian's father and mother travelled into various lands to find their son, and at length accidentally came to this castle, in his absence; where telling their story to the lady, who had heard it from her husband, she discovered who they were, and gave them her own bed to sleep in. Early in the morning, while she was at mass in the chapel, her husband Julian unexpectedly returned; and entering his wife's chamber, perceived two persons in the bed, whom he immediately slew with his sword, hastily supposing them to be his wife and her adulterer. At leaving the chamber, he met his wife coming from the chapel; and with great astonishment asked her, who the persons were sleeping in her bed? She answered, "They are your  
" parents, who have been seeking you so long, and whom I  
" have honoured with a place in our own bed." Afterwards they founded a sumptuous hospital for the accommodation of travellers, on the banks of a dangerous river.

This story is told in Caxton's *GOLDEN LEGENDE*<sup>2</sup>, and in

<sup>1</sup> In the Colophon.

<sup>2</sup> Fol. 90. edit. 1493.

the metrical Lives of the Saints<sup>v</sup>. Hence Julian, or Saint Julian, was called *hospitator*, or the *gode herberjour*; and the Pater Noster became famous, which he used to say for the souls of his father and mother whom he had thus unfortunately killed<sup>x</sup>. The peculiar excellencies of this prayer are displayed by Boccaccio<sup>y</sup>. Chaucer speaking of the hospitable disposition of his FRANKLEIN, says,

Saint Julian he was in his own countre<sup>z</sup>.

This history is, like the last, related by our compiler, in the words of Julian's Legend, as it stands in Jacobus de Voragine<sup>a</sup>. Bollandus has inserted Antoninus's account of this faint, which appears also to be literally the same<sup>b</sup>. It is told, yet not exactly in the same words, by Vincent of Beauvais<sup>c</sup>.

I take this opportunity of observing, that the Legends of the the Saints, so frequently referred to in the GESTA ROMANORUM, often contain high strokes of fancy, both in the structure and decorations of the story. That they should abound in extravagant conceptions, may be partly accounted for, from the superstitious and visionary cast of the writer: but the truth is, they derive this complexion from the east. Some were originally forged by monks of the Greek church, to whom the oriental fictions and mode of fabling were familiar. The more early of the Latin lives were carried over to Constantinople, where they were translated into Greek with new embellishments of eastern imagination. These being returned into Europe, were translated into Latin, where they naturally superseded the old Latin archetypes. Others of the Latin lives contracted this tincture, from being written after the Arabian literature became common in Europe. The following ideas in the Life of Saint Pelagian

<sup>v</sup> MSS. Bodl. 1596. f. 4.

<sup>x</sup> Ibid.

<sup>y</sup> DECAM. D. ii. N. 2.

<sup>z</sup> PROL. v. 342. See supr. vol. i. SECT. xvii. p. 438.

<sup>a</sup> Hystor. xxxii. f. lxii. a.

<sup>b</sup> ACT. SANCTOR. tom. ii. JANUAR. p. 974. Antv. 1643.

<sup>c</sup> SPECUL. HIST. Lib. ix. c. 115. f. 115. Venet. 1591.

evidently

evidently betray their original. "As the byshop fange masse  
 " in the cyte of Ufanance, he saw thre dropes ryghte clere all  
 " of one gratenessse whiche were upon the aulter, and al thre  
 " ranne to gyder in to a precyous gemme: and whan they had  
 " fet thys gemme in a crosse of golde, al the other precyous  
 " stons that were there, fyllen<sup>d</sup> out, and thys gemme was clere  
 " to them that were clene out of synne, and it was obscure and  
 " darke to synners<sup>e</sup>, &c." The peculiar cast of romantic inven-  
 tion was admirably suited to serve the purposes of superstition.

Possévin, a learned Jesuit, who wrote about the close of the  
 sixteenth century, complains, that for the last five hundred years  
 the courts of all the princes in Europe had been infatuated by  
 reading romances: and that, in his time, it was a mark of in-  
 elegance, not to be familiarly acquainted with Lancelot du Lake,  
 Perceforest, Tristan, Giron the Courteous, Amadis de Gaul,  
 Primaleon, Boccace's Decameron, and Ariosto. He even goes so  
 far as to say, that the devil instigated Luther to procure a transla-  
 tion of Amadis from Spanish into French, for the purpose of  
 facilitating his grand scheme of overthrowing the catholic reli-  
 gion. The popularity of this book, he adds, warped the minds  
 of the French nation from their antient notions and studies;  
 introduced a neglect of the scriptures, and propagated a love for  
 astrology, and other fantastic arts<sup>f</sup>. But with the leave of  
 t<sup>his</sup> zealous catholic I would observe, that this sort of reading  
 was likely to produce, if any, an effect quite contrary. The  
 genius of romance and of popery was the same; and both were  
 strengthened by the reciprocation of a simular spirit of cre-  
 dularity. The dragons and the castles of the one, were of  
 a piece with the visions and pretended miracles of the other.  
 The ridiculous theories of false and unsolid science, which,  
 by the way, had been familiarised to the French by other ro-  
 mances, long before the translation of Amadis, were surely more  
 likely to be advanced under the influence of a religion founded on

<sup>d</sup> Fell out.

<sup>e</sup> Caxton's GOLD. LEG. f. ccclxxxviii.

<sup>f</sup> BIBLIOTH. SELECT. Lib. i. cap. 25.

p. 113. edit. 1593.

deception,

deception, than in consequence of Luther's reformed system, which aimed at purity and truth, and which was to gain its end by the suppression of antient prejudices.

Many of the absurdities of the catholic worship were perhaps, as I have hinted, in some degree necessary in the early ages of the church, on account of the ignorance of the people; at least, under such circumstances they were natural, and therefore excusable. But when the world became wiser, those mummies should have been abolished, for the same reason that the preachers left off quoting Esop's fables in their sermons, and the stage ceased to instruct the people in the scripture-history by the representation of the MYSTERIES. The advocates of the papal communion do not consider, that in a cultivated age, abounding with every species of knowledge, they continue to retain those fooleries which were calculated only for christians in a condition of barbarism, and of which the use now no longer subsists.

CHAP. xix. When Julius Cæsar was preparing to pass the Rubicon, a gigantic spectre appeared from the middle of the river, threatening to interrupt his passage, if he came not to establish the peace of Rome. Our author cites the GESTA ROMANORUM for this story.

It was impossible that the Roman history could pass through the dark ages, without being infected with many romantic corruptions. Indeed, the Roman was almost the only antient history, which the readers of those ages knew: and what related even to pagan Rome, the parent of the more modern papal metropolis of christianity, was regarded with a superstitious veneration, and often magnified with miraculous additions.

CHAP. xx. The birth of the emperor Henry, son of earl Leopold, and his wonderful preservation from the stratagems of the emperor Conrade, till his accession to the imperial throne.

This story is told by Caxton in the GOLDEN LEGENDE, under the life of Pelagian the pope, entitled, *Here foloweth the lyf of Saynt Pelagien the pope, with many other hystories and*

*gestys of the Lombardes, and of Machomete, with other cronycles*<sup>g</sup>. The *GESTA LONGOBARDORUM* are fertile in legendary matter, and furnished Jacobus de Voragine, Caxton's original, with many marvellous histories<sup>h</sup>. Caxton, from the *gestes of the Lombardis*, gives a wonderful account of a pestilence in Italy, under the reign of king Gilbert<sup>i</sup>.

There is a *LEGENDA SANCTORUM*, five *HISTORIA LOM-BARDICA*, printed in 1483. This very uncommon book is not mentioned by Maittaire. It has this colophon. "Expli-  
ciunt quorundam Sanctorum Legende adjuncte post Lom-  
bardicam historiam. Impressa Argentine, M.CCCC.LXXXIII<sup>k</sup>." That is, the latter part of the book contains a few Saints not in the history of the Lombards, which forms the first part. I have neither time nor inclination to examine whether this is Jacobus's *LEGENDA*: but I believe it to be the same. I think I have seen an older edition of the work, at Cologne 1470<sup>l</sup>.

I have observed that Caxton's *GOLDEN LEGENDE* is taken from Jacobus de Voragine. This perhaps is not precisely true. Caxton informs us in his first preface to the first edition of 1483<sup>m</sup>, that he had in his possession a Legend in French, another in Latin, and a third in English, which varied from the other two in many places: and that *MANY HISTORIES* were contained in the English collection, which did not occur in the French and Latin. Therefore, says he, "I have wryton *ONE*  
*OUTE* of the sayd three bookes: which I have orderyd other-  
wyse than in the sayd *Englyshe Legende*, which was so to  
fore made." Caxton's English original might have been the old *METRICAL LIVES OF THE SAINTS*.

CHAP. XXI. A story from Justin, concerning a conspiracy of the Spartans against their king.

<sup>g</sup> Fol. cccxxxxvii. b.

<sup>h</sup> See his *LEGEND. AUR.* fol. cccxv.

<sup>i</sup> Ubi supr. f. lxxvi.

<sup>k</sup> Fol.

<sup>l</sup> Fol. See also "*Legenda Sanctorum*

"*quæ et LOMBARDICA dicitur.*" Lugd. 1509. fol.

<sup>m</sup> Fol. at Westminster. This is one of the finest of Caxton's publications.

CHAP. xxii. How the Egyptians deified Isis and Osiris. From saint Austin. As is the following chapter.

CHAP. xxiv. Of a magician and his delicious garden, which he shews only to fools and to his enemies.

CHAP. xxv. Of a lady who keeps the staff and scrip of a stranger, who rescued her from the oppressions of a tyrant: but being afterwards courted by three kings, she destroys those memorials of her greatest benefactor.

CHAP. xxvi. An emperor, visiting the holy land, commits his daughter and his favorite dog, who is very fierce, to the custody of five knights, under the superintendance of his seneschall. The seneschall neglects his charge: the knights are obliged to quit their post for want of necessaries; and the dog, being fed with the provisions assigned to the knights, grows fiercer, breaks his three chains, and kills the lady who was permitted to wander at large in her father's hall. When the emperor returns, the seneschall is thrown into a burning furnace.

CHAP. xxviii. The old woman and her little dog.

CHAP. xxx. The three honours and three dishonours, decreed by a certain king to every conqueror returning from war.

CHAP. xxxi. The speeches of the philosophers on seeing king Alexander's golden sepulchre.

CHAP. xxxiii. A man had three trees in his garden, on which his three wives successively hanged themselves. Another begs an offset from each of the trees, to be planted in the gardens of his married neighbours. From Valerius Maximus, who is cited.

CHAP. xxxiv. Aristotle's seven rules to his pupil Alexander.

This, I think, is from the *SECRETA SECRETORUM*. Aristotle, for two reasons, was a popular character in the dark ages. He was the father of their philosophy: and had been the preceptor of Alexander the Great, one of the principal heroes of romance. Nor was Aristotle himself without his romantic history; in which he falls in love with a queen of Greece, who quickly confutes his subtlest syllogisms.

CHAP. xxxv. The *GESTA ROMANORUM* cited, for the custom among the ancient Romans of killing a lamb for pacifying quarrels.

CHAP. xxxvi. Of a king who desires to know the nature of man. Solinus, de *MIRABILIBUS MUNDI*, is here quoted.

CHAP. xxxvii. Pliny's account of the stone which the eagle places in her nest, to avoid the poison of a serpent.

CHAP. xxxix. Julius Cæsar's mediation between two brothers. From the *GESTA ROMANORUM*.

We must not forget, that there was the Romance of *JULIUS CÆSAR*. And I believe Antony and Cleopatra were more known characters in the dark ages, than is commonly supposed. Shakespeare is thought to have formed his play on this story from North's translation of Amyot's unauthentic French Plutarch, published at London in 1579. Montfaucon, among the manuscripts of monsieur Lancelot, recites an old piece written about the year 1500, "*LA VIE ET FAIS DE MARC ANTOINE le triumvir et de sa mie CLEOPATRA, translâté de l'historien Plutarque pour tres illustre haute et puissante dame Madame Françoise de Fouez Dame de Châteaubriand*." I know not whether this piece was ever printed. At least it shews, that the story was familiar at a more early period than is imagined; and leads us to suspect, that there might have been other materials used by Shakespeare on this subject, than those hitherto pointed out by his commentators.

That Amyot's French version of Plutarch should contain corruptions and innovations, will easily be conceived, when it is remembered that he probably translated from an old Italian version. A new exhibition in English of the French carica-

<sup>a</sup> *Bibl. MANUSCR.* tom. ii. p. 1669. col. 2.

<sup>o</sup> See *BIBL. FR. de la Croix, &c.* tom. i. p. 388. Amyot was a great translator of Greek books; but I fear, not always from the Greek. It is remarkable, that he was

rewarded with an abbacy for translating the *THEAGENES* and *CHARICLEA* of Heliodorus: for writing which, the author was deprived of a bishoprick. He died about 1580.

ture of this most valuable biographer by North, must have still more widely extended the deviation from the original.

CHAP. xl. The infidelity of a wife proved by feeling her pulse in conversation. From Macrobius.

CHAP. xlii. Valerius Maximus is cited, concerning a column at Rome inscribed with four letters four times written.

CHAP. xliv. Tiberius orders a maker of ductile glass, which could not be broken, to be beheaded, lest it should become more valuable than silver and gold.

This piece of history, which appears also in Cornelius Agrippa DE VANITATE SCIENTIARUM<sup>9</sup>, is taken from Pliny, or rather from his transcriber Isidore<sup>p</sup>. Pliny, in relating this story, says, that the temperature of glass, so as to render it flexible, was discovered under the reign of Tiberius.

In the same chapter Pliny observes, that glass is susceptible of all colours. "Fit et album, et murrhinum, aut hyacinthos sapphirosque imitatum, et omnibus aliis coloribus. Nec est alia nunc materia sequacior, aut etiam PICTURÆ ACCOMMODATIOR. Maximus tamen honor in candido<sup>r</sup>." But the Romans, as the last sentence partly proves, probably never used any coloured glass for windows. The first notice of windows of a church made of coloured glass occurs in chronicles quoted by Muratori. In the year 802, a pope built a church at Rome, and, "fenestras ex vitro diversis coloribus conclusit atque decoravit<sup>r</sup>." And in 856, he produces "fenestras vero vitreis coloribus, &c<sup>r</sup>." This however was a sort of mosaic in glass. To express figures in glass, or what we now call the art of

<sup>p</sup> ORIG. lib. xvi. cap. xv. p. 1224. Apud AucT. LING. LAT. 1602.

Isidore's was a favorite REPERTORY of the middle age. He is cited for an account of the nature and qualities of the Falcon, in the Prologue to the second or metrical part of the old *Phebus de deduire de la chasse des Bestes Sauvages et des oyseaux de Preye*, printed early at Paris without date, and written, as appears by the ru-

bric of the last section, by *Le Comte de Tankerville*.

<sup>9</sup> Sandford's English TRANSLAT. cap. 90. p. 159. a. edit. Lond. 1569. 4to.

<sup>r</sup> NAT. HIST. Lib. xxxvi. cap. xvii. p. 725. edit. Lugd. 1615.

<sup>r</sup> DISSERT. ANTICIT. ITAL. tom. i. c. xxiv. p. 287.

<sup>r</sup> *Ibid.* p. 281.

painting

painting in glafs, was a very different work: and, I believe, I can shew it was brought from Constantinople to Rome before the tenth century, with other ornamental arts. Guiccardini, who wrote about 1560, in his *Descrittione de tutti Paesi Bassi*, ascribes the invention of baking colours in glafs for church-windows to the Netherlanders\*: but he does not mention the period, and I think he must be mistaken. It is certain that this art owed much to the laborious and mechanical genius of the Germans; and, in particular, their deep researches and experiments in chemistry, which they cultivated in the dark ages with the most indefatigable assiduity, must have greatly assisted its operations. I could give very early anecdotes of this art in England. But, with the careless haste of a lover, I am anticipating what I have to say of it in my HISTORY OF GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE IN ENGLAND.

CHAP. xlv. A king leaves four sons by his wife, only one which is lawfully begotten. They have a contest for the throne. The dispute is referred to the deceased king's secretary, who orders the body to be taken from the tomb; and decrees, that the son who can shoot an arrow deepest into it shall be king. The first wounds the king's right hand: the second his mouth; the third his heart. The last wound is supposed to be the successful one. At length the fourth, approaching the body, cried out with a lamentable voice, "Far be it from me to wound my father's body!" In consequence of this speech, he is pronounced by the nobles and people present to be the true heir, and placed on the throne.

CHAP. xlviii. Dionysius is quoted for the story of Perillus's brazen bull.

Gower in the *CONFESSIO AMANTIS* has this story; which he prefaces by saying that he found it in a *Cronike*†. In Caxton's *Golden Legende*, Macrobius is called a chronicle. "Macrobius sayth in a cronike‡." Chronicles are naturally the first efforts

\* Antw. Plantin. 1580. fol.  
† Lib. vii. f. 161. b. col. 1.

‡ Fol. lxii. b.

of the literature of a barbarous age. The writers, if any, of those periods are seldom equal to any thing more than a bare narration of facts; and such sort of matter is suitable to the taste and capacity of their cotemporary readers. A further proof of the principles advanced in the beginning of this Dissertation.

CHAP. xlix. The duchess Rosmilla falls in love with Conan, king of Hungary, whom she sees from the walls of the city of Foro-Julii, which he is besieging. She has four sons and two daughters. She betrays the city to Conan, on condition that he will marry her the next day. Conan, a barbarian, executed the contract; but on the third day exposed her to his whole army, saying, "such a wife deserves such a husband."

Paulus, that is, Paulus Diaconus, the *historian of the Longobards* is quoted. He was chancellor of Desiderius, the last king of the Lombards; with whom he was taken captive by Charlemagne. The history here referred to is entitled *GESTA LONGOBARDORUM*<sup>y</sup>.

CHAP. l. From Valerius Maximus.

CHAP. li. From Josephus.

CHAP. lii. From Valerius Maximus.

CHAP. liii. From the same.

CHAP. liv. The emperor Frederick's marble portico near Capua.

I wonder there are not more romances extant on the lives of the Roman emperors of Germany; many of whom, to say no more, were famous in the crusades. There is a romance in old German rhyme, called *TEUERDANK*, on Maximilian the first, written by Melchior Pfinzinger his chaplain. Printed at Nuremberg in 1517<sup>z</sup>.

<sup>y</sup> See Lib. iv. cap. xxviii. Apud Muratorii *SCRIPTOR. ITAL.* i. p. 465. edit. Mediolan. 1723. Where she is called Romilda. The king is Cacan, or Cakanus, a king of the Huns. There are some fine

circumstances of distress in Paulus's description of this siege.

<sup>z</sup> Fol. on vellum. It is not printed with moveable types: but every page is graved in wood or brass. With wooden cuts. It is a most beautiful book.

CHAP.

CHAP. lv. Of a king who has one son exceedingly beautiful, and four daughters, named Justice, Truth, Mercy, and Peace.

CHAP. lvi. A nobleman invited a merchant to his castle, whom he met accordingly upon the road. At entering the castle, the merchant was astonished at the magnificence of the chambers, which were overlaid with gold. At supper, the nobleman placed the merchant next to his wife, who immediately shewed evident tokens of being much struck with her beauty. The table was covered with the richest dainties; but while all were served in golden dishes, a pittance of meat was placed before the lady in a dish made out of a human scull. The merchant was surpris'd and terrified at this strange spectacle. At length he was conducted to bed in a fair chamber; where, when left alone, he observed a glimmering lamp in a nook or corner of the room, by which he discovered two dead bodies hung up by the arms. He was now filled with the most horrible apprehensions, and could not sleep all the night. When he rose in the morning, he was asked by the nobleman how he liked his entertainment? He answered, "There is plenty of every thing; but the scull prevented me from eating at supper, and the two dead bodies which I saw in my chamber from sleeping. With your leave therefore I will depart." The nobleman answered, "My friend, you observed the beauty of my wife. The scull which you saw placed before her at supper, was the head of a duke, whom I detected in her embraces, and which I cut off with my own sword. As a memorial of her crime, and to teach her modest behaviour, her adulterer's scull is made to serve for her dish. The bodies of the two young men hanging in the chamber are my two kinsmen, who were murdered by the son of the duke. To keep up my sense of revenge for their blood, I visit their dead bodies every day. Go in peace, and remember to judge nothing without knowing the truth."

Caxton has the history of Albione, a king of the Lombards, who having conquered another king, "lade away wyth hym

" Rosamounde

“ Rosamonde his wyf in captyvte, but after he took hyr to  
 “ hys wyf, and he dyde do make a cuppe of the skulle of that  
 “ kyng and closed in fyne golde and sylver, and dranke out  
 “ of it.” This, by the way, is the story of the old Italian  
 tragedy of Messer Giovanni Rucellai planned on the model of  
 the antients, and acted in the Rucellai gardens at Florence, be-  
 fore Leo the tenth and his court, in the year 1516<sup>b</sup>. Davenant  
 has also a tragedy on the same subject, called *ALBOVINE king  
 of the Lombards his Tragedy*.

A most sanguinary scene in Shakespeare's *TITUS ADRONICUS*, an incident in Dryden's, or Boccace's, *TANCRED and SIGISMONDA*, and the catastrophe of the beautiful metrical romance of the *LADY of FAGUEL*, are founded on the same horrid ideas of inhuman retaliation and savage revenge: but in the two last pieces, the circumstances are so ingeniously imagined, as to lose a considerable degree of their atrocity, and to be productive of the most pathetic and interesting situations.

CHAP. lvii. The enchanter Virgil places a magical image in the middle of Rome<sup>c</sup>, which communicates to the emperor Titus all the secret offences committed every day in the city<sup>d</sup>.

This story is in the old black-lettered history of the necromancer Virgil, in Mr. Garrick's collection.

Vincent of Beauvais relates many wonderful things, *mirabiliter actitata*, done by the poet Virgil, whom he represents as a magician. Among others, he says, that Virgil fabricated those brazen statues at Rome, called *Salvacio Romæ*, which were the gods of the Provinces conquered by the Romans. Every one of these statues held in its hand a bell framed by magic; and

<sup>a</sup> GOLDEN LEG. f. cccclxxxvii. a. edit. 1493. The compilers of the *SANCTILOGE* probably took this story from Paulus Diaconus, *GEST. LONGOBARD.* ut supr. Lib. ii. cap. xxviii. p. 435. seq. It has been adopted, as a romantic tale, into the *HISTOIRES TRAGIQUES* of Belleforest, p. 297. edit. 1580. The English reader may find it in Heylin's *COSMOGRAPHIE*, B. i. col. i.

p. 57. And in Machiavel's *HISTORY OF FLORENCE*, in English, Lond. 1680. B. i. p. 5. seq. See also Lydgate's *BOCHAS*, B. ix. ch. xxvii.

<sup>b</sup> See supr. vol. ii. p. 411.

<sup>c</sup> For the necromancer Virgil, see supr. vol. ii. p. 229.

<sup>d</sup> In the *CENTO NOVELLE ANTICHE*, Nov. vii.

when any province was meditating a revolt, the statue, or idol, of that country struck his bell<sup>c</sup>. This fiction is mentioned by the old anonymous author of the *MIRABILIA ROMÆ*, written in the thirteenth century, and printed by Montfaucon<sup>f</sup>. It occurs in Lydgate's *BOCHAS*. He is speaking of the Pantheon.

Whyche was a temple of old foundation,  
Ful of ydols, up set on hye stages;  
There throughe the worlde of every nacion  
Were of theyr goddes set up great ymages,  
To every kingdom direct were their visages,  
As poetes and Fulgens<sup>e</sup> by hys live  
In bokes olde plainly doth dyscrive.

Every ymage had in his hande a bell,  
As apperteyneth to every nacion,  
Which, by craft some token should tell  
Whan any kingdom fil in rebellion, &c<sup>h</sup>.

This fiction is not in Boccace, Lydgate's original. It is in the above-cited Gothic history of Virgil. Gower's *Virgil*, I think, belongs to the same romance.

And eke Virgil of acquaintance  
I sigh, where he the maiden prayd,  
Which was the daughter, as men sayd,  
Of the emperour whilom of Rome<sup>i</sup>.

CHAP. lviii. King Asmodeus pardons every malefactor condemned to death, who can tell three indisputable truths or maxims.

<sup>c</sup> *SPECUL. HISTOR.* Lib. iv. cap. 61. f. 66. a.

<sup>f</sup> *DIAR. ITAL.* cap. xx. p. 288. edit. 1702. Many wonders are also related of Rome, in an old metrical romance called *THE STACYONS OF ROME*, in which Romulus is said to be born of the *duches* of

*Troye.* MSS. Cotton. CALIG. A. 2. fol. 81.

<sup>e</sup> Fulgentius.

<sup>h</sup> *Tragedies of BOCHAS*, B. ix. ch. i. st. 4. Compare *supr.* vol. ii. p. 69.

<sup>i</sup> *CONFESS. AMANT.* L. viii. f. clxxxix. a. col. 2.

CHAP. lix. The emperor Jovinian's history.

On this there is an antient French MORALITE, entitled, *L'Orgueil et presumption de l'Empereur JOVINIAN* <sup>k</sup>. This is also the story of ROBERT king of Sicily, an old English poem, or romance, from which I have given copious extracts <sup>l</sup>.

CHAP. lx. A king has a daughter named Rosimund, aged ten years; exceedingly beautiful, and so-swift of foot, that her father promises her in marriage to any man who can overcome her in running. But those who fail in the attempt are to lose their heads. After many trials, in which she was always victorious, she loses the race with a poor man, who throws in her way a silken girdle, a garland of roses, and a silken purse inclosing a golden ball, inscribed, "whoso plays with me will never be fatiated with play." She marries the poor man, who inherits her father's kingdom.

This is evidently a Gothic innovation of the classical tale of Atalanta. But it is not impossible that an oriental apologue might have given rise to the Grecian fable.

CHAP. lxi. The emperor Claudius marries his daughter to the philosopher Socrates.

CHAP. lxii. Florentina's picture.

CHAP. lxiii. Vespasian's daughter's garden. All her lovers are obliged to enter this garden before they can obtain her love, but none return alive. The garden is haunted by a lion; and has only one entrance, which divides into so many windings, that it never can be found again. At length, she furnishes a knight with a ball or clue of thread, and teaches him how to foil the lion. Having achieved this adventure, he marries the lady.

Here seems to be an allusion to Medea's history.

CHAP. lxiv. A virgin is married to a king, because she makes him a shirt of a piece of cloth three fingers long and broad.

CHAP. lxv. A cross with four inscriptions.

<sup>k</sup> See EMEND. and ADD. to vol. i. at      <sup>l</sup> Vol. i. p. 184.

xxviii A DISSERTATION ON THE

CHAP. lxvi. A knight offers to recover a lady's inheritance, which had been seized by a tyrant; on condition, that if he is slain, she shall always keep his bloody armour hanging in her chamber. He regains her property, although he dies in the attempt; and as often as she was afterwards sued for in marriage, before she gave an answer, she returned to her chamber, and contemplating with tears her deliverer's bloody armour, resolutely rejected every sollicitation.

CHAP. lxvii. The wise and foolish knight.

CHAP. lxviii. A woman understands the language of birds. The three cocks.

CHAP. lxix. A mother gives to a man who marries her daughter a shirt, which can never be torn, nor will ever need washing, while they continue faithful to each other.

CHAP. lxx. The king's daughter who requires three impossible things of her lovers.

CHAP. lxxii. The king who resigns his crown to his son.

CHAP. lxxiv. The golden apple.

CHAP. lxxv. A king's three daughters marry three dukes, who all die the same year.

CHAP. lxxvi. The two physicians.

CHAP. lxxix. The fable of the familiar ass.

CHAP. lxxx. A devout hermit lived in a cave, near which a shepherd folded his flock. Many of the sheep being stolen, the shepherd was unjustly killed by his master as being concerned in the theft. The hermit seeing an innocent man put to death, began to suspect the existence of a divine Providence; and resolved no longer to perplex himself with the useless severities of religion, but to mix in the world. In travelling from his retirement, he was met by an angel in the figure of a man; who said, "I am an angel, and am sent by God to be your companion on the road." They entered a city; and begged for lodging at the house of a knight, who entertained them at a splendid supper. In the night, the angel rose from his bed, and strangled the knight's only child who was asleep in the cradle.

cradle. The hermit was astonished at this barbarous return for so much hospitality, but was afraid to make any remonstrance to his companion. Next morning they went to another city. Here they were liberally received in the house of an opulent citizen; but in the night the angel rose, and stole a golden cup of inestimable value. The hermit now concluded, that his companion was a Bad Angel. In travelling forward the next morning, they passed over a bridge; about the middle of which they met a poor man, of whom the angel asked the way to the next city. Having received the desired information, the angel pushed the poor man into the water, where he was immediately drowned. In the evening they arrived at the house of a rich man; and begging for a lodging, were ordered to sleep in a shed with the cattle. In the morning the angel gave the rich man the cup which he had stolen. The hermit, amazed that the cup which was stolen from their friend and benefactor should be given to one who refused them a lodging, began to be now convinced that his companion was the devil; and begged to go on alone. But the angel said, "Hear me, and depart. When you lived in your hermitage a shepherd was killed by his master. He was innocent of the supposed offence: but had he not been then killed, he would have committed crimes in which he would have died impenitent. His master endeavours to atone for the murder, by dedicating the remainder of his days to alms and deeds of charity. I strangled the child of the knight. But know, that the father was so intent on heaping up riches for this child, as to neglect those acts of public munificence for which he was before so distinguished, and to which he has now returned. I stole the golden cup of the hospitable citizen. But know, that from a life of the strictest temperance, he became, in consequence of possessing this cup, a perpetual drunkard; and is now the most abstemious of men. I threw the poor man into the water. He was then honest and religious. But know, had he walked one half of a mile further, he would

" have

“ have murdered a man in a state of mortal sin. I gave the golden cup to the rich man who refused to take us within his roof. He has therefore received his reward in this world; and in the next, will suffer the pains of hell for his inhospitality.” The hermit fell prostrate at the angel’s feet; and requesting forgiveness, returned to his hermitage, fully convinced of the wisdom and justice of God’s government.

This is the fable of Parnell’s HERMIT, which that elegant yet original writer has heightened with many masterly touches of poetical colouring, and a happier arrangement of circumstances. Among other proofs which might be mentioned of Parnell’s genius and address in treating this subject, by reserving the discovery of the angel to a critical period at the close of the fable, he has found means to introduce a beautiful description, and an interesting surprise. In this poem, the last instance of the angel’s seeming injustice, is that of pushing the guide from the bridge into the river. At this, the hermit is unable to suppress his indignation.

Wild sparkling rage inflames the Father’s eyes,  
 He bursts the bonds of fear, and madly cries,  
 “ Detested wretch !”—But scarce his speech began,  
 When the strange partner seem’d no longer man :  
 His youthful face grew more serenely sweet,  
 His robe turn’d white, and flow’d upon his feet ;  
 Fair rounds of radiant points invest his hair ;  
 Celestial odours fill the purple air :  
 And wings, whose colours glitter’d on the day,  
 Wide at his back their gradual plumes display.  
 The form ethereal bursts upon his sight,  
 And moves in all the majesty of light.

The same apologue occurs, with some slight additions and variations for the worse, in Howell’s LETTERS ; who professes to have taken it from the *speculative* fir Philip Herbert’s CONCEPTIONS

CEPTIONS to his Son, a book which I have never seen<sup>m</sup>. These Letters were published about the year 1650. It is also found in the DIVINE DIALOGUES of doctor Henry More<sup>n</sup>, who has illustrated its important moral with the following fine reflections. “ The affairs of this world are like a curious, but intricately contrived Comedy; and we cannot judge of the tendency of what is past, or acting at present, before the entrance of the last Act, which shall bring in Righteousness in triumph: who, though she hath abided many a brunt, and has been very cruelly and despightfully used hitherto in the world, yet at last, according to our desires, we shall see the knight overcome the giant. For what is the reason we are so much pleased with the reading romances and the fictions of the poets, but that here, as Aristotle says, things are set down as they should be; but in the true history hitherto of the world, things are recorded indeed as they are, but it is but a testimony, that they have not been as they should be? Wherefore, in the upshot of all, when we shall see that come to pass, that so mightily pleases us in the reading the most ingenious plays and heroick poems, that long afflicted vertue at last comes to the crown, the mouth of all unbelievers must be for ever stopped. And for my own part, I doubt not but that it will so come to pass in the close of the world. But impatiently to call for vengeance upon every enormity before that time, is rudely to overturn the stage before the entrance into the fifth act, out of ignorance of the plot of the comedy; and to prevent the solemnity of the general judgement by more paltry and particular executions<sup>o</sup>.”

Parnell seems to have chiefly followed the story as it is told by this Platonic theologift, who had not less imagination than learning. Pope used to say, that it was originally written in

<sup>m</sup> Vol. iv. LET. iv. p. 7. edit. 1655. 8vo.

<sup>n</sup> PART I. p. 321. DIAL. II. edit. Lond. 1668. 12mo. I must not forget that it occurs, as told in our GESTA, among a

collection of Latin Apologues, quoted above, MSS. HARL. 463. fol. 8. a. The rubric is, *De Angelo qui duxit Heremitam ad diversa Hospitia.*

<sup>o</sup> Ibid. p. 335.

Spanish.

Spanish. This I do not believe : but from the early connection between the Spaniards and Arabians, this assertion tends to confirm the suspicion, that it was an oriental tale.

CHAP. lxxx. A king violates his sister. The child is exposed in a chest in the sea ; is christened Gregory by an abbot who takes him up, and after various adventures he is promoted to the popedom. In their old age his father and mother go a pilgrimage to Rome, in order to confess to this pope, not knowing he was their son, and he being equally ignorant that they are his parents : when in the course of the confession, a discovery is made on both sides.

CHAP. lxxxix. The three rings.

This story is in the DECAMERON<sup>p</sup>, and in the CENTO NOVELLE ANTICHE<sup>q</sup> : and perhaps in Swift's TALE OF A TUB.

CHAP. xc. The tyrant Maxentius. From the GESTA ROMANORUM, which are cited.

I think there is the romance of MAXENCE, Constantine's antagonist.

CHAP. xcvi. King Alexander places a burning candle in his hall ; and makes proclamation, that he will absolve all those who owe him forfeitures of life and land, if they will appear before the candle is consumed.

CHAP. xcvii. Prodigies before the death of Julius Cæsar, who is placed in the twenty-second year of the city. From the CRONICA, as they are called.

CHAP. xcix. A knight saves a serpent who is fighting in a forest with a toad<sup>r</sup>, but is afterwards bit by the toad. The knight languishes many days : and when he is at the point of death, the same serpent, which he remembers, enters his chamber, and sucks the poison from the wound.

<sup>p</sup> i. 3.

<sup>q</sup> Nov. lxxi.

<sup>r</sup> The stories, perhaps fabulous, of the serpent fighting with his inveterate enemy the weazel, who eats rue before the

attack begins, and of the serpent fighting with and being killed by the spider, originate from Pliny, NAT. HIST. x. 84. xx. 13.

CHAP. ci. Of Ganterus, who for his prowess in war being elected a king of a certain country, is on the night of his coronation conducted to a chamber, where at the head of the bed is a fierce lion, at the feet a dragon, and on either side a bear, toads, and serpents. He immediately quitted his new kingdom; and was quickly elected king of another country. Going to rest the first night, he was led into a chamber furnished with a bed richly embroidered, but stuck all over with sharp razors. This kingdom he also relinquishes. At length he meets a hermit, who gives him a staff, with which he is directed to knock at the gate of a magnificent palace, seated on a lofty mountain. Here he gains admittance, and finds every sort of happiness unembittered with the least degree of pain.

The king means every man advanced to riches and honour, and who thinks to enjoy these advantages without interruption and alloy. The hermit is religion, the staff penitence, and the palace heaven.

In a more confined sense, the first part of this apologue may be separately interpreted to signify, that a king, when he enters on his important charge, ought not to suppose himself to succeed to the privilege of an exemption from care, and to be put into immediate possession of the highest pleasures, conveniencies, and felicities of life; but to be sensible, that from that moment, he begins to encounter the greatest dangers and difficulties.

CHAP. cii. Of the lady of a knight who went to the holy land. She commits adultery with a clerk skilled in necromancy. Another magician discovers her intrigues to the absent knight by means of a polished mirror, and his image in wax.

In Adam Davie's G<sup>EST</sup> or romance of ALEXANDER, Nec<sup>T</sup>abanus, a king and magician, discovers the machinations of his enemies by embattelling them in figures of wax. This is the most extensive necromantic operation of the kind that I remember, and must have formed a puppet-shew equal to the most splendid pantomime.

Barounes weore whilom wys and gode,  
 That this ars <sup>a</sup> wel undurftode :  
 Ac on ther was Neptanamous  
 Wis' in this ars and malicious :  
 Whan kyng other corl <sup>w</sup> cam on him to weorre <sup>v</sup>;  
 Quyk he loked in the steorre <sup>x</sup>;  
 Of wax made him popetts <sup>y</sup>,  
 And made heom fyzhte with battes :  
 And so he learned, *je vous dy*,  
 Ay to aquelle <sup>z</sup> hys enemye,  
 With charms and with conjurisons :  
 Thus he afaied the regiouns,  
 That him cam for to afaile,  
 In puyr <sup>a</sup> manyr of bataile <sup>b</sup>;  
 By cler candel in the nyzt,  
 He mad uchon <sup>c</sup> with othir to fyzt,  
 Of alle manere nacyouns,  
 That comen by schip or dromouns,  
 At the laste, of mony londe  
 Kynges therof haden gret onde <sup>d</sup>,  
 Well thritty y gadred beoth <sup>e</sup>,  
 And by spekith al his deth <sup>f</sup>.  
 Kyng Philipp <sup>g</sup> of grete thede  
 Maister was of that fede <sup>h</sup> :  
 He was a mon of myzty hond,  
 With hem brouzte, of divers lond,  
 Nyne and twenty ryche kynges,  
 To make on hym bataylynges :

<sup>a</sup> Art. Necromancy.

<sup>t</sup> Wife.

<sup>u</sup> Or earl.

<sup>w</sup> War.

<sup>x</sup> Stars.

<sup>y</sup> Puppets.

<sup>z</sup> Conquer.

<sup>a</sup> Very. Real.

<sup>b</sup> See Mr. Tyrwhitt's Chaucer's *CANT.*  
T. ver. 1281.

<sup>c</sup> Each one.

<sup>d</sup> Had great jealousy or anger.

<sup>e</sup> Near thirty were gathered, or confederated.

<sup>f</sup> All resolved to destroy him.

<sup>g</sup> Philip of Macedon.

<sup>h</sup> *Felde*, Field. Army.

Neptanamous

Neptanamous hyt underftod ;  
 Ychaunged was al his mod ;  
 He was aferde fore of harme :  
 Anon he dede <sup>l</sup> caſte his charme ;  
 His ymage he madde anon,  
 And of his barounes everychon,  
 And afterward of his fone <sup>k</sup> ;  
 He dude hem to gedere to gon <sup>l</sup>  
 In a baſyn al by charme :  
 He ſazh on him <sup>m</sup> fel theo harme ;  
 He feyz flye <sup>n</sup> of his barounes  
 Of al his lond diſtinctiouns,  
 He lokid, and knew in the ſterre,  
 Of al this kynges theo grete werre <sup>o</sup>, &c. <sup>p</sup>

Afterwards he frames an image of the queen Olympias, or Olympia, while ſleeping, whom he violates in the ſhape of a dragon.

Theo lady lyzt on <sup>q</sup> hire bedde,  
 Yheoled <sup>r</sup> wel with filken webbe,  
 In a chayfel <sup>s</sup> ſmok ſcheo lay,  
 And yn a mantell of doway :  
 Of theo bryztnes of hire face  
 Al about ſchone the place <sup>t</sup>.——

<sup>l</sup> He did.

<sup>k</sup> Enemies.

<sup>m</sup> He made them fight.

<sup>n</sup> He ſaw the harm fall on, or againſt, himſelf.

<sup>o</sup> Saw fly.

<sup>p</sup> The great war of all theſe kings.

<sup>q</sup> MSS. (Bod. Bibl.) LAUD. I. 74. f. 54.

<sup>r</sup> Laid. <sup>s</sup> Covered.

<sup>t</sup> In the romance of ARTIS et PERPHYLION. Cod. Reg. Par. 7191.

Un chemis de chaifil

De fil, et d'œuvre moult ſoutil.

<sup>u</sup> Perhaps in SYR LAUNFAL, the ſame ſituation is more elegantly touched. MSS. Cotton. CALIG. A. 2. fol. 35. a.

In the pavyloun he found a bed of prys,  
 Y heled with purpure bys  
 That ſemyly was of ſyzte ;  
 With inne lay that lady gente,  
 That after ſyr Launfal hadde ſente,  
 That leſſom beamed bryzt :  
 For hete her clothes donn the dede.  
 Almoſt to her gerdylſtede ;  
 Than lay ſhe uncovert :  
 Sche was as whyt as lylve in Maye,  
 Or ſnowe that ſnoweth yn wynterys daye ;  
 He feygh nevir non ſo pert,  
 The rede roſe whan ſche is newe  
 Azens her rode nes nauzt of hewe,  
 Y dar ſay yn fert  
 Her hare ſchon as gold wyre, &c.

Herbes he tok in an herber,  
 And stamped them in a mortar,  
 And wrong<sup>x</sup> hit in a box :  
 After he tok virgyn wox  
 And made a popet after the quene,  
 His ars-table<sup>y</sup> he can unwrene ;  
 The quenes name in the wax he wrot,  
 Whil hit was fumdel hot :  
 In a bed he hit dyzt  
 Al aboute with candel lyzt,  
 And spreynd<sup>z</sup> theron of the herbus :  
 Thus charmed Neptanabus.  
 The lady in hir bed lay  
 Aboutz mydnyzt, ar the day<sup>a</sup>,  
 Whiles he made conjuryng,  
 Scheo<sup>b</sup> fawe fle<sup>c</sup>, in her metyng<sup>d</sup>,  
 Hire thought, a dragoun lyzt,  
 To hire chaumbre he made his flyzt,  
 In he cam to her bour  
 And crept undur hir covertour,  
 Mony sithes<sup>e</sup> he hire kuff<sup>f</sup>  
 And fast in his armes pruff,  
 And went away, so dragon wyld,  
 And grete he left hire with child<sup>g</sup>.

<sup>x</sup> Wrang.

<sup>y</sup> This is described above, f. 55.

Of gold he made a table  
 Al ful of steorron [stars]. —

An astrolabe is intended.

<sup>z</sup> Sprinkled.

<sup>a</sup> Before day.

<sup>b</sup> She.

<sup>c</sup> Fly.

<sup>d</sup> Dream.

<sup>e</sup> Times.

<sup>f</sup> Kissed her.

<sup>g</sup> Fol. 57. The text is here given from MSS. Bodl. ut sup. Compared with MSS. Hospit. Lincoln. 150. See Gow-

er's CONFESS. AMANT. Lib. vi. fol. cxxxviii. a. col. 1. seq.

And through the crafte of artemage,  
 Of waxe he forged an ymage, &c.

Gower's dragon, in approaching the queen, is *courteis* and *debonaire*.

With al the chere that he maie,  
 Towarde the bedde ther as she laie,  
 Till he came to hir the beddes side  
 And she laie still, and nothyng cride;  
 For he did all hys thynges faire,  
 And was curteis and debonaire.

Ibid. col. 2. I could not resist the temptation of transcribing this gallantry of a dragon.

Theocritus, Virgil, and Horace, have left instances of incantations conducted by figures in wax. In the beginning of the last century, many witches were executed for attempting the lives of persons, by fabricating representations of them in wax and clay. King James the first, in his *DAEMONOLOGIE*, speaks of this practice as very common; the efficacy of which he peremptorily ascribes to the power of the devil<sup>b</sup>. His majesty's arguments, intended to prove how the magician's image operated on the person represented, are drawn from the depths of moral, theological, physical, and metaphysical knowledge. The Arabian magic abounded with these infatuations, which were partly founded on the doctrine of sympathy.

But to return to the *GESTA ROMANORUM*. In this story one of the magicians is styled *Magister peritus*, and sometimes simply *Magister*. That is, a *cunning-man*. The title *Magister* in our universities has its origin from the use of this word in the middle ages. With what propriety it is now continued I will not say. *Mystery*, antiently used for a particular art<sup>c</sup>, or skill in general, is a specious and easy corruption of *Maistry* or *Mastery*, the English of the Latin *MAGISTERIUM*, or *Artificium*; in French *Maistrise*, *Mestier*, *Mestrie*, and in Italian *Magisterio*, with the same sense<sup>d</sup>. In the French romance of *CLEOMEDES*, a physician is called simply *Maitre*<sup>e</sup>.

Lie font de chou qu'il n'y a  
Peril et que bien garira :  
Car il li MAISTRE ainfi dit leur ont.

dragon. Gower's whole description of this interview, as will appear on comparison, seems to be taken from Beauvais, "Nectabanus se transformat in illum draconis seductiorem tractum, tricliniumque penetrat reptabundus, specie spectabilis, tum majestate totius corporis, tum etiam sibilorum acumine adeo terribilis, ut parietes etiam ac fundamenta domus quati viderentur, &c." *HIST. SPECUL. fol. 41. b. ut supr. See Aul. Gell. Noct. Att. vii. 1.*

<sup>b</sup> Edit. 1603. 4to. B. ii. ch. iv. p. 44. seq.

<sup>c</sup> For instance, "the Art and *Mystery* of Printing."

<sup>d</sup> In a statute of Henry the eighth, instead of the words in the last note, we have "The *Science* and *Craft* of Printing." Ann. reg. 25. A. D. 1533. For many reasons, *Mystery* answering to the Latin *Mysterium*, never could have been originally applied in these cases.

<sup>e</sup> MSS. Cod. Reg. Paris. 7539.

And

And the medical art is styled *Mestrie*. "Quant il (the surgeon) aperçut que c'estoit maladie non mie curable par nature et par MESTRIE, et par medicine, &c." *Maistrise* is used for art or workmanship, in the CHRONICON of Saint Denis, "Entre les autres presens, li envoia une horologe de laton, ouvrez par *marveilleuse MAISTRISE*." That the Latin MAGISTERIUM has precisely the same sense appears from an account of the contract for building the conventual church of Casino in Italy, in the year 1349. The architects agree to build the church in the form of the Lateran at Rome. "Et in casu si aliquis [defectus] in eorum MAGISTERIO appareret, promiserunt refarcire." Chaucer, in the ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE, uses MAISTRISE for artifice and workmanship.

Was made a toure of grete *maistrise*,  
A fairer saugh no man with fight,  
Large, and wide, and of grete might, &c.

And, in the same poem, in describing the shoes of MIRTH.

And shode he was, with grête *maistrise*,  
With shone decopid and with lace.

MAYSTRYE occurs in the description of a lady's saddle, in SYR LAUNFAL'S romance.

Her sadell was femely fett,  
The sambus<sup>r</sup> were grene felvett,

<sup>m</sup> MIRAC. S. Ludov. edit. reg. p. 438.  
<sup>n</sup> Tom. v. Collect. Histor. Franc. pag. 254. Thus expressed in the Latin ANNALES FRANCIE, ibid. p. 56. "Horologium ex aurichalco arte mechanica mirifice compositum."  
<sup>o</sup> HIST. CASIN. tom. ii. pag. 545. col. ii. Chart. ann. 1349.  
<sup>p</sup> R. R. v. 4172.  
<sup>q</sup> Ibid. v. 842.  
<sup>r</sup> I know not what ornament or imple-

ment of the ancient horse-furniture is here intended, unless it is a saddle-cloth; nor can I find this word in any glossary. But *Sambue* occurs, evidently under the very same signification, in the beautiful manuscript French romance of GARIN, written in the twelfth century.

Li palefrois sur coi la dame fist  
Estoit plus blanc que nule flor de lis;  
Le lorsins vaut mils sols parlis,  
Et la SAUBUE nul plus riche ne vist.

"The

I paynted with ymagerye ;  
 The bordure was of belles \*  
 Of ryche golde and nothyng elle  
 That any man myzt aspie :  
 In the arfounis † before and behynde  
 Were twey stones of Ynde  
 Gay for the maystrye.  
 The paytrell † of her palfraye  
 Was worth an earldom, &c.

“ In the faddle-bow were two jewels of India, very beautiful

“ The palfray on which the lady fate, was whiter than any flower de lis: the bridle was worth a thousand Parisian sols, and a richer *Sambue* never was seen.” The French word however, is properly written *Sambue*, and is not uncommon in old French wardrobe rolls, where it appears to be a female saddle-cloth, or housing. So in *Le ROMAN DE LA ROSE*.

Comme roynne fust vestue,  
 Et chevauchast à grand SAMBUE.

The Latin word, and in the same restrained sense, is sometimes *SAMBUA*, but most commonly *SAMBUCA*. *Ordericus Vitalis*, Lib. viii. p. 694, edit. Par. 1619. “ *Man- nos et mulas cum SAMBUCCIS muliebribus prospexit.*” *Vincent of Beauvais* says, that the Tartarian women, when they ride, have *CAMBUCCAS* of painted leather, embroidered with gold, hanging down on either side of the horse. *SPECUL. HIST.* x. 85. But *Vincent's CAMBUCCAS* was originally written *gambucas*, or *Sambucas*. To such an enormity this article of the trappings of female horsemanship had arisen in the middle ages, that *Frederick king of Sicily* restrained it by a sumptuary law; which enjoined, that no woman, even of the highest rank, should presume to use a *Sambuca*, or saddle-cloth, in which were gold, silver, or pearls, &c. *CONSTITUT.* cap. 92. *Queen Olympias*, in *Davie's GEST* of *Alexander*, has a *Sambue* of silk, fol. 54. [Supr. vol. i. 221.]

A mule also whyte so mylke,  
 With fadel of golde, *sambue* of fylke, &c.

“ Of this fashion I have already given many instances. The latest I remember is in the year 1503, at the marriage of the princess *Margaret*. “ In *specyall the Erie of Northumberland* ware on a goodly gowne of tynfill, fourred with hermynes. He was mounted upon a fayre courser, hys harnays of goldfmyth worke, and thorough that sam was fawen small belles, that maid a mellodyous noyse.” *Leland. COLL. ad calc. tom. iii. p. 276.*

In the *NONNES PREESTES PROLOGUE*, *Chaucer* from the circumstance of the Monke's bridle being decorated with bells, takes occasion to put an admirable stroke of humour and satire into the mouth of the *HOSTE*, which at once ridicules that inconsistent piece of affectation, and censures the monk for the dullness of his tale. *Ver. 14796.*

Swiche talking is not worth a boterflie,  
 For therin is ther no disport ne game:  
 Therefore fire monke, dan Piers by your name,

I pray you hertely tell us somewhat elles,  
 Forfikerly, n'ere clinking of your belles  
 That on your bridel hange on every side,  
 By heven king that for us alle dide,  
 I shoulde or this have fallen down for slepe,  
 Although the slough had been never so depe.

\* Saddle-bow. See supr. vol. i. p. 165.

† Breast-plate.

“ to

“ to be seen, in consequence of the great *art* with which they  
“ were wrought \*.” Chaucer calls his Monke,

— fayre for the *Maistrie*,  
An outrider, that lovid venery †.

Fayre for the *Maistrie* means, skilled in the *Maistrie of the game*,  
*La Maistrise du Venerie*, or the science of hunting, then so  
much a favorite, as simply and familiarly to be called the *maistrie*.  
From many other instances which I could produce, I will only  
add, that the search of the Philosopher's Stone is called in  
the Latin Geber, INVESTIGATIO MAGISTERII.

CHAP. ciii. The merchant who sells three wife maxims to  
the wife of Domitian.

CHAP. civ. A knight in hunting meets a lion, from whose  
foot he extracts a thorn. Afterwards he becomes an outlaw ;  
and being seized by the king, is condemned to be thrown into a  
deep pit to be devoured by a hungry lion. The lion fawns on the  
knight, whom he perceives to be the same that drew the thorn  
from his paw. Then said the king, “ I will learn forbearance  
“ from the beasts. As the lion has spared your life, when it was  
“ in his power to take it, I therefore grant you a free pardon.  
“ Depart, and be admonished hence to live virtuously.”

The learned reader must immediately recollect a similar story  
of one Androclus, who being exposed to fight with wild beasts  
in the Roman amphitheatre, is recognised and unattacked by a  
most savage lion, whom he had formerly healed exactly in the  
same manner. But I believe the whole is nothing more than an  
oriental apologue on gratitude, written much earlier ; and that  
it here exists in its original state. Androclus's story is related  
by Aulus Gellius, on the authority of a Greek writer, one Ap-  
pion, called Plistonices, who flourished under Tiberius. The cha-  
racter of Appion, with which Gellius prefaces this tale, in some  
measure invalidates his credit ; notwithstanding he pretends to

\* MS. fol. 40. a.

† PROL. v. 165.

have

have been an eye witness of this extraordinary fact. "Ejus libri, " says Gellius, non incelebres feruntur; quibus, *omnium* ferme quæ " *mirifica* in Ægypto visuntur audiunturque, historia comprehen- " ditur. Sed in his quæ audivisse et legisse sese dicit, fortasse a " vitio studioque *ostentationis* fit *loquacior*, &c.\*" Had our compiler of the GESTA taken this story from Gellius, it is probable he would have told it with some of the same circumstances: especially as Gellius is a writer whom he frequently follows, and even quotes; and to whom, on this occasion, he might have been obliged for a few more strokes of the marvellous. But the two writers agree only in the general subject. Our compiler's narrative has much more simplicity than that of Gellius; and contains marks of eastern manners and life. Let me add, that the oriental fabulists are fond of illustrating and enforcing the duty of gratitude, by feigning instances of the gratitude of beasts towards men. And of this the present compilation, which is strongly tinged with orientalism, affords several other proofs.

CHAP. CV. Theodosius the blind emperor ordained, that the cause of every injured person should be heard, on ringing a bell placed in a public part of his palace. A serpent had a nest near the spot where the bell-rope fell. In the absence of the serpent, a toad took possession of her nest. The serpent twisting herself round the rope, rang the bell for justice; and by the emperor's special command the toad was killed. A few days afterwards, as the king was reposing on his couch, the serpent entered the chamber, bearing a precious stone in her mouth. The serpent creeping up to the emperor's face, laid the precious stone on his eyes, and glided out of the apartment. Immediately the emperor was restored to his sight.

This circumstance of the Bell of Justice occurs in the real history of some eastern monarch, whose name I have forgot.

\* NOCT. ARTIC. Lib. v. cap. xiv. See another fabulous story, of which Appion was an eye witness, *ibid.* L. vii. cap. viii. It is of a boy beloved by a dolphin.

In the Arabian philosophy, serpents, either from the brightness of their eyes, or because they inhabit the cavities of the earth, were considered as having a natural, or occult, connection with precious stones. In Alphonfus's CLERICALIS DISCIPLINA, a snake is mentioned, whose eyes were real jacinths. In Alexander's romantic history, he is said to have found serpents in the vale of Jordian, with collars of huge emeralds growing on their necks<sup>a</sup>. The toad, under a vulgar indiscriminating idea, is ranked with the reptile race: and Shakespeare has a beautiful comparison on the traditionary notion, that the toad has a rich gem inclosed within its head. Milton gives his serpent eyes of carbuncle<sup>b</sup>.

CHAP. cvi. The three fellow-travellers, who have only one loaf of bread.

This apologue is in Alphonfus.

CHAP. cvii. There was an image in the city of Rome, which stretched forth its right hand, on the middle finger of which was written STRIKE HERE. For a long time none could understand the meaning of this mysterious inscription. At length a certain subtle Clerk, who came to see this famous image, observed, as the sun shone against it, the shadow of the inscribed finger on the ground at some distance. He immediately took a spade, and began to dig exactly on that spot. He came at length to a flight of steps which descended far under ground, and led him to a stately palace. Here he entered a hall, where he saw a king and queen sitting at table, with their nobles and a multitude of people, all clothed in rich garments. But no person spake a word. He looked towards one corner, where he saw a polished carbuncle, which illuminated the whole room<sup>c</sup>. In

<sup>a</sup> Vincent Beauvais, SPECUL. HIST. Lib. iv. c. 58. fol. 42. a.

<sup>b</sup> PARAD. L. ix. 500.

<sup>c</sup> See supr. vol. ii. p. 229. So in the romance, or LAY, of SYR LAUNFAL. MSS. Cotton. CALIG. A. 2. fol. 35. a.

And whan he come to the forest on hyz,  
A pavyloun y teld he syz:  
The pavyloun was wrouth forsothe ywys  
All of werk of Sarfynys<sup>1</sup>;  
The pomells<sup>2</sup> of cryfall. —

On the top was a beaft,

<sup>1</sup> Saracen-work.

<sup>2</sup> Balls. Pinnacles.

Of

the opposite corner he perceived the figure of a man standing, having a bended bow with an arrow in his hand, as prepared to shoot. On his forehead was written, "I am, who am. No-thing can escape my stroke, not even yonder carbuncle which shines so bright." The Clerk beheld all with amazement; and entering a chamber, saw the most beautiful ladies working at the loom in purple<sup>d</sup>. But all was silence. He then entered a stable full of the most excellent horses and asses: he touched some of them, and they were instantly turned into stone. He next surveyed all the apartments of the palace, which abounded

Of bournedde golde, ryche and good,  
Ifloryshed with ryche amall<sup>3</sup>;  
His eyen wer carbonkeles bryzt,  
As the mon<sup>4</sup> they schon anyzt,  
That spreteth out ovir all:  
Alysaundre the conquerour,  
Ne kyng Artour yn hys most hend  
Ne hadde non scwych quell.  
He found yn the pavyloun,  
The kynges douzter of Olyroun,  
Dame Triamour that hyzte,  
Her fadyr was kyng of Fayre.

And in the alliterative romance, called  
the SEGE OF JERUSALEM. MSS. Cott.  
CALIG. A. 2. fol. 122. b.

Tytus tarriedde nozte<sup>5</sup> for that, but to  
the tempul rode,  
That was rayled in the rooffe with rubeys  
ryche,  
With perles and with perytotes<sup>6</sup> all the  
place sette,  
That glystere as coles in the fyre, on the  
golde ryche;  
The dores with dyamondes dryven were  
thykke,  
And made also marveylously with margery<sup>7</sup>  
perles,  
That ever lemede the lyzt, and as a lampe  
shewed:  
The clerkes had none other lyzte.—

<sup>d</sup> The original is, "*mulieres pulcherrimas*  
" in *purpura et pallio operantes invenit.*"

<sup>3</sup> Enamel.

<sup>4</sup> Moon.

<sup>5</sup> Nought.

<sup>6</sup> On the finger of Becket, when he was killed, was

a jewel called *Perrot*, MONAST. ANGL. i. 6.

<sup>7</sup> Margarites.

fol. L. a. col. 1. This may mean either  
the sense in the text, or that the ladies  
were *cloathed in purpura et pallio*, a phrase  
which I never saw before in barbarous  
latinity: but which tallies with the old  
English expression *purple and pall*. This  
is sometimes written *purple pall*. As in  
SYR LAUNFAL, ut *supr.* fol. 40. a.

The lady was clad yn *purpure palle*.

Antiently *Pallium*, as did *Purpura*, signified  
in general any rich cloth. Thus there  
were saddles, *de pallio et ebore*; a bed,  
*de pallio*; a cope, *de pallio*, &c. &c. See  
Dufresne, LAT. GLOSS. V. PALLIUM. And  
PELLUM, its corruption. In old French,  
to cover a hall with tapestry was called  
*paller*. So in SYR LAUNFAL, ut *supr.*  
fol. 40. a.

Thyn halle agyrde, and hele [cover] the  
walles

With clodes [clothes], and wyth ryche  
*palles*,

A zens [against] my Lady Tryamour.

Which also illustrates the former meaning.  
In A. Davie's GIST of Alexander we  
have,

Her bed was made forsothe  
With *pallis* and with riche clothe,  
The chambre was hangid with clothe of  
gold. fol. 57.

with all that his wishes could desire. He again visited the hall, and now began to reflect how he should return; "but, says he, my report of all these wonders will not be believed, unless I carry something back with me." He therefore took from the principal table a golden cup and a golden knife, and placed them in his bosom. When, the man who stood in the corner with the bow, immediately shot at the carbuncle, which he shattered into a thousand pieces. At that moment the hall became dark as night. In this darkness not being able to find his way, he remained in the subterraneous palace, and soon died a miserable death.

In the MORALISATION of this story, the steps by which the Clerk descends into the earth are supposed to be the Passions. The palace, so richly stored, is the world with all its vanities and temptations. The figure with the bow bent is Death, and the carbuncle is Human Life. He suffers for his avarice in coveting and seizing what was not his own; and no sooner has he taken the golden knife and cup, that is, enriched himself with the goods of this world, than he is delivered up to the gloom and horrors of the grave.

Spenser in the FAERIE QUEENE, seems to have distantly remembered this fable, where a fiend expecting sir Guyon will be tempted to snatch some of the treasures of the subterraneous HOUSE OF RICHESSE, which are displayed in his view, is prepared to fasten upon him.

Thereat the fiend his gnashing teeth did grate,  
And griev'd so long to lack his greedie pray;  
For well he weened that so glorious bayte  
Would tempt his guest to take thereof assay:  
Had he so doen, he had him snatcht away  
More light than culver in the faucon's fist\*.

This story was originally invented of pope Gerbert, or Syl-

\* B. ii. C. vii. ff. 34.

vester the second, who died in the year 1003. He was eminently learned in the mathematical sciences, and on that account was styled a magician. William of Malmesbury is, I believe, the first writer now extant by whom it is recorded: and he produces it partly to shew, that Gerbert was not always successful in those attempts which he so frequently practised to discover treasures hid in the earth, by the application of the necromantic arts. I will translate Malmesbury's narration of this fable, as it varies in some of the circumstances, and has some heightenings of the fiction. "At Rome there was a brazen  
 " statue, extending the forefinger of the right hand; and on its  
 " forehead was written *Strike here*. Being suspected to conceal  
 " a treasure, it had received many bruises from the credulous  
 " and ignorant, in their endeavours to open it. At length Gerbert  
 " unriddled the mystery. At noon-day observing the reflection of  
 " the forefinger on the ground, he marked the spot. At night  
 " he came to the place, with a page carrying a lamp. There by  
 " a magical operation he opened a wide passage in the earth;  
 " through which they both descended, and came to a vast  
 " palace. The walls, the beams, and the whole structure, were  
 " of gold: they saw golden images of knights playing at chess,  
 " with a king and queen of gold at a banquet, with numerous  
 " attendants in gold, and cups of immense size and value. In  
 " a recess was a carbuncle, whose lustre illuminated the whole  
 " palace: opposite to which stood a figure with a bended bow.  
 " As they attempted to touch some of the rich furniture, all  
 " the golden images seemed to rush upon them. Gerbert was  
 " too wise to attempt this a second time: but the page was  
 " bold enough to snatch from the table a golden knife of exquisite  
 " workmanship. At that moment, all the golden images  
 " rose up with a dreadful noise; the figure with the bow shot at  
 " the carbuncle; and a total darkness ensued. The page then  
 " replaced the knife, otherwise, they both would have suffered  
 " a cruel death." Malmesbury afterwards mentions a brazen  
 bridge, framed by the enchantments of Gerbert, beyond which  
 were

were golden horses of a gigantic size, with riders of gold richly illuminated by the most serene meridian sun. A large company attempt to pass the bridge, with a design of stealing some pieces of the gold. Immediately the bridge rose from its foundations, and stood perpendicular on one end: a brazen man appeared from beneath it, who struck the water with a mace of brass, and the sky was overspread with the most horrible gloom. Gerbert, like some other learned necromancers of the Gothic ages, was supposed to have fabricated a brazen head under the influence of certain planets, which answered questions. But I forbear to suggest any more hints for a future collection of Arabian tales. I shall only add Malmesbury's account of the education of Gerbert, which is a curious illustration of what has been often inculcated in these volumes, concerning the introduction of romantic fiction into Europe<sup>f</sup>. "Gerbert, a native of  
 "France, went into Spain for the purpose of learning astrology,  
 "and other sciences of that cast, of the Saracens; who, to  
 "this day, occupy the upper regions of Spain. They are seated  
 "in the metropolis of Seville; where, according to the cus-  
 "tomary practice of their country, they study the arts of divi-  
 "nation and enchantment.—Here Gerbert soon exceeded  
 "Ptolemy in the astrolabe, Alchind in astronomy, and Julius  
 "Firmicus in fatality. Here he learned the meaning of the  
 "flight and language of birds, and was taught how to raise  
 "spectres from hell. Here he acquired whatever human cu-  
 "riosity has discovered for the destruction or convenience of  
 "mankind. I say nothing of his knowledge in arithmetic,  
 "music, and geometry; which he so fully understood as to  
 "think them beneath his genius, and which he yet with great  
 "industry introduced into France, where they had been long  
 "forgotten. He certainly was the first who brought the  
 "algorithm from the Saracens, and who illustrated it with

<sup>f</sup> See Diss. i. And vol. i. 400. seq.

“ such

“ such rules as the most studious in that science cannot explain.  
 “ He lodged with a philosopher of that sect <sup>a</sup>, &c.”

I conclude this chapter with a quotation from the old metrical romance of SYR LIBEAUX DIASCONIOS, where the knight, in his attempt to disenchant the Lady of Sinadone, after entering the hall of the castle of the necromancers, is almost in similar circumstances with our subterraneous adventurers. The passage is rich in Gothic imageries; and the most striking part of the poem, which is mentioned by Chaucer as a popular romance.

Syr Lybeaus, knyzt corteys <sup>b</sup>,  
 Rode ynto the palys,  
 And atte the halle alyzte <sup>c</sup>:  
 Trompes, shalmuses <sup>d</sup>,  
 He feyz, be fore the heyz deys <sup>e</sup>,  
 Stonde in hys fyzte.  
 A mydde the halle flore,  
 A fere, sterke and store <sup>f</sup>,  
 Was lyzt, and brende bryzt <sup>g</sup>.  
 Ner the dor he zede <sup>h</sup>,  
 And ladde <sup>i</sup> yn hys stede  
 That wont was help hym in fyzt.  
 Lybeaus inner <sup>j</sup> gan pace  
 To se eche a place <sup>k</sup>,

<sup>a</sup> De GEST. REG. ANGL. lib. ii. cap. 10. p. 36. a. b. 37 a. b. edit. Savil. Lond. 1596. fol. Afterwards Malmesbury mentions his horologe, which was not of the nature of the modern clock: but which yet is recorded as a wonderful invention by his cotemporary Ditmar, CHRON. Lib. vi. fol. 83. edit. 1580. Vincent of Beauvais has transcribed all that William of Malmesbury has here said about Gerbert, SPECUL. HISTOR. Lib. xxiv. c. 98. seq. f. 344. a. Compare Platina, VIT. PONTIF. fol. 122. edit. 1485. See also *L'Histoire*

*taire Littéraire de France*, by the Benedictines, tom. vi. ad calc.

<sup>b</sup> Courteous.

<sup>c</sup> Alighted.

<sup>d</sup> Instruments of music.

<sup>e</sup> He saw at the high table.

<sup>f</sup> A Fire, large and strong. *Store* is *flour*.

<sup>g</sup> Lighted, and burned bright.

<sup>h</sup> *Yede*. Went into the door of the hall, with his horse.

<sup>i</sup> Led.

<sup>j</sup> Farther in.

<sup>k</sup> To see, to view, every place or thing.

The

The haies<sup>a</sup> in the halle,  
 Of mayne mor ne lasse  
 Ne sawe he body ne face<sup>b</sup>,  
 But menestrelles yclothen yn palle, &c.<sup>c</sup>  
 So much melodye  
 Was never with ynne walle.  
 Before ech menstrell stode  
 A torche fer<sup>d</sup> and gode,  
 Brennynge fayre and bryzt.  
 Inner more he zede,  
 To wyte, with egre mode  
 Who scholde<sup>e</sup> with hym fyzt:  
 He zede ynto the corneres,  
 And loked on the pileres,  
 That felcouth wer of fyzt,  
 Of jasper and of fyn crystall, &c.  
 The dores wer of bras;  
 The windowes wer of glas  
 Ffloryssed with imagerye<sup>f</sup>:  
 The halle ypaynted was<sup>g</sup>,  
 No rycher never ther was  
 That he hadde feye with eye<sup>h</sup>.  
 He sette hym on the hye deys<sup>i</sup>,  
 The mynstrelles were yn pes<sup>j</sup>,  
 That were so gode and trye<sup>k</sup>.  
 The torches that brende bryzt<sup>l</sup>  
 Quenched anon ryzt<sup>m</sup>;  
 The menstrelles were awaye<sup>n</sup>:

<sup>a</sup> Perhaps, *Holes*, i. e. corners.

<sup>b</sup> He saw no man.

<sup>c</sup> Clothed in rich attire.

<sup>d</sup> A torch fair and good.

<sup>e</sup> To know, in angry mood what knight  
would, &c.

<sup>f</sup> Painted glass.

<sup>g</sup> The walls were painted with histories.

<sup>h</sup> Had seen.

<sup>i</sup> He fate down in the principal feat.

<sup>j</sup> Were suddenly flent.

<sup>k</sup> Tried. Excellent. Chaucer, *R1M*.  
SIR THOM. p. 146. Urr. v. 3361.

With finger that is *trie*.

<sup>l</sup> Burned so bright.

<sup>m</sup> Were instantly quenched, or extin-  
guished.

<sup>n</sup> Vanished away.

Dores,

Dores, and wyndowes alle,  
 Beten yn the halle  
 As hyt wer voys of thunder, &c.—  
 As he fate tho dismayde,  
 And helde hymselfe betrayde,  
 Steedes herde he naye, &c.<sup>h</sup>.

This castle is called, "A paleys queynt of gynne," and, "by  
 " negremancye ymaketh of fayrye<sup>1</sup>."

CHAP. cviii. The mutual fidelity of two thieves.

CHAP. cix. The chest and the three pasties.

A like story is in Boccace's DECAMERON<sup>t</sup>, in the CENTO  
 NOVELLE ANTICHE<sup>1</sup>, and in Gower's CONFESSIO AMANTIS<sup>m</sup>.

The story, however, as it stands in Gower, seems to be co-  
 pied from one which is told by the hermit Barlaam to king  
 Avenamore, in the spiritual romance, written originally in  
 Greek about the year 800, by Joannes Damascenus a Greek  
 monk<sup>n</sup>, and translated into Latin before the thirteenth century,  
 entitled, BARLAAM and JOSAPHAT<sup>o</sup>. But Gower's imme-  
 diate author, if not Boccace, was perhaps Vincent of Beauvais,  
 who wrote about the year 1290, and who has incorporated  
 Damascenus's history of Barlaam and Josaphat<sup>p</sup>, who were  
 canonised, into his SPECULUM HISTORIALE<sup>q</sup>. As Bar-  
 laam's fable is probably the remote but original source of  
 Shakespeare's CASKETTS in the MERCHANT OF VENICE,  
 I will give the reader a translation of the passage in which  
 it occurs, from the Greek original, never yet printed. "The  
 " king commanded four chests to be made: two of which  
 " were covered with gold, and secured by golden locks, but

<sup>h</sup> MSS. Cotton. CALIG. A. 2. fol. 52.  
 b. seq.

<sup>i</sup> Ibid. f. 52. b.

<sup>j</sup> Nov. lxxv.

<sup>k</sup> Lib. v. fol. 96. a.

<sup>l</sup> See Joan. Damasceni OPERA nonnul.  
 HISTOR. ad calc. pag. 12. Basil. 1548.  
 fol. The chests are here called *Archie*.

<sup>o</sup> See supr. vol. ii. p. 17. And *ibid.*  
 EM. and ADDIT. to pag. 342.

<sup>p</sup> It is extant in Surius, and other col-  
 lections.

<sup>q</sup> DE REGE AUEMUR, &c. Lib. xiv.  
 f. 196. Ven. 1591. It contains sixty-four  
 chapters.

I A DISSERTATION ON THE

“ filled with the rotten bones of human carcasses. The other  
 “ two were overlaid with pitch, and bound with rough cords ;  
 “ but replenished with pretious stones and the most exquisite  
 “ gems, and with ointments of the richest odour. He called his  
 “ nobles together ; and placing these chests before them, asked  
 “ which they thought the most valuable. They pronounced  
 “ those with the golden coverings to be the most pretious, sup-  
 “ posing they were made to contain the crowns and girdles of  
 “ the king’. The two chests covered with pitch they viewed  
 “ with contempt. Then said the king, I presumed what would  
 “ be your determination : for ye look with the eyes of sense.  
 “ But to discern baseness or value, which are hid within, we  
 “ must look with the eyes of the mind. He then ordered the  
 “ golden chests to be opened, which exhaled an intolerable  
 “ stench, and filled the beholders with horror’.” In the ME-  
 TRICAL LIVES OF THE SAINTS, written about the year 1300,  
 these chests are called *four fates*, that is, four *vats* or vessels’.

I make no apology for giving the reader a translation from the  
 same Greek original, which is now before me, of the story of  
 the Boy told in the DECAMERON. “ A king had an only son.  
 “ As soon as he was born, the physicians declared, that if he  
 “ was allowed to see the sun, or any fire, before he arrived at  
 “ the age of twelve years, he would be blind. The king com-  
 “ manded an apartment to be hewed within a rock, into which  
 “ no light could enter ; and here he shut up the boy, totally in  
 “ the dark, yet with proper attendants, for twelve years. At the  
 “ end of which time, he brought him abroad from his gloomy  
 “ chamber, and placed in his view, men, women, gold, pre-  
 “ tious stones, rich garments, chariots of exquisite workmanship

’ In doctor Johnson’s abridgement of a  
 tale like this from Boccace, which he sup-  
 poses to have been Shakespeare’s original,  
 the king says, that in one of the Caskets  
 was “ contained his crown, sceptre and  
 “ jewels, &c.” See Steevens’s SHAKE-  
 SPEARE, vol. iii. p. 255. edit. 1779.

\* MSS. LAUD. C. 72. Bibl. Bodl. Com-  
 pare Caxton’s GOLDEN LEGENDE, fol.  
 ccclxxxiii. b. And Surius, VIT. SANCTO-  
 R. *Novembr.* 27. Ann. 383. pag. 560.  
 Colon. Agrippin. 1618.

’ MSS. BODL. 779. f. 292. b.

“ drawn

“ drawn by horses with golden bridles, heaps of purple tapestry,  
 “ armed knights on horseback, oxen and sheep. These were  
 “ all distinctly pointed out to the youth: but being most pleased  
 “ with the women, he desired to know by what name they  
 “ were called. An esquire of the king jocosely told him, that  
 “ they were devils who catch men. Being brought to the  
 “ king, he was asked which he liked best of all the fine things  
 “ he had seen. He replied, *the devils who catch men, &c.*”  
 I need not enlarge on Boccace’s improvements.”

This romantic legend of Barlaam and Josaphat, which is a history of considerable length, is undoubtedly the composition of one who had an intercourse with the east: and from the strong traces which it contains of the oriental mode of moralising, appears plainly to have been written, if not by the monk whose name it bears, at least by some devout and learned ascetic of the Greek church, and probably before the tenth century.

Leland mentions DAMASCENUS DE GESTIS BARLAAM ET JOSAPHAT, as one of the manuscripts which he saw in Nettley-abbey near Southampton.”

CHAP. cx. The life of the knight Placidus, or Placidus\*, afterwards called Eustacius.

It occurs in Caxton’s GOLDEN LEGENDE”. Among the Cotton manuscripts there is a metrical legend or romance on this story”.

CHAP. cxi. The classical story of Argus and Mercury, with some romantic additions. Mercury comes to Argus in the character of a minstrel, and lulls him to sleep by telling him tales and singing, *incept more histrionico fabulas dicere, et plerumque cantare.*

\* This fable occurs in an old Collection of Apologues above-cited, MSS. HARL. 463. fol. 2. a.

” COLLECTAN. tom. iii. p. 149. edit. 1770.

” Sir Placidus is the name of a knight in the FAERIE QUEENE.

” Fol. cccxiii. b. See vol. ii. p. 190. And METRIC. LIVES S. MSS. Bodl. 779. f. 164. a.

” CALIG. A. 2. fol. 135. b. This is a translation from the French. MSS. Reg. Parif. Cod. 3031.

CHAP. cxii. The son of king Gorgonius is beloved by his step-mother. He is therefore sent to seek his fortune in a foreign country, where he studies physic; and returning, heals his father of a dangerous disease, who recovers at the sight of him. The step-mother, hearing of his return, falls sick, and dies at seeing him.

CHAP. cxiii. The tournaments of the rich king Adonias. A party of knights arrive the first day, who lay their shields aside, in one place. The same number arrives the second day, each of whom chuses his antagonist by touching with his spear the shield of one of the first day's party, not knowing the owner.

The most curious anecdote of chivalry, now on record, occurs in the ecclesiastical history of Spain. Alphonfus the ninth, about the year 1214, having expelled the Moors from Toledo, endeavoured to establish the Roman missal in the place of saint Isidore's. This alarming innovation was obstinately opposed by the people of Toledo; and the king found that his project would be attended with almost insuperable difficulties. The contest at length between the two missals grew so serious, that it was mutually resolved to decide the controversy, not by a theological disputation, but by single combat; in which the champion of the Toletan missal proved victorious<sup>a</sup>.

Many entertaining passages relating to trials by single combat may be seen in the old Imperial and Lombard laws. In Caxton's *BOKE OF THE FAYTTES OF ARMES AND OF CHIVALRYE*, printed at Westminster in the year 1489, and translated from the French of Christine of Pifa, many of the chapters towards the end are compiled from that singular monument of Gothic legislation.

CHAP. cxv. An intractable elephant is lulled asleep in a forest by the songs and blandishments of two naked virgins. One of them cuts off his head, the other carries a bowl of his blood to

<sup>a</sup> See the *MOZARABES, or Missal of saint Isidore*, printed at Toledo, by the command of Cardinal Ximenes, A. D. 1500. fol.

the

the king. *Rex vero gavisus est valde, et statim fecit fieri PUR-  
PURAM, et multa alia, de eodem sanguine.*

In this wild tale, there are circumstances enough of general analogy, if not of peculiar parallelism, to recall to my memory the following beautiful description, in the manuscript romance of SYR LAUNFAL, of two damfels, whom the knight unexpectedly meets in a desolate forest.

As he fate in sorowe and fore,  
He sawe come out of holtes hore  
Gentyll maydenes two ;  
Thar kertelles were of Inde fandel <sup>b</sup>  
I lassed <sup>c</sup> smalle, jolyf and wel ;  
Thar myzt <sup>d</sup> noon gayer go.  
Thar manteles were of grene felwette <sup>e</sup>  
Ybordured with golde ryzte welle yfette,  
I pelured <sup>f</sup> with gris and gro <sup>g</sup> ;  
Har heddis <sup>h</sup> wer dyzt well withall,  
Everych hadde on a jolyf coronall,  
With fixty gemmys and mo <sup>i</sup>.  
Har faces was whyte as snowe on downe,  
Har rode <sup>k</sup> was red, har eyn were broune,  
I sawe never none swyche <sup>l</sup>.  
The oon bar of gold a basyn,  
That other a towayle whyt and fyn,  
Of fylk that was goode and ryche.  
Har kercheves wer well schyre <sup>m</sup>  
Arayd with ryche gold wyre, &c. <sup>n</sup>

CHAP. cxvi. The queen of Pepin king of France died in childbed, leaving a son. He married a second wife, who bore

<sup>b</sup> Indian silk. *Cendal*. Fr. See Dufresne,  
LAT. GL. V. CENDALUM.  
<sup>c</sup> Laced.  
<sup>d</sup> There might.  
<sup>e</sup> Velvet.  
<sup>f</sup> Furred. *Pelura*, *Pellis*.

<sup>g</sup> *Gris* is fur. *Gris* and *gray* is common  
in the metrical romances.  
<sup>h</sup> Their heads.  
<sup>i</sup> More.  
<sup>k</sup> Ruddiness.  
<sup>l</sup> Such. <sup>m</sup> Cut.  
<sup>n</sup> MSS. Cotton, CALIG. A. 2, fol. 35. a.

a son

a son within a year. These children were sent abroad to be nursed. The surviving queen, anxious to see her child, desired that both the boys might be brought home. They were so exceedingly alike, that the one could not be distinguished from the other, except by the king. The mother begged the king to point out her own son. This he refused to do, till they were both grown up; lest she should spoil him by too fond a partiality. Thus they were both properly treated with uniform affection, and without excess of indulgence.

A favorite old romance is founded on the indistinctible likeness of two of Charlemagne's knights, Amys and Amelion; originally celebrated by Turpin, and placed by Vincent of Beauvais under the reign of Pepin\*.

CHAP. cxvii. The law of the emperor Frederick, that whoever rescued a virgin from a rape might claim her for his wife.

CHAP. cxviii. A knight being in Egypt, recovers a thousand talents which he had entrusted to a faithless friend, by the artifice of an old woman.

This tale is in Alphonfus. And in the *CENTO NOVELLE ANTICHE*†.

CHAP. cxix. A king had an oppressive Seneshall, who passing through a forest, fell into a deep pit, in which were a lion, an ape, and a serpent. A poor man who gathered sticks in the forest hearing his cries, drew him up: together with the lion, the ape, and the serpent. The Seneshall returned home, promising to reward the poor man with great riches. Soon afterwards the poor man went to the palace to claim the promised reward; but was ordered to be cruelly beaten by the seneshall. In the mean time, the lion drove ten asses laden with gold to the poor man's cottage: the serpent brought him a precious stone of three colours: and the ape, when he came to the forest on his daily business, laid him heaps of wood. The poor man, in consequence of the virtues of the serpent's precious stone,

\* *SPECUL. HIST.* xxiii. c. 162. f. 329. b.

† *Nov.* lxxiv.

which

which he sold, arrived to the dignity of knighthood, and acquired ample possessions. But afterwards he found the pretious stone in his chest, which he presented to the king. The king having heard the whole story, ordered the seneshall to be put to death for his ingratitude, and preferred the poor man to his office.

This story occurs in Symeon Seth's translation of the celebrated Arabian fable-book called CALILAH U DUMNAH<sup>2</sup>. It is recited by Matthew Paris, under the year 1195, as a parable which king Richard the first, after his return from the east, was often accustomed to repeat, by way of reproving those ungrateful princes who refused to engage in the crusade<sup>1</sup>. It is verified by Gower, who omits the lion, as Matthew Paris does the ape, in the fifth book of the CONFESSIO AMANTIS<sup>3</sup>. He thus describes the services of the ape and serpent to the poor man, who gained his livelihood by gathering sticks in a forest.

He gan his ape anone behold,  
Which had gadred al aboute,  
Of stickes here and there a route,  
And leyde hem redy to his honde,  
Whereof he made his trusse and bond  
From daie to daie. — — —  
Upon a time and as he drough  
Towarde the woodde, he sigh beside  
The great gastly serpent glide,  
Till that she came in his prefence,  
And in hir kynde a reverence  
She hath hym do, and forthwith all  
A stone more bright than a christall  
Out of hir mouth to fore his waye  
She lett down fall. — — —

<sup>1</sup> P. 444. This work was translated into English under the title of "Donies MORALL PHILOSOPHIE, translated from the Indian tongue, 1570." Black Letter

with wooden cuts, 4to. But Doni was the Italian translator.

<sup>2</sup> HIST. MAJ. p. 179. Edit. Wats.

<sup>3</sup> fol. 110. b.

In

In Gower also, as often as the poor man sells the pretious stone, on returning home, he finds it again among the money in his purse.

The acquisition of riches, and the multiplication of treasure, by invisible agency, is a frequent and favorite fiction of the Arabian romance. Thus, among the presents given to Sir Launfal by the Lady Triamore, daughter of the king of Faeric.

I will the zeve ' an Alver ",  
 I mad of fylver and gold cler,  
 With fayre ymages thre :  
 As ofte thou puttest thy honde ther ynne,  
 A marke of golde thou shalt wynne ",  
 In wat place shalt thou be \*.

CHAP. XX. King Darius's legacy to his three sons. To the eldest he bequeathes all his paternal inheritance : to the second, all that he had acquired by conquest : and to the third, a ring and necklace, both of gold, and a rich cloth. All the three last gifts were endued with magical virtues. Whoever wore the ring on his finger, gained the love or favour of all whom he desired to please. Whoever hung the necklace over his breast, obtained all his heart could desire. Whoever fate down on the cloth, could be instantly transported to any part of the world which he chose.

From this beautiful tale, of which the opening only is here given, Occleve, commonly called Chaucer's disciple, framed a poem in the octave stanza, which was printed in the year 1614, by William Browne, in his set of Eclogues called the SHEP-HEARDS PIPE. Occleve has literally followed the book before us, and has even translated into English prose the MORALISATION annexed †. He has given no sort of embellishment to his

† Give thee.

‡ Perhaps *Almer*, or *Almers*, a cabinet or chest.

‡ Get. Find.

\* SYR LAUNFAL. MSS. Cott. CALIG. A. 2. fol. 35. b.

† Viz. MSS. SELD. Sup. 53. Where is a prologue of many stanzas not printed by Browne. See also MSS. DIOB. 185. MSS. LAUD. K. 78. [See supr. vol. ii. 38.]

original

original, and by no means deserves the praises which Browne in the following elegant pastoral lyrics has bestowed on his performance, and which more justly belong to the genuine Gothic, or rather Arabian, inventor.

Well I wot, the man that first  
 Sung this lay, did quenche his thirst  
 Deeply as did ever one  
 In the Muses Helicon.  
 Many times he hath been seene  
 With the faeries on the greene,  
 And to them his pipe did sound  
 As they danced in a round;  
 Mickle solace would they make him,  
 And at midnight often wake him,  
 And convey him from his roome  
 To a felde of yellow broome,  
 Or into the medowes where  
 Mints perfume the gentle aire,  
 And where Flora spreads her treasure  
 There they would beginn their measure.  
 If it chanced night's fable shrowds  
 Muffled Cynthia up in clouds,  
 Safely home they then would see him,  
 And from brakes and quagmires free him.  
 There are few such swaines as he  
 Now a dayes for harmonie <sup>2</sup>.

The history of Darius, who gave this legacy to his three sons, is incorporated with that of Alexander, which has been decorated with innumerable fictions by the Arabian writers. There is also a separate romance on Darius. And on Philip of Macedon <sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Egl. i.

<sup>3</sup> Bibl. Reg. Paris. MSS. Cod. 3031.

CHAP. cxxiv. Of the knights who intercede for their friend with a king, by coming to his court, each half on horse back and half on foot.

This is the last novel in the *CENTO NOVELLE ANTICHE*.

CHAP. cxxvi. Macrobius is cited for the address and humour of an ingenuous boy named Papirius.

This is one of the most lively stories in Macrobius<sup>\*</sup>.

CHAP. cxxviii. The forged testament of the wicked knight, under the reign of Maximian.

CHAP. cxxix. A young prince is sent on his travels. His three friends.

CHAP. cxxxii. The four physicians.

CHAP. cxxxiii. The king and his two greyhounds.

CHAP. cxxxiv. A story from Seneca.

CHAP. cxxxv. The story of Lucretia, from faint Austin's *CITY OF GOD*.

A more classical authority for this story, had it been at hand, would have been slighted for faint Austin's *CITY OF GOD*, which was the favorite spiritual romance; and which, as the transition from religion to gallantry was antiently very easy, gave rise to the famous old French romance called the *CITY OF LADIES*.

CHAP. cxxxvii. The Roman emperor who is banished for his impartial distribution of justice. From the *CRONICA* of Eusebius.

CHAP. cxxxviii. King Medro.

CHAP. cxxxix. King Alexander, by means of a mirror, kills a cockatrice, whose look had destroyed the greatest part of his army.

Aelian, in his *VARIOUS HISTORY*, mentions a serpent which appearing from the mouth of a cavern, stopped the march of Alexander's army through a spacious desert. The wild beasts, serpents, and birds, which Alexander encountered in marching through India, were most extravagantly imagined

\* *SATURNAL*. Lib. i. c. 6. pag. 147. Londin. 1694.

by

by the oriental fabulists, and form the chief wonders of that monarch's romance <sup>b</sup>.

CHAP. cxl. The emperor Eraclius reconciles two knights.

This story is told by Seneca of Cneius Pifo <sup>c</sup>. It occurs in Chaucer's SOMPNOUR'S TALE, as taken from *Senec*, or Seneca <sup>d</sup>.

CHAP. cxli. A knight who had dissipated all his substance in frequenting tournaments, under the reign of Fulgentius, is reduced to extreme poverty. A serpent haunted a chamber of his house; who being constantly fed with milk by the knight, in return made his benefactor rich. The knight's ingratitude and imprudence in killing the serpent, who was supposed to guard a treasure concealed in his chamber.

Medea's dragon guarding the golden fleece is founded on the oriental idea of treasure being guarded by serpents. We are told in Vincent of Beauvais, that there are mountains of solid gold in India guarded by dragons and griffins <sup>e</sup>.

CHAP. cxliii. A certain king ordained a law, that if any man was suddenly to be put to death, at sun-rising a trumpet should be sounded before his gate. The king made a great feast for all his nobles, at which the most skilful musicians were present <sup>f</sup>. But amidst the general festivity, the king was sad and silent. All the guests were surprised and perplexed at the king's melancholy; but at length his brother ventured to ask him the cause.

<sup>b</sup> In Vincent of Beauvais, there is a long fabulous History of Alexander, transcribed partly from Simeon Seth. SPEC. HIST. Lib. iv. c. i. f. 41. a. seq. edit. Ven. 1591. fol.

<sup>c</sup> DE IRA. Lib. i. c. 8.

<sup>d</sup> Ver. 7600. Tyrwh.

<sup>e</sup> SPECUL. HIST. Lib. i. c. 64. fol. 9. b.

<sup>f</sup> In the days of chivalry, a concert of a variety of instruments of music constantly made a part of the solemnity of a splendid feast. Of this many instances have been given. I will here add another, from the unprinted metrical romance of EMARE. MSS. Cott. CALIG. A. 2. fol. 71. a.

Syre Ladore latte make a feste,  
That was fayre and honeste,  
With his lord the kyng;  
Ther was myche ministralle,  
Trompus, tabors, and sawtre,  
Both harpe, and fydyllynge:  
The lady was gentyll and small,  
In kurtell alone served in hall  
By fore that nobull kyng;  
The cloth upon her schone so bryzth,  
When she was ther yn dyzth,  
She semed non erdly thyng, &c.

And in Chaucer, JAN. AND MAY, v. 1234.

Att everie cours came the loud ministralle.

The king replied, "Go home, and you shall hear my answer  
"to morrow." The king ordered his trumpeters to sound  
early the next morning before his brother's gate, and to bring  
him with them to judgement. The brother, on hearing this  
unexpected dreadful summons, was seized with horror, and  
came before the king in a black robe. The king commanded a  
deep pit to be made, and a chair composed of the most frail  
materials, and supported by four slight legs, to be placed in-  
clining over the edge of the pit. In this the brother, being strip-  
ped naked, was seated. Over his head a sharp sword was hung by  
a small thread of silk. Around him four men were stationed  
with swords exceedingly sharp, who were to wait for the king's  
word, and then to kill him. In the mean time, a table cov-  
ered with the most costly dishes was spread before him, ac-  
companied with all sorts of music. Then said the king, "My  
"brother, why are you so sad? Can you be dejected, in the midst  
"of this delicious music, and with all these choice dainties?"  
He answered, "How can I be glad, when I have this morning  
"heard the trumpet of death at my doors, and while I am  
"seated in this tottering chair? If I make the smallest mo-  
"tion, it will break, and I shall fall into the pit, from which  
"I shall never arise again. If I lift my head, the suspended  
"sword will penetrate my brain; while these four tormentors  
"only wait your command to put me to death." The king  
replied, "Now I will answer your question, why I was sad  
"yesterday. I am exactly in your situation. I am seated, like  
"you, in a frail and perishable chair, ready to tumble to  
"pieces every moment, and to throw me into the infernal  
"pit. Divine judgement, like this sharp sword, hangs over my  
"head: and I am surrounded, like you, with four executioners.  
"That before me is Death, whose coming I cannot tell; that  
"behind me, my Sins, which are prepared to accuse me before  
"the tribunal of God; that on the right, the Devil, who is  
"ever watching for his prey; and that on the left, the Worm,  
"who is now hungering after my flesh. Go in peace, my  
"dearest

“ dearest brother: and never ask me again why I am sad at  
“ a feast.”

Gower, in the *CONFESSIO AMANTIS*, may perhaps have copied the circumstance of the morning trumpet from this apologue. His king is a king of Hungary.

It so befell, that on a dawne  
There was ordeined by the lawe  
A Trompe with a sterne breathe,  
Which was cleped the Trompe of deathe:  
And in the court where the kyng was,  
A certaine man, this trompe of brasse  
Hath in keypyng, and therof serveth,  
That when a lorde his deathe deserveth,  
He shall this dredfull trompe blowe  
To fore his gate, to make it knowe,  
Howe that the jugement is yeve  
Of deathe, whiche shall not be foryeve.  
The kyng whan it was night anone,  
This man assent, and bad him gone,  
To trompen at his brothers gate;  
And he, whiche mote done algate,  
Goth foorth, and doth the kyng's heste.  
This lorde whiche herde of this tempest  
That he tofore his gate blewe,  
Tho wist he by the lawe, and knewe  
That he was schurly deade, &c.<sup>r</sup>.

But Gower has connected with this circumstance a different story, and of an inferior cast, both in point of moral and imagination. The truth is, Gower seems to have altogether followed this story as it appeared in the *SPECULUM HISTORIALE* of Vincent of Beauvais<sup>b</sup>, who took it from Damascenus's romance of *BARLAAM AND JOSAPHAT*<sup>i</sup>. Part of it is thus

<sup>r</sup> Lib. i. fol. xix. b. col. i.  
<sup>a</sup> Ubi supr. p. xlix.

<sup>i</sup> *Opp. ut supr. pag. 12.*

told

told in Caxton's translation of that legend<sup>k</sup>. " And the kynge  
 " hadde fuche a custome, that whan one sholde be delyvered to  
 " deth, the kynge sholde fende hys cryar wyth hys trompe that  
 " was ordeyned therto. And on the euen he sente the cryar  
 " wyth the trompe tofore hys brother's gate, and made to founne  
 " the trompe. And whan the kynges brother herde this, he  
 " was in despayr of sauynge of his lyf, and coude not slepe of  
 " alle the nyght, and made his testament. And on the morne  
 " erly, he cladde hym in blacke: and came with wepyng with  
 " hys wyf and chylde to the kynges paleys. And the kynge  
 " made hym to com tofore hym, and sayd to hym, a fooll  
 " that thou art, that thou hast herde the messager of thy bro-  
 " ther, to whom thou knowest well thou hast not trespassed  
 " and doubttest so mooche, howe oughte not I then ne doute  
 " the messageres of our lorde, agaynste whom I haue soo ofte  
 " synned, which signefyed unto me more clerely the deth then  
 " the trompe?"

CHAP. cxlv. The philosopher Socrates shews the cause of the infalubrity of a passage between two mountains in Armenia, by means of a polished mirroure of steel. Albertus is cited; an abbot of Stade, and the author of a Chronicle from Adam to 1256.

CHAP. cxlvi. Saint Austin's CITY OF GOD is quoted for an answer of Diomedes the pirate to king Alexander.

CHAP. cxlviii. Aulus Gellius is cited.

Aulus Gellius is here quoted, for the story of Arion<sup>l</sup>, throwing himself into the sea, and carried on the back of a dolphin to king Periander at Corinth<sup>m</sup>. Gellius relates this story from Herodotus, in whom it is now extant<sup>n</sup>.

CHAP. cliii. The history of Apollonius of Tyre.

This story, the longest in the book before us, and the ground-

<sup>k</sup> See Caxton's GOLDEN LEGENDE, fol. ccclxxxiii. b. See also METRICAL LIVES OF THE SAINTS, MSS. BODL. 779. f. 292. a.

<sup>l</sup> It is printed Amon.

<sup>m</sup> NOCT. ATTIC. Lib. xvi. cap. xix.

<sup>n</sup> Lib. viii.

work of a favorite old romance, is known to have existed before the year 1190.

In the Prologue to the English romance on this subject, called *KYNGE APOLYNE OF THYRE*, and printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1510, we are told. "My worshypfull mayster Wynkyn de Worde, havynge a lytell boke of an auneynt hystory of a kynge somtyme reygnynge in the countree of Thyre called Appolyn, concernynge his malfortunes and peryllous adventures right espouventables, bryefly compyled and pyteous for to here; the which boke, I Robert Coplande have me applied for to translate out of the Frenshe language into our maternal Englyshe tongue, at the exhortacyon of my fader sayd mayster, accordynge dyrectly to myn auctor: gladly followinge the trace of my mayster Caxton, begynnynge with small storyes and pamphletes and so to other." The English romance, or the French, which is the same thing, exactly corresponds in many passages with the text of the *GESTA*. I will instance in the following one only, in which the complication of the fable commences. King Appolyn dines in disguise in the hall of king Antiochus.—"Came in the kynges daughter, accompanied with many ladyes and damoyelles, whose splendente beaute were too long to endyte, for her rosacyate coloure was medled with grete favour. She dranke unto hir fader, and to all the lordes, and to all them that had ben at the play of the Shelde". And as she behelde here and there, she espyed kynge Appolyn, and then she sayd unto her fader, Syr, what is he that sytteth so hie as by you, it semeth by hym that he is angry or sorrowfull? The kynge sayd, I never sawe so nimble and pleasaunt a player at the shelde, and ther-

<sup>o</sup> The printer of that name. He also translated from the French, at the desire of Edward duke of Buckingham, the romance of the *KNYGHT OF THE SWANNE*. See his *PROLOGUE*.

<sup>p</sup> The tournament. To tourney is often called simply to *play*. As thus in *SYR*

*LAUNFAL*, MSS. Cott. CALIG. A. 2. fol. 37.

Hym thozte he brente bryzte  
But he myzte with *Launfal pleye*  
In the felde be tweene ham twey  
To justy or to fyzte.

And in many other places.

" fore

“ fore have I made hym to come and soupe with my knyghtes.  
 “ And yf ye wyll knowe what he is, demaunde hym; for per-  
 “ adventure he wyll tell you sooner than me. Methynke that  
 “ he is departed from some good place, and I thinke in my  
 “ mynde that somethynge is befallen hym for which he is  
 “ sorry. This sayd, the noble dameysell wente unto Appolyn  
 “ and said, “ Fayre Syr, graunt me a boone. And he graunted  
 “ her with goode herte. And she sayd unto hym, albeyt that  
 “ your vyfage be tryft and hevvy, your behaviour sheweth nobleffe  
 “ and facundyte, and therefore I pray you to tell me of your  
 “ affayre and estate. Appolyn answered, Yf ye demaunde of  
 “ my rycheffes, I have lost them in the sea. The damoyfell  
 “ sayd, I pray you that you tell me of your adventures<sup>9</sup>.” But  
 in the *GESTA*, the princefs at entering the royal hall kisses all  
 the knights and lords present, except the stranger<sup>r</sup>. Voffius  
 says, that about the year 1520, one Alamanus Rinucinus a  
 Florentine, translated into Latin this fabulous history; and that  
 the translation was corrected by Beroaldus. Voffius certainly  
 cannot mean, that he translated it from the Greek original<sup>s</sup>.

CHAP. cliv. A story from Gervase of Tilbury, an English-  
 man, who wrote about the year 1200, concerning a miraculous  
 statue of Christ in the city of Edeffa.

CHAP. clv. The adventures of an English knight named  
 Albert in a subterraneous passage, within the bishoprick of Ely.

This story is said to have been told in the winter after sup-  
 per, in a castle, *cum familia divitis ad focum, ut Potentibus moris est,*  
*RECENSENDIS ANTIQUIS GESTIS operam daret*, when the fa-  
 mily of a rich man, as is the custom with the Great, was  
 sitting round the fire, and telling *ANTIEN*T *GESTS*. Here is a  
 traite of the private life of our ancestors, who wanted the diver-  
 sions and engagements of modern times to relieve a tedious even-  
 ing. Hence we learn, that when a company was assembled, if a

<sup>9</sup> CAP. XI.  
<sup>r</sup> Fol. lxxii. b. col. 2.

<sup>s</sup> HIST. LAT. Lib. iii. c. 8. pag. 552.  
 edit. 1627. 4to.

jugler or a minstrel were not present, it was their custom to entertain themselves by relating or hearing a series of adventures. Thus the general plan of the *CANTERBURY TALES*, which at first sight seems to be merely an ingenious invention of the poet to serve a particular occasion, is in great measure founded on a fashion of antient life: and Chaucer, in supposing each of the pilgrims to tell a tale as they are travelling to Becket's shrine, only makes them adopt a mode of amusement which was common to the conversations of his age. I do not deny, that Chaucer has shewn his address in the use and application of this practice.

So habitual was this amusement in the dark ages, that the graver sort thought it unsafe for ecclesiastics, if the subjects admitted any degree of levity. The following curious injunction was deemed necessary, in a code of statutes assigned to a college at Oxford in the year 1292. I give it in English. "CH. XX.—" The fellows shall all live honestly, as becomes Clerks.—" They shall not rehearse, sing, nor willingly hear, BALLADS or TALES of LOVERS, which tend to lasciviousness and idleness." Yet the libraries of our monasteries, as I have before observed, were filled with romances. In that of Croyland-abbey we find even archbishop Turpin's romance, placed on the same shelf with Robert Tumeley on the Canticles, Roger Dymock against Wickliffe, and Thomas Waleys on the Psalter. But their apology must be, that they thought this a true history: at least that an archbishop could write nothing but truth. Not to mention that the general subject of those books were the triumphs of christianity over paganism.

CHAP. clvi. Ovid, in his *TROJAN WAR*, is cited for the story of Achilles disguised in female apparel.

Gower has this history more at large in the *CONFESSIO AMANTIS*: but he refers to a *Cronika*, which seems to be the *BOKE OF TROIE*, mentioned at the end of the chapter.

<sup>1</sup> CANTILENAS VEL FABULAS DE AMANTIS, &c. MS. Registr. Univ. Oxon. D. b. f. 76. See supr. vol. i. 92.

<sup>2</sup> Leland. COLL. iii. p. 30.  
<sup>3</sup> Lib. v. fol. 99. b. col. 2. See fol. 101. a. col. 1. 2.

CHAP. clvii. The porter of a gate at Rome, who taxes all deformed persons entering the city. This tale is in Alphonfus. And in the *CENTO NOVELLE ANTICHE* <sup>x</sup>.

CHAP. clviii. The discovery of the gigantic body of Pallas, son of Evander, at Rome, which exceeded in height the walls of the city, was uncorrupted, and accompanied with a burning lamp, two thousand two hundred and forty years after the destruction of Troy. His wound was fresh, which was four feet and a half in length.

It is curious to observe, the romantic exaggerations of the classical story.

CHAP. clix. Josephus, in his book *de Causis rerum naturalium*, is quoted, for Noah's discovery of wine.

I know not any book of Josephus on this subject. The first editor of the Latin Josephus was Ludovicus Cendrata of Verona, who was ignorant that he was publishing a modern translation. In the Dedication he complains, that the manuscript was brought to him from Bononia so ill-written, that it was often impossible even to guess at *Josephus's words*. And in another place he says, Josephus first wrote the *ANTIQUITATES* in Hebrew, and that he afterwards translated them from Hebrew into Greek, and from Greek into Latin <sup>y</sup>.

The substance of this chapter is founded on a Rabbinical tradition, related by Fabricius <sup>z</sup>. When Noah planted the vine, Satan attended, and sacrificed a sheep, a lion, an ape, and a sow. These animals were to symbolise the gradations of ebriety. When a man begins to drink, he is meek and ignorant as the lamb, then becomes bold as the lion, his courage is soon transformed into the foolishness of the ape, and at last he wallows in the mire like the sow. Chaucer hence says in the *MANCIPLES PROLOGUE*, as the passage is justly corrected by Mr. Tyrwhitt,

<sup>x</sup> Nov. 50.

<sup>y</sup> At Verona. 1480. By Peter Mauffer a Frenchman. It is a most beautiful and

costly book, printed on vellum in folio.

<sup>z</sup> *COD. PSEUDEPIGR. VET. TESTAM.* vol. i. p. 275.

I trowe that ye have dronken *wine of ape*,  
And that is when men plaien at a strawe <sup>a</sup>.

In the old KALENDRIER DES BERGERS, as Mr. Tyrwhitt has remarked, *Vin de finge*, *vin de mouton*, *vin de lyon*, and *vin de porceau*, are mentioned, in their respective operations on the four temperaments of the human body.

CHAP. clxi. Of a hill in a forest of England, where if a hunter fate after the chace, he was refreshed by a miraculous person of a mild aspect, bearing a capacious horn, adorned with gems and gold <sup>b</sup>, and filled with the most delicious liquor. This person instantly disappeared after administering the draught; which was of so wonderful a nature, as to dispel the most oppressive lassitude, and to make the body more vigorous than before. At length, a hunter having drank of this horn, ungratefully refused to return it to the friendly apparition; and his master, the lord of the forest, lest he should appear to countenance so atrocious a theft, gave it to king Henry the elder <sup>c</sup>.

This story, which seems imperfect, I suppose, is from Gervase of Tilbury.

CHAP. clxii. The same author is cited for an account of a hill in Castile, on which was a palace of demons.

Whenever our compiler quotes Gervase of Tilbury, the reference is to his OTIA IMPERIALIA: which is addressed to the emperor Otho the fourth, and contains his *Commentarius de regnis Imperatorum Romanorum*, his *Mundi Descriptio*, and his *Traſtatus de Mirabilibus Mundi*. All these four have been improperly supposed to be separate works.

CHAP. clxiii. King Alexander's son Celestinus.

CHAP. clxvii. The archer and the nightingale.

This fable is told in the Greek legend of BARLAAM AND

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 16993. Tyrwh.

<sup>c</sup> That is, Henry the First, king of

<sup>b</sup> The text says, "Such a one as is England.  
"used at this day."

JOSAPHAT, written by Johannes Damascenus<sup>d</sup>. And in Caxton's GOLDEN LEGENDE<sup>e</sup>. It is also found in the CLERICALIS DISCIPLINA of Alphonfus.

CHAP. clxviii. Barlaam is cited for the story of a man, who, flying from a unicorn, and falling into a deep and noisom pit, hung on the boughs of a lofty tree which grew from the bottom. On looking downward, he saw a huge dragon twisted round the trunk, and gaping to devour him. He also observed two mice gnawing at the roots of the tree, which began to totter. Four white vipers impregnated the air of the pit with their poisonous breath. Looking about him, he discovered a stream of hony distilling from one of the branches of the tree, which he began eagerly to devour, without regarding his dangerous situation. The tree soon fell: he found himself struggling in a loathsome quagmire, and was instantly swallowed by the dragon.

This is another of Barlaam's apologues in Damascenus's romance of BARLAAM AND JOSAPHAT: and which has been adopted into the Lives of the Saints by Surius and others<sup>f</sup>. A MORALISATION is subjoined, exactly agreeing with that in the GESTA<sup>g</sup>.

CHAP. clxix. Trogus Pompeius is cited, for the wise legislation of Ligurius, a noble knight.

Our compiler here means Justin's abridgement of Trogus; which, to the irreparable injury of literature, soon destroyed its original. An early epitome of Livy would have been attended with the same unhappy consequences.

CHAP. clxx. The dice player and faint Bernard.

This is from faint Bernard's legend<sup>h</sup>.

CHAP. clxxi. The two knights of Egypt and Baldach.

This is the story of Boccace's popular novel of TITO AND

<sup>d</sup> OPP. ut supr. p. 22. See also Surius, ut supr. Novembr. 27. pag. 565.

<sup>e</sup> Fol. ccclxxxii. b.

<sup>f</sup> See Caxton's GOLDEN LEGEND, fol. cccclxxxiii. a.

<sup>g</sup> See Damascenus, ut supr. pag. 31. And METRICAL LIVES OF SAINTS, MSS. BODL. 779. f. 293. b.

<sup>h</sup> See Caxton's GOLD. LEG. f. cxxix. b.

GISIPPO,

GISIPPO, and of Lydgate's *Tale of two Marchants of Egypt and of Baldad*, a manuscript poem in the British Museum, and lately in the library of doctor Askew<sup>1</sup>. Peter Alphonsus is quoted for this story; and it makes the second Fable of his CLERICALIS DISCIPLINA.

I take the liberty of introducing a small digression here, which refers to two pieces of the poet last-mentioned, never enumerated among his works. In the year 1483, Caxton printed at Westminster, "The PYLGREMAGE OF THE SOWLE translated out of Frensch into Englishe. Full of devout maters touching the sowle, and many questyons affoyled to cause a man to lyve the better, &c. Emprinted at Westminster by William Caxton the first yere of kynge Edward V. 1483." The French book, which is a vision, and has some degree of imagination, is probably the PELERIN DE L'AME, of Guillaume prior of Chaulis<sup>2</sup>. This translation was made from the French, with additions, in the year 1413. For in the colophon are these words. "Here endeth the dreame of the PYLGREMAGE OF THE SOWLE translated out of Frensche into Englishe, with somwhat of Addicions, the yere of our lorde M.CCCC. and thyrteen, and endethe in the vigyle of seint Bartholomew." The translator of this book, at least the author of the *Addicions*, which altogether consist of poetry in seven-lined stanzas, I believe to be Lydgate. Not to insist on the correspondence of time and style, I observe, that the thirty-fourth chapter of Lydgate's metrical LIFE OF THE VIRGIN MARY is literally repeated in the thirty-fourth chapter of this Translation. This chapter is a digression of five or six stanzas in praise of Chaucer; in which the writer feelingly laments the recent death of his *maister Chaucer, poete of Britaine*, who used to *amende and correcte the wronge traces of my rude penne*. No writer besides, in Lydgate's own life-time, can be supposed, with any sort of grace or propriety, to have mentioned those personal assistances of Chaucer, in Lydgate's own

<sup>1</sup> R. Edwards has a play on this story, 1582.

<sup>2</sup> See *supr.* vol. ii. p. 120.

words.

words. And if we suppose that the Translation, or its *Additions*, were written by Lydgate before he wrote his LIFE OF THE VIRGIN, the proof will be the same<sup>k</sup>.

Another piece probably written by Lydgate, yet never supposed or acknowledged to be of his composition, is a poem in the octave stanza, containing thirty-seven leaves in folio, and entitled LABEROUS AND MARVEYLOUS WORKE OF SAPIENCE. After a long debate between MERCY and TRUTH, and JUSTICE and PEACE, all the products of nature and of human knowledge are described, as they stand arranged in the palace and dominions of WISDOM. It is generally allowed to have been printed by Caxton: it has not the name of the printer, nor any date. Had it been written by Caxton, as I once hastily suspected, or by any of his cotemporaries, the name of Lydgate would have appeared in conjunction with those of Gower and Chaucer, who are highly celebrated in the Prologue as *erthely gods expert in poesie*: for these three writers were constantly joined in panegyric, at least for a century, by their successors, as the distinguished triumvirate of English poetry. In the same Prologue, the author says he was commanded to write this poem by the king. No poet cotemporary with Caxton was of consequence enough to receive such a command: and we know that Lydgate compiled many of his works by the direction, or under the patronage, of king Henry the fifth. Lydgate was born in Suffolk: and our author from the circumstance of having lived in a part of England not of a very polished dialect, apologises for the rudeness of his language, so that he cannot *delycately endyte*. It is much in the style and manner of Lydgate: and I believe it to have been one of his early performances<sup>l</sup>.

CHAP. clxxii. A king of England has two knights, named

<sup>k</sup> Stowe mentions Lydgate's "PILGRIMAGE OF THE WORLD by the commandement of the earle of Salisburie, 1426." But this must be a different work. Ad calc. Opp. Chauc. fol. 376. col. 1.

<sup>l</sup> See supr. vol. ii. p. 194. I know not if this is the poem recited by Stowe and called, "The Courte of Sapience in heaven for redemption of mankind." Ubi supr. col. i.

Guido

Guido and Tirus. Guido having achieved many splendid exploits for the love of a beautiful lady, at length married her. Three days after his marriage he saw a vision, which summoned him to engage in the holy war. At parting she gave him a ring; saying, "as often as you look on this ring, remember me." Soon after his departure she had a son. After various adventures, in which his friend Tirus has a share, at the end of seven years he returned to England in the habit of a pilgrim. Coming to his castle, he saw at the gate his lady sitting, and distributing alms to a croud of poor people; ordering them all to pray for the return of her lord Guido from the holy land. She was on that day accompanied by her son a little boy, very beautiful, and richly appalled; and who hearing his mother, as she was distributing her alms, perpetually recommending Guido to their prayers, asked, if that was his father? Among others, she gave alms to her husband Guido, not knowing him in the pilgrim's disguise. Guido, seeing the little boy, took him in his arms, and kissed him: saying, "O my sweet son, may God give you grace to please him!" For this boldness he was reproved by the attendants. But the lady, finding him destitute and a stranger, assigned him a cottage in a neighbouring forest. Soon afterwards falling sick, he said to his servant, "Carry this ring to your lady, and tell her, if she desires ever to see me again, to come hither without delay." The servant conveyed the ring; but before she arrived, he was dead. She threw herself on his body, and exclaimed with tears, "Where are now my alms which I daily gave for my lord? I saw you receive those alms, but I knew you not.—You beheld, embraced, and kissed your own son, but did not discover yourself to him nor to me. What have I done, that I shall see you no more?" She then interred him magnificently.

The reader perceives this is the story of Guido, or Guy, earl of Warwick; and probably this is the early outline of the life and death of that renowned champion.

Many romances were at first little more than legends of devotion,

votion, containing the pilgrimage of an old warrior. At length, as chivalry came more into vogue, and the stores of invention were increased, the youthful and active part of the pilgrim's life was also written, and a long series of imaginary martial adventures was added, in which his religious was eclipsed by his heroic character, and the penitent was lost in the knight-errant. That which was the principal subject of the short and simple legend, became only the remote catastrophe of the voluminous romance. And hence by degrees it was almost an established rule of every romance, for the knight to end his days in a hermitage. Cervantes has ridiculed this circumstance with great pleasantry, where Don Quixote holds a grave debate with Sancho, whether he shall turn saint or archbishop.

So reciprocal, or rather so convertible, was the pious and the military character, that even some of the apostles had their romance. In the ninth century, the chivalrous and fabling spirit of the Spaniards transformed saint James into a knight. They pretended that he appeared and fought with irresistible fury, completely armed, and mounted on a stately white horse, in most of their engagements with the Moors; and because, by his superior prowess in these bloody conflicts, he was supposed to have freed the Spaniards from paying the annual tribute of a hundred christian virgins to their infidel enemies, they represented him as a professed and powerful champion of distressed damsels. This apotheosis of chivalry in the person of their own apostle, must have ever afterwards contributed to exaggerate the characteristical romantic heroism of the Spaniards, by which it was occasioned; and to propagate through succeeding ages, a stronger veneration for that species of military enthusiasm, to which they were naturally devoted. It is certain, that in consequence of these illustrious achievements in the Moorish wars, saint James was constituted patron of Spain; and became the founder of one of the most magnificent shrines, and of the most opulent order of knighthood, now existing in christendom.

The

The Legend of this invincible apostle is inserted in the Mosarabic liturgy.

CHAP. clxxiii. A king goes to a fair, carrying in his train, a master with one of his scholars, who expose six bundles, containing a system of ethics, to sale \*.

Among the revenues accruing to the crown of England from the Fair of saint Botolph at Boston in Lincolnshire, within the HONOUR of RICHMOND, mention is made of the royal pavilion, or booth, which stood in the fair, about the year 1280. This fair was regularly frequented by merchants from the most capital trading towns of Normandy, Germany, Flanders, and other countries. "Ibidem [in feria] sunt quædam domus quæ dicuntur BOTHÆ REGIÆ, quæ valent per annum xxviii, l. xiii, s. iii, d. Ibidem sunt quædam domus quas MERCATORES DE YPRE tenent, quæ valent per annum, xx, l. Et quædam domus quas MERCATORES DE CADOMO<sup>†</sup> ET OSTOGANIO<sup>‡</sup> tenent, xi, l. Et quædam domus quas MERCATORES DE ANACO<sup>§</sup> tenent, xiii, l. vi, s. viii, d. Et quædam domus quas MERCATORES DE COLONIA tenent, xxv, l. x, s.<sup>¶</sup>" The high rent of these lodges, is a proof that they were considerable edifices in point of size and accommodation.

CHAP. clxxiv. The fable of a serpent cherished in a man's bosom<sup>‡</sup>.

About the year 1470, a collection of Latin fables, in six books, distinguished by the name of Esop, was published in Germany. The three first books consist of the sixty anonymous elegiac fables, printed in Nevelet's collection, under the title of *Anonymi Fabulæ Æsopiceæ*, and translated in 1503, by Wynkyn de Worde, with a few variations: under each is a fable in prose on the same subject from ROMULUS, or the old prose LATIN

\* Compare Matth. Parif. edit. Watts. p. 927. 40.—And p. 751. 10.

† Caen in Normandy.

‡ Perhaps, Ostend.

§ Perhaps *Le Pais d'Aunis*, between the Provinces of Poictou and Santone, where

is Rochelle, a famous port and mart.

\* Registr. HONORIS DE RICHMOND.

Lond. 1722. fol. Num. viii. APPEND.

p. 39.

‡ This fable is in Alphonfus's CLERICALIS DISCIPLINA.

ESOP, which was probably fabricated in the twelfth century. The fourth book has the remaining fables of Romulus in prose only. The fifth, containing one or two fables only which were never called Esop's, is taken from Alphonfus, the *GESTA ROMANORUM*, the *CALILA U DAMNAH*, and other obscure sources. The sixth and last book has seventeen fables *ex translatione Rinucii*, that is Rinucius, who translated Planudes's life of Esop, and sixty-nine of his fables, from Greek into Latin, in the fifteenth century. This collection soon afterwards was circulated in a French version, which Caxton translated into English.

In an antient general Chronicle, printed at Lubec in 1475, and entitled *RUDIMENTUM NOVITIORUM*<sup>7</sup>, a short life of Esop is introduced, together with twenty-nine of his fables. The writer says, "Esopus adelphus claruit tempore Cyri regis Persarum.—Vir ingeniosus et prudens, qui confinxit fabulas elegantes. Quas Romulus postmodum de greco transtulit in latinum, et filio suo Tibertino direxit, &c."<sup>8</sup> The whole of this passage about Esop is transcribed from Vincent of Beauvais<sup>9</sup>.

CHAP. clxxvii. The feast of king Ahasuerus and Esther.

I have mentioned a metrical romance on this subject<sup>10</sup>. And I have before observed, that Thomas of Elmham, a chronicler, calls the coronation-feast of king Henry the sixth, a second feast of Ahasuerus<sup>11</sup>. Hence also Chaucer's allusion at the marriage of January and May, while they are at the solemnity of the wedding-dinner, which is very splendid.

Quene Esther loked ner with soch an eye  
On Assuere, so meke a loke hath she<sup>12</sup>.

Froissart, an historian, who shares the merit with Philip de Comines of describing every thing, gives this idea of the so-

<sup>7</sup> In this work the following question is discussed, originally, I believe, started by saint Auſtin, and perhaps determined by Thomas Aquinas, *An Angeli possint coire cum Mulieribus, et generare Gigantes?*

<sup>8</sup> Fol. 237. a.

<sup>9</sup> *SPECUL. HIST.* L. iii. c. ii.

<sup>10</sup> Vol. ii. p. 178.

<sup>11</sup> Vol. ii. p. 35.

<sup>12</sup> *MARCH TALE*, v. 1260. Urr.

lemnity

lemnity of a dinner on Christmas-day, at which he was present, in the hall of the castle of Gaston earl of Foiz at Ortez in Bevern, under the year 1388. At the upper or first table, he says, fate four bishops, then the earl, three viscounts, and an English knight belonging to the duke of Lancaster. At another table, five abbots, and two knights of Arragon. At another, many barons and knights of Gascony and Bigorre. At another, a great number of knights of Bevern. Four knights were the chief stewards of the hall, and the two bastard brothers of the earl served at the high table. "The erles two sonnes, fir Yvan  
" of Leschell was sewer, and fir Gracyen bare his cuppe<sup>m</sup>.  
" And there were many mynstrelles, as well of his owne as of  
" straungers, and eche of them dyde their devoyre in their fa-  
" culties. The same day the erle of Foiz gave to harauldes  
" and mynstrelles, the somme of fyve hundred frankes: and  
" gave to the duke of Touraynes mynstrelles, gownes of clothe

<sup>m</sup> In the old romance, or LAY, of EMARE, a beautiful u'e is made of the Lady Emare's son serving as cup-bearer to the king of Galicia: by which means, the king discovers the boy to be his son, and in consequence finds out his queen Emare, whom he had long lost. The passage also points out the duties of this office. MSS. Cott. CALIG. A. 2. f. 69. Emare says to the young prince, her son.

To morrow thou shalt serve yn halle  
In a kuryll of ryche palle<sup>1</sup>;  
Byfore thys nobull kyng;  
Loke, sone<sup>2</sup>, so curteis thou be,  
That no man fynde chalange to the  
In no manere thyng<sup>3</sup>.  
When the kyng is served of spycerye,  
Knele thou downe hastilye,  
And take hys hond yn thyne;  
And when thou hast so done,  
Take the kuppe of golde, sone,  
And serve hym of the wyne.  
And what that he speketh to the  
Cum anon and tell me,

<sup>1</sup> A tunic of rich cloth.      <sup>2</sup> Son.      <sup>3</sup> May accuse thee of want of courtesy.      <sup>4</sup> The boy.  
<sup>5</sup> Richly apparelled.      <sup>6</sup> Washed.      <sup>7</sup> Courte.      <sup>8</sup> Saw.      <sup>9</sup> I am called.      <sup>1</sup> Sighing.  
<sup>2</sup> His son.      <sup>3</sup> Eyen. Eyes.      <sup>4</sup> The boy so beautiful.

On goddys bleffing and myne.  
The chylde<sup>4</sup> wente ynto the hall  
Among the lordes grete and smalle  
That lufsume wer unther lyne<sup>5</sup>:  
Then the lordes, that wer grete,  
Wyth<sup>6</sup>, and wente to her mete;  
Mynstrelles browzt yn the kours<sup>7</sup>,  
The chylde hem served so curteysly,  
All hym loved that hym fy<sup>8</sup>,  
And spake hym grete honowres.  
Then sayde all that lokyd hym upon,  
So curteys a chylde sawe they never non,  
In halle, ne yn bowres:  
The kyng sayde to hym yn game,  
Swete sone, what ys thy name?  
Lorde, he sayd, y hyzth<sup>9</sup> Segra-  
mowres.  
Then that nobull kyng  
Toke up a grete sykkyng<sup>1</sup>,  
For hys sone<sup>2</sup> hyght so:  
Certys, without lesyng,  
The teres out of hys yen<sup>3</sup> gan wryng.  
In herte he was full woo:  
Neverthelese, he lette be,  
And lokyd on the chylde so fre<sup>4</sup>,

“ of golde furred with ermyns, valued at two hundred frankes.  
 “ This dinner endured four houres<sup>n</sup>.” Froissart, who was entertained in this castle for twelve weeks, thus describes the earl’s ordinary mode of supping. “ In this estate the erle of  
 “ Foiz lyved. And at mydnyght when he came out of his  
 “ chambre into the halle to supper, he had ever before hym  
 “ twelve torches brennyng, borne by twelve varlettes [valets]  
 “ standyng before his table all supper<sup>o</sup>: they gave a grete  
 “ light, and the hall ever full of knyghtes and squyers; and  
 “ many other tables dressed to suppe who wolde. Ther was  
 “ none shulde speke to hym at his table, but if he were called.  
 “ His meate was lightlye wylde foule.—He had great plesure  
 “ in armony of instrumentes, he could do it right well hym-  
 “ selfe: he wolde have songes songe before hym. He wolde  
 “ gladlye se conveytes [conceits] and fantasies at his table. And  
 “ when he had sene it, then he wolde send it to the other  
 “ tables.—There was sene in his hall, chambre, and court,  
 “ knyghtes and squyers of honour goyng up and downe, and  
 “ talkyng of armes and of amours, &c<sup>p</sup>.” After supper, Froissart was admitted to an audience with this magnificent earl; and used to read to him a book of sonnets, rondeaus, and vi-relays, written by a *gentyll* duke of Luxemburgh<sup>q</sup>.

And mykell<sup>5</sup> he loved hem thoo<sup>6</sup>.—  
 Then the lordes that wer grete  
 Wheshen azeyn<sup>7</sup>, aftyr mete,  
 And then com spycerye<sup>8</sup>.  
 The chyld, that was of chere swete,  
 On hys kne downe he fete<sup>9</sup>,  
 And served hem curteyslye.  
 The kyng called the burgeys hym tyll,  
 And sayde, Syr, yf hyt be thy wyll,  
 Zyf me this lytyll body<sup>10</sup>;  
 I shall hym make lorde of town and  
 towre,  
 Of hys halles, and of bowre,  
 I love hym specyally, &c.

<sup>n</sup> CRON. vol. ii. fol. xxxvi. a. Transl. Bern. 1523.

<sup>5</sup> Greatly.

<sup>6</sup> Then.

<sup>7</sup> Washed again.

<sup>8</sup> Spicery. Spiced Wine.

<sup>9</sup> Bowed his knee.

<sup>10</sup> Give me this boy.

<sup>o</sup> It appears that candles were borne by domestics, and not placed on the table, at a very early period in France. Gregory of Tours mentions a piece of savage merriment practised by a feudal lord at supper, on one of his *valets de chandelle*, in consequence of this custom. Greg. Turon. Hist. Lib. v. c. iii. fol. 34. b. edit. 1522. It is probable that our proverbial scoff, *You are not fit to hold a candle to him*, took its rise from this fashion. See Ray’s PROV. C. p. 4. edit. 1670. And Shakesp. ROMEO AND JULIET, i. 4.

I’ll be a *Candle-bolder*, and look on.

<sup>p</sup> Ibid. fol. xxx. a. col. 2.

<sup>q</sup> Ibid. col. 1.

In

In this age of curiosity, distinguished for its love of historical anecdotes and the investigation of antient manners, it is extraordinary that a new translation should not be made of Froissart from a collated and corrected original of the French. Froissart is commonly ranked with romances: but it ought to be remembered, that he is the historian of a romantic age, when those manners which form the fantastic books of chivalry were actually practised. As he received his multifarious intelligence from such a variety of vouchers, and of different nations, and almost always collected his knowledge of events from report, rather than from written or recorded evidence, his notices of persons and places are frequently confused and unexact. Many of these petty incorrectnesses are not, however, to be imputed to Froissart: and it may seem surprising, that there are not more inaccuracies of this kind in a voluminous chronicle, treating of the affairs of England, and abounding in English appellations, composed by a Frenchman, and printed in France. Whoever will take the pains to compare this author with the coeval records in Rymer, will find numerous instances of his truth and integrity, in relating the more public and important transactions of his own times. Why he should not have been honoured with a modern edition at the Louvre, it is easy to conceive: the French have a national prejudice against a writer, who has been so much more complaisant to England, than to their own country. Upon the whole, if Froissart should be neglected by the historical reader for his want of precision and authenticity, he will at least be valued by the philosopher for his striking pictures of life, drawn without reserve or affectation from real nature with a faithful and free pencil, and by one who had the best opportunities of observation, who was welcome alike to the feudal castle or the royal palace, and who mingled in the bustle and business of the world, at that very curious period of society, when manners are very far refined, and yet retain a considerable tincture of barbarism. But I cannot better express my sentiments on this subject, than in the words of Montaigne. “ J'ayme les Historiens  
“ ou

“ ou fort simples ou excellens. Les simples qui n'ont point de  
 “ quoy y mesler quelque chose du leur, et qui n'y apportent que  
 “ le soin et la diligence de ramasser tout ce qui vient a leur  
 “ notice, et d'enregistrer a la bonne foy toutes choses sans chois  
 “ et sans triage, nous laissent le jugement entier pour la conoif-  
 “ fance de la verité. Tel est entre autres pour exemple le bon  
 “ Froissard, qui a marchè en son enterprise d'une si franche  
 “ naïfueté, qu'ayant fait une faute il ne craint aucunement de  
 “ la reconnoistre et corriger en l'endroit, ou il en a esté adverty:  
 “ et qui nous représente la diversité mesme des bruits qui cou-  
 “ roient, et les differens rapports qu'on luy faisoit. C'est la  
 “ matiere de l'Histoire nuë et informe; chacun en peut faire  
 “ son profit autant qu'il a d'entendement<sup>r</sup>.”

CHAP. clxxviii. A king is desirous to know how to rule himself and his kingdom. One of his wife men presents an allegorical picture on the wall; from which, after much study, he acquires the desired instruction.

In the original eastern apologue, perhaps this was a piece of tapestry. From the cultivation of the textorial arts among the orientals, came Darius's wonderful cloth abovementioned<sup>e</sup>; and the idea of the robe richly embroidered and embossed with stories of romance and other imageries, in the unprinted romance of EMARE, which forms of one the finest descriptions of the kind that I have seen in Gothic poetry, and which I shall therefore not scruple to give at large.

Soon after, yn a whyle,  
 The ryche kyng of Cefyle<sup>f</sup>  
 To the Emperour gan wende<sup>g</sup>;  
 A ryche present wyth hym he browght,  
 A clothe that was wordylye<sup>h</sup> wroght,  
 He welcomed hym as the hende<sup>i</sup>.

<sup>r</sup> ESSAIS. Libr. ii. ch. x. p. 409. edit. 1598. 8vo.

<sup>e</sup> CHAP. XX.  
<sup>f</sup> Sicily.

<sup>g</sup> Went to.

<sup>h</sup> Worthily.

<sup>i</sup> Courteously. But, I believe there is a slight corruption.

Syr Tergaunte, that nobyll knyzt,  
 He presented the emperour ryzt,  
     And sette hym on hys kne<sup>k</sup>,  
 Wyth that cloth rychyly dyght;  
 Full of stones thar hyt was pyght,  
     As thykke as hyt myght be :  
 Off topaze and of rubyes,  
 And other stones of myche prys,  
     That semely wer to se ;  
 Of crapoutes and nakette,  
 As thykke as they sette,  
     For sothe as y say the<sup>l</sup>.  
 The cloth was dysplayed sone :  
 The emperour loked thar upone  
     And myght hyt<sup>m</sup> not se ;  
 For glysterynge of the ryche stone,  
 Redy fyght had he non,  
     And sayde, how may this be ?  
 The emperour sayde on hygh,  
 Sertes<sup>n</sup>, thys is a fayry<sup>o</sup>,  
     Or ellys a vanyte.  
 The kyng of Cysyle answered than,  
 So ryche a jewell<sup>p</sup> ys ther non  
     In all cryftyante.  
 The amerayles dowzter of hethenes<sup>q</sup>  
 Made thys cloth, withouten lees<sup>r</sup>,

<sup>k</sup> He presented it kneeling.

<sup>l</sup> I tell thee.

<sup>m</sup> Could not it.

<sup>n</sup> Certainly.

<sup>o</sup> An illusion, a piece of enchantment.

<sup>p</sup> JEWEL was antiently any pretious thing.

<sup>q</sup> The daughter of the Amerayle of the Saracens. AMIRAL in the eastern languages was the governor, or prince, of a province, from the Arabic EMIR, Lord. In this sense, AMRAYL is used by Robert of

Gloucester. Hence, by corruption the word ADMIRAL, and in a restricted sense, for the commander of a fleet: which Milton, who knew the original, in that sense writes AMMIRAL. PARAD. L. i. 294. Dufresne thinks, that our *naval* Amiral, i. e. Admiral, came from the crusades, where the Christians heard it used by the Saracens (in consequence of its general signification) for the title of the leader of their fleets: and that from the Mediterranean states it was propagated over Europe. <sup>r</sup> Lying.

And

And wrozte hyt all wyth pryde ;  
 And portreyed hyt wyth grete honour,  
 With ryche golde and asour<sup>†</sup>,  
 And stons on ylka<sup>‡</sup> fyde.  
 And as the story telles yn honde,  
 The stons that on this cloth stonde  
 Sowzt<sup>§</sup> they wer full wyde :  
 Seven wynter hyt was yn makynge,  
 Or hyt was browght to endynge,  
 In hert ys not to hyde.  
 In that on korner made was  
 YDOYNE and AMADAS<sup>¶</sup>.  
 Wyth love that was so trewe ;  
 For they loveden hem<sup>\*</sup> wyth honour,  
 Portreyed they wer wyth trewe love flour  
 Of stons bryght of hewe.  
 Wyth carbunkull, and safere<sup>‡</sup>,  
 Kalfydonys, and onyx so clere,  
 Sette in golde newe ;  
 Deamondes and rubyes,  
 And othyr stons of mychyll pryse,  
 And menstrellys wyth her gle<sup>\*</sup>.  
 In that othyr korner was dyght  
 TRYSTRAM and ISOWDE so bryzt<sup>‡</sup>,  
 That semely wer to se ;  
 And for they loved hem ryght,  
 As full of stons ar they dyght,  
 As thykke as they may be.—

<sup>†</sup> Azure.  
<sup>‡</sup> Every.  
<sup>§</sup> Sought.  
<sup>¶</sup> On one corner, or side, was embroidered the history of Idonia and Amadas. For their Romance, see *supr.* vol. ii. p. 24.  
<sup>\*</sup> Loved each other.  
<sup>‡</sup> Sapphire.  
<sup>‡</sup> Figures of minstrels, with their music, or musical instruments.  
<sup>‡</sup> Sir Tristram and Bel Ifolde, famous in king ARTHUR'S Romance.

In the thrydde<sup>b</sup> korner wyth grete honour  
 Was FLORYS and BLAUNCHEFLOUR<sup>c</sup>  
 As love was hem betwene,  
 For they loved wyth honour,  
 Portrayed they wer with trewe loveflour,  
 With stones bryzht and shene.—

In the fourth korner was oon  
 Of Babylone the fowdans sonn,  
 The amerayles dowzter hym by :  
 For hys fake the cloth was wrowght,  
 She loved hym in hert and thowght,  
 As testymoyneth thys storye.

The fayr mayden her byforn,  
 Was portrayed an unikorn,  
 Wyth hys horn so hye ;  
 Flowres and bryddes on ylka fyde,  
 Wyth stones that wer sowght wyde,  
 Stuffed wyth ymagerye.

When the cloth to ende was wrowght,  
 To the Sowdan sone<sup>d</sup> hyt was browzt,  
 That semely was of fyzte ;  
 My fadyr was a nobyll man,  
 Of the Sowdan he hyt wan  
 Wyth maystrye and wyth myzte<sup>e</sup>.

Chaucer says in the ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE, that RICHESSE wore a robe of purple, which,

— Ful wele  
 With orfraies laid was everie dele,

<sup>b</sup> Third.

<sup>c</sup> See what I have said of their romance above, vol. i. p. 351. A manuscript copy of it in French metre was destroyed in the fire which happened in the Cotton Library. Boccace has the adventures of FLORIO and BIANCOFLORE, in his PHILOCOPO. FLORIS and BLANCAFLOR are

mentioned as illustrious lovers by *Maîtres Eymogau de Beziers*, a bard of Languedoc, in his *BREVIARI D'AMOR*, dated in the year 1288. MSS. REG. 19 C. i. fol. 199. See Tyrwhitt's CHAUCER, vol. iv. p. 169.

<sup>d</sup> Soldan's son.

<sup>e</sup> MSS. Cotf. (ut supr.) CALIG. A. 2: fol. 69. ver. 80. seq.

lxxxii A DISSERTATION ON THE

And purtraied in the ribaninges  
Of DUKIS STORIES and of KINGES<sup>f</sup>.

And, in the original,

Portraictes y furent d'orfroys  
Hystoryes d'empereurs et roys<sup>g</sup>.

CHAP. clxxix. Cefarius, saint Basil, the Gospel, Boethius, and Ovid, are quoted to shew the detestable guilt of gluttony and ebriety.

Cefarius, I suppose, is a Cistercian monk of the thirteenth century; who, beside voluminous Lives, Chronicles, and Homilies, wrote twelve Books on the Miracles, Visions, and Examples, of his own age. But there is another and an older monkish writer of the same name. In the British Museum, there is a narrative taken from Cefarius, in old northern English, of a lady deceived by the fiends, or the devil, through the pride of rich clothing<sup>h</sup>.

CHAP. clxxx. Paul, the historian of the Longobards, is cited, for the fidelity of the knight Onulphus.

CHAP. clxxxi. The sagacity of a lion.

This is the last chapter in the edition of 1488.

Manuscript copies of the *GESTA ROMANORUM* are very numerous<sup>i</sup>. A proof of the popularity of the work. There are two in the British Museum; which, I think, contain, each one hundred and two chapters<sup>k</sup>. But although the printed copies have one hundred and eighty-one stories or chapters, there are many in the manuscripts which do not appear in the editions. The story of the *CASKETTS*, one of the principal incidents in Shakespeare's *MERCHANT OF VENICE*, is in one of the manuscripts of the Museum<sup>l</sup>. This story, however, is in

<sup>f</sup> Ver. 1076.

<sup>g</sup> Ver. 1068.

<sup>h</sup> MSS. HARL. 1022. 4.

<sup>i</sup> See *supr.* vol. ii. p. 19.

<sup>k</sup> MSS. HARL. 2270. And 5259.

<sup>l</sup> *Viz.* CHAP. xcix. fol. 78. b. MSS. HARL. 2270. In the *CLERICALIS DISCIPLINA* of Alphonfus, there is a narrative of a king who kept a *FABULATOR*, or story-teller, to lull him to sleep every night.

an old English translation printed by Wynkyn de Worde, without date; from which, or more probably from another edition printed in 1577, and entitled A RECORD OF ANCIENT HISTORIES in Latin GESTA ROMANORUM, corrected and bettered, Shakespeare borrowed it. The story of the BOND in the same play, which Shakespeare perhaps took from a translation of the PECORONE of Ser Florentino Giovanni<sup>m</sup>, makes the forty-eighth chapter of the last-mentioned manuscript<sup>n</sup>. Giovanni flourished about the year 1378<sup>o</sup>. The tale of Gower's FLORENT<sup>p</sup>, which resembles Chaucer's WIFE OF BATH, occurs in some of the manuscripts of this work. The same may be said of a tale by Occleve, never printed; concerning the chaste confort of the emperor Gerelaus, who is abused by his steward, in his absence. This is the first stanza. A larger specimen shall appear in its place.

In Roman Actis writen is thus,  
Somtime an emperour in the citee  
Of Rome regned, clept Gerelaus,  
Wich his noble astate and his dignite  
Governed wisely, and weddid had he  
The douztir of the kyng of Vngrye,  
A faire lady to every mannes ye.

At the end is the MORALISATION in prose<sup>q</sup>.

night. The king on some occasion being seized with an unusual disquietude of mind, ordered his FABULATOR to tell him longer stories, for that otherwise he could not fall asleep. The FABULATOR begins a longer story, but in the midst falls asleep himself, &c. I think I have seen this tale in some manuscript of the GESTA ROMANORUM.

<sup>m</sup> GIORN. iv. Nov. 5. In Vincent of Beauvais, there is a story of a bond between a Christian and a Jew; in which the former uses a deception which occasions the conversion of the latter. HIST. SPECUL. fol. 181. a. edit. ut supr. Jews, yet under heavy restrictions, were originally tolerated in the Christian kingdoms

of the dark ages, for the purpose of borrowing money, with which they supplied the exigencies of the state, and of merchants, or others, on the most lucrative usurious contracts.

<sup>n</sup> Fol. 43. a. In this story MAGISTER VIRGILIUS, or Virgil the cunning man, is consulted.

<sup>o</sup> See Johnson's and Steevens's SHAKESPEARE, iii. p. 247. edit. ult. And Tyrwhitt's CHAUCER, iv. p. 332. 334.

<sup>p</sup> CONFESS. AMANT. Lib. i. f. xv. b. See supr. vol. ii. p. 31.

<sup>q</sup> MSS. SELD. Sup. 53. Bibl. Bodl. *De quadam bona et nobili Imperatrice*. It is introduced with "A Tale the which I in the Roman dedis, &c." Viz. MSS. LAUD. l 2 ibid.

I could point out other stories, beside those I have mentioned, for which Gower, Lydgate, Occleve, and the author of the *DECAMERON*, and of the *CENTO NOVELLE ANTICHE*, have been indebted to this admired repository<sup>1</sup>. Chaucer, as I have before remarked, has taken one of his Canterbury tales from this collection; and it has been supposed that he alludes to it in the following couplet,

And ROMAIN GESTIS makin remembrance  
Of many a veray trewe wife also<sup>2</sup>.

The plot also of the knight against Constance, who having killed Hermegild, puts the bloody knife into the hand of Constance while asleep, and her adventure with the steward, in the *MAN OF LAWES TALE*, are also taken from that manuscript chapter of this work, which I have just mentioned to have been verified by Occleve. The former of these incidents is thus treated by Occleve.

She with this zonge childe in the chambre lay  
Every nitz where lay the earle and the countesse<sup>3</sup>,  
Bitween whose beddis brente a lampe alway.

\* \* \* \* \*

ibid. K. 78. See also MSS. DIGB. 185. Where, in the first line of the poem, we have, "In the *Roman jessys* writen is this." It is in other manuscripts of Occleve. This story is in the *GESTA ROMANORUM*, MSS. HARL. 2270. chap. 101. fol. 80. a. Where *Greiaus* is Menelaus.

<sup>1</sup> Bonifacio Vannozi, in *Delle LETTERE MISCELLANEE alle Accademia Veneta*, says, that Boccace borrowed [Nov. i. D. iii.] the Novel of *Maseto da Lamporecchio*, with many other parts of the *DECAMERON*, from an older Collection of Novels. "In uno libro de Novelle, et di Parlare Gentile, ANTERIORE al Boccacio, &c." In Venetia, 1606. 4to. pag. 580. seq. I believe, however, that many of the tales are of Boccace's own

invention. He tells us himself, in the *GENEALOGIA DEORUM*, that when he was a little boy, he was fond of making *FICTIUNCULÆ*. Lib. xv. cap. x. p. 579. edit. Basil. 1532. fol.

<sup>2</sup> *MERCHANT'S TALE*, ver. 10158. edit. Tyrw. This may still be doubted, as from what has been said above, the *ROMAN GESTS* were the Roman history in general.

<sup>3</sup> Here we see the antient practice, even in great families, of one and the same bed-chamber serving for many persons. Much of the humour in Chaucer's *TROMPINGTON MILLER* arises from this circumstance. See the Romance of *SYR TRYAMORE*. And Gower, *CONF. AM.* ii. f. 39. a.

And

And he espied, by the lampes lizt,  
 The bedde where that lay this emprice  
 With erlis douztur<sup>†</sup>, and as blyve rizt,  
 This feendly man his purpose and malice  
 Thouzte<sup>‡</sup> for to fulfille and accomplice;  
 And so he dide, a longe knife out he drouze<sup>¶</sup>,  
 And ther with alle the maiden childe he slouze<sup>\*</sup>.

Hir throte with the knyfe on two he kutte  
 And as this emprice lay sleeping;  
 Into her honde this bloody knyfe he putte,  
 Ffor men shoulde have noon othir deemyng<sup>‡</sup>.  
 But she had gilty ben of this murdring:  
 And whanne that he had wrouzte this curfidnesse,  
 Anoone oute of the chambre he gan hem dresse<sup>\*</sup>.

The countess after hir slepe awakid  
 And to the emperesse bedde gan caste hir look  
 And sy<sup>¶</sup> the bloody knyfe in hir hande nakid,  
 And, for the feare she tremblid and quook.—

\*\*\*\*\*

She awakens the earl, who awakens the emprefs.

And hir awook, and thus to hir he cried,  
 “ Woman, what is that, that in thin hand I see?  
 “ What hast thou doon, woman, for him that diede,  
 “ What wickid spirit hath travaylid the?”  
 And as fone as that adawed was she,  
 The knyfe fel oute of hir hand in the bedde,  
 And she bihilde the cloothis al forbledde,

† Earl's daughter.  
 ‡ Thought.  
 ¶ Drew.  
 \* Slew.

‡ Opinion.  
 \* He hastened, &c.  
 † Saw.

And

And the childe dead, " Allas, she cried, allas,  
 " How may this be, god woot alle I note howe,  
 " I am not privy to hir hevy caas,  
 " The gilte is not myne, I the childe not slowe <sup>b</sup>."  
 To which spake the countesse, " What faist thou?  
 " Excuse the not, thou maist not faie nay,  
 " The knyfe all bloody in thin hand I fay <sup>c</sup>." <sup>d</sup>

This story, but with some variation of circumstances, is told in the HISTORICAL MIRROR of Vincent of Beauvais <sup>e</sup>.

But I hasten to point out the writer of the GESTA ROMANORUM, who has hitherto remained unknown to the most diligent enquirers in Gothic literature. He is Petrus Berchorius, or Pierre Bercheur, a native of Poitou, and who died Prior of the Benedictine convent of saint Eloi at Paris, in the year 1362.

For the knowledge of this very curious circumstance, I am obliged to Salomon Glaffius, a celebrated theologist of Saxe-Gotha, in his PHILOGOGIA SACRA <sup>f</sup>, written about the year 1623 <sup>g</sup>. In his chapter DE ALLEGORIIS FABULARUM, he censures those writers who affect to interpret allegorically, not only texts of scripture, but also poetical fables and profane histories, which they arbitrarily apply to the explication or confirmation of the mysteries of christianity. He adds, " Hoc in studio excelluit quidam Petrus Berchorius, Pictaviensis, ordinis divi Benedicti: qui, peculiari libro, GESTA ROMANORUM, necnon Legendas Patrum, aliasque aniles fabulas, allegorice ac mystice exposuit <sup>b</sup>." That is, " In this art excelled one Peter Berchorius, a Benedictine; who, in a certain peculiar

<sup>b</sup> Slew.

<sup>c</sup> Saw.

<sup>d</sup> Ut supr. viz. MS. SELD. SUP. 45. Qu. iiiii.

<sup>e</sup> SPECUL. HISTOR. Lib. vii. c. 90. fol. 86. a.

<sup>f</sup> PHILOGOGIA SACRÆ, qua totius sacrosanctæ veteris et novi testamenti scripturæ tum stylus et literatura, tum sensus et genuinæ interpretationis ratio expendi-

tur, Libri quinque, &c. edit. tert. Francof. et Hamb. 1653.

<sup>g</sup> From the date of the Dedication. For his other works, which are very numerous, see the DIARIUM BIOGRAPHICUM of H. Witte, sub Ann. 1665. Gedani, 1688. 4to.

<sup>h</sup> LIB. ii. Part. i. TRACTAT. ii. Sect. iii. Artic. viii. pag 312.

" book,

“book, has expounded, mystically and allegorically, the Roman “GESTS, legends of saints, and other idle tales<sup>1</sup>.” He then quotes for an example, the whole one hundred and seventieth chapter of the GESTA ROMANORUM, containing the story of saint Bernard and the Dice-player, together with its moralisation.

Berchorius was one of the most learned divines of his country, and a voluminous writer. His three grand printed works are, I. REDUCTORIUM MORALE *super totam Bibliam*, in twenty-four books. II. REPERTORIUM [or Reductorium] MORALE, in fourteen books<sup>2</sup>. III. DICTIONARIUM MORALE. Whoever shall have the patience or the curiosity to turn over a few pages of this immense treasure of multifarious erudition, will soon see this assertion of Glassius abundantly verified; and will be convinced beyond a doubt, from a general coincidence of plan, manner, method, and execution, that the author of these volumes, and of the GESTA ROMANORUM, must be one and the same. The REDUCTORIUM SUPER BIBLIAM<sup>1</sup> contains all the stories and incidents in the Bible, reduced into allegories<sup>3</sup>. The REPERTORIUM MORALE is a dictionary of things, persons, and places; all which are supposed to be mystical, and which are therefore explained in their moral or practical sense. The DICTIONARIUM MORALE is in two parts, and seems principally designed to be a moral repertory for students in theology.

<sup>1</sup> Salmeron, a profound school-divine, who flourished about 1560, censures the unwarrantable liberty of the GESTA ROMANORUM, in accommodating histories and fables to Christ and the church. COMM. in EVANGEL. HIST. i. pag. 356. PROL. xix. CAN. xxi.—Colon. Agrippin. 1602. fol.

<sup>2</sup> I use a folio edition of all these three works, in three volumes, printed at Venice in 1583. These pieces were all printed very early.

<sup>3</sup> This was first printed, Argentorat. 1473. fol. There was a very curious book in lord Oxford's library, I am not sure whether the same, entitled MORALI-

ZATIONES BIBLIÆ, Ulmæ 1474. fol. With this colophon in the last page. *Infinita dei clementia. Finitus est liber Moralizationum Bibliarum in ejusdem laudem et gloriam compilatus. Ac per industrium Joannem Zeiner de Reutlingen Artis impressoriæ magistrum non penna sed scagneis characteribus in oppido Ulmenfi artificialiter effigiatus. Anno Incarnationis Domini millesimo quadringentesimo septuagesimo quarto Aprilis nono.* This book is not mentioned by Maittaire.

<sup>4</sup> To this work Alanus de Lynne, a Carmelite of Lynne in Norfolk, wrote an *Index or Tabula*, about the year 1240. It is in MSS. REG. 3 D. 3. 1.

The

The moralisation, or moral explanation, which is added to every article, is commonly prefaced, as in the GESTA, with the introductory address of CARISSIMI. In the colophon, the GESTA is called *Ex gestis Romanorum RECOLLECTORIUM*: a word much of a piece with his other titles of REPERTORIUM and REDUCTORIUM. Four of the stories occurring in the GESTA, *The Discovery of the gigantic body of Pallas*<sup>n</sup>, *The subterraneous golden palace*<sup>o</sup>, *The adventures of the English knight in the bishoprick of Ely*<sup>p</sup>, and *The miraculous horn*<sup>q</sup>, are related in the fourteenth book of the REPERTORIUM MORALE. For the two last of these he quotes Gervase of Tilbury, as in his GESTA<sup>r</sup>. As a further proof of his allegorising genius I must add, that he moralised all the stories in Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, in a work entitled, *Commentarius MORALIS, sive ALLEGORIÆ in Libros quindecim Ovidii Metamorphoseon*<sup>s</sup>, and now remaining in manuscript in the library of the monastery of saint Germain's<sup>t</sup>. He seems to have been strongly impressed with whatever related to the Roman affairs, and to have thought their history more interesting than that of any other people. This appears from the following passage, which I translate from the article ROMA, in his DICTIONARIUM MORALE, and which will also contribute to throw some other lights on this subject. "How many remarkable facts might be here collected concerning the virtues and vices of the Romans, did my design permit me to drop Moralities, and to enter upon an historical detail! For

<sup>n</sup> CAP. xlix. f. 643. He quotes CHRONICA, and says, that this happened in the reign of the emperor Henry the second. [See GEST. ROM. c. clviii.]

<sup>o</sup> CAP. lxxii. f. 689. col. 1. 2. He quotes for this story [GEST. ROM. c. cvii.] William of Malmesbury, but tells it in the words of Beauvais, ut supr.

<sup>p</sup> Fol. 610. col. 2. [GEST. ROM. c. clv.] Here also his author is Gervase of Tilbury: from whom, I think in the same chapter, he quotes part of king Arthur's Romance. See OTIA IMPERIAL. Dec. ii. c. 12.

<sup>q</sup> Fol. 610. ut supr. [GEST. ROM. c. lxi.]

<sup>r</sup> A MORALISATION is joined to these stories, with the introduction of CARISSIMI.

<sup>s</sup> See what he says of the *Fabula Poetarum*, REPERTOR. MORAL. lib. xiv. cap. i. f. 601. col. 2. ad calc.

<sup>t</sup> Oudin. COMMENT. SCRIPTOR. ECCLES. iii. p. 1064. Lips. 1723. fol. I doubt whether this work was not translated into French by Guillaume Nangis, at the beginning of the fourteenth century. See MEM. LIT. xx. 751. 4to.

“ that

“ that most excellent historian Livy, unequalled for the dignity,  
 “ brevity, and *difficulty* of his style, (whose eloquence is so highly  
 “ extolled by saint Jerome, and whom I, however unworthy,  
 “ have translated from Latin into French with great labour,  
 “ at the request of John the most famous king of France,)  
 “ records so many wonderful things of the prudence, fortitude,  
 “ fidelity, and friendship, of the Roman people; as also of  
 “ their quarrels, envy, pride, avarice, and other vices, which  
 “ are indeed allied to virtues, and are such, to say the truth,  
 “ as I never remember to have heard of in any nation besides.  
 “ But because I do not mean to treat of historical affairs in  
 “ the present work, the matter of which is entirely moral, I  
 “ refer the historical reader to Livy himself, to Trogus Pom-  
 “ peius, Justin, Florus, and Orosius, who have all written his-  
 “ tories of Rome; as also to Innocent, who in his book on the  
 “ *Miseries of human nature*”, speaks largely of the vices of the  
 “ Romans.” In the mean time we must remember, that at  
 this particular period, the Roman history had become the grand  
 object of the public taste in France. The king himself, as we  
 have just seen, recommended a translation of Livy. French  
 translations also of Sallust, Cesar, and Lucan, were now circu-  
 lated. A Latin historical compilation called ROMULEON was  
 now just published by a gentleman of France, which was soon  
 afterwards translated into French. A collection of the GESTA  
 ROMANORUM was therefore a popular subject, at least it pro-  
 duced a popular title, and was dictated by the fashion of the  
 times.

I have here mentioned all Berchorius's works, except his  
 Comment on a Profody called *Doctrinale metricum*, which was

<sup>1</sup> I have mentioned this work before,  
 vol. ii. p. 114. It is remarkable, that a  
 copy of this manuscript in the British Mu-  
 seum is entitled, “TITUS LIVIUS DES  
 “ FAIS DES ROMAINS translate par Pierre  
 “ Bertheure.” MSS. REG. 15 D. vi.

<sup>2</sup> Pope Innocent the third, about the

year 1200, wrote three Books *De Contemptu  
 Mundi, sive De Miseria humanæ Conditionis*,  
 printed, Colon. 1496.

<sup>3</sup> DICTION. MORAL. P. iii. vol. ii. f.  
 274. col. 2. edit. 1583. — See *supr.* vol.  
 ii. p. 114.

used as a school-book in France, till Despauterius's manual on that subject appeared <sup>a</sup>. Some biographers mention his *TROPOLOGIA*, his *COSMOGRAPHIA*, and his *BREVIARIUM*. But the *TROPOLOGIA* <sup>y</sup> is nothing more than his *REDUCTORIUM* on the Bible; and probably the *BREVIARIUM* is the same <sup>z</sup>. The *COSMOGRAPHIA* seems to be the fourteenth book of his *REPERTORIUM MORALE*; which treats of the wonders of various countries, and is chiefly taken from Solinus and Gervase of Tilbury <sup>z</sup>. He is said by the biographers to have written other smaller pieces, which they have not named or described. Among these perhaps is comprehended the *GESTA*: which we may conceive to have been thus undistinguished, either as having been neglected or proscribed by graver writers, or rather as having been probably disclaimed by its author, who saw it at length in the light of a juvenile performance, abounding in fantastic and unedifying narrations, which he judged unsuitable to his character, studies, and station <sup>b</sup>. Basilius Johannes Heroldus, however, mentions Berchorius as the author of a *CHRONICON*, a word which may imply, though not with exact propriety, his *GESTA ROMANORUM*. It is in the Epistle dedicatory of his edition of the Chronicles of Marianus Scotus, and Martinus Polonus, addressed to our queen Elisabeth; in which he promises to publish many Latin *CHRONICA*, that is, those of Godfrey of Viterbo, Hugo Floriacensis, Conrade Engelhus, Hermannus Edituus, Lanfranc, Ivo, Robert of Saint Victor, PETER BERCHORIUS, and of many others, *qui de TEMPORIBUS scripserunt*, who have written of times <sup>c</sup>. Paulus Langius,

<sup>a</sup> Oudin, ubi supr.

<sup>y</sup> I have seen a very old black-letter edition with the title, "*Tropologiarum mysticarumque enarrationum, &c.*" Without date.

<sup>z</sup> But see *Bibl. Sangerm. Cod. MS. 687*. And *G. Serpili Vit. SCRIPTOR. BIBLIC. tom. vii. part. 2. pag. 44*. Also *Possevin. APPARAT. SACR. ii. p. 241. Colon. 1608*.

<sup>z</sup> This is in some measure hinted by

Oudin, ubi supr. "*Egressus autem a PROFANIS et grammaticis Berchorius, animum SOLIDIORIBUS applicuit, &c.*"

<sup>b</sup> Gesner adds, reciting his works, that he wrote "*alia multa.*" *EPITOM. BIBL. f. 147. b. Tig. 1555. fol.* And Trithemius, "*parvos sed multos tractatus.*" *DE ILLUSTR. BENED. Lib. ii. c. 131.*

<sup>c</sup> *Dat. 1559. Edit. Basil. Oporin. No Date. fol.*

who

who wrote about the year 1400, in his enumeration of Berchorius's writings, says nothing of this compilation<sup>d</sup>.

Had other authentic evidences been wanting, we are sure of the age in which Berchorius flourished, from the circumstance of his being employed to translate Livy by John king of France, who acceded to the throne in the year 1350, and died in the year 1364. That Berchorius died, and probably an old man, in the year 1362, we learn from his epitaph in the monastery of saint Eloy at Paris, which is recited by Sweertius, and on other accounts deserves a place here.

HIC JACET VENERABILIS MAGNÆ PRO-  
FUNDÆQUE SCIENTIÆ,  
ADMIRABILIS ET SUBTILIS ELOQUENTIÆ,  
F. PETRUS BERCOth<sup>e</sup>,  
PRIOR HUIUS PRIORATUS.  
QUI FUIT ORIUNDUS DE VILLA S. PETRI  
DE ITINERE<sup>f</sup>  
IN EPISCOPATU MAILLIZANCENSI<sup>g</sup> IN  
PICTAVIA.  
QUI TEMPORE SUO FECIT OPERA SUA  
SOLEMNIA, SCILICET  
DICTIONARIUM, REDUCTORIUM,  
BREVIATORIUM, DESCRIPTIONEM  
MUNDI<sup>h</sup>, TRANSLATIONEM CUJUSDAM  
LIBRI VETUTISSIMI<sup>i</sup> DE LATINO IN  
GALLICUM, AD PRÆCEPTUM EXCEL-  
LENTISS.  
JOANNIS REGIS FRANCORUM.  
QUI OBIIT ANNO M. CCC. LXII<sup>k</sup>.

<sup>d</sup> CHRON. CITIZ. f. 841. Apud Pif-  
torii ILLUSTR. VIT. SCRIPTOR. &c.  
Francof. 1583. fol. Compare the CHRON.  
of Philippus Bergom. ad ann. 1355.

<sup>e</sup> Read BERCHEUR.

<sup>f</sup> That is, of the village of *saint Pierre*  
*du Chemin*. Three leagues from Poitiers.

<sup>g</sup> Of Maillesais.

<sup>h</sup> The COSMOGRAPHIA abovementioned.

<sup>i</sup> Of Livy.

<sup>k</sup> Sweertii EPITAPHIA Joco-feria. edit.  
Colon. 1645. p. 158. It must not be dis-  
sembled, that in the MORALISATION of  
the hundred and forty-fifth chapter, a  
verb

Berchorius was constituted grammatical preceptor to the novices of the Benedictine Congregation, or monastery, at Clugni, in the year 1340<sup>1</sup>. At which time he drew up his Notes on the Profody, and his Commentary on Ovid, for the use of his scholars. About the same time, and with a view of rendering their exercises in Latinity more agreeable and easy by an entertaining Latin story-book, yet resolvable into lessons of religion, he probably compiled the *GESTA*: perpetually addressing the application of every tale to his young audience, by the paternal and affectionate appellation of *CARISSIMI*<sup>m</sup>. There was therefore time enough for the *GESTA* to become a fashionable book of tales, before Boccace published his *DECAMERON*. The action of the *DECAMERON* being supposed in 1348, the year of the great pestilence, we may safely conjecture, that Boccace did not begin his work till after that period. An exact and ingenious critic has proved, that it was not finished till the year 1358<sup>n</sup>.

I have just observed, that Berchorius probably compiled this work for the use of his grammatical pupils. Were there not many good reasons for that supposition, I should be induced to think, that it might have been intended as a book of stories for the purpose of preachers. I have already given instances, that it was antiently fashionable for preachers to enforce the several moral duties by applying fables, or exemplary narratives: and, in the present case, the perpetual recurrence of the address of *CARISSIMI* might be brought in favour of this hypothesis. But I will here suggest an additional reason. Soon after the age of

verb is explained, *vulgariter*, in the German language. Fol. 69. a. col. 2. And in the hundred and forty-third chapter, a hunter has eight dogs who have German names. Fol. 67. a. col. 1. seq. I suspect, nor is it improbable, that those German words were introduced by a German editor or printer. Mr. Tyrwhitt supposes, that we may reasonably conjecture one of our countrymen to have been the compiler, because three couplets of English verses and some English names,

appear in many of the manuscripts. But these are not to be found in any of the Editions; and there is no answering for the licentious innovations of transcribers. *CANT. T. vol. iv. 331.*

<sup>1</sup> Oudin. ubi sup. p. 1063.

<sup>m</sup> This, by habit, and otherwise with no impropriety, he seems to have retained in his later and larger works.

<sup>n</sup> See Tyrwhitt's *CHAUCER*, iv. 115. seq.

Berchorius,

Berchorius, a similar collection of stories, of the same cast, was compiled, though not exactly in the same form, professedly designed for sermon writers, and by one who was himself an eminent preacher: for, rather before the year 1480, a Latin volume was printed in Germany, written by John Herolt a Dominican friar of Basil, better known by the adopted and humble appellation of DISCIPULUS, and who flourished about the year 1418. It consists of three parts. The first is entitled "Incipiunt Sermones pernotabiles DISCIPULI de Sanctis per anni circumlum." That is, a set of Sermons on the Saints of the whole year. The second part, and with which I am now chiefly concerned, is a PROMPTUARY, or ample repository, of examples for composing sermons: and in the Prologue to this part the author says, that saint Dominic always *abundabat exemplis* in his discourses, and that he constantly practiced this popular mode of edification. This part contains a variety of little histories. Among others, are the following. Chaucer's Friar's tale. Aristotle falling in love with a queen, who compels him to permit her to ride upon his back<sup>o</sup>. The boy who was kept in a dark cave till he was twelve years of age; and who being carried abroad, and presented with many striking objects, preferred a woman to all he had seen<sup>p</sup>. A boy educated in a desert is brought into a city, where he sees a woman whom he is taught to call a fine bird, under the name of a goose: and on his return into the desert, desires his spiritual father to kill him a goose for his dinner<sup>q</sup>. These two last stories Boccace has worked into one. The old woman and her little dog<sup>r</sup>. This, as we have seen, is in the GESTA ROMANORUM<sup>s</sup>. The son who will not shoot at his father's dead body<sup>t</sup>. I give these as specimens of the collection. The third part contains

<sup>o</sup> EXEMPL. lxxvii. Sub litera, M. "De regina quae equitavit Aristotelem." He cites Jacobus de Vitriaco. [See supr. p. xix.]

<sup>p</sup> EXEMPL. xxiv. Sub Litera, L.

<sup>q</sup> Ibid. EXEMPL. xxiii. [See supr. p. l.]

<sup>r</sup> EXEMPL. xii. Sub. lit. V.

<sup>s</sup> CH. xxviii.

<sup>t</sup> This is also in the GESTA, CH. xlv.

—EXEMPL. viii. Lit. B.

stories

stories for sermon writers, consisting only of select miracles of the Virgin Mary. The first of these is the tale of the chaste Roman empress, occurring in the Harleian manuscripts of the *GESTA*, and versified by Occleve; yet with some variation. This third part is closed with these words, which also end the volume. "Explicit tabula Exemplorum in tractatulo de Ex-  
"emplis gloriose Virginis Marie contentorum." I quote from the first edition, which is a clumsy folio in a rude Gothic letter, in two volumes; and without pagings, signatures, or initials. The place and year are also wanting; but it was certainly printed before 1480<sup>o</sup>, and probably at Nuremburgh. The same author also wrote a set of sermons called *Sermones de tempore*<sup>m</sup>. In these I find \* Alphonfus's story, which in the *GESTA ROMANORUM* is the tale of the two knights of Egypt and Bal-dach<sup>7</sup>; and, in Boccace's *DECAMERON*, the history of TITO and GESIPPO: Parnell's *HERMIT*<sup>8</sup>: and the apologue of the king's brother who had heard the trumpet of Death<sup>9</sup>; both which last are also in the *GESTA*<sup>o</sup>. Such are the revolutions of taste, and so capricious the modes of composition, that a Latin homily-book of a German monk in the fifteenth century, should exhibit outlines of the tales of Boccace, Chaucer, and Parnell!

It may not be thought impertinent to close this discourse with a remark on the *MORALISATIONS*, subjoined to the stories of the *GESTA ROMANORUM*. This was an age of vision and mystery: and every work was believed to contain a double, or

<sup>1</sup> See *supr.* p. lxxxiii.

<sup>2</sup> For the second edition is at Nurem-  
burgh, 1482. fol. Others followed, be-  
fore 1500.

<sup>3</sup> The only edition I have seen, with  
the addition of the *SERMONES DE SANCTIS*, and the *PROMPTUARIUM EXEMPLORUM* abovementioned, was printed by M. Flaccius, Argentini. 1499. fol. But there is an earlier edition. At the close of the last Sermon, he tells us why he chose to be styled *DISCIPULUS*. Because, "non  
"subtilia per modum *MAGISTRI*, sed sim-  
"plicia per modum *DISCIPULI*, con-

"scripsi et collegi." I have seen also early impressions of his *SERMONES QUADRAGESIMALES*, and of other pieces of the same sort. All his works were published together in three volumes, Mogunt. 1612. 4to. The *EXAMPLES* appeared separately, Daventr. 1481. Colon. 1485. Argentorat. 1469. 1490. Hagen. 1512. 1519. fol.

<sup>4</sup> *SERM.* cxxi. col. ii. Signat. C 5.

<sup>5</sup> *CH.* clxxi.

<sup>6</sup> *SERM.* liii.

<sup>7</sup> *SERM.* cix.

<sup>8</sup> *CH.* lxxx. cxliii.

secondary,

secondary, meaning. Nothing escaped this eccentric spirit of refinement and abstraction: and, together with the bible, as we have seen, not only the general history of antient times was explained allegorically, but even the poetical fictions of the classics were made to signify the great truths of religion, with a degree of boldness, and a want of a discrimination, which in another age would have acquired the character of the most profane levity, if not of absolute impiety, and can only be defended from the simplicity of the state of knowledge which then prevailed.

Thus, God creating man of clay, animated with the vital principle of respiration, was the story of Prometheus, who formed a man of similar materials, to which he communicated life by fire stolen from heaven. Christ twice born, of his father God and of his mother Mary, was prefigured by Bacchus, who was first born of Semele, and afterwards of Jupiter. And as Minerva sprung from the brain of Jupiter, so Christ proceeded from God without a mother. Christ born of the Virgin Mary was expressed in the fable of Danae shut within a tower, through the covering of which Jupiter descended in a shower of gold, and begot Perseus. Acteon, killed by his own hounds, was a type of the persecution and death of our Saviour. The poet Lycophron relates, that Hercules in returning from the adventure of the Golden Fleece was shipwrecked; and that being devoured by a monstrous fish, he was disgorged alive on the shore after three days. Here was an obvious symbol of Christ's resurrection. John Waleys, an English Franciscan of the thirteenth century, in his moral exposition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*<sup>c</sup>, affords many other instances equally ridiculous; and who forgot that he was describing a more heterogeneous chaos, than that which makes so conspicuous a figure in his author's exordium, and which combines, amid the monstrous and indigested aggregate of its unnatural associations,

———— Sine pondere habentia pondus<sup>d</sup>.

<sup>c</sup> I have before mentioned Berchorius's *OVID MORALISED*.      <sup>d</sup> *METAM. L. i. 20.*  
At

At length, compositions professedly allegorical, with which that age abounded, were resolved into allegories for which they were never intended. In the famous ROMANNT OF THE ROSE, written about the year 1310, the poet couches the difficulties of an ardent lover in attaining the object of his passion, under the allegory of a Rose, which is gathered in a delicious but almost inaccessible garden. The theologists proved this rose to be the white rose of Jericho, the new Jerusalem, a state of grace, divine wisdom, the holy Virgin, or eternal beatitude, at none of which obstinate heretics can ever arrive. The chemists pretended, that it was the philosopher's stone; the civilians, that it was the most consummate point of equitable decision; and the physicians, that it was an infallible panacea. In a word, other professions, in the most elaborate commentaries, explained away the lover's rose into the mysteries of their own respective science. In conformity to this practice, Tasso allegorised his own poem: and a flimsy structure of morality was raised on the chimerical conceptions of Ariosto's ORLANDO. In the year 1577, a translation of a part of Amadis de Gaule appeared in France; with a learned preface, developing the valuable stores of profound instruction, concealed under the naked letter of the old romances, which were discernible only to the intelligent, and totally unperceived by common readers; who, instead of plucking the fruit, were obliged to rest contented with *le simple FLEUR de la Lecture litterale*. Even Spenser, at a later period, could not indulge his native impulse to descriptions of chivalry, without framing such a story, as conveyed, under the *dark conceit* of ideal champions, a set of historic transactions, and an exemplification of the nature of the twelve moral virtues. He presents his fantastic queen with a rich romantic mirror, which shewed the wondrous achievements of her magnificent ancestry.

And thou, O fairest princess under sky,  
In this fayre mirror maist behold thy face,

And

And thine own realmes in Lond of Faery,  
And in this antique image thy great ancestry<sup>s</sup>.

It was not, however, solely from an unmeaning and a wanton spirit of refinement, that the fashion of resolving every thing into allegory so universally prevailed. The same apology may be offered for the cabalistical interpreters, both of the classics and of the old romances. The former not willing that those books should be quite exploded which contained the antient mythology, laboured to reconcile the apparent absurdities of the pagan system to the christian mysteries, by demonstrating a figurative resemblance. The latter, as true learning began to dawn, with a view of supporting for a while the expiring credit of giants and magicians, were compelled to palliate those monstrous incredibilities, by a bold attempt to unravel the mystic web which had been wove by fairy hands, and by shewing that truth was hid under the gorgeous veil of Gothic invention.

\* B. ii. INTROD. St. vi.

QUESTA ROMANORUM

And thus our reader is told of the  
And in the course of the great anxiety

It was not, however, solely from an unwillingness and a want  
of refinement that the fashion of making eyes thus  
the subject is necessarily pursued. The most serious cause for  
it was the medical intervention - both of the disease and  
of the patient. The former, for without the great books  
which had not appeared which contained the ancient medicine,  
it was not possible to receive the general admission of the great  
fashion of the fashion, and the doctor, by demonstrating a negative  
resultance. The first cause having been removed, with  
a view of appearing for a while the fashion of the eyes  
and the patient were considered as fallen from the world, and  
the doctor, by a bold attempt to return the patient to the world  
had been made by this kind, and by showing that truth was  
not under the gorgeous veil of Gothic invention.

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