

THE PLOWMAN'S TALE



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Edited by ANDREW NICHOLAS WARR

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Synopsis.

This thesis offers a critical edition of The Plowman's Tale, a poem in the Chaucer apocrypha, which was last edited by W.W.Skeat in 1897. A full collation of all extant editions - both manuscript and printed - has led the present editor to select the text printed by Thomas Godfray in 1535, the earliest printed edition, as the base text for the present edition. The text is accompanied by a commentary and a glossary. The introductory chapters are concerned to relate the poem to its two most meaningful literary contexts. It is argued that almost all of the poem is a characteristic product of the Lollard movement at the end of the fourteenth century, but that by the addition of a Prologue at some time early in the sixteenth century, the anonymous verse tract came to be associated with Chaucer, as it took on its new role as a work of official Henrician propaganda after 1535.

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Abbreviations.Periodicals.

AHR	American Historical Review
DA	Dissertation Abstracts
EETS	Early English Text Society
ENR	English Historical Review
ELH	English Literary History
JEGP	Journal of English and Germanic Philology
L & P	Letters and Papers
MAe	Medium Aevum
MLN	Modern Language Notes
MLQ	Modern Language Quarterly
MLR	Modern Language Review
Med.et Hum.	Medievalia et Humanistica
Med.Stud.	Medieval Studies
NM	Neophilologische Mitteilungen
NQ	Notes and Queries
PMLA	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America
PQ	Philological Quarterly
RES	Review of English Studies
RN	Renaissance News
SEL	Studies in English Literature
SHR	Scottish Historical Review
SN	Studia Neophilologica
SP	Studies in Philology
SRen.	Studies in the Renaissance
STS	Scottish Text Society

Dictionaries etc.

DOST	Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue
EDD	English Dialect Dictionary
MED	Middle English Dictionary
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
STC	Short-title Catalogue

The titles of poems such as The Plowman's Tale and The Pilgrim's Tale have been abbreviated to PlowT and PilgT in view of their frequent occurrence in the text. The titles of other STC and Wing books used are given as abbreviated in the catalogues generally, but with spellings as found in the microfilm copies consulted.

CHAPTER ONE

The Genesis of the Plowman's Tale.

The evolution of a settled canon of Chaucer's works has been a long and uncertain process. It must be the wish of every author that posterity should judge him on the basis of work that is genuinely his rather than on that which is falsely ascribed to him. However, the circumstances which attended the publication of Chaucer's works both in manuscript and later in print, ensured that several generations of readers entertained a differently balanced view of his work from that generally held today.¹ It is not perhaps in the nature of apocryphal material to have this effect upon an author's reputation. A great many of the spurious works which find their way into an author's canon do so because they appear, or can be made to appear, similar in content and style to others which are known to be genuine. Thus their effect is, at most, to reinforce rather than to modify or significantly to alter existing impressions of the author's work.

The list of works which have, at various times, been incorrectly ascribed to Chaucer by editors such as William Thynne, John Stowe, Thomas Speght and John Urry bears witness to this. Pieces² such as The Assembly of Ladies (first included in an edition of Chaucer's works in 1532), The Testament of Cresseid (1532), The Testament of Love (1532), The Floure and the Leafe (1598), The Tale of Gamelyn (1721), The Tale of Beryn (1721) - all must have seemed eminently Chaucerian to an age whose preoccupation with questions of authenticity

was, by any standards, marginal. The poems in no way drew attention to themselves, nor did they have attention drawn to them - in terms of the canon, they had blended into their surroundings. Successive editions containing these works lent to them an aura of permanence in the Chaucer tradition and rendered ineffectual the sporadic efforts of those who wished to purify the canon in the period up to, and even beyond, Thomas Tyrwhitt's 'Introductory Discourse' to his edition of the Canterbury Tales (1775-8). The spurious works did not create a new impression of Chaucer but merely reinforced the old one.

There was, however, one apocryphal work which did play a significant part in governing many people's view of Chaucer. From its introduction to the canon by William Thynne in 1542 until well into the nineteenth century, The Plowman's Tale has been not infrequently a source either of gratification or embarrassment to generations of literary critics and historians, for the poem seemed to represent Chaucer as a prophet of and an apologist for the English Reformation. It is true that any reader of an early manuscript or printed edition of Chaucer's works would have been familiar with the disapproving irony in his treatment of some of the ecclesiastical characters and officials on the Canterbury pilgrimage. An owner of William Thynne's first collected edition (1532) may have regarded some satirical sections of the Romaunt of the Rose³ as further testimony to Chaucer's reservations about some aspects of contemporary religious observance, particularly within the mendicant orders. But it is clear that the Plowf came to be regarded as an altogether

more significant statement of the poet's position, for here was an extended indictment of clerical shortcomings which sought its effect not by oblique suggestion, but by embittered and persistent invective. The inclusion (in 1602) of Jack Upland,⁴ an attack on the nature and practice of the mendicant orders, must further have seemed to reveal Chaucer's reforming zeal, and must have augmented the force of Chaucer's supposed original indictment in the Plowf. Indeed Jack Upland probably owes its initial inclusion in the canon to the part already played by the Plowf in establishing the image of Chaucer, the Protestant reformer, in the minds of the reading public in general, and Chaucerian editors in particular.

Chaucer's Flowman in the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales is unique in having had two apocryphal tales fathered upon him. Although the focus of attention in this thesis is primarily upon the second of these, an account of the manuscript history of the first Flowf and the circumstances attending its inclusion in the Christ Church MS. of the Canterbury Tales will assist in throwing some light on the genesis of its more celebrated successor.

In Christ Church MS. 152⁵ on f. 228b is found 'The Prologe of the Ploughman', in which the subsequent tale⁶ is provided with a teller:

As the pylgrymys fforth ded ryde,
 Owr host be-gan to loke a-boute,
 And seyde, "ffelawys, we most prouyde,
 Hoo that best of alle thys route
 Kan telle hys tale, as lot comyth aboute.
 Ploughman Tylyer, drawe the nere,
 And telle thy tale, and we wyl here."

"Syr," he seyde, "y shalle telle, as y can,
 A tale of Crystys modyr dere,

Mary that bare bothe god and man,
 How to a monk she ded a-pere,
 That every day seyde here sautere,
 And heuene blysse had to hys mede:
 Hoc seruyth owr lady, the better shalle spede." (ll. 1-14)

There follow three stanzas, also in Rhyme-royal, of eulogy to the Virgin Mary, after which the rubric indicates the end of the Prologue by announcing - 'Here be-gynnyth the Ploughmannys tale of Owre lady'.

It tells of a pious and wealthy Frenchman who taught his son to say fifty Aves every day as part of his devotions. The son entered the Abbey of St. Gile as a monk. Returning home one day to visit his father, the son, in the course of his prayers in the Chapel, had a vision of the Virgin Mary who appeared before him in a sleeveless garment. Only by the proper completion of his prayers could she be properly clothed, the Virgin explained. The son must say thrice fifty Aves with a Pater Noster after every tenth one; this he did on the next holy day and the Virgin reappeared with full sleeves on her garment, and told him to return to the Abbey where he would become Abbot and, after seven years, would receive his reward in heaven. He did return and her promise was fulfilled.

The poem is in fact the work of Thomas Hoccleve⁷ and may be found in two MSS apart from MS. Christ Church 152 - in MS.HM 744⁸ (Huntington Library, California), which is the earliest extant text dating from the early fifteenth century, and in MS.R 3.21 in Trinity College, Cambridge⁹ which has been dated at about the time of Edward IV (1442-83). The story is not, as A. Beatty thought,

Hoccleve's own invention, for Beverly Boyd¹⁰ has shown that an earlier version exists in Bodleian MS. Digby 86,¹¹ which was copied 1272-3. The important point to note is that in none of the MSS, except Christ Church, is the Prologue to be found, for it seems to have been added subsequently, almost certainly not by Hoccleve, for the purpose of linking the poem to the main corpus of the Canterbury Tales. Such a process was regarded as a legitimate commercial ploy by professional scribes who were very conscious of the apparent incompleteness of Chaucer's great work as it stood. Scholarly discussion today still debates the possible reasons for this fragmentary state - Chaucer may have decided not to complete the work as a result of ecclesiastical influence and pressure¹²; he may have died before he had the opportunity to complete it¹³; some of it may have been lost; he may even have completed the work as he finally envisaged it and its apparent incompleteness could be the result of our failure to comprehend his original intention.¹⁴ Medieval scribes were, however, in no doubt that the poem was incomplete, and set about trying to remedy the deficiencies. J.S.P. Tatlock speaks of:

... a vast amount of evidence that the scribes were constantly trying to deal with the appearances of incompleteness¹⁵

and suggests that:

A large part of the changes and adjustments in the MSS. were for the contentment and convenience of readers, and made no doubt with business motives.

The scribe was concerned with:

... the gaps and breaks in continuity between tales, which were sure to make an uninformed buyer think he was getting a damaged copy. (p.110)

Two basic methods were employed to overcome the difficulty. One was to alter the appearance of existing material both by spurious links and by the insertion of rubrics so as to conceal gaps or, at least, to assure a prospective purchaser that any remaining gaps were in no way the fault or responsibility of the scribe. The second method was to add new material or to leave space in the MS for the completion of unfinished tales as and when suitable material should be discovered. Thus twenty five MSS of the Canterbury Tales have the Tale of Gamelyn added as the Cook's Tale,¹⁶ and the Northumberland MS. has the Prologue and Tale of Beryn added as the tale of the second Merchant, even though the colophon of the work states 'Nomen autoris presentis cronica rome et translatoris filius ecclesie Thome'.¹⁷ Such evidence lends credence to Tatlock's observation that 'The Medievals were not much exercised about questions of authenticity'. (p.111)

In this same way, Hoccleve's poem may have become ascribed to the Plowman. It is added to the Christ Church MS. in a hand variously described as 'Contemporary',¹⁸ or 'later',¹⁹ but 'not much later',²⁰ than that responsible for the remainder of the MS. It is included after the Squire's Tale on leaves left blank by an earlier scribe who, apparently, hoped that an ending could be added to the tale should one be found. The later scribe was also responsible for many corrections and insertions as well as the compilation of a

Table of Contents and the provision of directions for reading certain disarranged leaves in the correct order.

It is not possible to discover on whose initiative the second scribe added the new tale and the other improvements. It could be that the MS came into his possession before it was first put up for sale, and that he made all the additions for the purpose of increasing its commercial value. If the hand is a later one than that responsible for the rest of the MS, it is perhaps more likely that the work was carried out at the request of the owner of the MS who either requested that the blank leaves be filled up with any suitable piece known to the scribe, or who specifically asked the scribe to include Hoccleve's poem, possibly in the belief that it was by Chaucer. Again, at whose instigation the inserted material was provided with the Plowman link is not known - it could have been the initiative either of the scribe, or the owner of the MS or some unknown third party. The important thing to realise is, simply, that the link was provided. Someone felt either that the Plowman needed a tale or that he at least provided the excuse for the inclusion of one. The first PlowT presumably met the requirements of one patron and was, subsequently, rewarded with oblivion. The second PlowT, very different in character, aimed at, reached and influenced a much wider audience and its early textual history must now be considered in the light of what has already been suggested concerning the manuscript of the Canterbury Tales.

The contents of William Thynne's second edition of Chaucer's Works, printed in 1542 by William Bonham and John Reynes, differs

in only one significant respect from his first edition which had been printed ten years earlier.²¹ The one new feature was the inclusion, after the Parson's Tale in the Canterbury Tales, of the PlowT. This is the first occasion of its inclusion in a complete edition of Chaucer and it is of the greatest importance to try to understand the complex circumstances which may have attended its first printing. There is an account which sets out to detail these circumstances, for Francis Thynne, the son of William, produced in 1599 his Animaduersions vppon the Annotacions and Corrections of some imperfections of impressiones of Chaucers workes (sett downe before tyme, and nowe) reprinted in the yere of oure lorde 1598.²² The 'imperfections' referred to would not have occurred, he declares, 'yf yo^u [Speght] woulde have vouchesafed my howse, or have thoughte me worthy to have byn acquyented with these matters' (p.5). Thynne clearly regarded his information as indispensable and his story, though a long and involved one, is worth quoting extensively in order to comprehend the complicated sequence of events, and in view of the frequent reference which will be made to it throughout the thesis:

To enduce me and all others to iudge his editione (whiche I thinke yo^u neuer sawe wholye to-gether, beinge fyrst printed but in one coloume in a page, whereof I will speake hereafter) was the perfectest; ys the earnest desire and love my father hadde to have Chaucers Woorkes rightlye to be published. for the performance whereof, my father not onlye vsed the helpe of that lerned and eloquent kn[i]ghte and antiquarye Sir Briane Tuke, but had also made greate serche for copies to perfecte his woorkes, as apperethe in the ende of the squiers tale, in his editione printed in the yere 1542; but further had comissions to serche all the liberaries of Englande for Chaucers Workes, so that oute of all the Abbies of this Realme (whiche reserved anye monumentes thereof) he was fully furnished with multitude of Bookes. amongest whiche, one coppye of

some part of his woorkes came to his handes subscribed in diuers places with the "examinatur Chaucer". By this Booke, and conferringe manye of the other written copies together, he deliuered his editione, fullye corrected, as the amendementes vnder his hande, in the fyrst printed booke that euer was of his woorkes (beinge stamped by the fyrste impressione that was in Englande) will well declare, at what tyme he added manye thinges whiche were not before printed, as yo^u nowe haue donne soome, of whiche I am perswaded (and that not withoute reasone) the originall came from mee. In whiche his editione, beinge printed but with one coloume in a syde, there was pilgrymes tale, a thinge moore odious to the Clergye, then the speche of the plowmanne; that pilgrimes tale begynnyng in this sorte:

"In Lincolneshyre fast by a fenne,
Standes a relligious howse who dothe
yt kenne," etc.

In this tale did Chaucer most bitterlye enveye against the pride, state, custoumes, and extorcione of the Bysshoppes, their officialls, Archdeacons, vicars generalls, commissaryes, and other officers of the spirituall courte. The Invention and order whereof (as I haue herde yt related by some, nowe of good wershippes bothe in courte and countrys, but then my fathers clerkes,) was ...

[Tells the story of the Pilgrims Tale]

This tale, when kinge henrye the eighte had redde, he called my father unto hym, sayinge, "William Thynne! I doubt this will not be allowed; for I suspecte the Bysshoppes will call the in questione for yt." to whome my father, beinge in great fauore with his prince, (as manye yet lyvinge canne testyfy), sayed, "yf your grace be not offended, I hoope to be protected by yo^u:" wherevpon the kyng bydd hym goo his waye, and feare not. All whiche notwithstandinge, my father was called in questione by the Bysshoppes, and heaved at by cardinall Wolseye, his olde enmye, for manye causes, but mostly for that my father had furthered Skelton to publishe his 'Collen Cloute' againste the Cardinall, the moste parte of whiche Booke was compiled in my fathers howse at Erithe in Kente. But for all my fathers frendes, the Cardinalls perswadinge auctorytye was so greate with the kinge, that thoughte by the kinges fauor my father escaped bodelye daunger, yet the Cardinall caused the kinge so muche to myslyke of that tale, that chaucer must be newe printed, and that discourse of the pilgrymes tale lefte oute; and so beinge printed agayne, some thynges were forsed to be omitted, and the plowmans tale (supposed, but vntrulye, to be made by olde Sir Thomas Wyat, father to hym which was executed in the firste yere of Quene

Marye, and not by Chaucer) with muche ado permitted to passe with the reste, in suche sorte that in one open parliamente, (as I haue herde Sir John Thynne reporte, beinge then a member of the howse), when talke was had of Bookes to be forbidden, Chaucer had there for euer byn condempned, had yt not byn that his woorkes had byn counted but fables.

(pp.6-10)

This, then, is the story of one whose information concerning the events which he describes is, necessarily, second hand. Francis Thynne's recollection of having attended the funeral of Cardinal Pole in 1558, being then 'a yong scholar'²³, indicates that he was probably not born until after the publication of his father's second edition in 1542. His sources of information were twofold. Firstly there were those people 'nowe of good worshippe bothe in courte and countrys, but then my fathers clerkes', and secondly there was Sir John Thynne,²⁴ the builder of Longleat, who became one of Protector Somerset's counsellors and who would, probably, have been familiar with old court traditions, enmities and stories.

Francis's account, correctly understood, is frequently confusing and even manifestly incorrect when set against the facts as now known. However attempts by some scholars to summarise the story have often revealed the summariser's confusion as well as that of Thynne. Furnivall's account of the passage in which Cardinal Wolsey:

caged the kinge so muche to myslyke of that tale, that chaucer must be newe printed, and that discourse of the pilgrymes tale lefte oute; and so beinge printed agayne, some thynges were forsed to be omitted ... and the plowmans tale ... with muche ado permitted to passe with the reste

(p.10)

reads as follows:

my father's 1st edition of Chaucer was cancelld, and a 2nd printed without The Pilgrim's Tale. And from the 3rd The Plowman's Tale was nearly left out.

(p.10)

It is clear that Thynne's story as understood by Furnivall refers to three editions - to the pilot version (no longer extant) of the 1532 edition, in which the PilgT²⁵ was included; to the final 1532 edition (i.e. the pilot version 'newe printed') which omitted the PilgT; and to the 1542 edition (i.e. the 1532 edition 'beinge printed agayne') which included the FlowT. Such an interpretation can only be justified by torturing the syntax so as to allow that 'muste be newe printed' and 'so beinge printed agayne' refer to two separate editions (final 1532, 1542), rather than, as was surely intended, to different stages of the same (1532) edition. The two stages were, firstly, the order that the pilot edition must be 'news printed', and, secondly, the carrying out of that order, with the pilot 'beinge printed agayne', and the finished product was the 1532 edition as we now have it. The fact that this edition does not contain the FlowT should not disguise the fact that Francis Thynne believed, in his confusion, that it did. Furnivall incorrectly relates the phrase 'some thinges were forsed to be omitted' to the 1542 text. In fact, nothing was omitted in 1542 which had been included 10 years earlier. Read correctly, however, the phrase refers solely to the 1532 final edition, in relation to which its accuracy can neither be confirmed nor denied.

Mrs. C.C. Stopes is also guilty of accidental misrepresentation when she claims that William Thynne:

had brought out his first edition of Chaucer in 1532 in two columns a page, but that later he was bringing out an edition having one column on a side, which contained The Pilgrims Tale ...²⁶

whereas, in fact, Francis states exactly the opposite - the first edition had one column a side - and indeed at no stage mentions any

edition having 'two columns'.

Even Russell A. Fraser, in his otherwise excellent edition of The Court of Venus (Durham, North Carolina, 1955) makes the same mistake as did Henry Bradshaw in the nineteenth century.²⁷ Fraser describes Francis as 'a man who never saw the one-column edition of which he wrote'.²⁸ This may or may not be true, but it is a conjecture wholly unsupported from the text of the Animadversions in which the only reference to anyone NOT having seen that particular edition is when Francis, addressing Thomas Speght, says 'I thinke yo^u neuer sawe [it - i.e. the one column edition] wholye to-gether' (p.6).

These distortions, of varying degrees of importance in themselves, bear witness to the complexity of the story as told by Thynne and also highlight the danger of subconsciously rationalizing the story as told, in terms of the story as it should have been told. The actual mistakes which Thynne makes also vary in significance but, collectively, they render his story unacceptable as it stands. Firstly, the part played by Cardinal Wolsey in the rejection of the Pilgr from the so-called 'cancelled' edition is seen as a manifestation of the grudge which Wolsey had borne William Thynne ever since William offered the hospitality of his house 'at Erith in Kent' to John Skelton whilst that poet was engaged in writing Colin Clout, one of several abusive satires which he directed against the Cardinal. However, Skelton died in 1529, two years before William obtained the lease to the land at Erith. Home for Francis had, of course, always been Erith and this doubtless explains his confusion and telescoping of dates.²⁹

This same distortion of time results, secondly and more significantly, in Francis's claim that it was Wolsey whose influence caused Henry to demand the cancellation of the PilgrT. Wolsey died in November 1530 and, by the end of 1529, seems largely to have forfeited his influence over the king. For Francis's story to have any validity, it would mean that William had submitted his edition for approval before the end of 1529 and, after its initial rejection, had waited three years before publishing a revised version. That such a delay occurred is barely credible. It is more likely that Francis, knowing the antagonism between his father and Wolsey, and believing that the rejection of the PilgrT was the result of ecclesiastical pressure, transferred the deeds of a subsequent churchman onto the Cardinal. As will be shown later, there is abundant evidence to reinforce the belief that there was energetic clerical suppression of what was regarded as subversive literature.

The third demonstrable mistake in Francis's account is his claim that the PilgrT could have been submitted with the rest of the Canterbury Tales for approval in 1532. The tale has three internal allusions which, taken together, conclusively mark the poem as having been written after 1536, though probably before 1538. Firstly, there is a reference to lines from a printed version of the Romaunt of the Rose translation which was not, so far as is known, printed until 1532. The narrator of the PilgrT tells how his guide:

... bad me reyde the 'romant of the rose',
 the thred leafe, Iust from the end
 to the second page, ther he dyd me send ...
 he prayd me thes.vi.stauis for to marke,
 whiche be chaucers awn hand wark:-

'Thus moche woll our boke sygnify,
 that whyle peter hath mastery,
 may neuer Iohn show well his myght.
 now haue I declaryd right
 the meyning of the bark and rynd
 that makis the ententions blynd. (ll. 722-4; 739-46)

The earliest known edition of Chaucer's Works which contains the Romaunt at a position 'the thred leafe Iust from the end / to the second page' is that of 1532. Thus the Pilgr is unlikely to have been written before that date. Further, the poem contains the lines:

perkyn werbek and Iak straw,
 and now of lat owr cobler the dawe. (ll. 447-8)

in which the allusion is to a certain Captain Cobler, otherwise Robert Melton, who was the leader of the 1536 Lincolnshire rising.³⁰ As that insurrection did not begin until October, the reference seems to date the composition of the poem at the very end of the year at the earliest. The third and final allusion which helps to indicate the date of the Pilgr comes when, at the opening of the poem, the narrator reveals that he is going 'toward walsingham upon my pelgrymag' (l. 11). The famous shrine was destroyed by Henry VIII in 1538³¹ and whilst it is possible that a poet, writing after 1538 and anxious to archaize his story (which was to appear first in a volume bearing, in all probability, Chaucer's name on the title-page) both in language and in allusion, would cite Walsingham as a place of pilgrimage, it is surely more likely that a reforming poet writing at a time when artistic tact and diplomacy were at a premium, would not choose to perpetuate the memory of a recently destroyed shrine. So it is that a date at some time before 1538 is probable for the terminus ad quem.

In order to give any credence to Thynne's story of the Pilgr

and its connection with the events of 1532, it would be necessary for the lines in the tale referring to the Lincolnshire rising to have been interpolated; the Romaunt reference would also have to have been a subsequent insertion, or else an earlier printed edition must once have existed which was set up in exactly the same way on the page as the 1532 text and which must now have disappeared without trace. One is loathe to make so many hazardous assumptions.

A fourth error in Thynne's account is the statement that there was once an early one-columned edition of Chaucer's Works. The only evidence in support of this belief is Furnivall's story that W.C. Hazlitt and F.S. Ellis:

(the well-known antiquarian bookseller and publisher, of the firm of Ellis and White), told me some time since, and Mr Hazlitt has lately repeated his conviction, that they saw at Sotheby's sale-rooms at 13, Wellington St., W.C., within the last 2 or 3 years, a 2-columned folio of Chaucer's Works that had its wanting leaves supplied from some one-columned edition. 32

No trace has since been found of this item, and justification of Francis's statement can hardly be claimed in its absence. The fifth and final error in Francis's account is his assertion that the PlowT replaced the PilgT in the 'revised' edition of 1532. It didn't.

In spite of this series of errors in the account, there have been those who have attempted to defend Thynne's attribution of the date 1532 to the events which he describes. It has been suggested that a peculiarity in the collation of the 1532 edition reveals that something indeed was left out at some stage in the course of its preparation - perhaps it was the PlowT, thus making Thynne's mistake merely one of having confused the name of the piece about which there

16.

was dispute in 1532. The peculiarity referred to is a break in the foliation between Sig.Q.q.3 (which is f.CC.xix.) and Sig.[Q.q.7] (f.CC.xx.). These unfoliated leaves - Sig.Q.q.4 - [6^v] - contain the Testament of Creseyde. Sig.Q.q.3 contains the beginning of this poem, which follows on directly from the final verses of the Troilus, verses which occupy the top half of the first column. Sig.[Q.q.6^v] contains the end of the Testament, together with the title of the next poem - The Legende of Good Women, whose text begins on Sig.[Q.q.7] (f.CC.xx.). Furnivall³³ suggested that the Testament was occupying space originally intended for another work. Lounsbury³⁴ infers that this other work was the PlowT. If this were the case, Thynne's story of a work rejected from the 1532 edition would be substantially vindicated. However, the work of Professor W.A. Jackson has shown that originally the only space which had been left blank was Sig.Q.q.3^v which would, of course, be insufficient for the inclusion of works as long as the PlowT or the PilgT. His account states that:

The insertion of Henryson's The Testament of Creseyde was apparently a last minute alteration. Originally Sig Qq3 had on the recto the end of the fifth Boke of Troilus and the title, in compartment, of The Legende of Good Women; the verso was blank. The quire then contained only six leaves, Sig Qq4-[6] were occupied with the text of The legende. When it was decided to insert The testament, Sig Qq3 was cancelled and inserted in its place were two sheets (the first two leaves of which were signed 'Qq3-4' - the first leaf numbered with the folio of the cancellandum). These inserted sheets contain a reprinting of the end of Troilus, the text of The testament, and the title (without a compartment) of The legende. 35

There is, thus, no evidence from collation which indicated that any material was suppressed from the 1532 edition.

Lounsbury, who was more anxious than most to vindicate Thynne's

story as it stands, cites Leland as evidence that the FlowT was in fact suppressed. He refers to a passage in Leland's account of Chaucer's life in his Commentarii de Scriptoribus Britannicis (Oxford, 1709), in which Leland includes, in a list of Chaucer's works:

Fabulae Cantianae XXIV.

quarum duae soluta oratione scriptae; sed Petri Aratoris fabula, quae communi doctorum consensu Chaucero, tanquam vero parenti, attribuitur, in utraque editione, quia malos sacerdotum mores vehementer increpavit, suppressa est. 36

On what grounds did Leland base his statement that the FlowT had been suppressed? If it could be proved that Leland had compiled his work before 1542 then the chances that he had personal knowledge of the suppression would be increased, albeit not decisively. After 1542 Leland would have been in a good position to guess, rather than to know, that the FlowT had been suppressed ten years earlier, for a comparison of the contents of the two William Thynne editions would have revealed the absence of the FlowT from the earlier version. An inventive mind could have then begun to speculate as to the reasons for the omission. With no means for such a comparison (that is, before the publication of William's second edition), it would have been much more difficult to guess either that William had even intended to include the FlowT in his edition or that his intention had been thwarted.

Unfortunately, there is no certainty as to the date of Leland's work as a whole or of this statement in particular. Lounsbury³⁷ believes that Leland used the 1552 edition when compiling his list of Chaucer's works, thus implying a date before 1542 for Leland's statement, for if he had been writing after 1542, he would perhaps

have been more likely to use the 1542 edition whilst preparing his list. E.P. Hammond³⁸ suggests, however, that Leland may well have used the 1542 edition, for she notes a close similiarity between the order of works in Leland's list, and the order of the table of contents in that later edition. In fact, the tables of contents in both editions are identical as regards the order of the tales, so Miss Hammond's statement is valueless. Even supposing that Lounsbury were correct in his belief that Leland used the 1532 edition, guesswork could still have produced the theory of suppression, for the Thomas Godfray separate edition of the FlowT may well have been known to Leland in the years before 1542. The publication, some years after 1532, of a separate tale which was printed by the same man who was responsible for printing the 1532 edition, could well have caused Leland to ask himself why that tale had not been included in the collected edition, and the result of his speculation could easily have been the Suppression Theory. Thus one hesitates to place any faith in an undatable statement whose substance may well depend totally on Leland's speculative imagination rather than on verified knowledge. In passing, it should also be said that faith in Lounsbury's opinions is scarcely reinforced by his unhappy suggestion that Wolsey may be regarded 'after a fashion' as one of the early editors of Chaucer because of his suppression of the FlowT:

If he [Wolsey] kept this work out of the book, he was full as likely to have taken the course he did because he believed the work to be spurious as because it expressed hostility to the Roman Catholic church. 39

There are few historians who would share Lounsbury's confidence in the Cardinal's literary sensibilities in this particular instance.

Thus all attempts to rationalise Thynne's story in terms of the 1532 edition prove to be strained and unconvincing at best and manifestly incorrect at worst. There is one further factor 'already referred to', which must be considered in this connection. Thomas Godfray printed the 1532 edition and it was his name which also appeared at the end of a one-column separate edition of the PlowT which has been dated c 1535.⁴⁰ The suggestion has been made⁴¹ that this book was compiled from sheets which, it is alleged, were printed by Godfray in 1532 for inclusion in the complete edition and that, after their suppression, they were issued separately in 1535. We have already noted that there is no bibliographical evidence to support the view that some item was suppressed from the 1532 edition. Furthermore, Henry Bradshaw's Re-issue Theory reveals an unawareness of the actual typographical differences between the two editions. In the 1532 edition, the Monk's Tale (also written in eight line stanzas) occupies forty three lines in a column, two columns on each page. This contrasts with the PlowT in the separate edition which has only thirty six lines to a column and only one column to a page. Moreover the separate edition is printed in black letter and not, as is the case with the 1532 edition, in French lettre batarde.⁴²

It is clear that no characteristic of this 1535 text lends any support to Francis Thynne's story, or the conjectures based upon it, concerning the possible suppression and re-issue of material. None of the events which Francis assigns to 1532 can be rationalised in terms of that year. Such truth as his story may contain seems to accord better with circumstances which can be reconstructed as

having attended the publication of William Thynne's second edition.

These circumstances pivot on the textual history of a work already alluded to - the Pilgr. It has already been shown that this tale could not have been written before the end of 1536 and yet both Francis Thynne and, earlier, John Bale in his Illustrium majoris Britanniae scriptorum summarium (1548),⁴³ assign the work to Chaucer, in spite of its absence from all standard printed editions of Chaucer up to the time when Bale was exiled to Germany in 1540 after the fall of his patron Thomas Cromwell. Because Bale was forced to compile his great catalogue whilst he was on the continent, he was limited largely to material and information which he had been able to gather before his exile. How, then, did he come to assign the poem to Chaucer? It is in the likely answer to this question that this most probable explanation of Francis Thynne's overall confusion lies and thus the history of the Pilgr is worth dwelling upon at this point.

In Bale's list of Chaucer's works is the entry 'Narrationes diuersorum, trac.I. In comitatu Lyncolniensi',⁴⁴ which is a Latin rendering of part of the opening line of the Pilgr - 'In lincolneshyr fast by the fene'. The only extant text of the poem is found in a fragment (known as the Douce fragment) of a book with the running-title 'The Court of Venus'. One other fragment (known as the Folger fragment) of a work of this name survives which, in addition to the running-title, has a title-page, though without date or mention of author or printer. It is significant that Bale also lists under Chaucer's name a piece entitled 'De curia Veneris, li.I. In Maio cum uirescerent',⁴⁵ which is a Latin rendering of part of the opening line of the Folger fragment

Prologue - 'IN the moneth of may when the new tender grene' (p.115, l.1).

In the 1548 Summarium the two titles - Narrationes diuersorum and De curia Veneris are not to be found next to each other in the list of Chaucer's works, but they are moved closer together in the subsequent Catalogue (Basle, 1557-9).⁴⁶ Thus it is virtually certain that, at some stage, both works whether separately or in one volume must have had a title-page with Chaucer's name upon it. However if the Folger and Douce fragments are part of the same edition, printed before 1540, then it cannot have been this volume which Bale saw and which caused him to list the works included under Chaucer's name for, as we have noted, the Folger title-page has no indication as to the author's name.

It was Russell A. Fraser who demonstrated conclusively that the two fragments are not part of the same edition. By detailed typographical analysis he has proved that the Douce fragment is part of a book printed by Thomas Gybson between 1535-9⁴⁷ and the Folger fragment was printed by Thomas Marshe between 1561-5.⁴⁸ Thus the PilgrT, in a one-columned edition and with a title-page which could have mentioned Chaucer's name was accessible to Bale before his exile. Did this volume also contain the Court of Venus which would explain that work's attribution to Chaucer? Its running title suggests that it did. Furthermore, it is clear from Bale's Summarium that a Court of Venus had been printed by this time and the Prologue to this piece (as printed in the Folger fragment) contains veiled anti-clerical allusions⁴⁹ which connect it with the attitudes set out in the PilgrT. However, Fraser cites as conclusive evidence the fact that the information which eventually led Bale to change, in his Index

Britanniae Scriptorum (1557), his ascription of the Court of Venus from Chaucer to one Robert Shyngleton, a dissenting priest, was supplied 'ex Thoma Gybson medico'.⁵⁰ Who was more likely to know the identity of the poem's true author than the man who first printed it in 1537-9?

Thus, drawing ^{together} the threads of this complex sequence of events and possibilities, a one columned edition of works with the running title 'The Court of Venus', which probably bore Chaucer's name on the title-page, was extant at the time when William Thynne was preparing his 1542 edition of Chaucer. The one columned edition contained some ballad material and the Pilgr and Bale's description 'Narrationes diversorum', suggests that it also contained other tales. Also printed by this time was a separate edition of the Flow, also with one column to a page, which reflected the attitudes set out in the Pilgr and which was not unlike that poem in form. Francis Thynne's story may thus be a conflation of the events surrounding the compilation and publication of both these books and of his father's edition.

The precise form of Francis Thynne's confusion can never be clear. The explanation which corresponds most satisfactorily with the facts as known and which contorts Thynne's story least is that William noted the appearance in print after 1532 of the Pilgr, observed its attribution to Chaucer, desired to include it in his forthcoming second edition and, accordingly, submitted the poem for official approval as a Canterbury tale just prior to 1542. It was suppressed, partly because of its religious standpoint, but also because it used political prophecy⁵¹ as a weapon against the church (see Appendix). Henry's actions before 1542 show that he was fully aware of the danger

from the double-edged nature of such prophecies which could be, and were, turned against the very people whose positions the prophecies had been intended to vindicate. With the suppression of the PilgT, William Thynne was asked to substitute the PlowT which had also been in print for several years and which was eventually allowed to be printed only after 'much ado' - An Acte for thadvancement of true Religion and for thabbolishment of the contrarie (1542) had provided that:

... Cronycles Canterburye tales Chaucers bokes Gowers bokes and stories of mennes lieves, shall not be comprehended in the prohibicon of this acte, oonesse the kinges saide Majestie shall hereafter make speciall proclamacon for the condemnacon and reprovng of the same or any of them. 52

and apparently the king eventually ensured that the 'much ado' doubtless from the clergy, did not result in the banning of the PlowT, one of the Chaucerian books for which special immunity from censorship had been prescribed in the terms of the Act.

This interpretation of the facts accounts for a number of the features of Francis's story - including the suppression of the PilgT from and the inclusion of the PlowT in the same edition, which would not have been possible in 1532. One of Thynne's major errors can also, perhaps, be understood. His story of a one column edition of Chaucer containing the PilgT accords perfectly with our knowledge of the Thomas Gybson version of the Court of Venus - Thynne's mistake lay in believing that the pilot edition of the 1542 Chaucer which was submitted to the king and which also contained the PilgT, had a similar one column arrangement. Thynne's other errors - the story of Cardinal

Wolsey's interference, the assigning of all events to 1532 - can be regarded as the results of an understandable telescoping of a very complex sequence of events at a distance of fifty years. Consideration of why and at whose instigation the FlowT first came to be connected with the Canterbury Tales must be deferred until a later section, when the anatomy of the tale - its Prologue and its interpolations - can be discussed at greater length.

Skeat's epilogue to 'this amazing story' succinctly exemplifies the way in which the priorities of modern editors differ from those of their sixteenth century forbears:

... the really significant point ... is the obvious omission of all parties concerned - the editor, the king, and the bishops - that the question as to the admission of an extra tale or two amongst the series told by the Canterbury Pilgrims in no way depended upon the date at which such tale was composed! 53

As we shall see, authenticity had to submit to more important and immediate considerations.

Printed Editions:

The 1542 edition includes the FlowT after the Parson's Tale and immediately before the Romaunt. In subsequent editions it was placed between the Manciple's Tale and the Parst, a move which might be taken to indicate that the reading public had by this time accepted the FlowT as a rightful part of the Chaucer canon. Its position in early editions has been an important factor in dating the edition of

Chaucer published jointly by Thomas Petit, Robert Toye, Richard Kele, and John Reynes. This edition has been cited as a predecessor of the 1542 edition, a claim which is hardly probable when one notes that in it the FlowT is positioned before the Parst which would mean that, for a pre 1542 date to be accepted for the edition, the FlowT must first have been placed before the Parst, then after it, and finally in front of it again.⁵⁴ So it is that a date after 1542 - c 1550 has been postulated - is generally accepted.

John Stowe's edition (1561) basically derives its text from its predecessor and, in turn, becomes the basis for Thomas Speght's first edition (1598).⁵⁵ Speght's synopsis of the FlowT in this edition makes a revealing claim:

A complaint against the pride and couetousnesse of the cleargie: made no doubt by Chaucer with the rest of the Tales. For I haue seene it in written hand in Iohn Stowes Library in a booke of such antiquity, as seemeth to haue beene written neare to Chaucers time. 56

Stowe is known to have possessed an extensive collection of old MSS but, in view of the reservations accorded to Francis Thynne's story, caution reminds us that Speght may have merely seen a sixteenth century MS copy of a printed text of the poem; he might even be confusing it with another poem.⁵⁷ At all events, no medieval MS of the poem survives though there is, as will be shown later, a sixteenth century MS version which does not seem to have been copied directly from any known printed text of the poem. The evidence suggests that it was copied from another MS of the poem which was also current in the sixteenth century. It should be noted that Speght volunteers his information concerning the Stowe MS. There seems no compelling reason why, at this date, he

should have felt the need to justify the presence of the poem in the canon by claiming to have seen an early MS copy of it. In 1598 there cannot have been any of the pressures which might have tempted an editor to fabricate evidence of this sort, for everything suggests that the FlowT was accepted as Chaucer's without question.

Moreover, Speght's acceptance of the work as being genuinely Chaucerian is not an unthinking one. He shows himself to be alive to the danger of citing as Chaucer's, works which in all respects except vocabulary and diction seem to be products of the fourteenth century:

Others [works] I haue seen without any Authours name,
which for the inuention I would verily judge to be
Chaucers, were it not that wordes and phrases carry
not euery where Chaucers antiquitie. 58

One wonders if there is a veiled reference to the PilgT here. Certainly it is the same critical awareness evidenced here which seems to have identified and accepted as being of Chaucer's time, the MS of the FlowT in the Stowe collection. However, no such MS now exists and it is perhaps just possible that Speght might have invented its existence on his own initiative, for the sake of lending to his edition a greater air of authority and completeness.

Speght's second edition (1602) incorporates several, though not all, of Francis Thynne's suggested improvements as set out in the Animadversions. This edition was, in turn, reprinted by J.H. (J. Hindmarsh)⁵⁹ in 1687 whose 'Advertisement to the Reader'⁶⁰ records, interestingly, the failure of his sedulous search in both public and private libraries throughout the country, for the missing text of the PilgT; Thynne's reference to that work in the Animadversions had obliged

future editors to make at least a token effort to locate a manuscript version of it.

The important point to stress is that in all these editions up to 1687, the FlowT is clearly regarded as an integral part of the canon and there is no evidence to suggest that by the end of the seventeenth century there was any editorial desire or intention to omit the tale or to question its authenticity. The next edition, printed in 1721, was initially the work of John Urry though, after his death, it was guided to the press by two Christ Church scholars, Thomas Ainsworth (d.1719) and finally Timothy Thomas. The account of Chaucer's life as it stands in the edition is the work of John Dart, with a series of alterations and excisions, some of which were made, without the author's knowledge or consent, by William Thomas. When this rejected material is examined, it is hardly surprising that editors who were determined to print the FlowT were unfavourably disposed towards Dart's opinions and their inclusion in the 1721 edition.

In 1723 Dart⁶¹ records his dismay at the brazen omission of all his reasons for believing that the FlowT - that 'scandalous railing Ballad' - was spurious. He believes that the inclusion of the tale in the Urry edition is a slight on his own character and scholarship. He sets out three reasons for doubting the authenticity of the tale; firstly it is not to be found in any of the ancient MSS which he has seen; secondly he notes an alteration, in the printed texts, of the link line 'By this the Manciple had his Tale I ended' (as Dart quotes it) which should be the first line of the Parst, to

'By this the Ploughman had his Tale y ended'; thirdly, he points to various contradictions between the 'modest quiet, good Parishoner' of the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales and the 'ill-bred, saucy Fellow' of the PlowT Prologue. He believes that the two poems were 'both born at a time, yet they had very different Originals', thereby at least conceding a fourteenth century date to the PlowT.

It is worth noting that those responsible for the publication of Urry's edition were not quite as unscrupulous regarding their selection of material as is sometimes alleged. Timothy Thomas in his Preface concedes the possibility that the Prologue and Tale of Beryn may be spurious and his justification for their inclusion is merely that:

we are ... obliged to Mr. Urry's diligence for finding and publishing Two ancient Poems, not unworthy our perusal:
And they have as good a right to appear at the end of this Edition as Lidgate's Story of Thebes had to be printed in former ones. 62

No such concession is made about the PlowT - nor is that tale consigned to the end of the edition.

Dart's views went unheeded for a considerable time. In 1736 John Entick (1703-1773) issued his proposals for a new edition of Chaucer and revealed his intention to include the PlowT,⁶³ and it is not until 1775 that a further expression is given to Dart's doubts and action is taken in response to them. Tyrwhitt notes that Speght claimed to have seen an old manuscript of the poem:

He does not say it was among the Canterbury Tales, or that it has Chaucers name on it. We can therefore only judge it by the internal evidence, and upon that I have

no scruple to declare my opinion that it has not the least resemblance to Chaucers manner, either of writing or thinking, in his other works. Though he and Boccace have laughed at some of the abuses of religion and the disorders of Ecclesiastical persons, it is quite incredible that either of them, or even Wyclif himself, would have railed at the whole government of the Church in the style of the Plowmans Tale. If they had been disposed to such an attempt, their times would not have born it ... 64

and he concludes:

as I cannot understand that there is the least ground of evidence ... for believing it to be the work of Chaucers, I have not admitted it into this edition. (loc.cit.)

Tyrwhitt's reservations seem, to the modern reader, to be dictated more by considerations of taste and instinct than do those of Dart. Nevertheless action had been taken - the PlowT had been rejected.

Though Tyrwhitt's edition is now rightly regarded as a major turning point in the history of Chaucerian editing, it is important to realise that its effect on people's attitudes towards the PlowT both at the time of the edition's publication and on into the nineteenth century, was not as striking as might now be supposed. Though subsequent editors became more hesitant when printing the PlowT, print it they continued to do. Their prefaces frequently paid only lip service to Tyrwhitt - thus Robert Anderson in 1795:

The Plowman's Tale ... omitted by Tyrwhitt [has] been retained, though all evidence, internal and external, is against the supposition of [its] being the production of Chaucer. 65

John Bell's Chaucer volumes in his great The Poets of Great Britain (1782)⁶⁶ also contains the work, printed from the Urry text, and so does Alexander Chalmer's Chaucer volume in his Works of the English

Poets (1810),⁶⁷ which includes it in a section headed 'Certain Works of Geoffrey Chaucer annexed to the Impressions printed in the years 1561 and 1602'. Thus, however haltingly towards the end, Chaucer's name was still linked with the PlowE in editions which were used well into the nineteenth century.

As well as these collected editions of Chaucer, which contained the tale, there are four separate texts which were issued at various times. Mention has already been made of the Thomas Godfray edition. The only copy of this now known to exist is at the Henry Huntington Library in California and was formerly the property of such distinguished bibliophiles as Anthony Askew (1722-74), Richard Farmer (1732-79) and Richard Heber (1773-1833) before passing into the Britwell collection⁶⁸ whence, in 1924, it was sold to the United States. The date, like many other details of the book's history in print is tantalisingly obscure. The original suggestion that it was printed c 1535 was made by Hazlitt; earlier bibliographers like Ames,⁶⁹ Dibdin⁷⁰ and Collier⁷¹ do not mention the volume. Hazlitt's date, of great significance if it could be verified, has met with general acceptance yet has had little evidence, and that largely circumstantial, cited in its support. The conjectured date seems to be based on the fact that of the books printed by Godfray which can with any certainty be assigned to a particular year, none seems to have been printed after 1536. Apart from the 1532 Chaucer edition which is dated in the colophon, Morrison⁷² assigns a further twenty three works to the years between 1530 and 1535, yet, of these, he is certain in only two instances. These are, firstly, A treatyse of the donation gyuen vnto Syluester, pope of Rome

(which is assigned to 1534 on the strength of internal allusions) and The forme and maner of subvention for pore people practysed in Hypres, which is assigned to 1535. Beyond these works there is only surmise. In the case of the Plowt there is no conclusive watermark evidence,⁷³ and Mrs. Annie S. Irvine's confident assertion that:

since the only dated work of Godfray's is the 1532 edition of Chaucer, this separate edition of the Plowman's Tale must certainly antedate the 1542 edition of Chaucer. 74

must be treated with a degree of caution.

If Godfray's separate edition was printed at some time after 1542, it is unlikely that William Hyll would have entered into competition by printing, as he did, his separate edition of the poem at about the same time. The exact date of Hyll's edition is, again, not certain, but a full collation shows it to be merely a reprint (albeit a slovenly one) of the 1542 edition. It is equally unlikely that Godfray would have printed his edition with that of Hyll already on the market. With the need, then, for a lapse of some years between the two separate editions, with the certainty that the Hyll edition postdates 1542, and with the fact that collation does not insist that the Godfray text has been copied from the 1542 edition, it may be said that there is nothing in the evidence so far discussed which argues against Hazlitt's date and there are a number of factors which lend support to it. It is possible to resolve any remaining uncertainty fairly conclusively.

In the Pilgr which, we have noted, dates from some time between the end of 1536 and 1538, the following lines may be found:

rownd visagyd, and sun-thing son-ybrent,
he loked not as he were closter-pent; (ll. 181-2)

There is here a clear resemblance to lines in the PlowT Prologue in which, during a section describing the appearance of the Plowman, we are told that:

Our hoste behelde wele all about,
 And sawe this man was sunne ybrent;
 He knewe well by his senged snoute,
 And by his clothes that were to-rent,
 He was a man wont to walke about,
 He nas nat alway in cloystre ypent; (ll. 17-22)

and there are other echoes of the PlowT to be found in the PilgT. Compare, for instance, the PilgT lines:

whan for there bred men vsed to swynk,
 and erne ther met or that they drynk, (ll. 33-4)

with the PlowT:

For I am wont to go to the plowe,
 And erne my meate yer that I dyns;
 To swete and swynke I make avowe, (ll. 27-9)

and there is, again, a close similarity between 'I beseke god amend it for his grace' (PilgT l. 348) and the refrain at the end of the PlowT stanzas in sections of the third part of the poem - notably 'God amende it for his grace' (l. 1316). Taken in conjunction with the overall similarities of form and content between the two poems, these verbal parallels seem conclusively to indicate that the PilgT was directly inspired at the time of its composition by ^{the} existence in print of the PlowT. Two possibilities explain this influence. Either the PilgT poet saw the PlowT in manuscript or, surely more probable, in the single columned edition printed by Godfray. This being so, a date of c 1535-6 for that edition seems likely.

The Godfray edition has other points of interest. Firstly,

it lacks both the original title-page and the first thirty six lines of the Prologue which, together, must have filled both pages of Sig.A.i. The missing lines have been supplied in a much later hand - quite possibly by one of the volume's several distinguished owners during the eighteenth century. The addition has been attached to the beginning of the volume immediately before Sig.A.ii. on which l. 37 occurs. The readings of these added lines reveal that they were copied from Stowe's 1561 Chaucer edition. Only the late MS., St and Sp1 have her share (l. 7) - all other texts read share, with her omitted; only the late MS., St and UB read sainct (l. 11) [AO read Sainct] - other texts have a variety of different spellings.

A second point of interest concerns the missing title-page. For a book whose title-page must, presumably, have declared the contents to be one of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, there are a number of singular features of format. It should first be noted that the running titles offer no hint as to the title of the work - they merely record 'The fyrst parte', 'The seconde parte', and so on. Secondly, the rubrication does not refer to the poem as a 'Tale' but rather as 'this present worke' (Sig.A.ii.), or 'this boke' (Sig.B.ii.). Thirdly, there are a series of marginal glosses (See Appendix), mainly taken from the Vulgate, which are placed at appropriate places in the text up to l. 716, after which they are not to be found. Some of these glosses are accompanied by a Vulgate reference as with 'Ve pastoribus Israel / q[ui] pascebant semetipsos. Ezech.xxxiiii.' which appears in the left margin of Sig. A.iii^V, beside ll. 141-8. Other glosses have no reference, as with 'Ecce agnus dei', which accompanies l. 98 (Sig.A.ii^V). There can

surely be no question, with all these strange features, of an attempt to conceal the poem's identity, or its attribution to Chaucer. The Prologue alone would have been sufficient to render such an attempt ineffectual, even if the title-page did not state that the poem was written by Chaucer or that it was part of the Canterbury Tales.

Moreover, why should those responsible for the publication of the poem feel in any way hesitant about yoking the name of England's most celebrated 'antient' poet to the cause in which they believed?

In the absence of definite evidence, there can be only conjecture. Examining the glosses, it is surely significant that they are not once to be found after l. 716. As will presently be argued, after l. 716 the poem ceases to be exactly as was originally conceived at the end of the fourteenth century. After this line, the original material seems to have undergone some process of revision and expansion - probably early in the fifteenth century. It could be that the glosses represent some standard feature of the whole poem in its original form, and that this feature was accidentally ignored when the reviser came to deal with the material after l. 716. Alternatively, the omission of the glosses could represent a deliberate and conscious act by the reviser - it could reflect the calculated rejection of Vulgate glosses by an advocate of vernacular scriptures who saw no virtue in glossing a Lollard poem such as the Plowf. If this were the case, it would not be indicative of a particular date for the omission, for the action would be as likely to come from a Reformer who favoured both Thomas Cromwell's presentation of the Coverdale Bible to the king for approval in August 1535⁷⁵ and the subsequent episcopal

and Royal assent which the translation came to enjoy, as it would from any Lollard reviser.

The one factor which tips the balance slightly in favour of the glosses either having been accidentally omitted or even not having existed in the original after l. 716 is that if their absence from the second part of the poem reflects their conscious omission by a reviser, why did he not also remove the glosses from the first half of the poem? It might, of course, be argued that the absence of glosses after l. 716 indicates that the last section of the poem was written by a different author from the one responsible for the first 716 lines, and that it was the second author who was disinclined to take the trouble to gloss the interpolated material. It will be argued in a later chapter, however, that there is strong evidence for believing that l. 716f. must have existed, in some form, in the poem as first conceived, and that consequently the glossing must once have existed throughout the poem, or its cessation after l. 716 must have been the decision of the original author.

The retention of the glosses in G, together with the other unusual features of format referred to, could simply be taken to mean that whilst the poem itself had, by the addition of a Prologue, been metamorphosed into a Canterbury Tale, the format in which the work was presented was, as yet, insufficiently akin to that afforded to other Canterbury Tales in the collected editions, and that, consequently, the format did not act as an appropriate reinforcement to and underlining of the new status enjoyed by the work of that anonymous Lollard apologist. It is possible, however, to regard the retention of the

glosses as a deliberate act on the part of the editor or printer, designed to present the work in a format similar to that found in many of the serious vernacular theological and controversial tracts of the period. In this way, perhaps, it was thought that the poem would achieve a rather more widespread influence and respectability than would normally be enjoyed by a mere 'fable'.

The second separate edition, printed by William Hyll (STC 5100), is listed in Bale's Index as 'Narrationem Agricole, li.i. Agricole subduxit aratrum in Iunio',⁷⁶ and the text, as has already been remarked, is clearly a reprint - albeit a very inaccurate and careless one - of the 1542 text. The title-page announces 'The Ploumans tale compylled by syr Geffray Chaucher [sic] knyght', which is written in a clear hand on Sig.A.i. with Sig.A.i^v blank, and the text beginning on Sig.A.ii. There is no reason to believe that the extant title-page contains different information from that which may have been printed on the original one. At the end of the poem, the rubric 'Thus endeth the boke of Chaunterburye [sic] Tales' represents conclusive evidence that the Hyll edition was reprinted from Th1 in which, as has been mentioned, the FlowT is the final Canterbury Tale. Though the exact date of Hyll's edition is not known, it is usually dated c 1545. It should be remembered, however, that the only dated works from Hyll's press appear in 1548-9⁷⁷ and such a date for the FlowT edition would certainly be compatible with the change in the theological climate with the accession of Edward VI. A reprint of the FlowT would have been, in all probability, more favourably received after 1547 than it would during the last years of Henry VIII's reign.

Henry Bradshaw and E.P. Hammond⁷⁸ both mention a separate edition of the PlowT which was printed by William Powell⁷⁹ c1547-8, in octavo. There is, however, no trace of this edition or of Powell's association with any such project. The grounds on which Bradshaw based his statement concerning the existence of this edition are not known, and in the absence of any further corroborative evidence, it is necessary to believe that the edition is in fact a ghost.

The only other separate printed edition of the PlowT which assigns the work to Chaucer was printed by G.E.[lde] for Samuel Macham and Mathew Cooke in 1606, in quarto (STC5101). The edition is particularly interesting because of its notes and commentary which are usually assigned to Francis Thynne on the strength of a conjecture in the Preface to Urry's edition.⁸⁰ However it has been noticed⁸¹ that the title-page of one copy of the work has the manuscript ascription 'By Antony Wotton'. Wotton (1561?-1626) was a staunch protestant controversialist whose work A Defence of M. Perkins booke called A reformed catholicke was entered in the Stationers Register on January 16th.1606⁸² - the day before the PlowT was entered. Thus the evidence of ascription, registration and religious inclination seems to indicate that Wotton was the author of the notes. It is not unlikely that the book itself was issued as propaganda at the beginning of the year when memories of the Gunpowder Plot were fresh in the thoughts of many.

The poem was next available outside the Canterbury Tales texts in Thomas Wright's edition of 1859,⁸³ the text of which follows

closely that of Speght's third edition. Wright not only never mentions Chaucer's name in connection with the poem, but does not even print the Prologue - a clear indication of his view as to its authenticity.

These, then, are the major printed texts of the poem before Skeat's 1897 edition. There is one other text to consider, however. The University of Texas has in its possession a copy of the 1532 edition of Chaucer which contains, bound in after f.126 - immediately after the ParsT - a MS version of the PlowT written in an early sixteenth century hand on paper measuring 32cm. by 21cm.⁸⁴ Unfortunately no watermarks are visible on the paper.⁸⁵ Mrs. Annie S. Irvine, in her article 'A Manuscript Copy of The Plowman's Tale', quotes some notes which are written on the fly leaf of this volume and which include an excerpt from an unidentified bookseller's catalogue which gives some indication of the book's history:

Chaucer. The Workes of Geffray Chaucer newly printed with dayers [sic] works whiche were never in print before. Folio ... English, straight-grain morocco gilt, gilt edges, arms on the sides. London: Thomas Godfray 1532.

The first collected edition of Chaucer, illustrated with quaint wood-cuts from the library of the Duke of Buckingham (Stowe Library) with his arms on the sides. Like most of the known copies of this edition it has suffered to some extent in the four hundred years of its existence, lacking two leaves of preface, the title and two preliminary as well as the last leaf in facsimile and a few minor restorations and repairs to three leaves in addition to three leaves at the end supplied from a smaller copy. An important feature of this copy is that the Plowman's Tale, which was not printed until 1542, only at that time existing in manuscript is here supplied by an early manuscript version, possibly contemporary, written on 16 folio pages and bound in at the end of the Canterbury Tales. The Duke of Buckingham's collection was famous for its manuscripts, among them being those later sold to the Earl of Ashburnham and known by his name. This manuscript was no doubt one of those collected

by the Duke and bound in this volume. The woodcuts in this edition are copies of those cut by Caxton for his edition. (pp. 27-8)

The claim that the hand is 'possibly contemporary' (with Chaucer - is the point presumably being made) is acceptable. The hand seems characteristic of those found in Tudor or Elizabethan times and certainly does not date from the late fourteenth or early fifteenth centuries.

The Texas volume is not the only instance where a MS has been bound into a printed edition of Chaucer. The sale catalogue of Richard Smith's library in 1682 contains the following item:

English books in Folio 77. Chaucer's (Geoffery) Works of Antient Poetry; best Edition (with a MS. of a Tale of Gamelyn taken out of a MS. of Chaucer's Works in the University Library of Oxford, 1602) 86

Nevertheless, the phenomenon is sufficiently unusual to demand investigation. Two possible explanations suggest themselves in the case of the Texas volume. Firstly, it is not difficult to imagine an owner of a 1532 edition noticing, in 1542, that his copy of Chaucer differs from the newly published edition in one significant respect - it does not contain the PlowT. Determined to remedy this omission, he engages a scribe to make a copy of the poem and to set it out in such a format as will satisfactorily match that of the 1532 edition. For his source, the scribe uses another contemporary MS copy in circulation. As soon as the patron receives the completed copy, he arranges to have it bound into his 1532 volume. As an alternative explanation, it is possible that the MS copy may have been one of a number in circulation which eventually found its way into the Duke

of Buckingham's library and which was subsequently noticed and only then bound into the Chaucer volume - possibly not until the eighteenth century.

Mrs. Irvine believes that the MS was specially tailored to match the format of the 1532 Chaucer. The MS sheets are the same size as those of the Chaucer edition (a factor likely to be the result of trimming when the volume was subsequently rebound), identical forms of comma are used - the sign / was used instead of , as in all later editions - and both the MS and the edition use Latin rubrications. However these features could very easily be put down to scribal habit or eccentricity rather than to any conscious effort to adhere to the format of the 1532 edition and, further, there are a number of factors which must be set against Miss Irvine's arguments. The MS, unlike the edition, does not use catchwords, does not set the opening lines of each stanza back from the margin, and makes irregular use of differing paragraph signs. The fact that the MS is written in twin columns with, on average, forty four lines to a column which almost exactly matches the forty three lines to a column found in the 1532 Monk's Tale text, proves nothing. Any scribe using even approximately the same sized paper, and however ignorant of the 1532 format, stands a very fair chance, when copying a poem written in stanzas of eight lines, of producing a copy with a very similar line distribution in each column to that found in the printed edition.

There is, thus, no conclusive evidence of format to show that the MS was specially commissioned by the owner of a 1532 edition, though this idea is still tenable for it is quite possible that a

patron would not be sufficiently fastidious as to insist on a copy which in all respects reproduces the format features of his printed edition.

It is not even possible to date the inclusion of the MS by reference to its position in the 1532 edition - after the Parst. It will be recalled that only in the 1542 edition is the FlowT thus placed, but the position of the MS in the printed volume was not governed by a desire to match the order of tales in the 1532 edition with that found in the 1542 edition. Its position is governed entirely by the fact that it would not have been possible easily to insert the FlowT copy after the MancT in the 1532 edition because the end of the MancT falls on Sig.[V.v.] and not, as is the case at the end of the Parst, on the last sheet of a gathering. Thus it must have been simply the ease of binding the copy in after the Parst which dictated its position in the volume.

It was through all these texts discussed above that the FlowT was made accessible to the reading public for three centuries and more. Attention must now be turned to the reactions of the public to the poem; to the view of Chaucer induced by the poem's false attribution, and to the uses to which the poem was put in post Reformation controversial literature.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. The most recent study of the poems which were falsely ascribed to Chaucer is F.W. Bonner, 'The Genesis of the Chaucer Apocrypha', SP, 48(1951), 461-81. This article is based on his University of North Carolina Unpublished Dissertation 'A History of the Chaucer Apocrypha', noted in Doctoral Dissertations accepted by American Universities, ed. A.H. Trotter and Marian Harman, 17 (New York, 1950) 200. Bonner's remarks on the ascription of the Plowt to Chaucer are not illuminating.
2. With the exception of Beryn and Gamelyn, these works can be found in Chaucerian and Other Pieces, ed. W.W. Skeat (Oxford, 1897). This is a supplementary volume to Skeat's The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, 6 Vols. (Oxford, 1894). More recent editions include The Testament of Cresseid, ed. D. Fox (1968); The Cuckoo and the Nightingale, edited as The Boke of Cupide by V.J. Scattergood, Unpublished University of Birmingham Dissertation (1963); The Floure and the Leafe and The Assembly of Ladies, ed. D.A. Pearsall (1962); The Tale of Gamelyn, ed. J.D. Pickles, University of Birmingham Unpublished Dissertation (1967). The Tale of Beryn was last edited by F.J. Furnivall and W.G. Stone, BETS, ES 105 (1909).
3. In the sixteenth century the tendency must have been strong, particularly amongst the unscholarly, either to regard Chaucer as the author rather than the translator of the Romaunt, or to regard his choice of passages for translation - particularly the Fals Semblaunt section - as an indication of his tacit approval of the views expressed in those passages.
4. Printed in 'Political Poems and Songs relating to English History Composed during the Period from the Accession of Edward III to that of Richard III', ed. T. Wright, Rolls Series 14, 2 Vols. (1859-61), II, 16-39. This edition will hereafter be cited as Wright Pol.Songs B. The most recent edition is the dissertation of P.L. Heyworth, noted in Successful Candidates for the Degrees of D.Phil., B.Litt., and B.Sc. with titles of their theses, 18 (Oxford, 1966), 24. This has since been published, regrettably without a Glossary, as Jack Upland, Friar Daw's Reply and Upland's Rejoinder (Oxford, 1968).
5. The MS is described in The Text of the Canterbury Tales, ed. J.M. Manly and Edith Rickert, 8 Vols. (Chicago, 1940), I, 85-91: hereafter cited as Manly and Rickert, Canterbury Tales.
6. A New Ploughman's Tale, ed. A. Beatty, Chaucer Society, Second Series, 34 (1902). All line references are to this edition.

7. It is included in Hoccleve's Works, The Minor Poems in the Ashburnham MS., ed. Sir Israel Gollancz, EETS, ES 73, 2 Vols. (1925), II, 16-19. J. Mitchell, Thomas Hoccleve: A Study in Early Fifteenth Century Poetic (Urbana, Illinois, 1968), pp. 39-40, has a few, largely derivative remarks on the poem.
8. The MS is described by S. de Ricci and W.J. Wilson, Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada, 2 Vols. (New York, 1935), I, 74. This MS was formerly known as Ashburnham Additional MS. 133. H.C. Schulz, 'Thomas Hoccleve, Scribe', Speculum, 12 (1937), 71-81 has shown that MS.HM 744 is a Hoccleve autograph.
9. The MS is described by M.R. James, The Western Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, 4 Vols. (Cambridge, 1900-4), II, 83-95. The poem is listed on p.91, Item 52.
10. See her 'Hoccleve's Miracle of the Virgin', University of Texas Studies in English, 35 (1956), 116-122; also the abstract of her Columbia University Dissertation 'Middle English Miracles of the Virgin: Independent Tales in Verse', DA, 16 (1956), 334.
11. The MS is described by W.D. Macray, Catalogi Codicum Manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Bodleianae Pars Nona (Oxford, 1885), pp. 91-97. This early version has been edited by G. Horstmann in Altenglische Legenden, Neue Folge (Heilbronn, 1881), pp. 220-4.
12. The proximity of Westminster Abbey to Chaucer's last home - a little cottage in the garden of St. Mary's Chapel - has led to the belief that Chaucer was actively encouraged to write his Retraction by the clergy. W.A. Madden, 'Chaucer's Retraction and Mediaeval Canons of Seemliness', Medieval Studies, 17 (1955), 173-84 contains a representative expression of the nature of Chaucer's change of heart: 'In the end, Chaucer, like his age, gave precedence to spiritual considerations, and whatever the original motivation behind his poetic activity he ultimately came to see certain creations as likely to do more harm than their entertainment or instructional value could justify.' (p. 182)
13. Manly and Rickert, Canterbury Tales, IV, 527, are amongst those who have doubted the authenticity of the Retraction.
14. For this view see R.M. Lumiansky, 'Chaucer's Retraction and the Degree of Completeness of the Canterbury Tales', Tulane Studies in English, 6 (1956), 5-13.

Manly's Conception of

- 15. 'The Canterbury Tales in 1400', PMLA, 50 (1935), 110, note 31. Further references to this article are given after quotations in the text. For an account of the hazardous state of manuscript publication at the time of Chaucer's death and afterwards, see Germaine Dempster, 'The Early History of the Canterbury Tales', PMLA, 61 (1946), 379-415; also H.S. Bennett, 'The Production and Dissemination of Vernacular Manuscripts in the Fifteenth Century', The Library, Fifth Series, I (1947), 167-78. See, too, R.X. Root, 'Publication before Printing', PMLA, 28 (1913), 417-31.
- 16. Noted by J.D. Pickles, The Tale of Gamelyn, University of Birmingham Dissertation (1967), pp. 1-2.
- 17. The Tale of Beryn, ed. F.J. Furnivall and W.G. Stone, ETS, ES 105 (1909), 120. Furnivall's gloss to the Latin states 'A Canterbury monk wrote this tale'. The Northumberland MS. is described by Manly and Rickert, Canterbury Tales, I, 387-95.
- 18. Sir William McCormick (assisted by Janet E. Heseltine), The Manuscripts of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales (Oxford, 1933), p. xxv.
- 19. Manly and Rickert, Canterbury Tales, I, 86, describe the hand as 'A later, looser, more flourished hand'.
- 20. Manly and Rickert, loc.cit. This represents a slight qualification!
- 21. For full details of both Thynne's editions, see E.P. Hammond, Chaucer, A Bibliographical Manual (New York, 1908; reprinted 1933), pp. 116-9. Hereafter cited as Hammond, Manual.
- 22. Edited by G.H. Kingsley, ETS, OS 9 (1865). This edition was revised by F.J. Furnivall in 1875, and reprinted in 1965. All further references are taken from the Furnivall revision and are given after quotations in the text.
- 23. Quoted by Furnivall in his 'Mindwords' to the Animadversions, p. xlvi, note 1.
- 24. For details of the career of Sir John Thynne, see DNB.
- 25. The Pilgrim's Tale, was first edited by F.J. Furnivall in his revised edition of the Animadversions, pp. 77f. A more recent edition is that by R.A. Fraser, The Court of Venus (Durham, North Carolina, 1955), pp. 82-110. All references to the Pilgr are given after quotations in the text. All quotations are from the more accessible Animadversions text.

- 26. Mrs. C.C. Stopes, Shakespeare's Industry (1916), p. 309. Chapters 21 and 22 are slightly expanded versions of her articles 'The Metrical Psalms and The Court of Venus', The Athenaeum, 24th. June, 1899, 784-6; and 'The Authorship of The Newe Courte of Venus', The Athenaeum, 1st. July, 1899, 38.
- 27. Animadversions, p. 76. In a note on William Thynne's so-called 'cancell'd' edition of 1532, Henry Bradshaw remarks that 'Francis Thynne, too, tells us that he had never seen the one-column edition himself'.
- 28. Fraser, Court of Venus, p.19.
- 29. This discrepancy in Thynne's account was noted by J.M. Berdan, 'The Dating of Skelton's Satires', PMLA, 29 (1914), 506.
- 30. See R. Holinshed, Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland, 6 Vols. (1807-8), III, 799: 'On the nineteenth [of October 1536] all the inhabitants of Louth ... came to Lincolne, and there in the castell made their submission, holding vp their hands, and crieng for the kings mercie. And herwith were chosen fourth Nicholas Melton, capteine Cobler, & thirteene more, which were commanded to ward, and all the residue were new sworne to the king...'
- 31. See J.C. Dickinson, The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham (Cambridge, 1956), p. 66, where the signing of the deed surrendering the house and its possessions to the king is dated 4th. August, 1538.
- 32. Quoted by Furnivall in his 'Hindwords' to the Animadversions, p. xliii.
- 33. In the 'Index Britanniae Scriptorum', ed. R.L. Poole (assisted by Mary Bateson), Anecdota Oxoniensia (Oxford, 1902), p. xlii. Hereafter cited as Bale, Index.
- 34. T.R. Lounsbury, Studies in Chaucer, His Life and Writings, 3 Vols. (1892), I, 468. Hereafter cited as Lounsbury, Chaucer. Lounsbury believes that 'the weight of probability tends very strongly to the conclusion that [the material omitted was the FlowT]'
- 35. The Carl H. Pforzheimer Library Catalog - English Literature, 1475-1700, 3 Vols. (New York, 1940), I, 173.
- 36. Quoted Hammond, Manual, pp. 4-5.
- 37. Lounsbury, Chaucer, I, 468.
- 38. Hammond, Manual, p. 7.

39. Lounsbury, Chaucer, I, 469.
40. W.C. Hazlitt, Hand-Book to the Popular, Poetical and Dramatic Literature of Great Britain (1867), p. 98. W.W. Skeat, The Chaucer Canon (Oxford, 1900), p. 99, note 1, suggests 1532-5.
41. By Henry Bradshaw, Animadversions, p. xlii, note 1: 'We find a separate edition of the Flowman's Tale, the same type and size as Thynne's first edition of 1532, which looks as if he had intended to include it in that, and was overborne for some reason. He did include it in his second edition'.
42. D.B. Updike, Printers Types, Their History, Form and Use: A Study in Survivals, 2 Vols. (Cambridge, Mass.; Second edition, 1937), II, 126.
43. The STC entry reads: 'Illustrium majoris Britanniae scriptorum summarium. 4. [Wesel, D. van den Straten], Gippswici, per J. Overton, 1548'.
44. Summarium, f.198^v, quoted Hammond, Manual, p. 8.
45. Summarium, f.198, quoted Hammond, Manual, p. 8.
46. Scriptorum illustriū maioris Brytannie catalogus, Basel (Sep. 1557: Part 2, February, 1559).
47. See Fraser, Court of Venus, pp. 3-6. E.K. Chambers, Sir Thomas Wyatt and Some Collected Studies (1933), pp. 207-8, notes the similarity between the volume's type and that used by Gybson. He was not however convinced that Gybson was the printer: 'secular verse does not seem to have been in Gybson's line, and the type may have passed into other hands' (p. 208). Whilst Chambers' observation concerning Gybson's lack of concern with secular verse is born out by an examination of P.G. Morrison, Index of Printers, Publishers and Booksellers in A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave A Short-Title Catalogue of Books printed in England, Scotland & Ireland and of English Books printed abroad (Charlottesville, Virginia, 1950), p. 31 (Hereafter cited as Morrison), the typographical evidence still points strongly in his direction. Mrs. C.C. Stopes, Shakespeare's Industry (1916), p. 321, is mistaken in thinking that the printer was 'probably' William Bonham. For information on Thomas Gybson, see E.G. Duff, A Century of the English Book Trade (1905), p. 55; and also Handlists of English Printers 1501-1556, Part III (1905).
48. Fraser, Court of Venus, pp. 10-11. For information on Thomas Marshe, see E.G. Duff, A Century of the English Book Trade, p. 100; also Hand-Lists of Books Printed by London Printers 1501-1556, Part IV (1913). See, too, Morrison, pp. 49-50.

49. Notably in the lines, from Fraser, Court of Venus:

But thus farre he sayd he durst report
That loue without charitie, should be put downe
Nor periured persons, should no more resort
Vnto the court of Venus doth frowne
When the religion hath them bowne
And to Diana them selfe hath also sworne
And yet through Heccates in her court be borne.'

(p. 117, ll. 10-16)

There is a clear contradiction indicated here between the vows taken by churchmen to Diana (that is, celibacy), and the presence of the same churchmen in the Court of Venus.

50. Bale, Index, p. 389. The relevant portion reads:

Robertus Shyngleton, astrorum et theologie peritus,
sacerdos, composuit,

De septem ecclesijs, li.i.
Curiam Veneris li.i.
Atque alia plura

Londini paciebatur A.D. 1544

Ex Thoma Gybson medico.

51. See R.A. Fraser, 'Political Prophecy in The Pilgrim's Tale', South Atlantic Quarterly, 56 (1957), 67-78.

52. Statutes of the Realm, 11 Vols. (1810-28), III, 895.

53. W.W. Skeat, p. xix of his introduction to The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer (1905), which is a facsimile reproduction of the British Museum copy of the 1532 edition of Chaucer printed by Godfray.

54. Skeat, op.cit., p. xx. See, too, Animadversions, pp. 68-9 where Francis Thynne explains why his father positioned the FlowT after the Parst, and why Speght is wrong to have placed it between the Manct and the Parst.

55. The 1598 edition cannot strictly be said to have been edited by Speght. In his address To the Readers at the beginning of the volume, Speght claims that he was urged, against his better judgement, and in great haste, to make a series of improvements to an edition of Chaucer which was already 'in the Presse, and three parts thereof alreadie printed ...' It would be more correct to describe the 1602 edition as Speght's first edition for it was there that he introduced the whole series of improvements, both in text and format, which justify his claim that he had 'reformed the whole Worke': see J.R. Hetherington, Chaucer 1532-1602; Notes and Facsimile Texts (Privately printed - Birmingham, 1964).

- 56. The Workes of our Antient and Learned English Poet, Geoffrey Chavcer, ed. T. Speght, Sig.c.v.
- 57. This was clearly the case with John Pitts whose entry for the Plowt in his list of Chaucer's works reads: 'Oratoris narrationem, Librum vnum. Agricola tulit aratrum dum esset [A Latin version of the first line]. Pute esse librum illum cui titulus Anglice Pierce Ploussam [sic]: & habetur MS. Cantabrigiae in Collegio S.Benedicti, & Oxonij in publica', as quoted in Hammond, Manual, p. 15, from J. Pitts' De Rebus Anglicis (Paris, 1619).
- 58. Speght's Chaucer (1598), Sig.c.i.
- 59. The suggested identification of J.H. is that of Caroline F.E. Spurgeon, Five Hundred Years of Chaucer Criticism and Allusion 1357-1900, 3 Vols. (Cambridge, 1925), I, 260. All subsequent references are to this edition of Miss Spurgeon's work, which is cited hereafter as Spurgeon, Criticism.
- 60. Speght's Chaucer (Reprinted 1687), Sig.b4.
- 61. In Westmonasterium, or the History and Antiquities of the Abbey Church of St. Peter's, Westminster, 2 Vols. (1723), I, 86f.
- 62. The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. J. Urry (1721), Sig.k2^v-l.l.
- 63. See F.J. Furnivall, HQ, Eighth Series, VII (1895), 126, where he notes that Entick intended to include 'the usual genuine and spurious works of Speght's and Urry's editions'.
- 64. T. Tyrwhitt, 'Introductory Discourse' to his edition of The Canterbury Tales (1775-8), Section XL, note 32.
- 65. The Works of the British Poets, ~~14~~ Vols. (1795), I, p. vi.
- 66. The Poetical Works of Geoff[rey] Chaucer, 14 Vols. (Edinburgh, 1782), VI.
- 67. The Works of the English Poets, 21 Vols. (1810), I, 623-34.
- 68. For details of the sale of the volume, and a record of the names of previous owners, see The Britwell Handlist, 2 Vols. (1933), I, 199.
- 69. J. Ames, Typographical Antiquities (Augmented by William Herbert), 3 Vols. (1785-90), I, 319-25.

- 70. J. Ames, Typographical Antiquities (Augmented by T.F. Dibdin), 4 Vols. (1810-19), III, 65-72.
- 71. J.F. Collier, A Bibliographical and Critical Account of the Rarest Books in the English Language, 2 Vols. (1865).
- 72. Morrison, p. 31. Others who have been troubled by the absence of dating evidence for many of Godfray's volumes and who have surveyed the difficulties are C.C. Butterworth, The English Primers (Philadelphia, 1953), pp. 73-8; also Butterworth and A.G. Chester, George Joye (Philadelphia, 1962), pp. 135-8. None of the dateable characteristics which these scholars discovered can be used with reference to the PlowT volumes.
- 73. I am indebted to Mr. Carey S. Bliss of the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California, for sending tracings of the watermarks in the Huntington Library copy of the PlowT volume. Watermark evidence, however, can give only a terminus a quo in dating books, and, in this instance the resulting information is not helpful. The watermark on Sig.[A.iv] is not unlike item 4031 in E. Heawood, Watermarks (Volume I of Monumenta Chartae Papyraceae) (Silversum, 1950). This item, a copy of The Paston Letters is dated 'Temp.Edw.IV' (p. 153). Often paper was stored for many years before use; thus this early date is of little significance. Sig.[D.iv.] has a Crowned Unicorn which is not unlike (the resemblance is no stronger) items 10303-4 in C.M. Briquet, Les Filigranes, 4 Vols. (Geneva, 1907; Second Edition, Leipzig, 1923; reprinted New York, 1966). Briquet remarks (III, 531), that Crowned Unicorns 'n'est pas abondante', but the dates of the items mentioned are of the late fifteenth century and thus of little significance.
- 74. Mrs. Annie S. Irvine, 'A Manuscript Copy of The Plowman's Tale', University of Texas Studies in English, 12 (1932), 37.
- 75. See J.F. Mozley, Coverdale and his Bibles (1953), Chapter 6, esp. pp. 112-15.
- 76. Quoted Hammond, Manual, pp.444-5, from Bale, Index, p.76
- 77. See Hand-lists of Books Printed by London Printers 1501-1556, Part IV (1913)
- 78. Hammond, Manual, p. 444.
- 79. For a list of Powell's printed works, see Hand-lists, Part IV; also Morrison, p. 59.
- 80. Urry's Chaucer, Preface, Sig.m.1.

- 81. Noted by F.B. Williams Jr., 'Unnoted Chaucer Allusions 1550-1650', PQ, 16 (1937), 71.
- 82. See A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640, ed. E. Arber, 5 Vols. (1875-7; reprinted New York, 1950), III, 133^v. The FlowT is the very next entry - the first for the following day, 17th January, 1606. Edward Malone (1741-1812) notes, in a Bodleian Library copy of this edition, on a leaf opposite the title-page, that the tale 'was republished I think in consequence of the Gunpowder Plot, to set the Nation more sharply against the religion which gave birth to that execrable treason'.
- 83. Printed in Wright, Pol.Songs B, I, 304-44.
- 84. MS described by S. de Ricci and W.J. Wilson, Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada, 2 Vols. (New York, 1935; reprinted, 1961), II, 2157.
- 85. I am grateful to the Librarian at the University of Texas for supplying this information.
- 86. Quoted by Spurgeon, Criticism, I, 256. The catalogue was compiled by Richard Chiswel.

CHAPTER TWO

Chaucer and the Plowman's Tale - The Critical Legacy.

It did not take long after the initial attribution of the PlowT to Chaucer for the effects to become visible. Before the end of the sixteenth century, the process of linking Chaucer's name with the cause of post-Reformation protestantism was well on the way to becoming a commonplace in the controversial outpourings of religious polemicists as well as in the less turbulent world of literary criticism.

John Foxe, the protestant martyrologist, was probably the first writer to yoke the PlowT, and the belief in its Chaucerian authorship, to the service of contemporary religious propaganda. Foxe claims to know of people who 'by reading of Chaucer's works ... were brought to the true knowledge of religion'. Such people had derived the greatest benefit from reading the PlowT, which did not rely for its effects on oblique and unobtrusive irony and innuendo, as do 'other parts of his volume, whereof some are more fabulous than others'. It was the uncompromising directness of the PlowT which appealed to Foxe:

... what tale can be more plainly told than the Tale of the Ploughman? or what finger can point out more directly the pope with his prelates to be Antichrist, than doth the poor pelican reasoning against the greedy griffon? Under which hypotyposis, or poesy, who is so blind that seeth not by the pelican, the doctrine of Christ and of the Lollards to be defended against the church of Rome? or who is so impudent that can deny that to be true which the pelican there affirmeth, in describing the presumptuous pride of that pretensed church? Again, what egg can be more like, or fig, unto another, than the words, properties, and conditions of that ravening griffon resembleth the true image, that is, the nature and qualities of that which we call the church of Rome, in every point and degree? And therefore no great marvel if that narration was exempted out of the copies of Chaucer's works; which notwithstanding now is restored again, and is extant for every man to read who is disposed.



There are two points of particular interest here. Firstly, Foxe has - perhaps unconsciously - anticipated those who might question the authenticity of the FlowT on account of its absence from earlier printed editions and manuscripts of the Canterbury Tales. The association of the FlowT with Chaucer is no new attribution, he argues: it had merely been concealed as a result of clerical hostility. Secondly the importance which Foxe placed on the contrast between the 'plainly told' tale as opposed to others which are 'fabulous' is significant. Tudor propagandists had attempted to undermine the authority of works such as Sir Thomas More's Utopia,² by stressing the fictional basis of More's opinions. Foxe may well have been conscious of such attitudes when passing over, as propaganda material, the 'fabulous' elements in the Canterbury Tales in favour of a work whose tone and content unmistakably reflected the opinions championed in the Book of Martyrs.

Another protestant, the theological ^{writer} Lawrence Humphrey, saw Chaucer in the direct line of succession from Dante and Petrarch as an unceasing critic of the numerous abuses with which, Humphrey believed, the church had long been afflicted:

Oxoniensis fuit Galfridus Chaucerus, propter dicendi gratiam & libertatem quasi alter Dantes aut Petrarcha: quos ille etiam in linguam nostram transtulit, in quibus Romana Ecclesia tanquam sedes Antichristi describitur & ad viuum exprimitur: Hic multis in locis Fraterculos istos, monachos, missificos, Pontificiorum ceremonias, peregrinationes, facunde notauit, verum & spirituales Christi in Sacramento esum agnoui, turpitudine[m] coactae virginitatis perstrinxit, libertatem coniugij in Domino commendauit, vt in fabulis Monachi, Fratris, Aratoris & in reliquis legimus. 3

Here the FlowT is linked with the tales of the Monk and the Friar and

has evidently played its full part in influencing Humphrey's assessment of Chaucer's religious views.

Not least amongst the values which later writers placed upon Chaucer's name was its antiquity. Many reformers, mindful of the accusations of 'new-fangledness' which rained down on their writings from the pens of orthodox apologists, were conscious of the caste of respectability and authority which age could lend to ideas. The Plow afforded these reformers the opportunity to cite, in support of their views, the English Ennius as well as the Latin fathers. This is illustrated even by the title of John Favour's work Antiquitie Triumphant Over Novelty: Whereby It is Proved That Antiquitie is a true and certaine Note of the Christian Catholicke Church... (1619) (STC 10716). Favour places Chaucer amongst a distinguished group of authorities:

Of former ages let Saint Bernard, Saint Huldericke...let Mantuan, Petrarch, Palingenius, our Chawcer, the Poets of those ages, Bishops, Abbots, Monks, Friers, Panders and Painters, be asked of the Popes Court, the open sinnes of Rome...and they will crie with one voice, that faith and iustice were departed from the face of the earth. (pp. 409-10)

Soon Chaucer's name began to appear in catalogues of writers who had written on matters of ecclesiastical controversy. In 1604 Gabriel Powel's Disputationum theologicarum...de Antichristo...Libri II includes a section on Chaucer:

Galfridus Chaucerus Anglus, Eques auratus, Oxonii diu Literis operam dedit. Multa scripsit, in quibus Monachorum otia, missantium multitudinem, horas non intellectas, reliquas, peregrinationes, ac ceremonias false ridet; quinimo Pontificem ipsum Pastorum fatuum & Antichristum aperte denunciatur. Claruit anno Domini 1402. Chauc. in Aratoris Narratione, & alibi passim. 4

Thomas James, the Bodley librarian who was an editor of and apologist for Wyclif, was able to include Chaucer's name in his work Georgii Wicelii Methodvs Concordiae Ecclesiasticas, Cum Exhortatione ad Concilium (1625), under the section:

De Deformatione, vel pro Reformatione Ecclesiae Romanae scripserunt variis locis, & diversis regionibus & temporibus, Auctores que sequuntur, Alphabeticé distincti. 5

Throughout the 1630's, the output of Protestant propaganda increased, in much the same way as it had a hundred years before. Chaucer figures prominently in many of these works, largely it seems as a result of the ascription of the PlowT to him. Antony Cade's A Iyustification Of The Church of England (1630) includes a section on Chaucer:

Geffrey Chawcer Knight, Student at Oxford, wrote many things very wittily, reproving, and scoffing at the idlenesse foolery, and knauery of the Monks and other Clergy, at their ignorance, counterfeit Reliques / pilgrimages, and Ceremonies; yea the pope himself he sticked not to call an idle Lawrell, a Marshall of Hell, a proud, enuious, couetous Lucifer, and Antichrist, he flourished, anno 1402. 6

and quotes ll. 374f. from the PlowT in the margin as illustration. Five years later Simon Birckbek's The Protestants Evidence, Taken Ovt of Good Records... (1635) (STC 3082) cites:

This noble knight, who by marriage was brother in law to Iohn of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, found fault with the Faith, as well as the manners of the Romanists in his dayes, as may appeare by these instances following; of St. Peters successour he sayth in the Plowmans tale... [quotes ll. 373-84]... This, and much more doth he utter in the person of a simple Ploughman, implying thereby that the meanest Country-body in those dayes, could out of Gods Word, tell what was right and religious, and what otherwise; yea, and taxe the wickednesse and blindnesse of the Romanists in those days. 7

Amongst the supplementary illustrative material from other Chaucerian pieces which he mentions, reference is made to a poem which had only been added to the canon in 1602:

Take now a taste of the questions, which in the person of Iacke Vpland, he mooves to the Frier [and then quotes ll. 95-9 and parts of ll. 320-39 of the poem as edited by Skeat] (p. 64)

Of all the works in the seventeenth century which refer to the PlowT, none uses it more extensively than William Vaughan's The Golden Fleece (1626) (STC 24609). The work is structured in a manner previously employed by Boccacini⁸ - a succession of historical characters present Bills of Complaint at the Court of Apollo against the evils of their respective ages; the restoration of happiness is dependent upon the eventual discovery, in Newfoundland, of the Golden Fleece. The section concerning Chaucer is introduced by Duns Scotus' accusation against him:

Where after an eloquent Oration against the Lutherans, hee [Scotus] complayned of Sir Geffrey Chaucer the English Poet, that he about the latter end of King Edward the thirds Raigne, had published in his Plow-mans Tale most abhominable Doctrine, which infected not only diuers rare wits of that Age, but likewise wrought so much alteration in succeeding times, that John Wickliffe, John Husse, Ierome of Prague, Luther, and others now stiling themselues Protestants, had quite abandoned their Mother Church of Rome, which had flourished in stately Pompe and Pontificalibus for many hundred of yeares before. And particularly hee charged Chaucer for calling the Pope Antichrist, and for comparing his followers to the Griffon, and the pretended Reformed Church to the Pellican. (p. 111)

Appollo requests that the relevant portions - some 300 lines - of the PlowT be read out prior to judgement being given. In quoting these lengthy passages, Vaughan often took the trouble to emend and, occasionally,

completely to modernise lines whose language and syntax might have proved inaccessible to readers unfamiliar with Chaucerian English.

Vaughan's interest in the PlowT is also indicated by a section of his work The Chvrch Militant, Historically Continued... (1640) (STC 24606):

Then Chaucer by the Freedome of his Rimes
Unsilenc'd scan'd the Darknesse of those Times;
(Of such strange Force are Tunes of Raptur'd Wits,
That they have charm'd and still'd wild Tyrants Fits)
Henplainely pointed at Romes Antichrist,
Admiring at the Cleargies stormy Mist,
Which did so long our West exagitate. (p. 247)

The following year saw both John Milton and William Prynne naming Chaucer in support of their religious positions. In Of Reformation touching Chvrch-Discipline in England (1641), Milton, attacking the episcopal tradition of the Anglican church, reminds his readers of the encroachments of the pre-Reformation church into temporal affairs and notes:

this...our Chaucer also hath observ'd, and gives from hence a caution to England to beware of her Bishops in time, for that their ends, and ayms are no more freindly to Monarchy then the Popes.

Thus hee brings in the Plow-man speaking...[quotes ll. 693-708 of the PlowT]... Whether the Bishops of England have deserv'd thus to be fear'd by men so wise as our Chaucer is esteem'd, and how agree-able to our Monarchy, and Monarchs their demeanour ha's been, he that is but meanly read in our Chronicles needs not be instructed. 9

Prynne's work The Antipathie Of The English Lordly Prelacie, Both to Regall Monarchy, And Civill Unity...The Second Part (1641) (Wing 3891), discussing the lordliness and wealth of the Bishops and priests, remarks that 'Sir Geoffrey Chaucer our renowned Poet, writes to much the same effect'¹⁰ and quotes PlowT ll. 693-9, 701-8 as illustration.

Similarly in A Catalogue of Svch Testimonies In All Ages As Plainly Evidence Bishops And Presbyters To Be Both One, Equall And The Same (1641) (Wing 3922), Prynne's list includes:

Geofry Chancer [sic] the Ploughmans tale part 1, 2, Pierce Plowman passus 23, Anno 1390 William Swindertg [sic] Martyr...(p. 8)

where Chaucer's name is juxtaposed with that of one of the earliest Lollard preachers, by virtue of his alleged authorship of the PlowT.

The later years of the seventeenth century saw no diminution in the practice of assigning the PlowT to Chaucer - the belief in the poet's advocacy of the Protestant cause was thus sustained. The Protestant Almanack (1668), in discussing the way in which the papacy had attained its power and authority, claims that 'they [are] swimming in all manner of Wealth and Luxuriousness; as the ancient Poet Geoffery Chaucer thus expresseth in the Flow-mans Tale'.¹¹ Similarly in 1675, William Penn wrote:

We will bring in here a Passage out of the Plowman's Tale, as it lyes in GEEFFRY CHAUCER'S Works, not impertinent to our Purpose; whose Learning, Honour and Wit was great in the time he lived, which was about 1360. [ll. 253-60 are then quoted].¹²

Thomas Durfey's comedy The Campaigners (1698) includes in its Preface, the passage:

We find, for many Ages past, Poets have enjoy'd this Priviledge [of exposing Churchmen]; our Prince of Poets, Chaucer, had so much to do in this kind, that we find him weary himself, and loth to weary others with it. [ll. 1065-8 are then quoted].¹³

It is easy to understand the part played by constant repetition in the growth and preservation of a view of Chaucer radically different from that which is now held, particularly when, amongst the repetitious

voices, was one with the weight and authority of John Dryden. His is, in many ways, as balanced a view as the seventeenth century had to offer concerning Chaucer's religious attitudes. Chaucer, he says in his Preface to the Fables (1700):

...seems to have some little Bias towards the Opinions of Wickliff, after John of Ghant his Patron; somewhat of which appears in the Tale of Piers Plowman; Yet I cannot blame him for inveighing so sharply against the Vices of the Clergy in his Age: Their Pride, their Ambition, their Pomp, their Avarice, their Worldly Interest, deserv'd the Lashes which he gave them, both in that, and in most of his Canterbury Tales: Neither has his Contemporary Boccace, spar'd them. Yet both those Poets liv'd in much esteem, with good and holy Men in Orders: For the Scandal which is given by particular Priests, reflects not on the Sacred Function. Chaucer's Monk, his Chanon, and his Fryar, took not from the Character of his Good Parson. A Satyrical Poet is the Check of the Laymen, on bad Priests. We are only to take care, that we involve not the Innocent with the Guilty in the same Condemnation. The Good cannot be too much honour'd, nor the Bad too cursly us'd: For the corruption of the Best, becomes the Worst. 14

The specific association mentioned by Dryden of Chaucer with the doctrines of Wyclif had developed in conjunction with the notion of Chaucer, the Protestant sympathiser. It was first suggested by Foxe, and then sustained throughout the seventeenth century by writers such as Edward Leigh whose A Treatise of Religion & Learning, and of Religious and Learned men (1656) (Wing 1013) states that 'He [Chaucer] seems in his Works to be a right Wiclevian, as that of the Pellican and the Griffin shews' (p.160). Henry Wharton¹⁵ goes further and in a manuscript sketch of Chaucer as a theological writer asserts that not only did Chaucer follow the doctrines of Wyclif in most things (plurimum) but that there were few theologians of his time whom Chaucer did not surpass. It is worth, too, recalling the even

more extravagant claims made by Vaughan in The Golden Fleece (p. 111) where Chaucer is said to have influenced Wyclif rather than the other way round.

Belief in Chaucer's connection with Wyclif survives into the eighteenth century. John Lewis's The History of the Life & Sufferings of the Reverend and Learned John Wicliffe D.D. (1720) lists Chaucer in 'An account of the principal Persons who favoured Dr. Wicliffe & his Doctrines'.¹⁶ The historian Charles Dodd had none of Lewis's respect for Wyclif's beliefs, and yet he was obliged to concede their effect on the court of Richard II. The courtiers, he alleges, were encouraged to make remarks prejudicial to the church as a result of the influence of a 'flattering divine' (Wyclif) and the 'witty satires of sir Geoffrey Chaucer...being infected by Wicliff'.¹⁷

Even by the end of the eighteenth century, such doubts as had assailed Chaucerian editors as to the authenticity of the PlowT do not seem greatly to have affected the reading public.¹⁸ In addition to the twin notions of Chaucer the Wycliffite, and Chaucer the Morning Star of the Reformation - or at least one of the attendant constellation - which had both flourished under the influence of the PlowT, at least one other effect of the tale's false attribution was noticeable. Thomas Chatterton, whose powers of imagination and invention were not inconsiderable - as Tyrwhitt was later to show in another context - felt able to reveal the true circumstances which attended Chaucer's celebrated assault upon a Franciscan friar:

After Chaucer had distributed Copys of the Tale of Piers Plowman, the first of his Performances, a Franciscan Friar wrote ~~some~~ a Satyric Mommery (the Comedy of the Age) upon

him, which was acted at every Monastery in London and at Woodstock before the Court: Chaucer not a little nettled at the poignancy of the Satyre, & the popularity of it, meeting his Antagonist in the Fleet Street; beat him with his Dagger, for which he was fined two Shillings, as appears by a record of the Inner Temple where Chaucer was a Student. 19

This cause and effect relationship lacks any documented proof!

Further nineteenth century evidence of the lingering influence of the FlowT may be found in more recognisable forms. Isaac D'Israeli speaks of Chaucer as bound 'by a congenial spirit' to 'his friend, Dr. Wickliffe',²⁰ and both William Godwin²¹ (in 1803) and Robert Southey²² (in 1831) perpetuate the tradition, dating back to Speght,²³ which held that Chaucer had been up at Oxford at the same time as Wyclif and that the two men may well have known each other, although Godwin does not believe that Chaucer ever 'enlisted himself in the party of the Lollards' (p.345) and indeed describes the ascription of the FlowT to Chaucer as 'absurd' (p. 375)-the tale was no more than 'an additional article ... foisted into the Canterbury Tales' (p. 344).

Godwin's scepticism was not universally shared. A.F. Villemain in his Cours de littérature française. Littérature du moyen âge, en France, en Italie, en Espagne et en Angleterre (Paris, 1830) has no doubt that Chaucer was 'un des premiers disciples de Wiclef...' and that:

Chaucer se fit le poète de cette réforme; c'est-à-dire toutes les pensées hardies qui étaient enveloppées dans la théologie de Wiclef, toutes les inductions...que les esprits libres pouvaient tirer de la lecture immédiate de la Bible, Chaucer les exprimait vivement, et les animait par des satires contre la cour de Rome et les abus de la vie monacale.

In England, similarly, Charles Cowden Clarke was a vociferous opponent

of Godwin. Not only was he certain that Chaucer:

... essentially helped forward the cause of the Reformation by his formidable attacks upon the weak and corrupt branches of the ecclesiastical government 24

but he is not without suspicion as to the motives behind the expressions of doubt voiced by Godwin and Tyrwhitt:

There have not been wanting partisans of Chaucer, who either from affected zeal for his reputation, or from religious partisanship, have ventured to doubt the fact [sic] of his being the author of "Jack Upland", and "The Plowman's Tale;" could such persons, however, reduce their speculation to the matter of certainty, they would but leave the opinions of the poet unchanged; for there is abundant proof remaining scattered through various productions, unquestionably his writing, which stamp him the enemy of corrupt priestcraft, and the friend of ecclesiastical regeneration. 25

Cowden Clarke's views, which were echoed elsewhere,²⁶ are of some importance for the attitude that they represent - namely, that the removal of the PlowT from the canon would not materially affect the established view of Chaucer as a fiercely committed critic of ecclesiastical abuses, and one whose thought had been at least tinged with Lollardy. This was a view which had, in the first instance, derived principally from one apocryphal work. The other satirical materials in the Canterbury Tales together with numerous scattered references were able, by the nineteenth century, to sustain on their own a view of Chaucer very different from that which would have resulted from the same material had it been deprived of the long association with the PlowT. The spirit of the tale lived on long after the body had been removed, and it is important to remember that this removal from circulation cannot have been as immediate and as

total as might be imagined. There were doubtless many readers at the end of the nineteenth century who owned and read editions of Chaucer which included the text of the PlowT.

Two examples will suffice to illustrate the way in which critical activity continued to be influenced by the view of Chaucer induced by the PlowT. It is interesting, firstly, to examine H. Simon's essay 'Chaucer a Wycliffite',²⁷ in which the author tries to demonstrate that the same monks who were, he believes, responsible for composing Chaucer's Retraction, were also responsible for converting the 'original' Parst., a short Wycliffite tract dealing with the theme of penitence and contrition, into an unwieldy orthodox tract which included material on the (for the Lollards) secondary issues of confession and satisfaction. The external evidence which he cites in favour of his view of Chaucer the Wycliffite is the same as had been in use for centuries - the association with Wyclif at Oxford, the allusions and attitudes discernible in the Canterbury Tales, and elsewhere - all now able, in Simon's opinion, to sustain his view of Chaucer without a single mention of the PlowT.

Secondly, there were those who sought to identify Wyclif as the inspiration behind Chaucer's Canterbury Tales Prologue portrait of the idealised Parson. The possible identification was noted by a biographer of Wyclif in 1832,²⁸ and given further support by Gotthard Lechler in his influential work on Wyclif, which appeared in popular form in England in 1904. Discussing the portrait, Lechler acknowledges that:

There are several features...which agree with the character of Wycliffe, and not a single trait can be detected in it which does not suit him. The humility, the contentment, and the unselfishness; the moral spotlessness, the compassionate love, the conscientious and diligent faithfulness in his office and the Biblical character of his preaching - these lineaments were all his. 29

Though there are few today who would accept Lechler's identification,³⁰ its importance as evidence of the continuing discussion of Chaucer's religious position is indisputable. So much of this discussion had, ultimately, one energising force - the PlowT. It was a long time after its excision from the canon before Chaucerian scholarship was liberated from its influence. Not, perhaps, until after the foundation of the Wyclif Society was there a reexamination of attitudes towards Wyclif, Lollardy and Chaucer's relationship with both. This process of reappraisal has led to a sharper realisation of the distinctions which have to be drawn between academic and popular Lollardy, and between heretical and orthodox movements for reform within medieval society. This realisation has, in turn, led to a more careful use of terminology when discussing Chaucer's religious position.

As with many other medieval writers of unimpeachable theological orthodoxy, the force of Chaucer's criticism of clerical abuses, and the clarity of his recognition of the wide gulf between precept and example within the church, came from his profound belief in and concern for the Catholic church. The good humoured voice of disapproval in the Canterbury Tales is far removed in letter, and infinitely removed in spirit, both from the systematic remorselessness of Wyclif's philosophical and theological stance, and from the more disorganised abrasiveness which characterises the PlowT. It would surely have

astonished (and probably have distressed) Chaucer to have been told that future generations would mention him and his ideas in the same breath as those of Oxford's last great schoolman, and his adherents.

- 2. *...*
- 3. *...*
- 4. *...*
- 5. *...*
- 6. *...*
- 7. Material relating to the ...
- 8. See *...*
- 9. *...*
- 10. *...*
- 11. The allusion is noted in *...*
- 12. In *A Treasury of Verse* ...
- 13. Printed in *...*
- 14. *The Poets of the Middle Ages* ...

CHAPTER 2 - NOTES

1. The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe, ed. J. Pratt, 8 Vols. [Fourth Edition, 1870], IV, 249.
2. R. Pineas, 'Thomas More's Utopia and Protestant Polemics', RN, 17 (1964), 197-201.
3. In Jesuitismi pars prima: siue de praxi Romanae Curiae (1582) (STC 13961), Sig. 9997.
4. Quoted Spurgeon, Criticism, I, 174.
5. P.24. Quoted A.C. Dobbins, 'Chaucer Allusions: 1619-32', MLQ, 18 (1957), 309.
6. Pp. 63-4. Quoted Dobbins, p. 309.
7. Material relating to the fourteenth century, p. 63.
8. See Dizionario Letterario Bompiani, 9 Vols. (Milan, 1949-52), VI, 89.
9. Complete Prose Works of John Milton, 4 Vols. (New Haven, Conn., 1953-66), I, 579-80; see also I, 560.
10. Sig.Vu4. The pagination is irregular with pp. 1-376 followed immediately after by 307f. Sig.Vu*4 is the second p. 337.
11. The allusion is noted by B. Harris, 'Some Seventeenth-Century Chaucer Allusions', PQ, 18 (1939), 405. Harris is incorrect however in assigning the work to 1700 - Wing states that the first edition was printed in 1668 - see Wing, I, 44, Item 2222.
12. In A Treatise of Oaths, p. 122. Noted by Harris, p. 400.
13. Printed in Augustan Reprint Society, Third Series, 4 (1948), 15. The allusion is noted by R.P. Bond, 'Some Eighteenth Century Chaucer Allusions', SP, 25 (1928), 317-18.
14. The Poems of John Dryden, ed. J. Kinsley, 4 Vols. (Oxford, 1958), IV, 1453-4. Though it is clear that Dryden knew the FlowT, Skeat's suggestion that it was the discussion between the Griffon and the Pellican which 'clearly suggested' (Supplement, p. xxxv) to Dryden the form of his debate between the Hind and the Panther is unacceptable. Dryden states explicitly in the poem that his sources, his 'great

examples', had been Aesopian fable and Spenser's Mother Hubbard's Tale; see The Hind and the Panther in Poems, ed. Kinsley, 4 Vols. (1958), II, 504, ll. 6-11.

15. Historiola de Chaucero nostro, scripta etiam à Reverendiss. Tho. Tenison, archiepiscopo Cant. [or rather by Henry Wharton] ad calcem Historiae G. Cavei Literariae [printed in] Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria, by William Cave 1740-3, vol.ii, Appendix, pp. 13-14 of Notae MSS. & Accessiones Anonymi ad Cavei Historiam Literariam, Codicis Margini adscriptae, in Bibliotheca Lambethana...; the passage reads: 'Subtiliorem etenim scholarum disciplinam probè noverat; castioris autem Theologiae studio nullos ferè non sui temporis Theologos antecelluit, Wiclefi dogmata ut plurimum secutus, & infucatam & genuinam pietatem sectatus. Hinc graviore Ecclesiae Romanae superstitiones & errores acerbè saepiùs vellicat; corruptam ineptissimis commentis Disciplinam Ecclesiasticam luget; Cleri luxuriam & ignaviam castigat, in Ordines autem Mendicantes projectissimo ubique odio invehitur, quorum hypocrisin, ambitionem aliaque vitia turpissima aliquoties totâ operâ, nullibi vero non oblatâ quâvis occasione, acerrime insectatur' (quoted in Spurgeon, Criticism, III, 79-80).
16. Quoted Spurgeon, Criticism, I, 350.
17. C. Dodd, Church History of England From the Year 1500, to the Year 1688 (Brussels, 1737), I, Book 1, Article 1, p. 61.
18. See F.W. Bonner, 'Chaucer's Reputation during the Romantic Period', Furman Studies, 34 (1951), 1-21.
19. A MS. note in BM MSS. Add. 5766 B.folio 31, printed in The Town and Country Magazine, II (1870), 16, and quoted in Spurgeon, Criticism, I, 434, together with a photograph of the MS. note.
20. I. D'Israeli, Amenities of Literature, 2 Vols. [n.d.], I, 160. The three volume edition is dated 1841.
21. W. Godwin, Life of Chaucer, 2 Vols. (1803); quotations are taken from the third volume of the four volume Second Edition of 1804.
22. Select Works of the English Poets, ed R. Southey (1831), p. 1.
23. Speght's Chaucer (1598), Sig.b.iii.
24. C. Cowden Clarke, Riches of Chaucer, 2 Vols.; quotations are taken from the Second Edition. (1835; Second Edition, 1870), p.17.

25. Loc.cit.
26. Illustrations of the Lives and Writings of Gower and Chaucer, ed. H.J. Todd (1810), p.xxxix.
27. H. Simon, 'Chaucer a Wycliffite', Chaucer Society, Second Series, 9 (1876), 229-292.
28. See C.W. Le Bas, The Life of Wiclif, (1832) pp. 212-13.
29. G. Lechler, John Wycliffe and his English Precursors [Popular Edition, Translated by Dr. Lorimer and revised by Dr. Green] (1904), p. 207.
30. The most convenient twentieth century summaries of the case in favour of Chaucer, the Lollard, are those of J.S.P. Tatlock, 'Chaucer and Wiclif', MP, 14 (1917), 257f. and R.S. Loomis, 'Was Chaucer a Laodicean', Essays and Studies in Honor of Carylton Brown (New York, 1940), pp. 129-148. Still the most sensible note of caution sounded is that of E.K. Maxfield, 'Chaucer and Religious Reform', PMLA, 39 (1924), 64-74.

CHAPTER THREE.

The Anatomy of the Plowman's Tale.

The excision of the Plow from the Chaucer canon was not, as has been indicated, the result of any detailed analysis of the evidence relating to the poem's date. Rather was it a decision based primarily on instinct and taste. Until the end of the nineteenth century, the piece was accepted as being of late fourteenth or early fifteenth century origin. In 1842, Thomas Wright assigned it to the reign of Henry IV at which time, he says, 'the burning of heretics came into fashion'.¹ He notes an allusion to such a punishment in the lines:

And ayenst his commaundementes they crye,
 And danne all his to be brende; (11.633-4)

Wright also draws attention to another datable reference:

Of Freres I have tolde before,
 In a makynge of a Crede; (11.1064-6)

lines which, he is sure, allude to Pierres the Plowman's Crede,² a poem which he assigns to a date 'very soon after the year 1393'.³ His evidence for such a date derives from an allusion to the Welsh Lollard Walter Brut whose unorthodox opinions brought him into

conflict with ecclesiastical authorities on several occasions
between 1391 and 1393. ⁴ The Crede speaks of:

...Wat Brut hou bisiliche)ei pursueden
For he seyde)e so)e... (11.657-8)

Wright's certainty as to the date of both poems is not matched by a
certainty about their alleged common authorship, as implied in the
Crede allusion:

Perhaps... the writer only claims the authorship
of the Crede in his allegorical character, as the
representative of that class of satirical writers
who were then attacking the monastic orders. 5

This view of the plowman as the common persona adopted by two
different poets can be traced back to Godwin who, in 1803, conjectured
that:

as the appellation of the Plowman descended from
generation to generation among the poets who
satirised the corruptions of the Roman Catholic
church, so the Plowman...might, poetically
speaking, be considered as one with the Plowman
who in his Crede inveighs against the friars,
though the writers of the two performances
might, in strict chronology, have existed at an
interval of centuries. 6

Wright's doubts about the common authorship theory were not
expressed in his later edition of the Crede, published in 1859. He

simply states, in the notes, that the Crede reference in the FlowT:

implies that the present poem was written soon after the publication of that work. 7

and hence dates the FlowT '1393 or 1394'.

Skeat's first edition of the Crede puts the date at 'about 1394'⁸ and the FlowT at 'about 1395'. The doubts which at one time appear to have afflicted Wright about the possible common authorship of the two works do not seem to have influenced Skeat. He refers to similarities of dialect, vocabulary, phrases, formation of past participles, and overall attitude and concludes with an almost truculent certainty:

Several more points of resemblance might be cited, but surely these are sufficient to confirm the statement made by the author himself, and against which there cannot be adduced any argument whatever. It may be locked upon, I think, as a proved fact: and I would ask the reader who has any lingering doubts fairly to compare the poems, and he will see how very much - to save space - I have understated and curtailed the proof of it. 9

So it was that, until the end of the nineteenth century, the belief in the common authorship met with general acceptance, as did the conjectural dates for both poems offered by both Wright and Skeat.

Doubts on both issues were raised first by Thomas Lounsbury

who, believing that the Flowr Prologue was part of the original composition, thought that the Flowr was composed as a supplementary Canterbury Tale. This put the date of composition forward to a time when people were aware of the existence of the Canterbury Tales as a whole. He continues - 'The evidence of language seems to me, also, to indicate a later time for its composition than these dates [i.e. circa 1394] imply'.¹¹ He is not even impressed by Skeat's accumulation of evidence regarding common authorship. Far from comprising 'undoubted or even very convincing proof', the evidence, to Lounsbury, ignores the likelihood that any poet who was familiar with the Crede might duplicate in a poem of his own several phrases and words from that work without necessarily having written it.

It was left to Henry Bradley and Professor York Powell¹² to draw attention, apparently independently, to a feature of the Flowr which seems clear to the modern reader but which had passed unnoticed - certainly unremarked upon - for nearly four hundred years. In an article in the Athenaeum,¹³ Bradley points to what he believes to be clear evidence of massive interpolation in the Flowr, involving the Prologue, and lines 205-228 and 717-1268. The evidence is based primarily on the absence from the six and a half stanzas of the Prologue and from seventy two further stanzas within the poem, of the appropriate rhyming refrain which characterises the stanzas elsewhere

in the poem. The stanzas from ll.53-476 all end with the word 'fall'; those from ll.477-700 end in 'asend'; and those from ll.701-16 and again from ll.1269-1380 end in 'grace'. The removal of those passages which lack these refrain lines leaves no apparent gap in the sense of the poem, declares Bradley:

indeed, the shorter of them [i.e. ll.205-28] is an obvious digression, the spuriousness of which an acute critic might possibly have suspected on the ground of the close connexion between the two stanzas which it disjoins.

Bradley also states that forty seven of the sixty nine stanzas in the long interpolation have a rhyme scheme which differs from the one adhered to in the rest of the poem.

14

These conclusions had certainly been communicated to Skeat by 1905.

15

Indeed, according to Bradley, they had been pointed out to Skeat by Professor York Powell within a year of the publication of the 1897 edition of the FlowT. In his new 1906 edition of the

16

Crede, Skeat concedes that most of the verbal resemblances between the Crede and the FlowT, which he had noted in 1867, occur within the very passages now understood to be interpolations. Even the lines in which the FlowT poet seems to claim for himself the authorship of the Crede are to be found in one such passage. Thus Skeat is reduced to suggesting that:

It may still be true that the interpolator was himself aware that the genuine part of the Plowman's Tale was really by the same author as the Credo. More than this can hardly be said, except it be to remark that the two poems have a good deal in common, as regards both thought and diction. 17

With the undermining of the evidence upon which the theory of common authorship had been built, the whole notion of the fourteenth century composition of the Flowf was open to question. Bradley took up Professor Alois Brandl's suggestion ¹⁸ that the Prologue was merely an attempt to provide a means of disguising the Flowf as a Canterbury Tale. Bradley states that 'there can be no doubt that the prologue belongs to the sixteenth century', and that it was 'quite possibly...written by the person who prepared the first edition for the press'. Regarding the other interpolated passages, Bradley finds no difficulty in assigning them to the sixteenth century:

Their tone is that of the beginnings of the Reformation movement; it is not far from the tone of the Lollard writings of the fourteenth and early fifteenth century, but the evidence of language will not allow us to date these stanzas so far back.

We shall see that the 'evidence of language' cited by Bradley is negligible.

Having dealt with the obvious interpolations, the remaining

ninety four stanzas of the poem do not escape Bradley's attention. Though they bear no evidence in the form of missing refrains which could link them with the interpolated passages, they are, he believes, 'in everything but the absence of refrains...extraordinarily similar to those [stanzas] of the two obvious interpolations'. His conclusion is that a fourteenth century Lollard poem underwent two successive sixteenth century expansions. Many of the ninety four stanzas represent the first stage of such an expansion: the seventy two stanzas without refrain mark the second stage, when the interpolator had 'ceased to be solicitous about the exact conformity of his additions to the original pattern' - assuming, of course, that the same interpolator was responsible for both stages of expansion. Bradley believes that only ll. 53-60, 69-132, 181-204, 229-236, 7301-8 'contain matter derived from the original poem'.

Bradley's views regarding the form and date of these interpolations were soon raised to the level of authority by their incorporation in standard reference books such as The Cambridge History of English Literature (in 1908),¹⁹ and J.E. Wells Manual (in 1916),²⁰ which states that though some of the elements of the Flowf may be of the fourteenth century, 'the Complaint as it stands is practically wholly of the sixteenth [century]'. It is this view which is invariably cited in subsequent references to the poem,²¹ in spite

of the fact that Bradley's judgements are grounded on a series of vague and unsubstantiated claims which do not wholly bear examination.

Chief amongst these claims is that which insists that 'the evidence of language' precludes a composition date before the sixteenth century for these passages which correspond to both Bradley's phases of interpolation as set out above. Bradley, however, does not indicate the nature of this evidence. For every conclusion concerning the date and authenticity of particular lines, he appears to rely entirely on a subjective impression of the language used. This technique cannot now be regarded as wholly acceptable for there are means available with which certain aspects of the diction may be subjected to more objective scrutiny with regard to their date.

Bradley's judgement may also be at fault in refusing to recognise the possibility that the author of the original Flow! material may have been responsible for the interpolations as well, writing them at a time when he had forgotten or, perhaps more likely, had ceased to bother about adhering to the rhyme scheme and refrain which he had used in the original stanzas. Bradley is content to remark:

I think no competent scholar who will carefully read these stanzas [i.e. the interpolated material] apart from the rest will think it possible that they were written in the fourteenth century.

He denies that there is anything in the second and third parts of the

poem which 'strongly suggests an early origin unless it be the author's apology in the last stanza but one', but again offers no evidence in support of this important assertion.

When Bradley turns his attention to those parts of the poem which he believes to be survivals from the original, he offers no principle of selection to explain his choice of passages which are to be regarded as genuine. Where he finds indications of older diction in the interpolations, he accounts for them by speaking of 'the writer's fairly successful endeavour after archaism', yet he makes no attempt to indicate which passages in the interpolations have been archaized in this way. Even supposing that Bradley's basic thesis concerning the use of archaisms by a sixteenth century interpolator is correct - the interest shown in and use made of archaized diction during the early part of the sixteenth century by writers such as Sir Thomas Wyatt lends a degree of credence to it - one would have been happier if Bradley had sought to explain why an interpolator should go to the very considerable trouble of archaizing the diction and vocabulary of his material in order to disguise the poem's presence in a fourteenth century work whilst quite failing to undertake the more obvious and less onerous task of matching up the rhyme scheme and refrain with that of the original. Such a failure would be at least as likely to draw attention to the spurious nature of the interpolated lines as would a

failure to archaize the language.

It is clear, then, that Bradley's conclusions, based as they frequently seem to be on intuition and guesswork, must be treated with the greatest caution and their acceptance must be dependant upon a more exhaustive examination of all the available evidence concerning vocabulary, historical allusions and the interpolations than has hitherto been attempted.

Vocabulary.

An extensive study of the vocabulary of the FlowT has been undertaken in the hope of establishing some foundation for a discussion of the date and provenance of the various parts of the poem. The absence of any manuscript text earlier than the University of Texas MS., and hence the dependence on sixteenth century printed texts deprives an editor of the opportunity for effective analysis of the spelling of words. By the time the poem reached the sixteenth century printed page, the probable corruption of spellings caused by the text passing from scribe to scribe, from compositor to printer, ²³ leaves only the word itself for analysis - the printed spellings offer no guide to the date of the original poem. Dealing with the word itself, in whatever form, atten-

tion has been paid to terminal dates of usage, and to meanings at particular times. However it is important to exercise caution in the assessment of vocabulary evidence not only because it is tempting, in the absence of the evidence which the editor of a medieval text normally hopes to derive from a study of the early manuscripts of the work, to ascribe overmuch significance to such other evidence, in this case from vocabulary, which remains. It would be particularly unwise to place too great a reliance upon vocabulary evidence because the sources from which it is obtained are, unhappily, uncertain and inadequate at times.

²⁴
The MED provides the fullest available account of forms and usages of words before 1500. It also contains a re-assessment of traditionally accepted datings for all the works cited ²⁵ - it is perhaps significant that the FlonT is not amongst the works used, reflecting presumably the continuing acceptance enjoyed by Bradley's notion of sixteenth century authorship. Only when a comparison is made between the material available in the MED and that available in the OED does the present incompleteness of the MED beyond the letter I seem particularly regrettable. Much evidence in the OED concerning terminal dates of usage cannot be cross-checked fully with the DOET ²⁶ which has not progressed further than the letter N.

Nor is it simply the inadequacy of the particular tools used which must qualify ^{the} drawing of any over hasty conclusions from the

investigation. A dictionary can only record usage at a series of single points of time. How far on either side of a given terminal date may conclusions be drawn concerning the currency of a word? Does the inclusion of a word in one of the early dictionaries reflect usage at the time of that dictionary's compilation, or does it merely serve to illustrate the essentially derivative nature of many dictionaries? For instance, D.F. Starnes, in discussing the possible sources of the Prognosticon Pythagoricum (1440), states that:

these may be found in the numerous English-Latin and Latin-English vocabularies in existence in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. 27

and it is clearly possible to imagine the inclusion in a later dictionary of words which, though current at the time of the original compilation of such early vocabularies, had long since passed out of common use.

There are further problems. If the noun form of a word exists in 1300, but its verbal form is first recorded in 1520, to what extent does the inclusion, in an unrelated work, of the verbal form preclude a fourteenth or fifteenth century date of composition for the work? How accurate can evidence be which depends on dating a change of meaning of a word already long used in other senses? At what date after 1390 and before 1590 does the terminal use of a word

cease to be evidence for the theory of fourteenth century composition and start to be evidence for the theory of sixteenth century composition? These are some of the questions to be borne in mind when examining the findings of the vocabulary analysis.

The nature of these findings seems, to the present writer, in no way to insist upon a sixteenth century date of composition. Rather does it offer very considerable support for a date within a generation of the end of the fourteenth century.

1. Forms not recorded after 1410:

<u>in one</u>	1.72	in the same condition
<u>crokettes</u>	1.306	rolls of hair
<u>so</u>	1.464	as, in the way that-- <u>OR</u> 17.
<u>sturts</u>	1.868	content
<u>inwde</u>	1.1336	ready, prepared
<u>foraerie</u>	1.1340	forfeited

2. Forms not recorded after 1475:

<u>theracavn</u>	1.44	in opposition
<u>(In) takenyng</u>	1.99	signifying
<u>pelure</u>	1.106	fur

<u>wrightly</u>	1.457	wrongly
<u>thence</u>	1.472	whereas (1472-85)
<u>to</u> ²⁸	11.20,179,255, 1274,1339	QED, Eg. prefix 2.
<u>each a</u>	1.1282	every

3. Forms recorded after 1475 in Dictionaries only:

<u>countours</u>	1.802	accounting officials	1483
<u>markette beters</u>	1.871	idlers at the market	1483
<u>avlted</u>	1.1308	sinned against	1530

4. Forms rarely recorded after 1500:

<u>merciful</u>	1.96	merciful (Spenser)
<u>present</u>	1.432	ale (Palgrave)

5. Forms in various positions:

a) Not recorded after 1410:

<u>royat</u>	1.218	appointment, benefice
<u>adid</u>	1.368	forgave, absolved
<u>quall</u>	1.570	pervert
<u>benles</u>	1.537	beads
<u>loru</u>	11.731,986	lost (Spenser)

<u>svares</u>	1.759	harlots (1994, C18)
<u>skere</u>	1.937	purified
<u>teame</u>	1.1043 (both)	plot of land, enclosure
<u>sovernavle</u>	1.1078	one who governs, ruler (<u>QED</u> 2c)

b) Not recorded after 1475:

<u>scale</u>	1.71	cold
<u>crallvt</u>	1.186	curled, twisted
<u>putry</u>	1.287	unchastity (1483)
<u>glawe (pret.ppl.)</u>	1.305	destroyed
<u>crovaery</u>	1.445	company of Christians
<u>howe</u>	1.487	think, consider
<u>avende</u>	1.666	belong to
<u>plaveng-fero</u>	1.723	play-thing
<u>enplede</u>	1.734	plead
<u>asayse</u>	1.843	way, manner
<u>or nona</u>	1.932	or not (<u>QED</u> none C 2)
<u>crouche</u>	1.942	cross (1482)
<u>ascha</u>	1.943	ashes
<u>rouche</u>	1.947	are mean, niggardly
<u>curise</u>	1.960	value, worth, virtue
<u>wuat</u>	1.1092	kept away, apart
<u>wlate</u>	1.1098	loathe
<u>avet</u>	1.1172	(never you) mind

to-race 1.1274 tear to pieces

c) Recorded after 1475 in Dictionaries only:

<u>avaulauder</u>	1.333	slander (1483)	1530
<u>angred</u>	1.343	angered	1692
<u>forthan</u>	1.603	therefore	1674
<u>displeas</u>	1.647	displease	1658
<u>filthy</u>	1.1097	filthy	1616 (C18-)

d) Not recorded after 1501:

<u>peace and cryth</u>	1.247	peace (<u>MED</u> <u>grith</u> 1b)
<u>catall</u>	1.250	property, wealth
<u>halke</u>	1.489	corner
<u>proced</u>	1.928	proceed (<u>QED</u> <u>aug</u> 18)
<u>dressed</u>	1.1002	dressed (<u>QED</u> 'after 1500 arch.')
<u>comanded</u>	1.1229	commanded

e) Recorded after 1500 in Scottish writings only:

<u>corner</u>	1.81	corner (C18)
<u>death</u>	1.163	death
<u>forgets</u>	1.465	forgets

<u>elder days</u>	1.643	former days (<u>OED</u> <u>day</u> 13 a)
<u>adown</u>	1.1319	here below

It will be noted that none of the forms set out above insist on a composition date after 1500; many of them imply a date not later than 1450; none of them precludes a late fourteenth century date and a considerable number support such a date.

There are, however, a number of words whose presence in the poem might, at first sight, seem to argue against so early a date. For instance, some words are first recorded in their Floer sense after 1435, though before 1445:

<u>preching</u>	1.48	a sermon	D
<u>lustly</u> (adv.)	1.434	lustfully	D
<u>marchendry</u>	1.800	comerce	
<u>rayment</u>	1.936	clothing	D

These are not, however, of crucial importance. Those marked with a D were first recorded in the Proemterium Parvulorum whose list of English words was, as we have already noted, derived in part at least from existing word lists. Thus the forms recorded in the

Proemptorium may well have been current at the end of the fourteenth century. As for marchandry, a similar form merchandry with the same meaning is recorded twice in the fourteenth century. It could well be that marchandry represents merely a later form - the work of either a compositor, printer, editor or scribe - of the poem's original form merchandry. Another word, goodesse (1.967), can be similarly accounted for. The OED records the form only once - in Lord Berners' translation of Froissart in 1523 when the word means 'goods'. However even in the passage from the translation cited by the OED, Lord Berners, or his printer, use goodesse and goodes interchangeably, with goodes representing a form to be found as early as the fourteenth century. Thus it seems likely that goodesse in the Floot represents a sixteenth century spelling of an older word and can perhaps be explained by an editorial desire to show that the second syllable of the word should be stressed.

Several words in the Floot are not recorded before 1460 and yet the forms from which they are derived have long been in existence. Thus though the first recorded use of outragesnesse (1.507) is in Malory, the words outrageous and outrageously are to be found in the fourteenth century. Similarly, though inhausenig (1.112) as a verbal noun is not found before 1490, the same form (spelt with en-) is recorded as a participle adjective from 1382 and the verb enhausen is also recorded in the fourteenth century. One last example will

suffice - counterfeiture (1.1061), meaning 'pretenders, deceivers' is not recorded before 1547. However the verb counterfeit with the sense of 'to deceive by imitation' is recorded twice in the fourteenth century (MED 30). It is surely unwise to assume that all the forms of these words as found in the FlowT could not have been coined considerably earlier than their recorded terminal dates imply. With similar forms or the same form with a different meaning extant at the end of the fourteenth century, the FlowT forms scarcely constitute evidence of any weight for a late date.

There remain a few words about which there is some uncertainty as to their meaning and their earliest date of usage. Firstly, the word metall (1.330) seems in its context to have the sense of 'money' or 'wealth'. The OED records the first use of the word meaning 'a precious metal or gold' in Shakespeare, and the first use meaning 'coins' in 1574. Clearly such a date is too late for both the suggested dates of the FlowT's composition. One must therefore either accept that the FlowT context insists upon some connotation of 'value' in the word and that the OED is wrong in ascribing so late^a a date to that particular sense, or one must accept that the word as used in the FlowT simply means 'any metal substance', with no special connotation of 'value' or 'worth' other than the obvious fact that all metal is of some worth. In this more general sense, metall is recorded many times

in early and late Middle-English, and can thus have no force as evidence for a late FlowT composition date. Similarly with the word willer (11:228,780), which means 'a wisher, one who desires', the OED records (apart from the FlowT) no use of the word in this sense before 1586. Clearly the OED is mistaken - but this does not help to decide the FlowT composition date - the dictionary could be fifty years out - or three hundred.

Two words, both occurring in the Prologue, pose different problems. The word ypent (1.22) meaning 'confined' is a past participle form derived either from pen, a verb with preterite forms penned and pynned which are recorded in the fourteenth century, or from oend, a verb whose earliest recorded use is about 1450. However, the form of the past participle in the FlowT is not recorded before 1579. It is quite possible that this form represents a sixteenth century scribal spelling of a preterite participle form of a word which had existed, as we have noted, in the fourteenth century. No dating significance can be assigned to the y- prefix. This was a characteristic of past participles in both the South and the West Midlands in Middle English, and was also adopted as an archaistic feature in the sixteenth century by such writers as Spenser, Arthur Hall and Sylvester.

The difficulty with platte (1.12) is that its meaning in the FlowT context is far from certain. The OED does not record the temporal

sense 'straightaway' which seems most applicable to the use of the word in the FlowT. Skeat suggests that the meaning implied is 'flatly', 'plainly' and in this sense of the manner of the plowman's departure, the word is recorded from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century and thus could favour either possible date of composition. Other uses of the word - as an adverb of degree, manner or position - span the same period. Only as an adverb of direction with the sense of 'directly, exactly, straight' is the word not found before 1433. This could be the sense implied in the FlowT, but it is certainly less suitable than the temporal sense of 'straightaway'. Thus one is hesitant to attach any significance to the late date at which one sense of the word is first recorded when that sense has less to commend it than one alternative sense which is unrecorded and other alternatives which, as it happens, can fit either of the postulated dates of composition.

Even if a late date were accepted for both platte and want, this would not of itself be significant as dating evidence for the poem as a whole. Both words occur in the Prologue which, as will presently be argued, was probably not part of the original poem and may well have been added in the sixteenth century. It is interesting, in this context, to note the presence in the Prologue of rearsche (l.51) which rhymes with harsche (l.49). This form is first recorded in the sense of 'to upbraid a person', in 1513, though the Middle English forms rearsen and rearsene are recorded earlier. In view of its position as a rhyming

word, the sixteenth century form reproche seems essential and represents considerable additional evidence in favour of a sixteenth century date of composition for the Prologue, though not for the whole poem.

The line 'They toteth on her somme totall' (1.418) contains two words which might seem to present some difficulty if the poem is to be ascribed to the fourteenth century. The verb tot, meaning 'note something by means of the word tot or the letter T, as on a Sherrif's list' is recorded in both its original and transferred senses. The original sense is found in the fourteenth century, but the transferred sense is not recorded before The Paston Letters in 1444. It is surely possible to believe that it was the untransferred sense which was being used in the FlowT. As regards totall, the OED notes the FlowT reference and takes the word as an adjective. The distinction is drawn between two adjectival senses in the dictionary - 'Of, pertaining, or relating to the whole of something', which is found after 1386, and 'constituting or comprising a whole', which is the meaning which the OED rightly gives to the FlowT usage and which is first recorded in 1474. In this instance, too, it is quite likely that this second sense had been used at least once before 1474.

There remain two words and phrases to comment upon. Firstly ones for all (1.410), meaning 'once and for all', is not recorded, in the OED, before 1489. Secondly contende (1.578), meaning 'fight', is not recorded, in any form, before 1514. There is no immediate way satisfactorily of reconciling these two late forms with a fourteenth century date. There is a Middle

English form contek which has the same meaning as contende, but the sixteenth century form must have been in the original version of the poem because it has to rhyme with asende (1.590). All that can be said is that neither the word nor the phrase occurs in any of the passages which have been marked as probable interpolations by Skeat and others, and that therefore, their presence in the Flowf does nothing to substantiate the theory that, as we now have it, the Flowf is a sixteenth century expansion of a fourteenth century original. Moreover, set against all these forms listed earlier which seem to have passed out of use by the beginning of the sixteenth century, the two forms can scarcely be said to represent a conclusive retort. If the alternatives are either to ignore the accumulated evidence which favours an early date of composition, or to believe that these two forms could have existed, as yet unrecorded, in the fourteenth century, it is surely acceptable to proceed to the next stage of the date investigation with the claim that a prima facie case has been established for a fourteenth century date for many parts of the tale and that ^a significant case cannot, on the evidence thus far considered, be established for the alternative theory of sixteenth century authorship for most of the tale as it now stands.

Historical Allusions.

It is the intention of this section to indicate such individual references and details in the poem as are suggestive of a particular period of composition. Consideration of the broader questions arising from the likely date of the attitudes revealed in the poem is deferred to a subsequent chapter.

The differing values which scholars have placed on the Grade allusion in the Flowr (l.1066) have already been referred to. It should simply be said that whether or not the allusion occurs in a passage which is part of a later interpolation, it offers no assistance in dating the Flowr as a whole. There seems, to the present writer, no evidence of any weight to support the notion of common authorship for the Grade and any part of the Flowr. The allusion together with any slight verbal similarities between the two pieces (See Appendix) can be explained satisfactorily by believing that the Flowr poet (or interpolator) knew rather than wrote the Grade. It would have been possible for him to familiarise himself with the work at the end of the fourteenth century when the Grade was first written, or he could have seen a manuscript copy in circulation in the sixteenth century prior to the publication of the first printed edition - printed by Reginald Wolfe ³¹ in 1553. Skeat has shown that British Museum MS.

Reg. 13 B. XVII³² is older than the printed text and was not copied from it. He also noted that the other extant manuscript, Trinity College, Cambridge, R.3.21³³ is an independent authority though it is older than the printed version. He believes that both manuscripts and the printed text were copied from 'one and the same MS., a fairly good one',³⁴ and believes that this common source could have been a manuscript dating from the fourteenth century. More recently A.I. Doyle has shed new light on the early manuscript history of the Credo. He has found 11.173-207 from the text of the Credo in British Museum MS. Harley 78 which were written in a hand recognisable as that responsible for codices of English verse and prose dating from the third quarter of the fifteenth century. He believes that these lines may have been rejected from a complete copy of the Credo and that this copy may be the shared source of the later versions, in both manuscript and print. Thus it is likely that the author of that part of the FlowT which contains the Credo allusion could have read the Credo in manuscript at any time between 1393 and 1535. Hence, verbal similarities between the poems cannot be used as evidence for one date of composition rather than another when considering the date of the FlowT.

What, then, of the other historical allusions? Firstly, there are three references to fashion which seem to have been current at the end of the fourteenth century but to have lasted little longer.

The first is a contemptuous reference to priests who 'kembe her crockettes with christall' (l.306). The word crocket has long been used as an architectural term but, as used in the Flowt, and elsewhere in the fourteenth century, it alludes to a particular hair-style. The MED glosses the word as 'an ornamental curl or roll of hair' and notes amongst recorded usages, lines in Gower:

Her crocket kembd and theron set
A Nouche with a chapelet 36

and, earlier in the fourteenth century, in Handlyng Synne, the warning to 'Be nat proud of)y crocket'.³⁷ There is even a reference to a lost romance entitled King Adelstane with gilðen krocket. Sir Frederick

Madden notes that:

The term crocket (derived by Skinner from the Fr. crochet, uncinulus) points out the period of the poem's composition, since the fashion alluded to of wearing those large rolls of hair so called, only arose at the latter end of Hen. III reign, and continued through the reign of Edw. I and part of his successors. 38

The fact that the word is not recorded after 1393 suggests that the particular fashion was no longer current by the beginning of the fifteenth century. Thus the allusion in the Flowt is a strong indication of a date of composition not long after 1400, for the section containing the

allusion.

The second item of fashion evidence concerns the shoes which were worn by the clergy as described in the poem. The complaint is that priests have 'longe pykes on her shone' (l.930). Shoes with long points were often known as Cracowes³⁹ and owed their introduction to England to Queen Anne of Bohemia,⁴⁰ the wife of Richard II. John Stow remarks:

since the fift of Richard the 2. (when he tooke to wife Anne daughter to Vesclaus [Venceslaus] King of Bohem) by her example the English people had used piked shoes, tied to their knees with silken laces, or chaynes of silver and gilt.... 41

The extravagant length of these points was the subject of subsequent restrictive legislation in the fifteenth century⁴² until, gradually, the fashion died out. Quite when this finally happened is not certain but Fairholt remarks that:

This ... fashion continued until the overthrow of the house of York, at least amongst the nobility, although it does not so constantly appear during the reigns of Henry IV. and V. 43

Thus, before the end of the fifteenth century, the fashion seems no longer to have been current and an allusion to the fashion in the FlowT

may be taken as a further factor favouring a date of composition a good deal earlier than that suggested by Bradley for this latter section of the poem.

The third fashion reference alludes to the size of sleeve which priests affected at the time of the poem's composition:

Nowe ben proestes pokes so wyde
That men must enlarge the vestement (ll.933-4)

The sense of pokes intended here suggests that the reference is to the fashion spoken of by the unknown English continuator of Higden's Chronicle:

Grete insolence of vesture began to encrease in the begynnyng of this kyng [Richard III], and specially of gowmes with longe pokes, made in the maner of a baggye, usede indifferently by ryche men and poore, whiche syghte be callede welle the receyvynge places of the devalle; for men hydde in theym that they myghte gette, for some of theyse were so longe that they were extente unto the grounde, and some to þe knees. 44

The latest contemporary OXD reference to pokes in this sense is Higden - the only subsequent ^{reference} is in Phillips' Dictionary (1658). It is clear, therefore, that the fashion was not current after the early years of the fifteenth century and that its inclusion in the long interpolated passage

in the Flowe is further evidence against the theory which sees that particular interpolation as the work of a sixteenth century writer.

Skeat has drawn attention to a number of allusions in the poem which, he believes, refer to particular events at the end of the fourteenth century. The lines:

Betwene hem nowe is great stryfe,
Many a man is kylled with a knyfe,
To wete which of hem have lordship shall; (11.240-2)

are seen as an allusion to the Great Schism ⁴⁵ which lasted from 1378 to 1415. The phrase betwene hem is taken ^{by} Skeat as a reference to the antagonism between the rival popes-Boniface IX, who was elected on November 2nd. 1389, and Benedict XIII, who was elected on September 28th. 1394. It is this same antagonism which Skeat sees reflected elsewhere in the poem:

Why cursen they the croysery,
Christes christen creatures?
For bytwene hem is nowe envy,
To be enhaunsed in honours; (11.445-8)

Skeat's choice of Boniface and Benedict rather than two earlier (or later) rival popes, seems to have been motivated by his already firm belief that the Grade allusion in the tale points conclusively to a date of composition of 1394. However, whether or not Skeat is correct in his identification of the particular popes in question, the repetition of the phrase

'bytwene hem' does strongly suggest a date within that period of internecine strife amongst European Catholics known as the Great Schism when opposing claimants to the Holy See sought support in every land for their respective causes.

At an early stage of the Schism, one of those chiefly responsible for organising support in England for Urban VI in his dispute with Clement VII was Henry DeSpenser, Bishop of Norwich.⁴⁶ Urban granted DeSpenser permission to arrange a crusade against the French-supported Clementine forces, and he offered indulgences to all those participating in it. Clerics were allowed, under the Bull Datum cum filii Babil.⁴⁷ to take up arms without the consent of their superiors and to consider themselves absolved from all duties of residence within their parish. Many aspects of the resulting crusade to Flanders were denounced furiously by Wyclif and the Lollards, and none more so than the activities of militaristic prelates in general and Bishop DeSpenser in particular.⁴⁸ Several references in the Flowt seem to echo these criticisms. Priests who should '... to no bateyle ... non lede/For inhauyng of her owne degree' (11.111-2) are guilty of straying from this precept, for they:

... hyereth men by dayes and yeres,
 With strength to holde hem in her stall,
 And culleth all her adversaries...
 And men of warre they woll wage,
 To bryng her enemyes to the dode; (11.265-8;271-2)

One further set of allusions seems to offer the possibility of narrowing down the date of composition to a date no earlier than 1401. Discussing the likely fate of the true believer at the hands of malevolent ecclesiastical authority, the PlowT explains that:

...they ben harder in their bonde,
Worse beate and bytter brende,
Than to the kyng is understande; (11.681-3)

with the reference, almost certainly, to the practice of punishing heresy by burning the convicted heretic at the stake. Elsewhere in the poem, we read that:

And ayenst his [Christ's] commaundementes they crye,
And dampne all his to be brende,
For it lyketh nat hem suche losengery;
God almighty hem amende. (11.633-6)

and again at the end of the poem, the Griffon, in the course of threatening the Pellican, declares:

Thou shalbe brente in balefull fyre;
All thy secte I shall distrye;
Ye shalbe hanged by the swyre. (11.1234-6)

It is generally accepted that the first documented instance of an heretic suffering death at the stake was the Lollard William Sawtre who was executed in 1401.⁴⁹ Thus any writing containing an allusion to such

a punishment for heresy might reasonably be expected to post-date Savtre's execution. This assumption clearly influenced those who assigned the Flowf to c 1402. Sleat, however, who was already convinced by the Grade allusion evidence of a composition date c 1394 set about trying to reconcile the date suggested by the Grade allusion with that suggested by the references to judicial burnings. He points to the lines:

[The clergy]... say that heresy is her sawe,
And so to prysons well hem sende; (11.641-2)

and, again, to:

And yet wel worse, they woll hym tere,
And in prysons well hym pende
In gyves and in other gere;
When God woll it save sende, (11.649-52)

as evidence that the poem was written at a time (before 1401) when imprisonment was the basic punishment for heresy, and not at a time (after 1401) when 'Lollards were frequently sent to the stake for heresy'.⁵⁰

Sleat's position is not convincing. Imprisonment was an essential part of the judicial process irrespective of date. The heretic was apprehended and then kept in prison before and during his trial at the local Consistory court.⁵¹ The Flowf lines do not imply that prison was, in itself, the ultimate penalty - they do not preclude the possibility of subsequent execution - but rather do they record that, after the initial charge of heresy, the accused is committed to prison either until such

times as he recanted, or until he was dealt with by the due processes of
 ecclesiastical ^{and} secular law. It is true that Fleet does recognise the
 existence of those passages in the poem which make direct reference to
 burning at the stake and which would seem to preclude a date of composi-
 tion before 1401. Fleet, however, denies that the references preclude
 the early date and is able ⁵² to draw on evidence gathered together by
 Thomas Arnold, one of the celebrated nineteenth century editors of
 Wycliffite writings. Arnold, and others after him, instance several cases
 in which judicial burning was said to have been used as a punishment
 for heresy in England before 1401. ⁵³ As early as the reign of Henry
 III, an apostate friar who wished to marry a Jewess was burnt. ⁵⁴ In
 1330 the Chronicle of Meaux records that :

... In Anglia, in quadam silva, combusta
 sunt viri quinquaginta quinque, et mulieres
 octo, ejusdem ordinis et erroris. ⁵⁵

and in Henry Knighton's Chronicle in *one* case not mentioned by Arnold,
 there is an entry which claims that the Lollard William Swinderby was
 threatened with the death penalty in 1382 - 'pabulus ignis digno effici
 meruit' ⁵⁶ - before he was saved by the intervention of John of Gaunt.
 Later Thomas Walsingham records that Bishop DeSpenser threatened to deal
 with recalcitrant Lollards 'vel ignibus traderetur vel capite privaretur'. ⁵⁷

Another case not mentioned by Arnold, but of considerable interest,
 concerns Wyclif himself. In his De Veritate Sacras Scripturas, Wyclif

explains why, about the middle of January 1378, he did not appear as requested at St. Paul's in order to answer charges of heresy which had been brought against him. He had heard, he says, that Archbishop Sudbury was plotting against him and that there were rumours that some people were in favour of eliminating him whether by burning, slaughter or any other means. ⁵⁸

This reference in a work definitely written by Wyclif is of rather greater value as evidence than references which are to be found in many of the so-called English works of Wyclif. ⁵⁹

A large number of these vernacular pieces were certainly not written by Wyclif and many indeed were not written by anyone before the beginning of the fifteenth century. ⁶⁰

Discussing the allusions to burning in the English works, H.B. Workman plausibly suggests that 'Later editing by a disciple would account for the reference (s)...which so misled Arnold.' ⁶¹

As for other references in Latin works definitely written by Wyclif, Workman believes that they are the result of rumours reaching England concerning the fate of Spiritual Franciscans on the continent whose defiance of the ecclesiastical authorities dates back to their defiance of the measures taken against them by Pope John XXIII. ⁶²

E.W. Talbert does not consider it necessary to look back to the earlier years of the fourteenth century in order to explain the references - the fate of the persecuted Waldensians in the 1370's was a more contemporary influence. ⁶³

Miss Deanealy states that there was enough burning of Beghards and

Friends of God at this time to justify any English Lollard's fear of the same fate for years before the De Haeretico Comburendo statute of 1401⁶⁴.

H.G. Richardson believes that the references to burnings represent 'no more than threats: Lollards, or at least instructed Lollards, spoke of death by burning as inflicted by the pope and his cardinals on those who maintained God's law, not as a penalty exacted in England'⁶⁵. Thus, all these scholars believe that allusions to burning at the stake can be explained without having to believe that such a punishment was carried out in England before 1401.

Arnold dissents from this view. He stresses that the De Haeretico Comburendo statute represented not the desire to create a de novo situation, but rather the desire to make existing practice 'uberius et celerius'⁶⁶. Maitland concedes that the church had the theoretical right to punish heresy by death. For him, the statute was no more than an aid, albeit an extremely desirable one, in the execution of a sentence which was already both justified and indeed necessitated by 'divine law and the positive law of the church'⁶⁷: the Church's authority to punish the guilty 'was a right which no statute gave, and no parliament could take away'. For Maitland, the execution of Savtre, before the statute was actually passed by Parliament, was carried out precisely to confirm that principle.⁶⁸

Even if the church had the theoretical right to deal with heretics in this way before 1401, was this right commonly exercised? Maitland

implies that the execution of Savtre was one isolated instance and in no sense a continuation of existing practice . Arnold's answer to the question develops from a caution with which few could disagree:

considering the imperfect nature of communications between different parts of the country in that age, and the paucity of records, it would surely be hazardous to assert confidently, merely because the chroniclers are silent, that no such threat [of burning] was ever carried into effect. 69

to a certainty from which many would dissent:

[burning at the stake] appeared to most men so obviously natural and right,--so much a matter of course,--that one can better understand how very severe punishments may have passed over absolutely without record. 70

The idea that burning at the stake was so common a punishment before 1401 that chroniclers did not bother to mention it is hardly convincing. If this were the case, why did the burning of Lollards after 1401 suddenly attract so much attention from those who had previously been utterly disinterested?

One is thus obliged to conclude that the first reference to burning in the poem - the threat (ll.1234-6) - could apply equally to a date before or after 1401. The second reference - the implementation of the threat (ll.681-3) - could have been written before 1401 only if one concedes that it is not incumbent upon propagandists and polemicists to

write that which is the whole truth but rather that which is most advantageous in creating sympathy for the particular cause being championed. It should also be realised, however, that even if the lines were written after and not before 1401, they do not appear to refer to a very common practice. Documented cases of burning for heresy are extremely rare during the first decade of the fifteenth century. After Savtre's execution, the next recorded instance is not before 1410 when John Badby was burnt in spite of the repeated efforts of the king to secure his recantation.

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It is clear, then, that whilst the various historical allusions cannot give a precise date of composition for the Flowe, the sum total of available evidence, taken with the conclusions from the examination of vocabulary points towards a date within the period of the Great Schism. It may perhaps be claimed that none of the actual references to the Schism occurs in passages which have been cited as subsequent interpolations and that, consequently, the notion of the sixteenth century origin of these interpolations is in no way invalidated. However, the 'pyked' shoes fashion reference occurs in one of these passages and the vocabulary study reveals that some of the earliest forms are also to be found in these lines. Thus if the passages are to be regarded as interpolations, all the evidence discussed so far suggests that, with the possible exception of the Prologue, they were written at much the same time as the

rest of the poem. There is certainly no allusion in the lines which points even haltingly, let alone decisively, to an exclusively sixteenth century date of composition.

The Interpolations.

The Flowr as it stands is amongst the most comprehensive indictments of the medieval church that was produced by any writer of English vernacular poetry in the Middle Ages. It is necessary to add the qualification 'as it stands' for, as will be recalled, the view has long been held that the poem as first printed in the sixteenth century and as reproduced in most subsequent editions, represents the work of more than one writer and, indeed, of more than one age. Thus far it has been asserted that there is no positive evidence - whether from individual historical allusions or from vocabulary - to lend support to a theory of sixteenth century authorship for any part of the work except the Prologue. Such evidence as there is argues strongly in favour of a date within a generation of the end of the fourteenth century. There is further evidence, however, which needs examination before the Bradleian theory is completely rejected. Each of the so-called interpolations must be viewed in the light of two questions. Firstly, has each passage

an organic relationship to the structure of the poem as a whole - that is to say, would a reader who was unaware of the existence of these passages, and who was provided with a text from which they had already been removed, find the structure and content of the poem more, less or as meaningful as would be the case if the omitted passages had been included? Secondly, does any passage suggest major ideas and themes - as opposed to the single allusions already discussed - which point clearly to characteristically sixteenth century attitudes and situations rather than to views which either reflect a fourteenth century context or which could allude to both periods with equal force? In short, have the passages been interpolated at some time after the poem's original date of composition? If so, when and by whom?

Dealing first with the Prologue, it should be noted that every one of the six and a half stanzas is written in the rhyme scheme abababab. In this, the stanzas differ both from those sections of the poem which are assumed by most critics to be part of the original work, and also from all but two of the stanzas generally regarded as interpolations. Secondly, the poem may in general be described as self-sustaining and in no way dependant on its Prologue. A reader probably would be unaware that the narrator of ll.53f. was supposed to be a Plowman had not that fact been revealed both by the Prologue, and also by the attribution of the speeches on ll.1285-6,1289-90, and 1301-2 to the Plowman, in the margins of the earliest printed texts. Such an attribution need not be

thought of as a feature of the early manuscript(s) of the FlowE. It could have been the work of the sixteenth century official editor who prepared the text for publication - perhaps the same man who was responsible for the addition of the Prologue in which the identity of the narrator in the poem is revealed. Certainly the Prologue may be thought of as structurally superfluous. The poem as a whole - with the single exception of the Crede allusion, whose importance in discussing the genesis of the Prologue will be indicated presently - is perfectly meaningful without it.

Thirdly, there is a clear contradiction, noted first by John Barisham in 1642,⁷² between the Prologue in which the Flowman requests that his audience should be tolerant whilst he is 'tellyng' (1.52) his tale, and the end of the poem when the narrator requests 'Of my writyng have me excused' (1.1366).

There are a number of possible explanations for the provenance of the Prologue. Firstly, it could conceivably have been the work of the FlowE poet who, at some point after the Canterbury Tales had achieved, or looked like achieving, widespread circulation in manuscript, sought by the addition of a Prologue to pass off his poem as one of the apparently missing parts of Chaucer's masterpiece. Alternatively, an unknown writer of the early fifteenth century may have come across the FlowE and, wishing to afford greater prominence to the opinions set out in the poem, could have written the Prologue in order to identify the work with

Chaucer and so extend its circulation. Mention has been made already of the way in which a poem written by Hoccleve seems to have found its way into the Christ Church MS. of the Canterbury Tales as a result of the intervention of just such an unknown third party who provided the piece with the Prologus. Both of these explanations mean that the Flowr would have arrived in the sixteenth century complete with a Prologue.

Under those circumstances, its subsequent progress can be explained in a number of ways. If it was newly unearthed before 1532 then its absence from the Chaucer edition of that year could be explained, as it was by Henry Bradshaw, by believing that Francis Thynne had confused the name of the poem which was reported to have been suppressed from that edition and that instead of being the Pilgr perhaps it was the Flowr which had been rejected from the pilot edition. It could also be explained by doubting whether its existence was known to William Thynne before 1532. If indeed the discovery of the poem was the result of a systematic official policy of ransacking collections of medieval books in the search for material which could be used for the purposes of religious and political propaganda, then the authorities into whose hands the work fell may not have thought of the idea of including it in the new edition of Chaucer before it was too late to take the necessary action before the publication of the 1532 edition. Certainly the idea that William Thynne could have had the piece in his possession, complete with its Prologus which clearly identified the work with the Canterbury

Tales, and yet not have tried to print it is inconceivable. His religious sympathies were apparently in harmony with those of the poem and it is highly unlikely that he could have rejected the work on grounds of its doubtful authenticity when the same editor was prepared, if the version of Francis Thynne's story set out in an earlier chapter is accepted, to print as Chaucer's in 1542 a work - the Pilgr - which certainly could not have been written before 1536.

The poem may, of course, not have been unearthed until after 1532 (but before 1535) in which case the printer Thomas Godfray could have received his commission to print the work from William Thynne. It will be argued later that, in fact, Godfray's instructions came from more official sources whose responsibility it was to ensure that a work of such potent propagandist value as the Flowr was rushed into print without delay.

All the foregoing speculation is, as has been indicated, based on the assumption that the Prologue was written sometime before the sixteenth century and that the Flowr, when rediscovered, was complete with its Prologue. The greater likelihood is, however, that the Prologue was a product of the sixteenth century. The body of the poem may have been found as an anonymous verse tract and then provided with a Prologue in order both to increase its pervasiveness and influence as a work of Chaucer's and to associate it with the other Flowman tracts then in circulation (see Appendix). If this were the case, it is difficult to

believe that William Thynne was responsible either for writing or even commissioning the Prologue. Why, if he was responsible, did he then choose first to print the Pilgr rather than the Flowr in 1542? Both had been in print for five years at least and yet, if we are to believe Francis Thynne, William saw fit to bestow the benefits of inclusion in a major edition of Chaucer's works to the Pilgr, a piece with which he had had (so far as is known) no direct connection and whose Prologue and narrator blended less happily and advantageously into the framework of the Canterbury Tales.

A more likely possibility is that the poem was first found by, or brought to the attention of government officials who arranged for it to be provided with a Prologue and then to be printed as Chaucer's in the separate edition of 1535, and finally to be included in the 1542 Chaucer after it transpired that William Thynne's original choice, the Pilgr, was unacceptable for the reasons discussed elsewhere.

There are two further factors worthy of consideration in this discussion of the Prologue. Firstly, it will be recalled that the discussion of the poem's date at the beginning of the present chapter mentioned the various interpretations which could be placed on the Crede allusion, in the Flowr. Either the author of the Flowr is claiming for himself the authorship of the Crede, or he is having ^{it} claimed for him by an unknown interpolator writing at a later date, or it could simply be that the authorship is being claimed for the Flowman figure. Each of

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these possible explanations raises a further question - did the person who was responsible for the Crede allusion know that the narrator of the Flowt was in fact a Flowman? If he did not, how did he come to link the Flowt with the Crede. If he did, how did he come to know? The implications of these questions are considerable. If the writer of the Crede allusion did know that the Flowt narrator was a Flowman, then his most likely source of such information would be the Flowt Prologue. If he was writing at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and the Prologue was not composed before 1530, that source of information would clearly not have been available to him. Therefore it would seem that either the Prologue was written, like the long interpolation, some time at the beginning of the fifteenth century - possibly by the same man - or the long interpolation was not written before the sixteenth century. But as has already been indicated, there is strong vocabulary evidence in favour of a late fourteenth/early fifteenth century date for the long interpolation, and there is some vocabulary and rhyme evidence in favour of a sixteenth century date for the Prologue. Moreover, the theory of one author for both the long interpolation and the Prologue comes up against the difficulty posed by the differing rhyme schemes between these two sections - the Prologue rhymes abababab, whilst the predominant scheme in the long interpolation is ababbabc. Why should the same author change his scheme? Did he write one section so long after the other that he forgot to maintain his original rhyme scheme?

The difficulties involved in accepting a theory which suggests either common authorship or a common period of composition for the two sections, lead one to search for alternative explanations. Two such explanations come to mind. Firstly, it is possible to imagine the sixteenth century Prologue writer reading lines such as:

What knoweth a tyllour at the plowe,
 The popes name and what he hate ?
 His crede suffyseth to hym ynowe,
 And knoweth a cardynall by his hatte; (11.453-6)

or, again:

Had they [the clergy] ben out of relygion,
 They must have honged at the plowe,
 Threshyng and dyngyng fro towne to towne,
 With sory mete and nat halfe ynowe (11.1041-4)

and such phrases as krewe tyllers (1.868), and believing that the narrator of such sentiments would, in all probability, be a Piers Plowman figure. An alternative explanation, no more but no less likely, would explain the Crede allusion by believing it to have been interpolated into the long interpolation by the person who, in the sixteenth century, was responsible for writing the Prologue.

Endless permutations of the facts set out above are possible, but all that need be noted is that there is no evidence which insists upon a fourteenth/early fifteenth century date of composition for the Crede allusion or for the Prologue. The present writer is strongly inclined to accept the evidence of rhymes and vocabulary as it relates to the

two passages, to take the long interpolation as a late fourteenth/early fifteenth century piece, to take the Prologue as a specially commissioned piece written shortly before 1535, and to explain the identification, ^{by} the Prologue writer, of the Plowman as the narrator of the tale, in terms of the two suggested solutions set out above, together with the fact that the Plowman figure had not been provided with a tale in the Canterbury Tales as they were known to the Prologue writer.

The second factor concerning the Prologue which is worth considering, although it complicates rather than simplifies what has gone before, concerns two documented cases of Lollard suspects who, it was revealed at their examination, owned a number of English books, amongst which were copies of the Canterbury Tales. A Lincolnshire man, John Baron, confessed to the possession of :

one (book) of the life of our Lady, of Adam and Eve, and of other sermons, the mirror of sinners, and the mirror of matrimony; the second book of the tales of Canterbury, and the third book of a play of saint piousse. 73

and in another case, a suspect from either Coventry or the Chiltern Hills, owned a copy of the Canterbury Tales. Speaking of the latter case, J.A.F.Thomson states that 'the records note works which may well have been unexceptionable', and concludes that 'any ownership of books was liable to give rise to suspicion'. ⁷⁴ Certainly it is possible to argue that the work had merely been listed as part of the inventory of the man's books and that no particular charge had been made against the

suspect for his possessing it. Alternatively, it could be that a hypersensitive ecclesiastical official took exception to Chaucer's ironical portraits of various ecclesiasts which could be found in both the Prologue and in the Tales themselves, with no suggestion that the work was in any way theologically unacceptable. There is, however, a third possibility which should at least be mentioned. Could it be that in a very few isolated MS of the Canterbury Tales, the Flowr had already been provided with a Prologue and had found its way into the corpus of Chaucer's poem, thereby making the possession of such a MS a clear and serious offence in the eyes of church authorities? Could it also be that no MS from which William Thynne came eventually to work had been thus interpolated, but that one such MS had chanced into the possession of the government during the early 1530's and that steps were initiated immediately to ensure widespread circulation for a work so favourably inclined to Henry's cause?

This is probably a little too far-fetched a theory for any weight to be attached to it, but with this theory as with all the others examined, no apology is offered for so extensive an exercise in speculation. There is little virtue in claiming certainty for just one reading of a series of possibilities which, in many respects, are evenly balanced. All that can be said is that there is no evidence which insists upon a fourteenth century date for the Prologue, and a certain amount of linguistic and circumstantial evidence in favour of a sixteenth century

date.

The second interpolation (ll. 209-228) has been described as 'a rather clumsy insertion [which] produced a topical sixteenth-century discussion on the nature of ecclesiastical authority', and the motive behind its insertion was simply 'to bring it [the poem] up to date in current religious controversies'.⁷⁵ For such a view to carry any weight the passage must either contain ideas or evidence of doctrine unique to the sixteenth century and not to be found elsewhere in the original form of the poem, or it must at least alter the balance of the poem in such a way as to reflect sixteenth century attitudes. It is this second test which, applied to the interpolation, reveals indications of sixteenth century origin for the lines. The passage represents a more direct and emphatic attitude to the question of papal authority than is found elsewhere in the poem. The interpolation occurs directly after the first reference to the pope. The poet, discussing clerical injustice and intolerance, has been discussing the one authority to which priests will submit:

All holyst they clepen her heed,
 That of her rule is regall;
 Alas, that ever they eten breed,
 For all such falsed wolle foules fall. (ll. 201-4)

and he makes it clear that obedience to Christ is for thee a very secondary consideration:

They ne clepen Christ but Sanctus Deus,
 And clepen her heed Sanctissimus;

They that suche a secte sewys,
I trowe they taken hys anyesse; (ll.229-32)

One notes firstly that the attack on the papal position is a somewhat indirect one. Whilst the reader is clearly meant to appreciate that the pope does little to discourage the priests in their misplaced worship of his authority, it is nevertheless the priests themselves at whom the accusing finger is pointed - their's is the fault, they should know better than to worship the pope rather than Christ.

It is also important to note the way in which the dual attitudes of the priests towards the papacy - obedience and, virtually, deification - are first suggested in isolation and are then reiterated in juxtaposition with their attitudes to Christ by means of the Latin phrases. This is a sufficiently neat and logical development of the narrative to make acceptable the notion that the second passage quoted above should follow on directly from the first. In fact there are three stanzas which separate the two passages. These stanzas have the same rhyme scheme ababbab as these parts of the Flowf which are not regarded as obvious interpolations. They do not, however, have the refrain - all last lines ending in fall - common to the other stanzas of Part One. Instead, the interpolated three stanzas have last lines ending, respectively, in omnipotent, lownt and fele.

The suspicions aroused by this discrepancy in rhymes are confirmed by a closer examination of the three stanzas. It will be recalled that the target for abuse in the lines enclosing the interpolation is the

priesthood. It is their claims for the pope's authority which are condemned as excessive and inappropriate. Suddenly, however, the focus of attention changes and the pope himself is directly criticised for the powers which he claims for himself. For three stanzas there is a more clearly defined confrontation between the narrator and the papacy than is to be found elsewhere in the poem. There is an occasional echo within the three stanzas of the earlier narrative emphasis on the criticism of the priests, as with 'They holdeth h^{ole} omnipotent' (1.212), and again with:

To Popes hestes suche taketh more hede,
 Than to kepe Christes commandment; (11.209-210)

Nevertheless the more usual focus in these stanzas is on that which the pope himself ordayneth (1.213), seeth (1.221), damneth and saveth (1.224), and loveth (1.205). Immediately after the interpolated stanzas the focus reverts from the pope to the clergy with the shift apparent in the first line of the next stanza - 'They ne clepen Christ but Sanctus Deus' (1.229). The suddenness of the change from and return to the normal narrative view point argues strongly that the intervening lines have indeed been interpolated.

The discussion of what the pope claims for himself has one significant detail. His belief that 'he is hyghest in erthe here' (1.217) is repeated with variation on several occasions - he is hole omnipotent (1.212), and he seeth above all (1.221). This claim has two distinct aspects. One is the contrast between the authority which the pope insists

is rightly his, and the authority which he grants to Christ. The sense of the sanctus deus/sanctissimus juxtaposition is taken up in the lines:

But to Christ that hath no pere,
Reserveth he neyther o pyn ne loynt. (11.219-220)

and also in the impression, given by the pope's behaviour, that 'Christ [was] aboven hym nothyng' (1.222). A second aspect to the notion of the contrasting authorities of the pope and others, lies in the comment on the relative powers on earth of spiritual and temporal rulers:

Her heed loveth all honour,
And to be worskyped in worde and dede;
Kynge's note to hem knole and coure; (11.205-7)

Here is the spectacle of the nation's supreme secular head submitting necessarily to the weight of ecclesiastical/papal authority. This same humiliating, as regarded by the poet, picture of secular leaders grovelling at the feet of haughty and arrogant churchmen may be found elsewhere in the poem:

Lordes note to hem loute
Obeyaunt to hir brode blessing (11. 181-2)

but in the interpolation such a situation is set out in a more extreme form. It is not a picture of lords against priests: it is king against pope, and it is perhaps this increased particularity of reference which has led Miss Aston to conclude that the discussion as to the nature of

ecclesiastical authority in the poem has a noticeably sixteenth century topicality to it. It is not difficult to imagine that the interpolation was the product of a society which had become increasingly conscious of the broader implications of Henry's confrontation with the pope over the king's wish to divorce Catherine of Aragon.

It is the effect which the interpolation has on the balance of ideas in the poem which really marks it as a likely sixteenth century addition. The basic confrontation between pope and secular ruler is suggested, albeit a little more obliquely, elsewhere in the poem in a section indisputably of fourteenth century origin:

The Emperour yaf the pope contynye
 So highe lordshyppe hym aboute,
 That at laste, the sely kynge,
 The proude Pope putte hym out;
 So of this realme is in doute,
 But lordes beware and then defende,
 For nowe these folke be wonder stouthe;
 The kynge and lordes nowe this ascende. (ll.693-700)

Here the parallel is drawn between, on the one hand, the late fourteenth century danger of the English realm surrendering its sovereignty unless that sovereignty is reasserted and strongly defended and, on the other hand, the former usurpation of Emperor Constantine's authority by Pope Sylvester following the initial endowment of the church by the Emperor -
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 a favourite theme of Lollard and later writers.

Thus the interpolation does not introduce a theme which is otherwise excluded from the original poem - rather does it anticipate a later emphasis, and afford it greater and earlier prominence than it would

otherwise have enjoyed. It is as if a sixteenth century interpolator, moved by contemporary circumstances, inserted at the first suitable opportunity in the poem (that is, at the first mention of the pope), a more concentrated and urgent indictment of those same papal claims which were unacceptable to the original author. The interpolation may thus be said to have altered the balance of ideas in the poem in a characteristically sixteenth century way, thereby indicating the likely date of its composition.

So to the third, and major, passage which has been regarded as an interpolation. Attention has already been drawn to the evidence of allusion and vocabulary which indicates a date of origin before the sixteenth century for at least some of the lines within this passage. There are, too, structural reasons why much of the material in this section must have existed in some form as part of the poem as originally conceived.

The third section of the Flowf would, without interpolation, amount to sixteen stanzas as compared with the fifty stanzas of Part One, and the twenty eight stanzas of Part Two. The disproportionate brevity of Part Three need not of itself suggest that a portion of the original section must be missing. Such a conclusion seems, however, unavoidable when the narrative structure of Part Three is examined.

Skeat believes that ll. 717-1268 had been interpolated and doubts the authenticity of ll. 701-16 on account of what he considers to be the unsatisfactory rhyming of welde and helda (ll. 702, 704) with bolde and

folde (11.705,707) and of fruite (1.710) with dispyte (1.712). He has no doubt that with the removal of all these lines, 'the original poem becomes at once consecutive and intelligible' ⁷⁷ - with Part Three beginning at 1.1269. It is very difficult however to explain the dramatic content and context of 11.1269f. without believing that a considerable portion of the original poem, as understood by Skeat, has been lost. Moreover, the interpolated passage contains many of the features which one would have expected to find in that missing portion.

As understood by Skeat, the poem begins by introducing the two disputants to the reader: The Griffon representing the Catholic church and the Pellican representing those committed to the reform of abuses within that church - the exact nature of the Pellican's sect must await examination in a later Chapter. The Pellican produces without further delay an unbroken and prolonged catalogue of clerical iniquities until, when he finishes, the Griffon who has not been mentioned since 1.91, suddenly:

. . .grymmed as he were wode,
 And loked lethaly as an owle,
 And swore by cookes herte blode,
 He wolde hym tere every doule;
 'Hely churche thou disalaund rest feule;
 For thy reasons I woll the all to-raze,
 And make thy flesshe to rote and moule;
 Lesell thou shalte have harde grace'. (11.1269-76)

and, thus satisfied with the force of his threat, flies away to gather together the army of predatory birds whose intention it is to to-~~raze~~

the Pellican.

In this form the poem lacks two things which would be expected of it. Firstly it lacks any sense of a debate between the two birds. Nothing is heard from the 'one [who] dyde plede on the Popes syde' (L.85) until he announces his verdict and sentence in the lines quoted above. This in itself is unusual for a piece which opens as if it intends to follow the form of other medieval literary disputations. In such works, whilst the disputants seldom have their views presented in as balanced and persuasive a fashion as is the case in, for example, The Owl and the Nightingale, it is usual for both of the contending parties to be given some sort of a hearing if only for ~~the~~ purpose of enabling one disputant to condemn himself out of his own mouth. For the Flores debate to consist of 668 lines (as in the original form set out by Skeat) spoken by the Pellican and only four lines spoken by the Griffon - and those spoken at the very end of the poem - scarcely fulfills the expectations aroused in the mind of the reader by the form of the poem's opening.

Secondly, the poem as understood by Skeat offers no sufficiently clear explanation as to why the Griffon should choose to intervene when he does. It is perhaps possible to argue that the intervention is the direct result of the last line of Part Two which, to the Griffon, would represent a significant change from the normal stansaic refrain in that section of the poem. In all but four of the twenty four stanzas of Part Two, the poet expresses the hope and belief that God will amend the abuses within the church. Of the four refrains in which God is not mentioned as the force behind this

process of amendment, only one - the last - varies significantly from the normal form. In l.700 with the wish that 'The kyng and lordes nowe this amende', the poet is no longer thinking in a rather quiescent way of some future unspecified time when God will act to ameliorate the state of the church. Action for reform is not thought of solely as the ultimate responsibility of God, but is regarded as the immediate responsibility of the laity. Perhaps the sudden introduction of the Griffon at this point with his threats of punitive force was intended, by the poet, to represent exactly what happened in fourteenth century England. Voices of complaint and reform had passed relatively uncollected (so far as is known) for centuries until Wyclif and the Lollard movement, by associating reform not only with theological heresy but also with the belief that immediate reform by means of lay action was not only possible but essential, caused the full weight of ecclesiastical pressure to be brought against these voices. So in the poem a demand for immediate reform to be carried out by secular authority is greeted with threats of violence against those responsible for the demand.

In this way it is perhaps possible to reconcile the Griffon's abrupt intervention at l.1269 with the form of the original poem as understood by Skeat. However, an examination of the interpolation which was discounted by Skeat, and in particular an examination of its latter part, reveals lines which, taken as part of the original poem, suggest a more satisfactory explanation for the Griffon's intervention.

From the beginning of the interpolated passage, it is clear that the interpolator is conscious of the need to provide the Griffon with a meaningful part to play in the poem. Initially, the Griffon's contributions serve only to feed the Pellican with the right questions at the right times so that the target for abuse can be varied and topics introduced which had not previously been dealt with in the narrative. Thus the Griffon asks:

'What canst thou preche ayenst chanons,
That men clepen seculere?' (11.717-8)

and again, later on:

The Gryffon began for to threte,
And sayd, 'of monkes canst thou ought?' (11.989-90)

A more important function of the Griffon may be seen after the Pellican has finished its attack on monastic abuses, for the Griffon assumes the role which had been anticipated from the start of the poem - apologist for the Catholic church. What follows is a genuine dialogue between the Griffon and the Pellican in which every speech is a relevant and appropriate retort to the speech which has gone before. The Griffon makes a number of important and interesting accusations against the Pellican - in particular that:

. . . all the sevyn sacramentes
Ye speke ayenst, as ye were slye;
Ayenst tithinges, offrynges, with your ententes,

And on our lordes body falsely lye;
 And all this ye done to lyve in ease,
 As who sayth there ben none suche,
 And sayth the pope is nat worth a pease;
 To make the people ayen hym gruche. (11.1157-64)

which evokes an energetic denial from the Pellican of the unorthodoxy with which he is charged. This denial, however, is based on a series of conditions and qualifications which are incompatible with the demand for unquestioning obedience to the authority of the church which is implied in the Griffon's position. Consequently, the Griffon threatens dire punishment unless the Pellican recants.

It is important to realize that, at this stage in the narrative, the Griffon has not excluded the possibility of the Pellican saving himself from the inevitable fate of the heretic:

Thou shalt be cursed with boke and bell,
 And discovered from holy church,
 And alone ydampned into hell,
 Otherwysse but ye woll worche. (11.1241-4)

But the conditional 'Otherwysse but' has no meaning for the Pellican, who is not prepared to abjure, or to 'worche otherwysse'. He has no intention of compromising the tenets of his faith in order to save his own skin, and resolutely declares his intention to endure the consequences which have already been conditionally threatened. With the final demand for recantation ignored, and not before the point, 'The Gryffon grymmed as he were wode' (1.1269), and he proceeds to announce the unconditional verdict of the church:

'Holy churche thou disclaundrest foule;
 For thy reasons I woll the all to-raise,
 And make thy flesshe to rote and moule;
 Lesell thou shalte have harde grace.' (11.1273-6)

Without the interpolation, then, the structure of the poem consists of a long denunciation of the church followed by the passing of the death sentence on this unwelcome critic. With the interpolation, however, the poem reads much more like the life-cycle of a Lollard preacher - first the preaching and publicising of his complaints; then the charges being made against him; then the chance to defend himself in court; eventually to the demands for his recantation and so, finally, to the death sentence.

The structural importance of the debate must be recognised. It is precisely the absence of this debate which renders unsatisfactory the version of the original as understood by Skeat. The diminished importance which Skeat's version attaches to the Griffon scarcely satisfies the expectations aroused by the introduction of the disputants at the beginning of the poem. It is the belief of the present writer that the original author intended to satisfy these expectations. If Skeat's version of the original diminishes the Griffon's importance, Henry Bradley's version eliminates him totally:

I think it not unlikely that the fourteenth-century piece was an attack on the friars only, not on the Pope and Church dignitaries in general, and that the appearance of the Griffon as an adversary of the Lollard Pelican is an addition to the original scheme.

Bradley is, of course, perfectly entitled to speculate as to the form and content of a supposititious poem of which virtually nothing now remains. His theory that the Griffon is an addition to the poem as originally conceived will not however bear examination when set against any other theory than his own as to the poem's original form. Viewed, for instance, in the light of Skeat's reconstructed original, the Griffon is introduced as a potential disputant, and is seen finally as one about to administer a sentence passed at the end of a non-existent debate. As neither of the Griffon references mentioned above occurs in stanzas which bear the distinguishing mark of other so-called interpolations - the break-down of the recurrent rhyme system - one must conclude that even in Skeat's reconstruction of the original, the Griffon had been assigned a part and cannot be explained away as 'an addition to the original'.

Not only structurally, but in terms of content, the contribution of the Griffon to the debate contains a number of interesting features which are relevant to a discussion of the nature and genesis of the interpolation as a whole. In his speeches, the Griffon seeks to make three distinct points. Firstly, the organisation of the church as envisaged by the Pellican would be a source of shame and hardship to the faithful. So impoverished and impotent would the pope and prelates be that they would be unable to protect the church from its enemies - they would be ill prepared to meet force with force:

With strength if men the church assaile,

With strength men must defende her node. (11.1083-4)

nor would God be worshipped in a suitably respectful manner. 'Men wolds be sadde' (1.1089) with the pope's lack of authority and 'The wicked of hym nolde nat be dradde' (1.1088), with the result that 'Holy churche shulde stande full colde' (1.1095). Such a state of affairs, declares the Griffon, would be a terrible affliction for the church and its adherents.

The Griffon's second point concerns the motive behind the Pellican's stand against the authority of the church, and in the analysis of these motives, some interesting details emerge about the possible status of the Pellican in the eyes of the Griffon. What sort of a person does the Griffon believe would engage in hostile criticism of the church? All that the reader learns at the beginning of the poem is that the Pellican is 'withouten pride' (1.87) and is one who 'used his wate in measure' (1.89) whenever he argued. His custom of continually calling on Christ for counsel (1.90) is also mentioned. The opening words of the Griffon in his first long speech seek to cast doubt on the authority of the Pellican for making any comments about what is or is not good in the church - 'thou canst no good/Thou canst never of no gentyll kynde' (11.1073-4) - and this emphasis on his lowly status is extended in the Griffon's next speech in which the Pellican is said to live 'in londe as a lorell' (1.1138), and to have no cure of souls (11.1150, 1173). It is this very poverty combined with greed and covetousness which, claims the Griffon, has motivated the Pellican's attack on those who are more fortunately endowed with the goods of this world. Why, asks the Griffon, should the Pellican complain because others

'faren wele' (1.1134) ? The answer is jealousy. The Pellican, like the Devil, 'lyveth in elene envye' (1.1142), and it is this which leads the Pellican to wish 'other people [to] distry' (1.1144), because he himself cannot live as prosperously as they can (1.1146). All the Pellican's efforts are directed at enabling him to 'fare well at feestes/And [to be] warme . . . clothed for the colde' (1.1153-4), and to 'lyve in ease' (1.1161). No notice should be taken of such a voice, for it 'shalte answer for no man' (1.1176) - rather is it representative of one man's greed and jealousy.

It is not clear whether the Griffon regards the Pellican as a layman or as an impoverished cleric without a benefice. The Pellican is spoken of as having no cure of souls which could imply either lay or lesser clerical status. It is, perhaps, easier to see why, by speaking against official doctrine, a layman rather than a cleric could hope to 'lyve in ease' (1.1161), for if, as some Lollards desired, the church was to be disendowed, the wealth of the church would accrue to the lay authorities for redistribution in such a way as seemed to them appropriate. Those most likely to benefit from this redistribution of wealth would be the laity. The stress which has been laid elsewhere in the poem on the desirability of the supremacy of lay over ecclesiastical authority lends support to such an interpretation.

The third point made by the Griffon indicates his acceptance of a doctrine of laissez-faire with regard to reform, a doctrine which one

would not, perhaps, associate with a truly orthodox medieval churchman motivated by any sort of charity. The Pellican is told to 'lette other men lyve as hem lyst' (1.1170) and not to interfere with 'other mennes conscience' (1.1172). 'What haste thou to done with [other folks'] lyve' (1.1135), asks the Griffon:

What meddell ye that han nat to done?
Letts men lyve as they han done yore, (11.1174-5)

The implications of this point of view are, when compared with the rest of the Griffon's arguments, ambiguous. His points concerning both the necessity of the church having a strong head and also the unworthy motives of the Pellican are not self-condemnatory - they have a certain force and demand a thoughtful answer. They are certainly not so transparently specious as to act merely as rhetorical Aunt-Sallies. It is less easy to analyse the force of his third point. If the implication behind his remarks is that the Pellican, as an uninformed layman (or cleric), should not concern himself with arguing about matters of faith and doctrine which should be obeyed and not questioned, then this too would be a tenable and characteristic orthodox point of view which does not, as it were, condemn itself out of its own mouth. There is, however, the clear suspicion that what the Griffon's statement really implies is that an individual should not concern himself with the lives of others - rather should he look after his own life and, if he is successful in that, he should leave others to be their own physicians and to look after themselves.

This argument must have been regarded as self-condemnatory and an easy target for the Pellican's retort that in his desire to prevent other men from living incorrectly, he is 'moved by charite' (l.1188).

This last technique of argument - the deliberate citing of a transparently untenable point of view in order to destroy it by retort - is, of course, a commonplace of debate and discussion particularly at a popular level. It is not usual, particularly in more popular discourse, for a speaker or writer holding one point of view to offer, in the course of his argument a dispassionate, largely undistorted and, above all, fairly lengthy account of his opponent's position. Sometimes the impression is given that this is what is being done before, on closer examination, the ironies, innuendoes and contradictions in the account of the opponent's position reveal themselves. Such techniques of distortion were not always essential in medieval debate poetry, nor would one expect always to find them in debates which were often little more than literary extensions of exercises in scholastic disputation in which the art lay in a disputant's ability to argue, if necessary, on either side of the question with equal fluency and persuasiveness. It may not have been of the greatest importance to a writer whether Winter or Summer, Water or Wine, Violet or Rose won the various debates in which they were participants, with the result that both sides of a discussion could be given equal weight in the poem. Even if a writer did wish to suggest the supremacy of one point of view, it need not, from that writer's point of view, be of crucial significance if a reader missed the underlying ironies in

the portrayal of an opposing side's arguments, and, as a result, missed the bias in what seemed, superficially, an evenly balanced dialectic, unless the writer believed fervently in the cause which he was championing, and was really writing as a propagandist.

What is at first sight a little surprising is the maintenance of some sort of a balance in the actual debate between the Griffon and the Pellican, in a poem whose intention can only have been to put forward unequivocally the Lollard case to what must have been a relatively unsophisticated audience. Even allowing for the rather dubious force of the Griffon's final argument, the overall impression created by the Griffon's speeches is of a not unreasonable point of view which requires answering. One is, thus, forced to consider who was responsible for the inclusion of the Griffon's speeches in the poem and what was the motive behind their inclusion. If in fact the lines were interpolated there can certainly be no question of their being the work of an orthodox interpolator writing some time after Wyclif's death and wishing in some way to redress the balance in the poem's argument. The other interpolated material after 1.716 which precedes the contributions by the Griffon, shows clearly that the anti-clerical, anti-authoritarian tone of the first two parts of the work had been well maintained - such a tone is difficult to reconcile with the idea of an orthodox interpolator.

A second and equally unlikely possibility is that the interpolation was the work of one engaged in the propagandist support of Henry VIII.

Even if the vocabulary evidence supported such a dating (which it doesn't), it is scarcely conceivable that any one connected with the organisation of Henrician propaganda would have arranged to have had written and interpolated a passage which sought to explain and justify the very positions which were adapted by the supporters of papal authority at a time when Henry was either about to reject, or had already rejected, this same authority within the realm of England. Even supposing that the interpolation could be explained in these terms, would not the Pellican's reply to the Griffon, indeed the interpolated passages as a whole, have had a rather more pronounced erastian tone than is in fact the case? If the FlowT had entered the sixteenth century complete with the speeches of the Griffon, there was sufficient material elsewhere in the poem which would be of propaganda value to the king without his having to worry about the possible effects of the Griffon's speeches. They could be overlooked when considering the balance of ideas in the poem as a whole. It is difficult, however, to believe that the Griffon's speeches were specially commissioned as part of a long propagandist interpolation. It is one thing to tolerate such material when it is already present in the poem - it is quite another thing to make a special effort to interpolate it, when the views expressed were hardly likely to advance the king's cause.

It seems likely, then, that it was a Lollard who originally saw fit to provide a platform for a series of orthodox arguments. Two questions remain - why were the orthodox arguments included, and was the Lollard

interpolator the writer of the original Flowe or was he a subsequent interpolator. Dealing with the second point, the present writer is convinced that a debate was included in the original form of the poem. It is unlikely, however, that the debate as we now have it is the same as that written for the original poem. Why should a writer suddenly abandon for 600 lines the rhyming refrain which had been a feature of the previous 700 lines, only to resume the refrain before the end of the poem? Thus one is left with two alternatives. The long interpolation may represent the work of the original writer at a later date who, for some reason, decided to re-write and expand his original debate and to precede it by the addition of some new material concerning secular canons and monks, and the inclusion of a reference to further anti-mendicant material which was available elsewhere. His motive for including the new material may simply have been to extend the range of the poem so that it represented a fairly comprehensive ecclesiastical world picture as viewed through the eyes of a Lollard. His motives for wishing to re-write the debate are more difficult to imagine. Perhaps he wished to define his position more precisely in relation to certain controversial matters - the question of the Eucharist, for instance. Perhaps his affirmation of belief in the Real Presence in the Eucharistic sacrament was intended as a rebuke to the more extreme commemorativist position which developed amongst some of Wyclif's successors - the author of The Wicket,⁷⁸ for example. He may also, in the light of experience, have wished to expand and redefine the Griffon's

speeches and the Pellican's replies so as to provide a reader with a reasonably comprehensive statement of some of the arguments with which Lollards might be confronted under official examination, and of appropriate retorts to such arguments. The discrepancies of rhyme noted may be the result of his alterations having been made at some considerable time after the original composition was written - at a time when his attention was fixed more on the content of the interpolation than on any attempt at verbal decoration. Alternatively, perhaps he simply could not be bothered to take the not inconsiderable trouble and time to match up the rhymes of every stanza.

A second possible explanation of the interpolation is that it may have been the work of a later Lollard who, in addition to rewriting the debate for the reasons suggested above, also felt the need to broaden the scope of the poem's criticism by incorporating the additional material mentioned above. Interpolation of additional material into a Lollard poem by another writer is not without precedent - Upland's Rejoinder contains ⁷⁹ three such passages. The failure of the FlowT interpolator to observe the rhyming pattern could have been the result of his failure either to notice such a pattern or to consider its continuation of sufficient importance to justify the time and effort involved.

The actual content of the FlowT interpolation other than the dialogue section is not greatly instructive as a means of dating the interpolation, and hence of revealing whether the original author of the poem would have

been alive at the time of the interpolation's composition. Of the two new themes which are introduced, one is an attack on the indiscipline of the monastic orders which, laments the poet, contrasts unfavourably with the precepts set out in the Rule of St. Benedict, their founder. Secondly, the poet inveighs against 'canons/That men clepen seculare (ll.717-18), whose non-residence and bad example leads to the neglect of those whose spiritual welfare is their responsibility. Instead of attending to their duties, the **canons** concentrate on extravagant and immoral living. Both these themes are as characteristic of medieval as of sixteenth century polemical writing and it is quite impossible to draw any meaningful conclusion concerning the date of the interpolation from the fact that it was material on these subjects which was inserted.

If the context is not particularly revealing as to the date, the overall evidence of vocabulary, allusion and structure points to a date at the end of the fourteenth or at the beginning of the fifteenth century for the long interpolation, rather than to a sixteenth century date. It should be seen either as the revision work of the original author writing at some time after the composition of the earlier parts of the poem, or the work of some other unknown and unknowable later interpolator.

The likely area of the FlowT's composition is difficult to determine. The absence of early MSS of the poem leaves only vocabulary and rhymes which are likely to have remained largely unaffected by the combined ravages of time and the sixteenth century printer. Most of the limited

available evidence seems to support Professor Brandl's conjecture of a West Midland provenance for the piece. ⁸⁰ There are, as is noted in Appendix C, clear similarities of phrase - both alliterative and otherwise - between the FlowT and the West Midland Credg. It is also worth noting that another West Midland poem, Pearl, has the same features of alliteration, eight line stanzas and refrains which are employed in the FlowT. Additionally, words such as glytterande (11.134, 162), lyfflers (1.195), kyne (1.695), and untrende (1.594) are generally found in West Midland texts - the last two words exclusively so. As both these words occur in a rhyming position, their presence in the poem represents considerable evidence for the theory of West Midland provenance. Moreover, a glance at K.B. ⁸¹ McFarlane's map of the West Midland involvement in Oldecastle's Lollard uprising 1414 indicates that here indeed was an area rich in Lollard support in the early fifteenth century.

The FlowT, then, except for a few lines of sixteenth century origin, may be regarded as a West Midland product of, and commentary upon, that period of challenge to the authority of the church which resulted from the activities of Lollard writers and preachers in the years on either side of 1400. It is against the intellectual background of the Lollard movement in particular, but also anticlericalism generally, that the FlowT must now be considered.

Chapter 3 - Notes.

1. The Vision and Creed of Piers Ploughman, ed. T. Wright, 2 Vols. (1842; Second Edition, 1887), I, xxvi, note 10.
2. Pieces the Ploughmans Crede, ed. W.W. Skeat, EMES, OS 28(1867). A revised edition was published at Oxford in 1906. A new edition which has been undertaken by Dr. A.I. Doyle has yet to appear in print - see R.H. Robbins, 'Middle English Research in progress: 1963-64', NM, 65 (1964), 367.
3. Creed, ed. Wright, I, xxiv, note 9.
4. For an extended account of the proceedings against Walter Brute, see Foxe, Acts and Monuments, III, 131-88. Helen G. White, Social Criticism in Popular Religious Literature of the Sixteenth Century (New York, 1944) p.27 seems unaware of the allusion to Brute, for she dates the Crede' some time near the end of the fifteenth century', but cites no evidence in support of her theory.
5. Creed, ed. Wright, I xxvi, note 10
6. Life of Chaucer (1804 Edition), III, 377
7. Wright, Fol. Songs B., I, 304.
8. Crede, ed. Skeat (1867), p.xvi.
9. Op.cit., p.xv.

10. 'If this prologue is genuine - and this, in spite of Mr. Furnivall's disbelief (Thymer's Animadversions, 1875, note to p. 69), there seems no reason to doubt...', Lounsbury, Chaucer, I, 460, note 3.
11. Op.cit., I, 461, note.
12. York Powell does not seem to have committed to paper his observations concerning the date of the Flowr - there is no reference to them in O. Elton, Frederick York Powell: A Life, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1906). The authorities for the belief that he did regard the poem as, in part at least, of the sixteenth century are Henry Bradley, 'The Plowman's Tale', The Athenaeum, 12th. July, 1902, p. 62 - all subsequent quotations are from this same page; and J. M. Manly, 'Piers the Plowman and its Sequences', in The Cambridge History of English Literature, 15 Vols. (Cambridge, 1907-27), II, 39.
13. Bradley, op.cit.
14. Bradley is mistaken in his figures regarding the proportion of stanzas with the regular ababbcb rhyme scheme to those which have other rhyme schemes. Out of 69 stanzas, there are 42 (possibly 43) with the regular scheme common to the rest of the poem. Only 26 or 27 have any other scheme and not, as Bradley suggests, 47. The predominant alternative scheme is ababedcd which accounts for 21 of the remaining stanzas. Other schemes are ababacac (3), and abababab (2). Bradley's basic point is, of course, not invalidated by the inaccuracy of his figures - it is merely rendered a little less striking.
15. Skeat acknowledges them in his facsimile reproduction of the 1532 BM. copy of The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer and Others (1905), p. xix, note 1.
16. Crade, ed. Skeat (1906), p. xciii.
17. Op.cit., pp. xciii-iv.
18. See H. Paul, Grundriss der Germanischen Philologie, II Band, I Abteilung (Strassburg, 1893), § 68 of Brandl's Mittelenglische Literatur section.

- 19. II, 39.
- 20. J.E.Wells, A Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1400 (Yale, 1916), p.268.
- 21. See, for example, W.F.Schirmer, Geschichte der Englischen Literatur (Halle, 1937), p.132.
- 22. See V.L.Rubel, Poetic Diction in the English Renaissance (New York, 1941), pp.47-51. Wyatt, of course, was mentioned by Francis Thynne as being, in the mistaken view of some people, the author of the Flowf. It is perhaps possible to speculate as to how this attribution came about. The confusion, already noted, between the Flowf and the Pilgr may well have combined, in the minds of some, with the knowledge that the volume containing the Pilgr also contained some lyrics attributable to Wyatt, and these same people - mindful of Wyatt's interest and skill in archaism, and his avowedly protestant sympathies - may have come to make the attribution of the Pilgr to him, and hence, by further confusion, the Flowf. On the attribution of the short poems in the Douce fragment to Wyatt, see Fraser, Court of Venus, pp.33-4.
- 23. It was common practice for early printers to modernise certain features of medieval manuscript sources from which they were printing. Spellings were brought up to date, archaic vocabulary was occasionally replaced and rhymes were 'improved'. Moreover, word order and line content were frequently altered for purposes of justification. As H.C.Schulz has said, in an article discussing the fundamental differences between the Boke of Purgatorie and the Huntington MS (HM 130) of the Prick of Conscience from which it was printed, '(the early) manuscripts were not ... purposely prepared for use as printer's copy and often contained linguistic features considered to be old-fashioned, if not obsolete, at the time of printing. In the eyes of the printer the needs of his reading public took precedence over faithfulness to the antiquated forms of expression in his exemplar...indeed the author was fortunate to have his name remembered in the title or in the colophon': 'A Middle English Manuscript Used As Printer's Copy', The Huntington Library Quarterly, 29 (1966), 327. For details of the inconsistency with which modernisation was carried out, and of its significance, see the comparisons between the copy manuscripts and the first printed editions of Dives and Pauper and Lydgate's Seige of Thebes as noted in, respectively, Margaret M. Morgan, 'Pynson's

Manuscript of Dives and Pauper , The Library, Fifth Series, 8 (1955), esp. pp. 224-8; and G. Bone, 'Recent Manuscripts printed from by W. de Worde with notes on the owner, Roger Thorneby' , The Library, 12 (1932), esp. 288-93.

24. Middle English Dictionary, ed. H. Kurath and S.M. Kuhn (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1954-).

25. 'Although many MS dates remain uncertain. . . the editors of the MED feel that they can assure those scholars who are concerned with MS dates, or with the dating of words, meanings, forms and spellings, that the dates used in the dictionary reflect the considered opinion of competent scholars as of the year 1950. Scholars know, of course, that in dating MSS the margin of error is considerable, and that many dates must be taken with a grain of salt' , *Op.cit.*, I, 18.

26. A Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue (Chicago, 1937-). This Dictionary was founded by Sir William Craigie and is now edited by A.J. Aitken, assisted by Janet M. Templeton and F. Ranford.

27. D.F. Starnes, Renaissance Dictionaries (Austin, Texas, 1954), p. 10.

28. OED: 'In OE., about 125 compound verbs in to- are recorded; many of these did not survive in ME., where however so many new compounds appear... that their number in Early ME. was not less than in OE. In the 15thc. they rapidly disappeared and only a few are found after 1500'. It is possible to reconcile the presence of one such form in the Prologue which, it has been argued, is a sixteenth century composition, with the presence in the rest of the text of four others, by believing that the Prologue instance represents a deliberate archaism, whilst the other four instances represent genuine late fourteenth century usage. It may even be that these four usages inspired the Prologue writer to utilise that particular form of archaism.

29. The dates given refer to the following dictionaries:

1483 Catholicon Anglicum.

1530 John Palgrave, Les clarissement de la langue francoyse.

1616 John Bullokar, An English Expositor.

- 1658 Edward Phillips, The New World of English Words.
- 1674 John Ray, Collection of English Words Not Generally Used.
- 1676 Elisha Coles, An English Dictionary .
- 1775 John Ash, The New and Complete Dictionary of the English Language.

For details of these dictionaries, see D.T.Starnes, Renaissance Dictionaries, and Starnes and Gertrude E. Noyes, The English Dictionary from Casdrey to Johnson:1604-1755 (Chapel Hill,1946).

- 30. The OEED has a useful discussion of the historical development and use of the y- prefix.
- 31. For information about Reginald (Rayner) Wolfe and his publications, see E.G.Duff, A Century of the English Book Trade, pp.171-2, and Handlists of English Printers 1601-1956, Part 3; also Morrison, p.79
- 32. Listed in Sir George Warner and J.P.Gilson, Catalogue of the Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and Kings Collections, 4 Vols. (1921), II, 293.
- 33. Listed in M.R.James, The Western Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, 4 Vols. (Cambridge, 1900-4), II, 65-6.
- 34. Crade, ed. Skeat (1906), p.xii.
- 35. A.I.Doyle, 'An unrecognized Piece of Piers the Ploughman's Creed and other Work by Its scribe' , Speculum, 34 (1959), 428-36.
- 36. Gower, CA, V, 7065-6.
- 37. Handlyng Synne, I, 3208; Owst, Literature and Pulpit, p.275, note 1.

38. See Sir Frederick Madden's note quoted in The Lay of Havelok the Dane, ed. W.W. Skeat, ETS, 4 (1868), vi-vii (note). For an account of the stories of Athelstane, the tenth century West Saxon king, see R.W. Wilson, The Lost Literature of Medieval England (1952), pp.48-50.
39. See, for example, the phrase 'cracowen her schoes' in The Lanterne of Lizt, ed. Lillian M. Swinburn, ETS, 151 (1917), 132, l.7. A note on the phrase (p.151) speaks of 'shoes with long pointed toes... probably (so called) because they came from Cracow in Poland; at that time incorporated with Bohemia'.
40. Though most authorities believe that the shoes were introduced by Anne of Bohemia, E. Peacock in his edition of John Myro, Instructions for Parish Priests, ETS, 31 (1868), 73 (note to l.43), thinks that they came into use during the reign of William Rufus. The story was that Fulk, Earl of Anjou, had deformed feet and wore the shoes to conceal the defect.
41. John Stow, A Survey of London, ed. G.L. Kingsford, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1908), I, 351.
42. In particular, see Statutes of the Realm, 11 Vols. (1810-28), II, 414: '...That no Person Cordwainer or Cobler within the City of London, or within Three Miles (of) any Part of the same City... do to be made after the Feast of Easter, which shall be in the Year of our Lord One thousand four hundred sixty-five, any Shoes, Galoches, or Muscaus) with any (Pike or Poleyn,) that shall pass the Length of Two Inches...' - see also Rotuli Parliamentorum, 6 Vols. (n.d.), V, 505, 566. The first reference is to an order which restricts the wearing of shoes with Pikes of more than two inches to those knights who are NOT below the 'estate of a Lorde, Squier, Gentleman, or other persons...'
43. F.W. Fairholt, Costume in England, 2 Vols. (1909-10), II, 67. This is the fourth edition, revised and enlarged by H.A. Dillon, of the work originally published in 1846.
44. Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden Monachi Cestrensis, ed. G. Babbington and J.R. Lumby, Rolls Series, 41, 9 Vols. (1865-86), VIII, 514. The

same fashion is alluded to in The Reply of Friar Day Tonic, in Wright, Poet. Songs E., II, 69: 'the pokes of purchase/hangen to the erthe', where the allusion, curiously enough, is to Lollard fashions which are under attack from the Friar. Heyworth omits the lines from his edition - he gives his reasons for the omission in his note to l. 362, opp. 150. See also Gwat, Literature and Pulpit, pp. 409 (esp. note 7), 410 (esp. note 1).

- 45. For an account of the background to the Schism, see W. Ullmann, The Origins of the Great Schism (1948); also E. Perroy, L'Angleterre et le Grand Schisme d'Occident (Paris, 1933).
- 46. For an account of the preparations for and execution of DeSpenser's Crusade, see Perroy, pp. 171-200; also H. B. Workman, John Wyclif: A Study of the English Medieval Church, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1926), I, 64-70.
- 47. Perroy, p. 176.
- 48. A representative expression of Lollard opinion may be found in Mathew, English Works, p. 152. See also textual note to FlowT, II, 111-12.
- 49. 'so was this William Sawtre...the first of all them in Wickliff's time...to be burned in the reign of the aforesaid King (Henry IV), which was in the year of our Lord, 1401', Foxe, Acts and Monuments, III, 229. An account of Sawtre's trial is given on pp. 221-8.
- 50. Skeat, Supplement, p. 489, note to l. 642.
- 51. An account of the processes by which a suspected heretic was brought to trial is given by H. G. Richardson, 'Heresy and the Lay Power under Richard II', EBR, 51 (1936), 1-28.
- 52. Skeat, Supplement, pp. 489-90, note to l. 827.
- 53. Arnold, I, viii-xii. J. E. Deinhard, 'Burning at the Stake in Mediaeval Law and Literature', Speculum, 16 (1941), 186-209, does not deal with

burning as a punishment for heresy.

- 54. H.Braeton, De Legibus et Consuetudinibus Angliae, ed. Sir Travers Twiss, Rolls Series, 6 Vols. (1878-83), II, 300-1.
- 55. Quoted Arnold, I, x.
- 56. See Chronicon Henrici Knighton vel Cnithon monachi Lecestrensis, ed. J.R.Lumby, Rolls Series, 92, 7 Vols. (1889-95), II, 192.
- 57. See Thomas Walsingham, Historia Anglicana, ed. H.T.Riley, Rolls Series, 28, 2 Vols. (1863-4), II, 189.
- 58. John Wyclif, De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae, ed. R.Muddensieg (for the Wyclif Society), 3 Vols. (1905-7), I, 374, ll.27-8: '...foret elemosina, ut combustione, occisione vel morte alia sin extinctus ...'. This passage and the events alluded to are discussed by J.H.Dahms, The Prosecution of John Wyclif (New Haven, 1952), p.67.
- 59. A convenient summary of the evidence in favour of attributing some English sermons to Wyclif is set out in H.Hargreaves, 'Wyclif's Prose', Essays and Studies (1966), 4-5. It amounts to the testimony of Thomas Netter, writing forty years after Wyclif's death, and to the presence of the sermons in manuscripts 'whose contents have traditionally been ascribed to Wyclif and never to anyone else'. See, too, E.D.Jones, 'The Authenticity of Some English Works Ascribed to Wycliffe', Anglia, 30 (1907), 261-8.
- 60. The most important recent work on the dating of the English 'Wycliffite' sermons has been that of E.W.Talbert, 'The Date of the Composition of the English Wycliffite Collection of Sermons', Speculum, 12 (1937), 464-74; also Mary Wallace Ransom, 'The Chronology of Wyclif's English Sermons', Research Studies of the State College of Washington, 16 (1948), 67-114. It is clear from their work that some sermons in both the Commune Sanctorum and Ferial groups, as printed by Arnold, contain allusions to events up to 1395, whilst others in the Sunday Gospel group can be dated by allusions, as late as 1412.
- 61. Workman, Wyclif, II, 177, note 1.

- 62. Workman, Wyclif, II, 100.
- 63. Talbert, art.cit., 468. However, Talbert believes that 'no reference to the persecution of 'true men' and no attack upon the Lollards' enemies because they inflict, or would inflict, the death penalty for heresy should be used alone to date a passage at a definite time' (p.468).
- 64. Margaret Deanesly, The Lollard Bible (Cambridge, 1920; reprinted 1966), p.78.
- 65. H.G.Richardson, HR 51 (1936), 20.
- 66. Arnold, I, xi.
- 67. F.W.Maitland, Roman Canon Law in the Church of England (1898), p.177.
- 68. H.G.Richardson, art.cit., 22, note & sees a 'fatal difficulty' in Maitland's argument as to the significance of Sautre's death. He states that: 'the writ under the authority of which Sautre was burnt, is warranted 'per ipsum regem et consilium in parlamento' and was in fact issued 'par avis des seignurs en parlement' (Rot. Parl. iii.459). The statute may have been formally promulgated after the writ, but here is ample parliamentary authority for the proceedings of the mayor and sheriffs'. The execution was not, therefore, an autonomous act of the church in defiance of Parliament.
- 69. Arnold, I, xi.
- 70. Arnold, I, xii.
- 71. For an account of Badby's examination and execution, see Foxe, Acts and Monuments, LII, 235-9.
- 72. Quoted Spurgeon, Criticism, I, 221-2.

73. Quoted Deanesly, Lollard Bible, p.363
74. J.A.F.Thomson, The Later Lollards:1414-1520 (Oxford,1965).p.243.
75. Margaret Aston, 'Lollardy and the Reformation:Survival or Revival?', History, 49 (1964),158.
76. See textual note to ll. 693f. in the commentary.
77. Skeat, Crede (1906),p.xvii.
78. Printed in Writings of The Reverend and Learned John Wickliff,D.D. (for Religious Tract Society)(n.d.),pp.154-68.
79. Quoted in Jack Upland etc.,ed.P.L.Heyworth,pp.170-2; and discussed pp.40-44. See, too, Heyworth, 'Jack Upland's Rejoinder, a Lollard Interpolator and Piers Plowman B.X.249f', MAe, 36 (1967), 242-8.
80. See H.Paul, Grunderiss der Germanischen Philologie, II Band, I Abteilung (Strassburg,1893), § 68 of Brandl's Mittelenglische Literatur section.
81. K.B.McFarlane, John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Non-conformity (1952),back end-cover.

CHAPTER FOUR.

The Flowman's Tale and Lollardy.

Those who, at the end of the fourteenth century, inveighed against the prevailing ills of the English church were, in one sense at least, doing nothing which had not been done before. From the eleventh century onwards, medieval Christendom had seen a succession of movements whose avowed aim was to reform those existing institutions whose observance was thought to have grown lax. A variety of disputes developed between members of existing institutions and those who sought a greater perfection by the foundation of different orders. There were disputes amongst the monastic orders - notably between the Cluniacs, as represented by Peter the Venerable, and the Cistercians, whose champion was Saint Bernard. The debate¹ between these two men, which developed after 1125, set the tone for many subsequent discussions, with the representative of the reforming body (in this case Saint Bernard) cataloguing the list of failings in current monastic life - lavish foods, extravagant clothes, luxurious dwellings and a pervading sense of pomp and pride which invested all Cluniac activities. These same ills are pilloried by another opponent of the Cluniacs, the black monk of Christchurch, Canterbury, Nigel Wirecker², whose satirical works maintained the tradition of hostility between various orders of monks.

Criticism of the monastic orders came from secular sources also. Dom David Knowles notes the growth of episcopal opposition to the black monks in particular towards the end of the twelfth century - 'before 1150 no body of educated opinion in England was hostile to the monastic order'.³ The hostility of the bishops was centred around questions of monastic privilege and exemption from episcopal jurisdiction. Another form of secular criticism came from writers such as Giraldus Cambrensis⁴ and Walter Map⁵, both highly educated clerks who had studied the Roman satirical poets and came to turn the techniques which they had learnt onto the composition of works critical of all the abuses within the church, especially within the monastic orders - works which, though historically unreliable, are indicative of the attitudes of those who were writing. The particular criticisms become standard, with lavishness of diet, sexual incontinence and illiterate inefficiency being the most popular targets for abuse. The stage was reached at which satire of the monastic orders was 'the vogue in all polite circles' with writers drawing from a combination of personal experience and 'a floating body of common places', with the latter playing an increasingly important part as the writing became, in many cases, merely an exercise in 'developing a literary topic'.⁶

The rise to prominence of the mendicant orders provided another focal point for controversy. There were those representatives of the traditional monastic communities - men like Matthew Paris⁷ -

whose criticisms of the friars reveal the age-old jealousy at the arrival of a new broom. The friars also came under attack from seculars at the Universities both at home, as at Oxford and Cambridge in the period from 1303-1320,⁸ and abroad, notably at Paris, where a general grievance at the friars' assertion of autonomous rights against ecclesiastical and civil interference was sharpened into a particular hostility towards the Franciscans as a result of the controversy in the 1250's over the potentially inflammatory writings of Joachim of Flora.⁹ The attack which was made against Joachimism and its implications by William of St. Amour set a precedent in anti-mendicant invective which was followed by Jean de Meung in the late thirteenth century, and by Archbishop Fitzralph of Armagh in the middle of the fourteenth century, and by a succession of less well educated writers.¹⁰ The result was that all those who were critical of the friars at the end of the fourteenth century, whether their name was Chaucer, Langland or Wyclif, were the inheritors of a long and learned tradition rather than the creators of a new fashion.

The mendicants were not passive recipients of criticism. Through the pulpit - a medium which they did so much to develop at all levels, but especially the popular level - they hit back at both the monks and the seculars. Wyclif's contemporary John Bromyard¹¹ is a typical example of mendicant attitudes as expressed in Latin sermons. His Summa contains a wide ranging critique of the church from the pope to the local curate, and details abuses in the papal court, in diocesan administration and justice as well as in overall prelate discipline.

The alleged activities of all branches of the clergy provide abundant illustrative material for each of the seven deadly sins. Indeed much of fourteenth century preaching in England, whether by Bromyard, or the Franciscans William Staunton and Nicholas Bozen, the Augustinian John Waldeby or monks such as Robert Rypon and William of Rymington,¹² or by seculars such as Bishop Brinton and Archbishop Fitzralph represents a formidable contemporary indictment of the secular clergy to add to those indictments, already mentioned, of the regular orders. Such criticism was, however, merely an extension of the attitudes of earlier years - it was in no sense peculiar to the fourteenth century.

All this preaching mentioned above comes to us in Latin and much of it was probably preached in Latin although some sermons of the period seem to have been preached in English and only afterwards recorded in Latin.¹³ Preaching in Latin would be quite appropriate for sermons whose audience was, in all probability, composed mainly of clerics. Preachers would tend to produce sermons specially tailored to the needs of the particular section of the community being addressed and the material would usually be delivered only in front of representatives of that particular group and to no-one else. Groups of sermones ad status¹⁴ were produced for specific congregations - regulars, seculars, merchants, virgins, soldiers and many others - which were designed to expose the evils in the particular profession or calling represented in the audience. Hence sermons critical of the clergy which never existed outside the Latin language would seldom become

accessible to the laity. The disruptive effect on the authority of the church in the community of anti-clerical criticism in the vernacular - whether written or spoken - was likely to be considerable unless clerical abuses were exposed only in the context of a total world picture of sin and corruption which needed overall amendment. This Satira Communis - general satire - was often found in Latin satirical writing, a notable example being Bernard of Cluny's De Contemptu Mundi.¹⁵ Criticism of the three estates¹⁶ - the clergy, the knightly classes and, in a variety of forms, the commons, may also be found in moralistic and penitential handbooks in the vernacular - works such as Handlyng Synne¹⁷ and the Ayenbite of Inwit¹⁸ - with the emphasis on the total pervasiveness of sin and the necessity for all estates to reform themselves by renewed attention to the basic teachings of the church. The clergy are not singled out for invective but are simply seen as an erring part of an erring totality.

It is not possible to make a comprehensive analysis of exactly what form criticism of the clergy and the other two estates took in all the popular aspects of vernacular preaching in the fourteenth century for, as Owst has remarked:

while bishop and monk, friar and anchorite, will leave behind them the monuments of their pulpit eloquence in homily book, in tract, and "summa", for our inspection, the preaching of the humbler seculars escapes us practically unrecorded.¹⁹

It is, nevertheless, possible to draw some conclusions from Thomas Wimbeldon's sermon Redde Rationem Villicationis Tue²⁰ which,

in terms of the number of manuscripts in which it survives,²¹ seems to have been the most popular late medieval vernacular sermon. The structure of its first section demonstrates very clearly the tripartite division of Wimbledon's critique. He asks three questions about each estate of society - 'How has þou entred' (l.163), 'How hast þou reulid' (l.235) and 'how hast þou lyued' (l.268) and all his criticisms of the clergy - of their motives for entering holy orders:

And zif we taken hede trewly what abhominacions ben
scaterrid in þe chirche nowadayes among prestis,
we shulde wel wite þat þey alle comen nouzt into þe
folde of Crist by Cristis clepyng for to profite but
þe oþer weyes to gete hys worldly welþe. (ll.206-10)

also of their misconduct and luxurious living standards - are framed and afforded perspective by Wimbledon's criticisms of the remainder of society - the knights and, (in this instance) other Christian men. The clergy are not singled out for opprobrium.

Thus far we have noted partisan attacks on particular sections of the church as well as more generalised criticism which is only part of a judgement on society as a whole. Of the media employed in the dissemination of these ideas, one was partially controllable, the other much less so. Preaching was, in a sense, self-controlling when it involved the use of Latin. Only a limited range of audience would be reached through this medium. Moreover all preaching, whether in Latin or the vernacular, was under constant episcopal surveillance, so that, for instance, a certain Thomas Wimbledon - quite possibly the Wimbledon whose sermon has already been mentioned, had to seek a licence granting him permission to preach from William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester.²²

One of the reasons for the strong Lollard opposition to the licensing system²³ was that it enabled a bishop to clamp down on those whose preaching was improper, in his opinion, firstly by withdrawing the licence from the recalcitrant preacher, and then by applying further coercive pressures against those who persisted in preaching without a warrant.

The licensing system, however, was not completely effective as a control on preaching. Amongst those who must have been particularly difficult to control were the friars. The withdrawal of a licence to preach in one diocese, assuming that it had ever been applied for, need not have had a crippling effect on a mendicant friar who could simply move on to a neighbouring diocese and commence preaching there. Their itinerant way of life must have constantly enabled them to escape the restrictions which could be imposed on a resident cleric in a diocese. The relative freedom from episcopal control which was enjoyed by the friars must greatly have worried the secular clergy, whose behaviour was frequently the target for some of the most virulent abuse uttered by the friars. Such were the narrative skills of the friars with their use of the techniques of minstrels in the composition of their sermons²⁴ - notably the use of vivid and arresting stories illustrative of a particular abuse or precept - that they must have been able to arrest and sustain the attention of unlettered lay audiences rather more easily than their Lollard opponents whose uncompromising insistence upon simplicity and plainness

in utterance cannot always have made them the most captivating of preachers for the ears of simple folk. One can easily imagine how popularised versions of Breyard's anti-clerical material were voiced by mendicants who were less concerned than Breyard to stress the equivalent sins of the other two estates in society. The usurpation of the secular prelate's function by the friar was a familiar complaint of the seculars - notably Archbishop Fitzralph of Armagh²⁵ - in this period. Such a process of usurpation could well have been accelerated by the friars' sermonized attempts to discredit the authority of the local curate (or bishop) in whose parish (or diocese) the friar was preaching.

The other medium whose influence was particularly difficult to regulate was the vernacular poem. Owt has conclusively shown that the material used by poets of complaint and satire represents, in versified form, the content of so many contemporary sermons. The ideas which eventually became literary commonplaces achieved their initial popularity in the pulpit. Of the poems which have survived, some are partisan satires, whether anti-monastic, as is the case with some of the Kildare MS. material²⁶ extant, or anti-mendicant.²⁷ Still more survivals are generalised complaints on the evils of 'The Wicked Age',²⁸ in which the clergy are not usually the sole targets for abuse. One of these poems, written about 1320, stands out.²⁹ Its seventy-eight stanzas mark it as much longer than nearly all other poems in the genre and its attack on clerical abuses assumes a much

greater prominence than does the treatment of other social ills. There is no hint in it of theological unorthodoxy and yet, deprived of its specific historical allusions, which date it earlier in the fourteenth century, it is easy to believe that the poem would be consigned to that amorphous pile marked 'Wycliffite'. A closer examination of the piece will provide a suitable compendium of precisely the sort of ideas which were as strongly held at the beginning of the fourteenth century as they were immediately before, during and after the turmoil surrounding Lollardy at the end of the century. The poem sets out to explain:

Whi werre and wrake in londe and manslaught is i-come,
 Whi hunger and derthe on eorthe the pore hath undernome,
 Whi bestes ben thus storve, whi corn hath ben so dere,
 (11.1-3)

and the poet believes the current afflictions to be a manifestation of divine wrath because of the ills which society has allowed to harm its fabric. The church is afflicted at the highest levels:

For at the court of Rome, ther treuthe sholde biginne,
 Him is forboden the paleis, dar he noht com therinne
 for doute; (11.9-10)

through the ranks of the episcopacy:

For though the bishop hit wite, that hit bename kouth,
 He may wid a litel silver stoppen his mouth; (11.91-2)

to the ordinary clergy:

And whan this neue parsoun is institut in his churche,
 He bithenketh him hu he may shrewdelichest worche; (11.66-7)

and to the regulars, whether monks:

And au is pride maister in everich ordred hous;
 Religioun is evele i-holde and fareth the more ^{iwis,} [amis.]
 (11.124-6)

or friars:

That welde preche more for a buschel of whete,
 Than for to bringe a soule from helle out of the hete
 to rest. (11.165-7)

The three questions which were noted in Wimbledon's sermon, again form the basis of the criticism. Entry into the Court of Rome, indeed to the church itself, was impossible without bribery - 'Wers he nevere swich [good] a clerk' (1.20) and because simony (the sale of ecclesiastical preferment) attends the recruitment of clerks, the subsequent faults - serving the king rather than the church (11.45-8), erosion of vows of celibacy (11.52-3), ignorance (11.103-8), love of hunting (1.122), lack of charity (11.127-32), pride and gluttony (11.152f.), cupidity (11.181-6), injustice (11.199f.), fraud (11.211f.) - are inevitable. How the clergy ruled was implicit in how they first entered the church.

The poet could well have been a literate but poor secular clerk whose sympathies are with the honest poor who suffer at the hands both of the church and of the knightly classes. The latter, by their malpractices, deprive the king of the services and revenues which should properly accrue to him. As a consequence, this burden always falls upon those least able to sustain it. The king is not blamed,

but he is advised that:

Ac were the king wel avised, and wolde worche bi skile,
 Litel nede sholde he have swiche pore to pile;
 Thurfte him noht seke tresor so fer, he mihte finde ner,
 At justices, at shirreves, cheiturs, and chaunceler,
and at les;
 Swiche mihte finde him i-nouh, and late pore men have pes.

(11.319-23)

Restoration of a society in which each estate plays its allotted role is the request. The proper role of the clergy in that society is not questioned - their abuse of it, is. To ask the king to intervene and correct the erring behaviour of the knightly estate would be accepted, by most medieval readers, as a justifiable plea for the king to assert his incontestable authority over his knights for the sake of the common good.³⁰ It was thought right for a king to insist upon the complete fulfillment by the knights of their duties to society. By the end of the century, however, an increasing number of people were asking - who could, who would impose a similar insistence upon the clergy?

Such a question grew out of the growing frustration which many felt at the inability, not to say unwillingness, of the church to reform and discipline itself sufficiently. The very machinery which should have been engaged on this task was, the allegation went, unwilling to listen to criticism and counsel as to what was wrong and what reforms were needed, and was instead engaged in a systematic campaign to silence those who dared to 'say seth'. Whilst few of

those who criticised the church would have disagreed with the concept of monarchy which believed:

That is a king y-coroune to kepe vs vnder lawe,
To put vs into prisone whenne we passe boundes.³¹

yet there were many who felt that the 'boundes' which the church had imposed were unjustified and unacceptable. The De Haeretico Comburendo statute (1401), and the Constitutions³² (1409 - promulgated at Oxford in 1408) of Archbishop Arundel, for instance, meant (it was alleged) that the vital task - and duty - of advocating reform was being severely impeded. Preaching and writing on matters concerning the church were now fraught with danger. Such was the complaint. Obedience to the precept:

... if God have grauntyd þe grace for to knowe
Ony manere mysscheff þat myȝte be amendyd
Schewe þat to þi souereyne to schelde him from harmes³³

was liable to result in punishment. The scant rewards for and the fate of the 'Sothsegger' is one of the most recurrent themes of polemical writings from the fourteenth century to the Reformation. The cry of the Plow poet is that:

... though the sothe thou of hem tell,
In great cursyng shalte thou fall. (11.171-2)

and again:

Who sayth sothe he shalbe shent, (1.825)

This motif is, in a sense, central to the poem, and though it can be found in material written at the beginning of the century, as in

Robert of Brunne's statement:

Þey [the church authorities] are wroth whan any þus precheþ,
But holy wryt þus vs telleþ and techeþ.³⁴

it becomes a much more frequent feature of poetry written at the end of the century. One critic of the church says he 'dare no more say, lest I were shent',³⁵ whilst another poet, speaking of society as a whole, complains that any person offering well-intentioned criticism:

luytel þonk he schal him reche,
And summe þer ben þat wol him spise ...
But zif he kepe him out of heore cleche,
ffor his soþ sawe he schal be shent.³⁶

These lines are taken from one of two poems, each over ninety lines long, which are to be found in the Vernon MS. and which deal with the penalties of truth-telling in the writers' society.³⁷ Both poems employ variations on the 'ffor his soþ he schal be shent' line as a refrain at the end of every stanza. The impression given by both of these poems, and by another far longer piece, Mum and the Sothsegger, is that such comments do not apply just to the fate of those who criticise the church, but reflect the fate of the truth-teller everywhere in late fourteenth/early fifteenth century society. Mum dominates the whole of the country - the malaise is total. The difficulties which the truth-teller experienced in the church, however, should not be seen as apart of a general trend, but as the inevitable consequences of the particular atmosphere created by the Lollard

movement. Moreover, with the imposition of the anti-Lollard measures at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the repetition of such complaints should not be regarded as the use of a rhetorical topos which had become in any way disassociated from the reality which had initiated it. So concerned were the church authorities with the eradication of Lollardy and so vigilant did they become, that writers of unimpeachable theological orthodoxy complain that they are almost being shamed into silence for fear of being accused that they are Lollards. In the early years of the fifteenth century, Alexander Carpenter states:

Those who hear cursed transgressors of God's commandments daily blaspheming God with lies and horrible oaths nevertheless are ashamed to silence them and refrain from such transgressions themselves, lest they be called lollards and heretics, or of the Lollard sect.³⁸

and his indignation is echoed in the poetry of a contemporary, John Awdelay:

Fore to þe treuþ þai take no tent;
 Þe soth fore hem þ dar not say;
 Here-fore þe fynd he wil hem fray,
 Fore þay cal trew Cristyn men lollard,
 Þat kepyn Cristis comawndmentis nyȝt and day,
 And don Goddis wil in dede and worde.
 Azayns ham I take Crist to wytnes;
 Here is non error ne lollardre,
 Bot pistil and gospel, þe sauter treuly;
 I take witnes of þe treue clargy
 Þat han Godis lauye fore to redres.³⁹

The zeal of the church's heresy hunting meant, as Joseph Dahmus has remarked, that 'to suspicious souls, almost any person critical of the church in the late fourteenth century was apt to pass as a Lollard'.⁴⁰ Why was this? What was it about Lollard writers which

provoked the church into measures of such unprecedented severity? To explain this phenomenon, it is necessary to pause and examine the Lollard movement as a whole - its nature, function and writings - so that the superficial resemblances which its views seem to have with orthodox reformers may be put into more meaningful perspective.

John Wyclif - Heresiarch.

Just as Lollardy was initially invested with life by Oxford's most distinguished schoolman of the 1370's, and yet was sustained eventually, in a radically less intellectual form, by the lower orders of fifteenth century society, so the writings associated with the movement cover a similarly broad spectrum of authorial learning and opinion. At one end of the scale, Wyclif's works represent, intellectually, the zenith of the Lollard literary achievement. Recent scholarship⁴¹ has revealed the extent to which Wyclif's later polemical works derive from his earlier and fundamental metaphysical and theological positions set out in works written long before Wyclif's orthodoxy had been seriously questioned. These early works had, by 1370, established Wyclif in the eyes of most of his contemporaries, opponents included, as the outstanding philosopher of his generation in Oxford⁴². His subsequent controversial works were thus assured of a large and well-educated

audience within the confines of the University. The subjects treated in these later works soon ensured an attentive audience outside Wyclif's academic environs⁴³. This last fact was not lost on those who, from about 1374 onwards, began seriously to question his conclusions concerning the nature and structure of the visible church. Wyclif was no stranger to controversy even at this stage - at the time of his inception in theology he had been involved in disputes with, amongst others, the Carmelite scholar John Kenningham,⁴⁴ concerning his treatise De incarnatione Verbi. However, although this altercation clearly prefigures the collision course on which the two sides were already embarked, it was at this stage, as has rightly been remarked, 'just part of the routine of the schools'.⁴⁵ Subsequent critics were more mindful of the practical consequences should Wyclif's teaching with regard to the relations between church and state; pope and king; parishioner and cleric; and individual and creator filter down through society as a whole. Thus, whilst maintaining a tone of respect towards Wyclif himself, orthodox scholars began to attack his views with increasing energy, and the progress of the debate was marked with interest and concern both by the pope in Rome and the ecclesiastical hierarchy in England - and by influential sections of lay society. The fundamental factor preventing Wyclif's works from having a pervasive influence was that they were written in 'a learned, burdened, scholastic Latin which could never make general reading.'⁴⁶ Even his sermons, the most public expression of his opinions, though they may have reached a small and educated lay element

in his University church audiences, were written down in Latin.⁴⁷

Thus his corpus of Latin works was mainly directed either ad clerum or to Parliament and could not, alone, account for Wyclif the heretic becoming Wyclif the heresiarch - the inspirer of others - outside the limited worlds that were University and Government. It required a process of popularization of Wyclif's writings if his ideas were ever to reach into the parishes of England. It is now not at all certain whether Wyclif himself actively encouraged this dissemination in the vernacular tongue. At one time scholars had no doubt that he did so. The general acceptance of Wyclif's authorship of the many English writings edited by Arnold and F.D. Mathew was paralleled by the conviction that Wyclif had organised a group of itinerant preachers⁴⁸ - the so-called Poor Priests - whose duty it was to tour the country and, using the writings specifically provided for them, to preach to the sorts of audience who were unaware of the convulsions taking place within the schools. However, just as belief in Wyclif's authorship of these vernacular writings has been called into question, so too has the notion of his patronage and encouragement of the Poor Priests. That there were itinerant preachers passing from county to county without a licence from their ordinaries is certain; that many of the ideas which they preached would have met with Wyclif's approval is likely; that they reached a wide cross section of the population with their message, both in churches and in the market places, is equally probable - but the idea that it was Wyclif who initiated and sustained an organisation of such preachers has no evidence of substance

to support it. Wyclif himself was no popularizer - he began and ended his career a schoolman. Thus, if lay society as a whole was to hear anything of the letter and spirit of Wyclif's message, it would have to wait for those who were prepared to write as well as preach in the vernacular and generally to orientate their evangelism in the direction of the people who were ultimately to sustain the Lollard movement.

Any treatment of the process of transmission of Lollard ideas at the end of the fourteenth century must be prefaced by some reference to the nature of these ideas. It cannot be the claim of this section to provide an exhaustive account of the beliefs associated either with Wyclif or with Lollardy. The provision of such an account has been a task which has engaged several generations of scholars. However, a degree of sectarian partizanship, often in itself the motivating force behind monumental editorial labours, has resulted in some unsatisfactorily unbalanced treatments of the material under discussion, and it is only in recent years that a more coherent and comprehensive picture has begun to emerge. One of the fruits of these latest investigations is an indication of the degree of complexity underlying much of Wyclif's writing, and this has served to distinguish his position more decisively from the positions subsequently adopted by those later Lollards to whom, directly or indirectly, he had been an inspiration. Moreover the notion of a single static 'Wycliffite' or 'Lollard' position has given way to a fresh realisation of the constant development, alterations of emphasis, and variations in tone

of these views associated with Lollardy. It is clear that when Wyclif's ideas left the University, it was not just their medium of expression which changed but their character also. Thus it is important that some indication of this change be given in order that the subsequent analysis of the views held by the author of the FlowT may be set against the overall spectrum of Lollard thought, thereby suggesting more clearly the stage of development which the poem may represent in the history of Lollardy.

The discussion must begin with Wyclif. What characterised his views in the years before they passed into more general circulation amongst the laity, and what was the basis of his position? Any attempt at an explanation must begin in the Oxford of his youth. If the nature and quality of the debates current within the University between 1350 and 1370 did little to arrest the alarming decline in scholastic studies at that time, to which scholars now make mention, it is clear that their influence was profound enough on the thinking of some students. Amongst the topics about which there was dispute when Wyclif first went up to Oxford⁴⁹, was one concerning the reality or otherwise of universal concepts. Was reality, for man, limited to that which can be perceived by human sense organs, or was it possible to think in terms of the reality of universal concepts, of eternal archetypes, of which human sense perception could comprehend only the individual, the transitory, the temporal realisation? In the answers to these questions, a broad division can be made between those who answered 'Yes' to the first and 'No' to the second, and those who

answered in the opposite fashion. Of the former position - known as Nominalism or Terminism - the most extreme expression had been given earlier in the century by William of Ockham.⁵⁰ He rejected the Thomist belief in the potential of human reason as an aid to faith in the understanding of man's relationship with God. He stressed the unknowability of God which cannot be reduced by reason but only by a committed and absolute faith. The human senses must be confined to the reality of the individual and the temporal, and must resign themselves to the proper study of mankind being man - beyond man, speculation must give way to faith, talk of the reality of universals must cease. For Ockham universals were no more than the creation of the human intellect as an aid to understanding the relationship between the temporal and the eternal - they did not represent any corresponding reality independent of the human mind. This Terminist view did not, in the opinion of Gordon Leff,⁵¹ reflect the position of the majority of medieval thinkers. It was opposed by those who adopted, to a greater or lesser degree, a Realist point of view,⁵² that is to say, those who believed that universals did have an existence independent of the human intellect. Realists believed that there was a universal quality which made each individual being what it was - there were not, it was believed, just individual men, for example, but a universal essence of humanity from which the individual was derived, and about which it was possible to attain objective knowledge. There was, however, deep division amongst schoolmen as to how this essence existed. More moderate Realists

such as Aquinas believed that humanity, for instance, existed only through its medium - man - it had no independent existence prior to individuals. Extreme Realists asserted this independence and Wyclif was of their number. For him the idea, the esse intelligibile as he called it, was the first and most important part of the three-fold nature of being⁵³ as he understood it. The archetype which resided eternally in God was the true reality because it was not dependent on time and place. The other parts of being - potential being, that is to say the possibility of being, and actual being, that is to say the realisation of that possibility were thus dependent. Thus for Wyclif the quality and characteristic of the world was its transience - permanence existed only in the idea, the archetype which, sharing God's being, shared also his eternity, necessity and indestructability. This represents a view diametrically opposed to that of Ockham and thus it is not surprising that amongst the opponents of Wyclif at Oxford were the followers of Nominalism. Quite how many of these there were is not certain. J.A. Robson remarks that 'the Arts faculty does not appear to have adopted terminism to any overwhelming degree'⁵⁴ and believes that Wyclif's references to a powerful school of Terminists at the University may well be merely a characteristically exaggerated assessment of any shade of moderate opinion.⁵⁵ Nevertheless H.B. Workman⁵⁶ points to 'a strong party in the church, especially among the friars ... [who had] embraced nominalism.' Opposition was also forthcoming from moderate Realists, probably more extensive in numbers than the Nominalists. All this

opposition was, however, within the schools and merely an extension of a long series of disputations on these matters. Accusations of heresy were not heard until Wyclif, in his theological writings and discussion of church policy in the 1370's, applied his philosophical views to contemporary problems and came up with conclusions which threatened the very existence of the church temporal.

The two most significant conclusions of Wyclif were those which defined his attitude to the church and to the Bible. Dealing first with the church, Wyclif was anxious to clarify the nature of the true church which he considered to be very different from that of the visible church on earth. He did not accept the efficacy of human mediation by ordained ministers of the visible church in the relations between man and God. An individual's salvation or damnation was decided by an omnipotent God whose decision was irrevocable, and could in no way be influenced by the good or bad works performed by an individual whilst he was alive, nor could it be swayed by the ministrations of the visible church on behalf of that individual. Moreover, a person's fate was not merely pre-ordained, but unknown and unknowable to all except God. Thus, argued Wyclif, the futility of the claims made for itself by the visible church can readily be understood. Not only is prayer unnecessary for those predestined to salvation and unavailing for those predestined to damnation, but circumstances could be imagined in which the very priest offering prayer, be he the lowliest curate or the pope himself, was not of

the community of the elect - not a member of the true church. Equally, a layman need not have been admitted to the visible church in order to become a member of the true church. How, asks Wyclif, can the church on earth claim authority and demand obedience when it bears no relationship to the archetypal church - the congregatio predestinatorum: on what grounds can it use coercive powers against those who refuse to submit to what are merely man-made rules of doctrine and conduct? Wyclif's answer was simple - it can't.

The apparent implications of Wyclif's position are not difficult to understand. The visible church had lost its raison d'être; it had become redundant. Its ministrations were valueless: its judgements unavailing, and the nature of the priesthood was totally devalued. Yet, in order to understand why these implications were not constantly drawn together by Wyclif in a demand for the abolition of all forms of religious organisation, it is necessary to realise that, though one aspect of Wyclif's attitude to the church was conditioned by his realist metaphysic, this was not the only aspect. He was prepared to attack the visible church from another standpoint, even though it appeared to contradict the first. Wyclif's first argument had denied the value of the visible church's existence. His second denied the value of the current visible church's existence but implied that reform could produce a visible church which adhered more closely to Christian principles, and which, as a consequence, he would be prepared to countenance. Thus, as has been remarked, though 'logically it flawed his system; psychologically [his second argument] gave

him the best of two worlds and he indulged each to the full'.⁵⁷

It was his intention to demonstrate that the current church was a living betrayal of Christ's example and teaching as witnessed in the Bible. When discussing the church Wyclif had felt it necessary to reach beyond the individual church realised in time and space and to seek its eternal archetype. The scriptures represented this eternal truth - they were God's word independent of time and place. As J.A. Robson puts it, the Bible was "God Himself, an emanation of the Supreme Being 'transposed into writing'".⁵⁸ Wyclif's interpretation of the scriptures did not differ materially, in theory at least, from that of traditional exegetes. He was, particularly in his last years, more than a literalist, more than a believer in Scriptura Sola.⁵⁹ He modified his earlier insistence on the literal truth of each word of scripture⁶⁰ to a position which accepted the existence of two distinct sorts of truth - explicit (literal) and implicit, with the latter being made accessible by reference both to reason and to the writings of the saints and other traditional authorities - the result was the 'sensus Catholicus'. However, if Wyclif was no fundamental literalist, he was a fundamentalist regarding 'God's word fittingly interpreted'. This was to be contrasted to the practices and claims of the visible church and to act as the eternal, archetypal yard-stick by which they were to be judged. If discrepancies were revealed, it was to the Bible, as a metaphysical reality and entity, that Wyclif turned and upon which he relied with

the utmost conviction and fervour.

This, then, was the two pronged attack made by Wyclif on the visible church. He had denied the validity of its existence. Now by contradicting himself he drew back from this extreme position in order to embrace a view which accepted a distinction between good and bad with respect to the institutions and conduct of the visible church. The test of that church in all its aspects would be the degree of its adherence to scriptural precept. It is worth noticing that even where, as in the case of the papacy there was (according to Wyclif) no scriptural justification for the existence of the office, he did not relentlessly press his arguments to their logical conclusions and demand the abolition of the pope and all his cardinals - rather did he judge their conduct against the general Christian standards outlined in the Bible. Once again, he was prepared to accept the distinction between a good pope and a bad.

Thus, in seeking the characteristics of Wyclif's thought, reference must constantly be made to the extent to which the potential extremism implied in his ultra-realist metaphysic was qualified by a persistent and contradictory pragmatism. The balance between these two forces was not constant - his moderation seems to have weakened towards the end of his life - but it was this equation which made Wyclif distinctive rather than his more particularised assaults on individual aspects of abuse within the church. Such attacks were, as will be recalled, common to a variety of fourteenth century writers. It was the nature of the metaphysical base out of which they grew in

Wyclif's mind that set him apart from most of his fellow Lollards.

There remain two aspects of Wyclif's beliefs to be examined. Firstly reform of the church. As we have noted, the notion of reform had little meaning for Wyclif in his most uncompromising position. What, after all, was the point of reforming an institution which had become redundant and superfluous to the spiritual welfare of a predestined individual? As has already been suggested, however, Wyclif's more moderate stance accepted that a thorough process of amelioration could produce a visible church organisation which would be acceptable to him. What, then, needed to be changed and by what means? Wyclif's answer centred on the temporal possessions and interests of the church. These were sapping its spiritual energy and causing the clergy to compromise their fundamental duty of pastoral care in favour of energetic involvement with temporalia. He attacked every aspect of ecclesiastical life which mirrored the acquisitive and mercenary attitude of all clergy - both secular and religious. Thus simony, patronage, pluralism, the malpractices of ecclesiastical courts, the sale of indulgences, the abuse of powers such as excommunication in, for instance, the exaction of tithes - all came repeatedly under Wyclif's lash. Scorn was poured not only on the church's desire to increase its existing wealth, but on its original endowment with worldly goods. The only satisfactory reform lay, for Wyclif, in the removal of the source of the infection - the church must be disendowed and allowed to resume that state of spiritual innocence which had pertained before the alleged donation

of wealth to Pope Sylvester by the Emperor Constantine.⁶¹ It was partly by this formulation of a specific remedy, which was to be implemented by means of lay power, that Wyclif could be distinguished from the more quietist critics of the fourteenth century church. Whereas others were prepared to await spiritual regeneration in the fullness of time, Wyclif initiated an immediate programme of action which depended for its success on the secular arm. Appeals to the king and to Parliament are frequently to be found in his writings and must be viewed in the light of the lengthy dispute, which had in some ways dominated medieval political thinking, as to the relative authority of an emperor (or of a king) and a pope.

For a writer to ask the king to intervene and correct the errors of knights within his realm would have been accepted by most medieval readers as a justifiable plea for the king to assert his incontestable authority over his knights.⁶² It would have been thought right for a king to insist upon complete fulfillment of appointed duties by the knights. Who, however, had the power to impose a similar insistence upon the clergy? Two positions had crystallized by the fourteenth century. The papal view⁶³ may be seen in Boniface VIII's decree Unam sanctam (1302), in which the argument was that the pope's power originally and fundamentally consisted of two swords - 'one signifying the pope's priestly coercive power, the other the regal coercive power'.⁶⁴ One of these powers, the regal, he had delegated to kings and emperors whose use of it remained 'at the bidding and sufferance of the pope'.⁶⁵ Thus all actions of a secular ruler were

theoretically subject to papal approval and in no circumstances could a king initiate actions which were unacceptable to the spiritual arm. The king's power was thought of as being entirely derivative and subject to its source - to resist the papacy was, in effect, to resist the supreme, divinely ordained power on earth.

Such a view met with concerted opposition from those who sought to justify the position of a supreme universal or national ruler whose authority was in no way answerable to the church - whose authority was, itself, derived directly from God. In particular, writers such as Marsilius of Padua⁶⁶ and William of Ockham⁶⁷ aimed to liberate the secular arm from subordination to the papacy. For them any state consisted of citizens under the governance of the secular ruler, and clerics were, in all except their spiritual function, as answerable to secular authority as any other citizen. In so far as the clergy concerned themselves with temporalia, they were entirely subject to the appropriate temporal power - the emperor, or king.

This dispute had engaged Europe for centuries. Fourteenth century England was clearly conscious of its implications. Formal limitations on the encroachments of papal power were introduced by the twin statutes of Provisors⁶⁸ and Praemunire⁶⁹ and adherents to the 'Court' party during the 1370's - notably John of Gaunt - kept the activities of political bishops such as Courtenay and Wykeham under close surveillance.

Thus Wyclif's writings and his assertion of the king's authority over that of the pope draws on a long tradition and is based

particularly on Marsilius' view that the king was the spiritual guardian of the church in his land. The priest's power was made in the image of Christ's humanity, but the king's power was made in the image of Christ's divinity. Thus the king could command absolute obedience from both laymen and clerics - his sovereignty on earth was complete and certainly included the authority to reform the church by force if necessary.⁷⁰

This is yet another instance of Wyclif's willingness to compromise his more extreme beliefs in times of necessity. His view of the nature of lordship and possession meant that both were gifts from God, through his grace, and were dependent upon the absence, in the possessor, of any taint of mortal sin.⁷¹ With the taint of sin, lordship and possession were forfeited. However, as it stood his theory hardly met Wyclif's particular needs of the moment, for it represented no justification for the disendowment of the church by the king. Logically if the king was in mortal sin, he too should forfeit his possessions let alone attempt to dispossess others. Further, who was to know that the king was not of the community of the damned? If he were, he would scarcely be the ideal instrument of church reform. Wyclif apparently realised the implications of too rigorous an application of his theories and compromised accordingly.⁷² Lordship, for the church, was contrary to Christ's example: Lordship for a king was part of the essence of kingship. In this way the power to disendow was confirmed as being within the king's mandate. In his policy of disendowment is to be found the most

immediate link between Wyclif the schoolman and the world of politics outside. His teaching on the subject has rightly been cited as 'his most explosive legacy to his disciples'.⁷³ It provided for others the most striking indication of how to translate theory into decisive action.

The second remaining aspect of Wyclif's beliefs which has yet to be considered concerns his attitude to the Eucharist. It should not be imagined that the Middle Ages had a precisely defined and universally accepted view of the Eucharist against which Wyclif was flagrantly rebelling.⁷⁴ The clarification of Trent had yet to materialise. Nevertheless, the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 had given official authorisation to a doctrine of transubstantiation which involved 'a physical miracle producing a local presence of Christ hidden under the accidents of a vanished substance'.⁷⁵ Even those people such as Ockham, who thought that the continued presence of the substance in the sacrament after the words of consecration was 'very reasonable apart from the decision of the Church to the contrary',⁷⁶ were prepared to accept that decision as binding.

For Wyclif such an acceptance was impossible. He could not accept that, after the words of consecration, the substance of the bread and wine had been transubstantiated into the body and blood of Christ with only the accidents - the material qualities of the bread and wine - remaining. The possibility of annihilating a substance was anathema to Wyclif's metaphysic. For him, no substance could be annihilated

without the corresponding annihilation of that substance's eternal archetype. This was clearly impossible. Therefore Wyclif, though he did not reject the doctrine of the Real presence (a point to be remembered by those who seek to find, in his writings, evidence that he was the English precursor of those who adopted, in the sixteenth century, a sacramentalist and commemorativist view of the Eucharist), set about reconciling the continuing presence of the substance with the new presence, in some form after consecration, of Christ. Wyclif could not compromise his metaphysic with the demands of obedience to the visible church's authority in matters of faith.

Wyclif came to believe that Christ had spiritual being in the bread and not dimensional being. The bread and wine remained naturally as they were before consecration, and yet became something more by a spiritual change which he did not attempt to explain in natural terms. He certainly did not stress, as did most medieval doctrine, that the bread and wine became the body and blood of Christ as a direct result of the priest speaking the words of consecration. The priest, said Wyclif, could not create anything new - only God possessed such a power.

The effect of Wyclif's advocacy of his eucharistic views, which he began in earnest during the summer of 1379 in Oxford, was firstly to alienate the friars en masse; previously there had existed some mutual sympathy and respect.⁷⁷ Secondly the implications with regard to the authority of the priest were inescapable. Wyclif was undermining their position by denying that it was through their contribution, in

the words of consecration, that the Mass was made efficacious. Thirdly, his position implied a clear rejection of the authority of the church - he was not prepared to compromise his reason by submitting, obediently, to the teaching of the church. Thus his eucharistic writings mark another stage at which his fundamental metaphysical position resulted in a break with existing doctrine. They also mark the juncture at which Wyclif joined the long tradition of writers who inveighed against the mendicant orders.

With Wyclif, then, the particular abuse is related constantly to its central frame of reference. The reader is never allowed to feel that an attack on alleged corruption is grounded in a self-sufficient empiricism. Abuse of the sacraments and images, neglect of preaching, extortions of alms and tithes, greed, hypocrisy, injustice and lack of charity - such things represent not the totality of Wyclif's complaints, but rather serve to illustrate more general attitudes formed by a considerable, if not always consistent intellect. The official campaigners against Wyclif, led by Archbishop Courtenay, saw, in the implications of Wyclif's attitude to the visible church, a challenge to their basic authority within the community. Wyclif's position represented, it was believed, a serious attempt to jerk the rug from beneath the feet of temporal ecclesiastical authority and, as such, had to be discredited and suppressed both at its source and at its possible points of dissemination within the community at large.

The action taken against Wyclif himself was necessarily limited. The patronage and protection which he enjoyed from John of Gaunt⁷⁸ seems to have ensured that he died in bed, and still in communion with the Catholic church. Nevertheless, action was taken to ensure that his residence in Oxford was brought to an end. In 1381⁷⁹ a Council of twelve under William Berton considered and condemned as heretical a number of Wyclif's beliefs and Wyclif was asked to leave Oxford shortly afterwards. He seems to have returned to his Lutterworth home during 1381⁸⁰ and he remained there until his death three years later - all the time occupied with producing the formidable volume of tracts and sermons which was his legacy to his disciples both in this country and on the continent. In order to restrain those of his supporters who remained at the University, there was a call by the orthodox for the 1382 Blackfriar's condemnation of Wyclif's heresies,⁸¹ to be acted upon within Oxford. Interference by those (such as Courtenay) who occupied positions of authority at national level was resented by the University Chancellor, Rigge, who seems to have had some sympathy with the Lollards, quite apart from his desire to defend the independence of the University from outside intervention. Matters came to a head when first Nicholas Hereford, a follower of Wyclif, preached the Ascension Day sermon at St. Frideswyde's, and then Philip Repington, later to become as Bishop of Lincoln an avowed opponent of the Lollards, but in his early days an equally devout supporter, preached on Corpus Christi day (June 5th). Intense pressure was brought to bear on Rigge who

agreed, on June 12th, to implement the wishes of Courtenay and began the active process of suppressing Lollardy at Oxford. Wyclif was finally and officially suspended from the University and a general inquisition was initiated to seek out his followers. Repington and Hereford were excommunicated, and other supporters such as John Aston and Laurence Bedeman were condemned. H.B. Workman's conclusion that by January 1383 'Oxford lay crushed at Courtenay's feet'⁸² seems substantially true. It could never again openly and confidently be dominated by Wyclif's views. Confronted with the heavy hand of authority, many early adherents, some of whom had never been energetic in their support, must have reverted to orthodoxy whilst the more committed Lollards were forced to find more clandestine means of operating. This they did. The measures taken by Archbishop Arundel at the beginning of the fifteenth century indicate a concern with this unofficial Lollard activity and Repington's demand, in 1414,⁸³ for investigation of heresy within the University together with the inclusion, in the statutes of newly-founded colleges - Lincoln and Magdalen for instance⁸⁴ - of clauses which make specific mention of the need to extirpate heresy, all bear witness to the wariness of the church against any significant resurgence of academic unorthodoxy. Moreover this wariness did not just reflect itself in suppressive measures, but also in the growth of a concerted programme of orthodox doctrinal writing designed specifically to refute Wyclif's attitudes by argument and hence to counter the effects of his

lingering reputation and influence. The lack of vitality in the Oxford philosophy of the later fourteenth century had meant, as has been remarked, that:

a man of powerful but eccentric opinions could progress to the extreme position which Wyclif had reached in 1372 without being attacked.⁸⁵

The situation was somewhat different at the beginning of the fifteenth century. The church had been roused into action. It felt, as it had not often felt before, the need to defend itself at the highest intellectual levels by argument rather than by citing the church's absolute authority in doctrinal matters as a means of silencing disagreement. The works of Roger Dymok⁸⁶ and, more particularly, Thomas Netter's Doctrinale (c1421)⁸⁷ mark a high point in the activities of orthodox apologists⁸⁸ and whilst there is, of course, no denying the effectiveness of coercion in breaking up the influential circle of Lollards in the 1380's, yet J.A.F. Thomson has rightly remarked that:

[the] intellectual counter-attack probably did more to defeat Lollardy in the university than the repressive measures of Archbishop Arundel had done, as the academic resistance to outside interference which these [measures] had roused meant that opponents of heresy were spending their effort on fighting each other.⁸⁹

The significance of this 'counter-attack' is that, for the first time, it meets the Lollards on ground which they had previously tended to monopolise. The vernacular written word played a vital part in the development of the Lollard movement, and the content of

this material, its relationship to the Latin works of Wyclif, as well as the organisation of its production and distribution must now be considered.

The Later Lollards and Literature.

Mention has already been made of the fact that, serious as Wyclif's challenge to the church authorities was, the problem remained largely a localised one for as long as it could be confined to University audiences and surroundings. The moment was not long delayed, however, when the tide of controversy overflowed its academic banks, for by the first decade of the fifteenth century, Wyclif's beliefs were not only filtering through to each estate of English society but were achieving considerable prominence throughout Central and Eastern Europe.⁹⁰ It was in the years immediately following Wyclif's death that the process of dissemination and popularization of his message achieved greatest momentum. One of the fruits of such efforts was the Plow and it is on the mechanism of the process that attention must now be centred.

The effectiveness of propaganda then, as now, depended on the ability of the propagandist to arrest and maintain the attention of a prospective audience by manipulation of either the spoken or the written word. A wide variety of readers had to be catered for at the

beginning of the fifteenth century, ranging from those who were anxious to read Wyclif's works in their original Latin, through those who were capable of following a sustained theological discourse if it was presented in the vernacular, to those who required not only translation but simplification of all scholastic complexity, even to those who could content themselves with a few lines of inferior doggerel. All were catered for. Moreover, as the Lollards would have been the last to insist upon literacy as a necessary condition for salvation, measures had to be taken to ensure that oral communication, particularly in the form of sermons, was successful in reaching deep into the English town and countryside. Such measures were taken.

Dealing first with books, the Lollards seem to have succeeded in establishing and, perhaps more remarkable, sustaining organisations which were responsible for the production, distribution and discussion of Lollard writings throughout the fifteenth century. The organisations existing before 1400 which had been centred on Oxford may have differed markedly in character from those by which they were succeeded but a continuity of spirit prevailed amongst adherents throughout the century. The early groups, composed as they were mainly of University men, undertook a number of onerous tasks including the multiplication of texts of Wyclif's Latin writings and the production and distribution of the so-called Wycliffite translation of the scriptures. Few of the manuscripts of Wyclif's works survive in this country to bear adequate testimony to the work of the scribes who produced them. The

energetic suppression of such writings by Archbishop Arundel after 1407 resulted in what must have been a substantial number of copies being consigned to the fire. That we have any appreciable knowledge of the contents of these writings is due in no small measure to the industry of those visiting scholars from Bohemia and Poland⁹¹ who, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, made their own copies of Wyclif manuscripts and then returned with them to the University at Prague and elsewhere. There the copies remained undisturbed until, under the auspices of the Wyclif Society, the daunting task of editing was undertaken by that painstaking group of Central European scholars at the end of the nineteenth century without whose labours Wyclif would, today, be a complete enigma.

Amongst those in England who first benefited from the systematic process of manuscript reproduction of Wyclif's Latin works were, in all probability, scholars at Oxford - the pupils of Wyclif and his immediate disciples perhaps - whom, naturally, the church had no wish to see contaminated by such doctrines, for the 'undergraduates' of today were the clerics of tomorrow. Another sizeable group of readers would be those engaged in government. Affairs of church and state were sufficiently closely related at that time to ensure that much of what Wyclif wrote, both material dealing with matters of ecclesiastical polity and with theology, would be seen to have a direct and immediate relevance in the formulation and rationalisation of lay attitudes towards the church.

It is, however, from the English works sympathetic to Lollard tenets of faith that a more detailed picture of post-Wycliffite literary activity can be drawn. A vital and characteristic emphasis of all Lollard writing was its persistent and unyielding examination of current ecclesiastical practice in the light of scriptural precept. Priority had, thus, to be given to the task of making the scriptures more readily available to that whole range of people who, unable to read Latin, were compelled to rely on a variety of Biblical paraphrases and devotional and homiletic treatises all of which, at best, could provide only a glimpse, and that often a second hand one, of the scriptures themselves. So it was that the earliest major project undertaken by Lollard scholars was the translation of the Bible into English.⁹² The survival of over 170 fourteenth and fifteenth century manuscripts⁹³ of various parts of this translation is testimony to its popularity and pervasiveness in the years following the death of Wyclif, and it is appropriate that the work which represented the highest priority in Lollard literary activity at all levels should have negotiated the difficult passage through fifteenth and early sixteenth century ecclesiastical censorship far more successfully than did the many other works which were the products of Lollard apologists. It is possible to catch a glimpse of the early network supporting these works, both in their production and distribution, from an examination of facts which have recently come to light regarding the manuscript tradition of the Bible translation.

It has long been recognised⁹⁴ that the extant manuscripts of the translation represent, in fact, two translations or, more precisely, one translation and a substantial and far reaching revision. The earliest translation, one characterised by extreme literalism and suitable only for use in conjunction with a Vulgate,⁹⁵ has generally been assigned to a group of Oxford scholars who began their task, or at least their plans for it, during the 1370's probably with Wyclif's guidance and encouragement and, conceivably, with his active assistance. This group, a number of whom seem to have been centred at Queen's College up to 1380 included, most importantly, Nicholas Hereford and also, it has recently been interestingly argued, John Trevisa.⁹⁶ It is worth noting that Wyclif himself rented a room in the college both in 1374-5 and 1380-1 and there is no definite reason to suppose that he could not have been resident there in the intervening years. Hereford's participation in the early work of translation is evidenced both by a manuscript note 'Explic^t translacon Nicholay de herford'⁹⁷ written in a contemporary hand on what may well be the earliest extant copy (EV1) of the earliest version (EV) of the Old Testament, and also by a letter written to Hereford⁹⁸ which accuses him of deficiencies in his knowledge of Latin grammar. Such accusations would seem appropriate when set against the 'erroneous and nonsensical renderings'⁹⁹ which characterise EV1. Of the need for and existence of collaborators in Hereford's task there is no doubt as is clear from Purvey's account, written in 1395, of the beginnings of the project:

Fyrste... [the translator]... had mych trauaile wyth diuers felowis and helpars to gather mani eld Bibles and other doctouris and comune glosis, and to make oo latine Bible somedell trwe, and than to studie it of the newe, the text with the glose, and other doctours as he might get: and specially Lire on the elde testamente, that helpyd full miche in hys werke The thyrde tyme to Counsell wyth elde gramariens and elde diuinis, of harde wordis and harde sentensis, how thy myght beste be vnderstanden and translated. The fourth tyme, to translate as cleerly as he could to the sentence, and to haue many good felowis and kunnyng, at the correctinge of the translation. 100

The identity of all the other members of this school of translators is not known, though it is possible to speculate that one or more of the most eminent Lollard scholars of the time - Purvey himself, Philip Repington, John Aston, - were involved.

There is no certainty, either, as to the date of EV, but the most recent scholarship assigns to it a date c1390¹⁰¹ which is some eight years later than that suggested by Forshall and Madden. The grounds for adopting thus late a date are, suggests Conrad Lindberg, the likelihood that the break at Baruch 3.20 in MS. Bodley 959 (the earliest extant MS. for EV1) was the result of Hereford's recantation - which seems to have occurred c1391 - and his subsequent refusal to co-operate in the translation venture, and not the result of his temporary absence from England after 1382. So late a date need in no way be incompatible with the idea of a Queen's College caucus of translators dating back to the late 1370's if one surmises that the early years were taken up with planning the entire venture and with translating the New Testament prior to undertaking the Old Testament. The difficulties and labour implicit in such a task would surely have

been compounded after Wyclif's death, when the necessity for more clandestine and furtive operations would have made itself urgently apparent to all those involved - delays would, thus, be entirely likely.

What is important to appreciate with regard to EV as a whole is firstly the certainty that it represents the work of several hands in its production and many more in the multiplication of its copies. Secondly, the translation's guiding principle was the need to provide a faithful and literal rendering of the Latin. This degree of literalness, without doubt, disturbed those Lollard scholars who saw the translation project undertaken by Hereford as foundering for want of a sufficiently broad-based stylistic appeal, and successive revisions of the text show clearly that ameliorative steps were hastily initiated. There were at least two revisions of the text carried out and not, as was thought by Forshall and Madden, the single one represented by the Later Version (LV). The discovery of the so-called Intermediate Version¹⁰² (EV2) is of the first importance for it reveals the continuity of the Lollard translating organisation. There seems to have been a continuous process of revision and alteration¹⁰³ which produced texts bearing, in varying degrees, the marks of attempts to render the English more fluent and readable by the resolution of participles and relatives and the evolution of a more natural word-order. Scholars did not wait until EV was complete before undertaking the task of revision with the result that, by the end of the fourteenth century, there were early, intermediate, late and mixed texts of the

translation all in circulation at the same time. All represented different stages on the way to the guiding principle of style set out by Purvey in the General Prologue:

[translate] after the sentence, and not onely after the wordis. / So that the sentence be as opyn (either opener) in Englyshe as in latyne, and go not farre fro the letter. 104

In this way the scriptures could be directly and meaningfully accessible to the literate layman without a knowledge of Latin - the man to whom so much vernacular Lollard literature was, in part at least, addressed.

Both the translators themselves and the less well educated Lollards of later years, were acutely conscious of the need to protect and to justify the results of the many years of labour put in by the scholastic core of Wyclif's early adherents. A controversial act which flew in the face of ecclesiastical opinion was certainly in need of supplementary written support and justification. The Lollard Bible was provided with this support both at the time of its first appearance and also subsequently after official steps were taken, by Archbishop Arundel in 1408, to ensure its suppression.¹⁰⁵ The initial justification of their attempts to translate the scriptures was provided by John Purvey in the General Prologue to the LV, and it was he who must have provided the chief impetus for much Lollard literary activity in the years between the dissolution of the original Wyclif circle at Oxford after 1382, and his own recantation in 1401. The range of Purvey's learning, which is suggested by Netter's claim that

he was 'bibliotheca Lollardorum' and 'librarius Lollardorum',¹⁰⁶ is confirmed by an examination of his writings. For instance, amongst the authorities who he was able to cite (in his General Prologue to the Bible translation) in support of vernacular scriptural translations were Bede, Boethius, Higden, Nicholas of Lyra, Aquinas, Jerome, Fitzralph, Rolle, Grossteste, and Thoresby, and it was this energetic intellect which he placed at the service of the Lollard cause. There is no reason to doubt that a great deal of the learned and moderate Lollard writing in this period was either the work of, or encouraged by Purvey, though it seems clear that there was growing up within the movement a tension between the 'moderates' and those whose writing was a good deal less intellectually restrained.

It is easy, therefore, to imagine the force of the blow to the Lollard movement which resulted from Purvey's recantation. Though Purvey seems to have produced some material in both English and Latin in support of the translated Bible after 1401,¹⁰⁷ and though there seem to have been a number of adherents with sufficient learning to produce carefully argued pieces like The Lanterne of Light,¹⁰⁸ the time was fast approaching when Lollard literary activity would cease to perform its hitherto creative function and would turn, instead, to the conservation, distribution and multiplication of such material as had accrued from the last twenty years of the fourteenth century. Deprived of Oxford, the academic training ground of so many of its first generation adherents, deserted by many former friends, the Lollard

movement's intellectual demise can finally be marked by the flight to Bohemia, in 1413, of its last influential supporter in Oxford, Peter Payne of St. Edmund Hall.¹⁰⁹ All that remained was to fortify and sustain those who stood firm in the face of the church's coercive measures and this seems to be the prime aim of a writer like William Thorpe who lists, amongst his reasons for wishing to set down an account of his examination by Archbishop Arundel in 1407, his desire to reassure the faithful that:

this good LORD will not forget to comfort all such men and women in all their tribulations¹¹⁰

and that those who:

for their very virtuous living and for their true knowledging of the Truth and their patient, wilful, and glad suffering of persecution for righteousness, deserve through the grace of GOD to be heirs of the endless bliss of heaven. (p.105)

For those like Hereford and Purvey with whom Thorpe had, at one time, 'communed ... long time and oft' (p.119), and by whom he claims to have been instructed and inspired, he now has nothing but scorn as a result of their recantations. It is as if he recognises both the practical and psychological blow which the recanters had dealt to the movement which they had done so much to found:

For they feign and hide and contrary the Truth which before they taught out plainly and truly ... they choose now rather to blaspheme God than to suffer awhile here bodily persecution for soothfastness that CHRIST shed out his heart-blood for. (pp.119-20)

With the fall of Oxford Lollardy, the movement's history in the fifteenth century must be sought away from its place of origin, and an investigation into the organisation of Lollard literary activity in the period must seek its material from the records of a variety of geographical areas. Recent scholarship¹¹¹ has shown that Lollardy survived and even flourished during the fifteenth century - albeit in forms and with attitudes some way removed from those which had come to dominate the University. In whatever form, Lollardy persistently defeated the considerable efforts made by the church to eradicate it. Most of the fifteenth century evidence concerning heresy comes, of course, from ecclesiastical records - notably episcopal registers - which record the fate of those whose allegedly heretical activities had been brought to light. From these records it is quite clear that Lollardy remained a literate movement, for books played a notable part in the lives of many Lollard adherents and it was certainly possible for a work written at the end of the fourteenth century in the vernacular to play a full and active part in the observance of many clandestine Lollard groups and individuals, and thus to arrive in the sixteenth century with over a hundred years of active service to its credit. What is revealed by the records of examinations for heresy is the existence of small conventicles of Lollards whose book requirements were satisfied by the efforts of a variety of sympathisers within the book trade.

It is interesting to examine the sort of circumstances attending the use of heretical books in the fifteenth century as a means of

understanding the nature of the Lollard literary underworld. There is, firstly, no doubting the importance of the support lent to the movement by those whose trades could be of practical assistance in the production and copying of books. A survey¹¹² of the professions of Lollards resident in London and the South East between 1414 and 1534 reveals, amongst the sympathisers, three skinners, three parchment makers, two scribes, and a book-binder, and there is evidence from other parts of the country - the West, for instance - to support this. One of the assurances given to the Bishop of Hereford by Thomas Packer of Walford in 1474 was that he 'would not retain quires or rolls containing heresies, or errors, written by himself [N.B.] or others'.¹¹³ The work of the scribes could be extremely hazardous, as witnessed by the case of one William Smyth, a parchment maker and Lollard preacher, whose copying activities were brought to light as a result of Bishop Courtenay's visitation to Leicester in 1392. Knighton's Chronicle records that:

Libros etiam solennes quos in materna lingua de evangelio, et de epistolis et aliis episcopis et doctoribus conscripserat, et ut fatebatur per annos octo studiose conscribere, laboraverat archiepiscopo coactus tradidit.¹¹⁴

Nevertheless, a flow of copies of a variety of works continued to result from the efforts of scribes both in the metropolis and in the regions. London in fact seems to have acted as an important distribution centre for Lollard literature. For instance, Nicholas Belward bought a Wycliffite New Testament in London for four marks and forty pence, and then took it back with him to Norfolk, and it

may well have been on one of Sir Hugh Pie's trips to London for the purpose of 'having often conference upon the Lollards' doctrines' that he bought the gospell translations which he gave to Richard Fletcher and to a servant girl [sic] of William White.¹¹⁵

Once distributed, there were two main ways in which the books were put to use. Episcopal registers record a variety of cases in many parts of the country concerning individuals whose houses were to be searched for heretical books or, the search proving successful, who were to be examined for possessing them. These books, which the individual could have used in his private devotions, seem mostly to have been Wycliffite translations of parts, or the whole of, the Bible. Occasionally, however, other books are named - heretical ones such as The Lanterne of Lizt,¹¹⁶ as well as others which, at first glance at least, should have been regarded as scrupulously orthodox, such as The Prick of Conscience.¹¹⁷ The seizure by the church authorities of books of apparent orthodoxy, whilst it shows the suspicion with which any vernacular book could be regarded, may well, as will presently be shown, be indicative of more subtle ploys used by the Lollards to avoid the attentions of the authorities.

The second way in which Lollards used their books was as the sources for readings at small gatherings in each others' houses. As with so much other evidence concerning Lollardy, the recorded cases may well be but a fraction of the activity actually taking place in the course of the fifteenth century. Thus, amongst the articles admitted by Richard Sawyer of Newbury was the reading of books, at

night and in secret, with men of Newbury in Berkshire. Similarly, a Midland Lollard, Thomas Flesher, held a gathering at which seven people were present - doubtless for the purpose of reading and worshipping from his books.¹¹⁹ If regular meetings were impossible and the permanent possession of books proved too hazardous,¹²⁰ it was still possible for people to avail themselves of the contents of the books by means of committing long passages to memory. One Lollard confessed that he had recited 'epistolam pauli in anglicis de caritate et evangelium in quo diabolus tentat deum',¹²¹ and a weaver, James Willis of Henley in the West Country, knew by heart much of the New Testament in English.¹²² Material which was written in verse would be of particular use to those who had to rely on memorising passages rather than permanently possessing books. When an owner of a book died, the book passed on to its next owner thus ensuring its continued preservation and usefulness. Illustration of this process is provided by a manuscript note at the end of a MS. of The Fore Caitiff, a collection of orthodox moralistic and homiletic tracts. The note states:

This book was made of the goods of John G malin, for a common profit, that the person that has this book committed to him of the person that hath power to commit it, have the use thereof for the time of his life, praying for the soul of the same John. And that he that hath this aforesaid use of commission, when he occupieth it not, leave he it for a time to some other person. Also that the person to whom it was committed for the term of life, under the foresaid conditions, deliver it to another the term of his life. And so he it delivered and committed from person to person, man or woman, as long as the book endureth.¹²³

and there is no doubt that a similar process attended Lollard books as well.

What emerges from an examination of such fifteenth century and early sixteenth century Lollard cases as have been studied by scholars is, firstly, the extent of the geographical area which they cover - the Midlands, the South-West and the Home counties, in particular; secondly the range of occupation of those who were accused of holding Lollard views and who would be likely, either by reading or listening, to have contact with Lollard books. The movement found its supporters amongst the gentry,¹²⁴ the clergy, as well as amongst a wide range of artisan professions - Barbers, Ploughwrights, Shipwrights, Bricklayers, Carpenters and like trades, as well as a variety of shopkeepers. It should not be imagined that the inevitable intellectual degeneration which set in after the movement lost its hold on Oxford, meant that, by the end of the fifteenth century, its adherents were, in the main, recalcitrant country 'bumpkins'.¹²⁵ The continuing association both with clergy, and with the increasingly important London merchant classes, as well as the degree of literacy exhibited by a number of artisan supporters suggests that the degeneration was by no means total.

We have noted that, amongst all these people, one way of counter-
ing the periodic searches of the authorities for heretical books was by learning lengthy portions of scripture. There grew up, however, a more subtle way of concealing heretical material by interpolating it into books of seemingly unchallengeable orthodoxy. The number of manuscripts of a variety of works which have been tampered with in this way bears witness to the value which the Lollards placed on

the method. Emendation by Lollards of older Lollard tracts showed that writers were constantly alive to the potential value of any relevant, contemporary interpolation. One tract, subsequent to Purvey's General Prologue to the Wycliffite translation, but dealing with the same topic of justifying vernacular scriptures by the citing of precedents, has had its original hostile references to Archbishop Arundel supplemented in a later manuscript by similarly uncomplimentary remarks about Bishop Fleming of Lincoln whose action of ordering the exhumation and burning of Wyclif's remains did not endear him to Lollards of the 1420's.¹²⁶ Others who were alive to the possibilities of interpolation were rather more ambitious and their work, which was probably carried out in the early post-Wycliffite days of the movement, is of particular interest. What they sought to do is exemplified in Richard Rolle's indignant lament at the fate of some manuscripts of his Psalter:

Copied has this Sauter ben, of yuel men of lollardry:
 And afturward hit has bene sene, ympyd in with eresy.
 They seyden then to leude foles, that it shuld be all enter,
 A blessyd boke of hur scoles, of Rychard Hampole the Sauter.
 Thus thei seyde, to make theim leue, on her scole thoro sotelte,
 To bryng hem in, so hem to greue, agayn the feyth in grete fole,
 And slaundird foule this holy man, with her wykkyd waryed wyles:

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and amongst other orthodox moralistic tracts to suffer in this way were The Ancrene Riwe,¹²⁸ The Pore Caitiff,¹²⁹ The Lay Folks Catechism,¹³⁰ The Prick of Conscience¹³¹ and various expositions of the Pater Noster and the Decalogue.¹³² A collection of sermons in manuscript was similarly treated.¹³³ The popularity of many of these tracts meant

that, dependent on how many manuscripts could be interpolated and how many were subsequently copied, the Lollards were in possession of a potentially pervasive means of influencing the literate community. It should be noted that at any one moment there would be in existence copies of these tracts made from interpolated manuscripts as well as from uncontaminated ones. It is scarcely surprising, therefore, that when the ecclesiastical authorities realised what was happening, they took steps to examine, on occasions, all printed books rather than simply concentrating on those which were manifestly heretical. The distinction between these two categories had, as a result of Lollard interpolations, become much less definite.

The extent and nature of individual interpolations varied considerably. Some were concerned with single points of orthodox doctrine which were unacceptable to Lollards. Into this category, may be put a number of manuscripts of The Pore Caitiff. This work which seems to date from c1400¹³⁴ consists of a series of expositions on the various articles in the Creed, Pater Noster and Decalogue, together with other tracts discussing Temptation, Chastity and the distinction between the Active and Contemplative life. 'There is nothing at all to shew that the author sympathised with Lollardy',¹³⁵ remarks Miss Deanesly, a conclusion in no way invalidated by the energetic and tendentious efforts of an annotator, in an edition of the work published by the Religious Tract Society, to convince his readers that not only is the work Lollard in attitude, but was written by Wyclif himself, albeit at a time when some of his views were still

'tainted with Popery'.¹³⁶ Another tradition associated with the work's authorship is that the title echoes the words of John Purvey in his Prologue to the Bible translation in which he speaks of the translation as having been compiled by 'a poor caitiff'.¹³⁷ If the identification of Purvey as the author of The Pore Caitiff is true, then the piece must be dated at some time after Purvey's recantation in 1401 for it contains nothing which would lead one to associate it with Purvey, the Lollard. In the exposition on the Creed, 20 manuscripts reflect the old tradition that each article was the work of one apostle - thus:

Aftir þe assencioun of ihesu crist. þe hooli goost tauzte
 þe apostlis: al truþe needful to soule / & bi þe teching
 of him. þei twelue settiden togidir twelue articlis:
 þe whiche alle þat wolen be saued. moten stidfastli bileeue.
 þe ffirst article of þe bileeue. seynt petir puttide in to
 þe crede: bi teching of þe hooli goost. seiynge in þis wise -
 I Bileeue in god fadir almyzti: maker of heuene & of erþe. ¹³⁸

A further 8 manuscripts omit the legend - two silently; six defiantly. Thus Trinity College, Cambridge MS.336 (f.3^v-4) reads:

Aftir þe ascenscioun of ihesu crist þe holi goost tauzte
 þe apostlis al truþe needful to soule: & bi þe techinge of
 him þei XII settiden to gidere XII articlis. þe whiche alle
 þat wolen be saued moten stidfastli bileeuen / But muse we
 not what apostil made whiche parte eijer article of þis
 holi crede / but bileeue we stidfastli þat þe holi goost
 tauzte it in hem alle / þe ffirst article in þis. Crede in
 deum patrem omnipotentem creatorum celi & terre ... ¹³⁹

Such a change could perhaps be seen as the work of an orthodox, rationalist and critically aware mind of the mid fifteenth century such as Bishop Pecock. It seems more likely, however, that the alteration was a manifestation of Lollard disapproval of those

traditions which had no scriptural basis and justification. In most of these Pere Caitiff manuscripts, Lollard interference is further suggested by the interpolation of additional passages of anti-clerical material.¹⁴⁰ By themselves many of these passages might not be conclusive proof of Lollardy - we have already noted the force of orthodox criticism of clerical abuses - but in conjunction with a specific doctrinal alteration, the adherence to the Lollard movement of the interpolator seems certain.

Mention might also be made, in passing, of another doctrinal alteration of a different nature. Amongst the books found by the Monks of St. Albans in the course of their search for Sir John Oldcastle were some in which the names of all saints had been erased¹⁴¹ - a feature consistent with Lollard attitudes towards the various cults of saints which played, many thought, too central a part in the observance of the medieval church. Veneration of saints degenerated all too easily into idolatry, it was alleged.

More extensive changes and interpolations may be found in The Recluse, an interpolated version of the Ancrene Riwe, in Rolle's Psalter, and above all, in The Lay Folks' Catechism. The Recluse has been described as:

a truly devotional product of the early Lollard movement which serves to bridge the gap between the reformers and the mystics of the fourteenth century, a gap which though it exists, is not so wide as might be thought by those whose only knowledge of Lollardy is derived through a study of the later period ...¹⁴²

and certainly the additions, though they show the interpolator to be anti-papal and hostile to the regular orders, are not characterised by the more abrasive tone of some later Lollard writing. The author's strictures against Sloth, Pride, Simony and Negligence amongst the clergy can be paralleled in orthodox writings - it is the act of interpolating such material into another work that marks the writer as a Lollard, as much as any heterodoxy explicit in the inserted material. Actually to take the trouble, and risk, of adding highly critical passages to books enjoying at least the tacit approval of the church authorities is tantamount to an admission that, as they stood, the officially sanctioned books were inadequate and misleading and in need of changes in content and emphasis. For an individual, or group, to make such a judgement must be regarded as a blow at the authority of the church, an authority which was at all times jealously guarded. We shall see how the question of authority was a pivotal one in the disputes between Lollards and the church - interpolations of this nature represent a refusal to accept the church's concept of its own authority just as much as more open acts of verbal defiance against official examiners such as Archbishop Arundel.

An interesting feature of the manuscripts cited by Hope Emily Allen as being Lollard interpolated versions of Rolle's Psalter is that three of them are large, elaborate and handsome volumes and as such:

bear testimony to the riches, and probably the social importance of the Lollards' friends at the time when these texts were copied. They also testify to the zeal and literary industry to be found in the movement.

Moreover, of all the manuscripts which she cites - both elaborate and ordinary copies - some date from early fifteenth century whilst others ^{date} from the later part of the century and are, thus, further testimony to the continuity of the Lollard literary movement throughout the century.

The interpolations in The Lay Folks' Catechism¹⁴⁴ involve a series of expositions of each article in the Pater Noster, the Ave, the Credo, the Decalogue, the seven works of mercy and the seven virtues - expositions which were either entirely absent from the original Archbishop Thoresby Catechism, or which were very brief. In the course of the interpolations, a whole series of attitudes are exhibited which are to be found in other vernacular Lollard writings. There is the stress on vernacular teaching and preaching which, if the prelates fail to provide it, should be undertaken by 'secler lordys' (1.235); vernacular preaching should be given a higher priority than hearing masses (11.630-3); there is a characteristic Lollard definition of the church, in which the unknowability of a man's salvation or damnation renders spurious the claims made for the priestly office (11.310f.); there is the stress on obedience to God's law rather than to man's (11.540-4); it is stated that withdrawing of tithes should not be considered as serious an offence as non-performance, or sinful performance by priests of their spiritual duties (11.688-91); priests are accused of turning a blind eye to the sins of their parishioners in return for an annual sum of money (11.767-73); there is criticism of the lordship of the secular clergy,

of mendicancy and of the regular orders (ll.840-58); over-reliance on pardons, masses and chantries, rather than on true living, is attacked (ll.885-7), as is the mistaken belief that those who die dressed in the habit of a particular religious order are assured of deliverance from hell (ll.1254-69). For all this material to have been interpolated into a simple vernacular catechism clearly marks the additions as the work of a Lollard sympathiser.

Thus far the part played by books in the diffusion of Lollard ideas in the community has been touched upon. Preaching was the other central means of communication at the disposal of the Lollards. It should be realised that for the Lollards the pulpit was not simply a convenience, an effective means of reaching the illiterate and of reinforcing the written works available. They regarded preaching not so much as a useful means of communication open to them, but as the clear and unalterable duty of all ordained priests, whether or not they had a cure of souls.¹⁴⁵ The material which was made available to priests was prepared with this view in mind - it was to assist in the performance of their divinely ordained function. Nevertheless, the power of the pulpit, particularly as used by itinerant preachers such as William Swinderby and the East Anglian William White,¹⁴⁶ represented a threat and a blow to the authority of the church. We have already noted how even before 1408 it was the normal practice for a preacher to apply to the local bishop for a licence to preach in his diocese. Without official permission, the preacher was, in the eyes of the church, acting illegally. The

legislation enacted by Archbishop Arundel in 1408 served to codify and make explicit the regulations with regard to preaching:

.... no manner of person, secular or regular, being authorized to preach by the laws now prescribed, or licensed by special privilege, shall take upon him the office of preaching the word of God, or by any means preach unto the clergy or laity, whether within the church or without, in English, except he first present himself, and be examined by the ordinary of the place, where he preacheth. 147

The legislation further stipulated that no local clergyman was to allow a visitor to preach in his parish without first examining that visitor's official credentials.¹⁴⁸ Furthermore the content of sermons was to be controlled. Official practice had long been to inveigh against the particular sins of the audience in front of whom the sermon was being delivered and against the sins of no other group. The dangers implicit in over-exposure of the sins of the clergy to the laity had been realised by the church authorities. Arundel was explicit on the point:

the preacher of God's word, coming in form aforesaid ... preaching to the clergy, he shall touch the vices, commonly used against them; and to the laity, he shall declare the vices commonly used amongst them; and not otherwise. (p.244)

Finally, Arundel stated that under no circumstances should any opinion be preached concerning:

the sacrament of the altar, matrimony, confession of sins, or any other sacrament of the church, or article of the faith, than what already is discussed by the holy mother church; nor shall bring any thing in doubt that is determined by the church ... (pp.244-5)

Thus, the controls imposed regulated who was to preach, where he was to preach and what he was to preach, and as such, were totally incompatible with the Lollard view of preaching as a duty imposed by God which cannot be compromised in any way by a set of man-made restrictions. It was obviously to counter the activities of people like Swinderby that Arundel had acted. Swinderby had moved from Lincoln to Hereford, and in that latter location, had preached without authorisation in a variety of churches and venues, and on a variety of unauthorised subjects, so that he was regarded by the church as one who 'by his open preachings and private teachings, doth pervert ... the whole ecclesiastical state,' ¹⁴⁹ There is no doubt that Swinderby's activities, to a Lollard, were exemplary and it is the clash over the efficacy, as understood by both sides, of one of the Lollards' main channels of communication whose use was part of their more fundamental doctrinal stance which must now lead to an examination both of some of the other Lollard doctrines which passed, by book or word of mouth, into the community, and also of some orthodox attitudes on these same issues.

One of the articles most frequently cited against Lollards was their refusal to accept the official teaching regarding the Eucharist, and certainly the extent of a suspect's heterodoxy can be judged by his attitude to the sacrament. We have noted that Wyclif's refusal to accept the notion of Transubstantiation derived from his ultra-realist metaphysic which denied that an accident could exist without

its subject or that an accident could remain whilst its subject, as a result of the priest's words of consecration, changed. Wyclif's teaching is reflected in the views of many later Lollards. One of the items in the Instrument of the Canons of Hereford against Walter Brute states:

As touching the matters objected against him by them that stood by, concerning the sacrament of the altar; he [Brute] said ... after the sacramental words there doth remain very bread, and the substance thereof after the consecration of the body of Christ; and that there do not remain accidents without substance or subject after the consecration of the body of Christ.¹⁵⁰

and this is much the same accusation as is put before William Swinderby,¹⁵¹ William Sautre¹⁵² (the first Lollard martyr), John Badby,¹⁵³ John Purvey¹⁵⁴ and many others. What the church required from heretics of this sort, was unconditional submission:

I ... submit myself principally to the evangely of Jesus Christ, and to the determination of holy kirk, and to the general councils of holy kirk. And to the sentence and determination of the four doctors of holy writ; that is Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome and Gregory. And I weekly submit me to your correction, as a subject ought to his bishop.¹⁵⁵

It was insufficient to claim, as did Swinderby, that:

mine answeere has ben alwaie conditionall, as the people openlie knowes: for ever I say, and yet say, and alway will; that if they cannen shew me by Gods law that I haue erret, I will gladlie ben amendet, and reuoke mine errours¹⁵⁶

because, for the Lollards, 'Gods law' so often meant the scriptures, and, by demanding that scripture should represent the ultimate and decisive authority in a dispute rather than 'the determination of the holy kirk', Swinderby and other Lollards were judged to have

flouted what was officially regarded as the church's incontestable right to insist upon complete doctrinal obedience from its communicants. It was no argument for a Lollard to claim ignorance of the finer scholastic implications of words like 'subject' and 'accident'. In the eyes of the church unquestioning acceptance of doctrine was of greater importance than understanding, and it is in this light that William Thorpe's statement to Archbishop Arundel should be regarded:

... as I understand, it is all one to grant or to believe that there dwelleth substance of bread, and to grant or to believe that this most worthy Sacrament of CHRIST'S own body is one Accident without Subject. But, Sir, for as mickle as your asking passeth mine understanding, I dare neither deny it nor grant it, for it is a School matter, about which I busied me never for to know it: and therefore I commit this term accidens sine subjecto, to those Clerks which delight them so in curious and subtle sophistry, because they determine oft so difficult and strange matters, and wade and wander so in them, from argument to argument, with pro and contra, till they wet not where they are! nor understand not themselves. 157

This is a remarkable rejection of the methods by which Thorpe's early teacher, Wyclif, first came to prominence and clearly marks the sort of intellectual level of much later Lollard discussion - characterised by a use of the basic headings and conclusions of much of Wyclif's teachings but without the underlying intellectual force and understanding. Such a denial was, for the church, as blatant a refusal to accept church authority as was the use of more detailed arguments in an attempt to refute the church's teaching.

Throughout the fifteenth century, the persistence of Lollard heresy cases involving the Eucharist seems to have led the church into occasional forms of counter-propaganda, including the use of the

plastic arts and the stage. The Croxton Play of the Sacrament may well have been specially adapted from its continental sources for the purpose of reinforcing popular orthodox belief in the efficacy of the Eucharistic sacrifice as performed by the parish priest.¹⁵⁸ The visual representation of the bleeding Host, both on the stage and in murals,¹⁵⁹ may well have proved an effective local answer to Lollard tracts and preachers.

It is small wonder that the church reacted so violently to attacks on its Eucharistic teachings, for these attacks, indirectly, were undermining the authority of the priesthood in the community. By denying that a priest, by his words of consecration, could effect the transubstantiation of the Eucharistic elements,¹⁶⁰ Lollards were striking at the heart of the orthodox belief which saw an individual's ultimate salvation as dependent, in part, on the ministrations of the priesthood. Lollard Eucharistic teaching denied what had previously been regarded as one of the priest's unique spiritual functions in society. Lollard teaching on auricular confession denied another. By laying stress on the importance of individual contrition rather than on auricular confession to the priest,¹⁶¹ the Lollards were once again placing responsibility for an individual's spiritual wellbeing on that individual rather than on the ministrations of some priestly intermediary. Indeed some Lollards sought to redefine the whole notion of priestly orders by denying that episcopal ordination necessarily marked a man as a true priest, and by affirming that ordination by God was the only test of true priesthood, and that such ordination was as

likely to happen to a layman as to a cleric.¹⁶² This form of priesthood of all believers doctrine clearly cast a shadow over the authority of holy orders as they were understood in the visible church, and marks another aspect of the challenge to visible ecclesiastical authority which characterised what was distinctively Lollard in so much preaching and writing. Far from being willing to submit to current authority, Lollards sought to redefine the nature of that authority.

With some recurrent features of Lollard doctrine, the distinctions between the orthodox and Lollard positions often seem to be ones of tone and emphasis rather than of irreconcilable basic differences. The question of images and pilgrimages is a case in point. Lollards believed that images tended to be worshipped and venerated in an idolatrous fashion rather than simply acting as visible books of instruction to the illiterate laity¹⁶³ - books which should not be an end in themselves but which should lead an individual to contemplate and worship God, whose work could be seen in the life commemorated in the image. The abuse of images was, for Lollards, representative of the danger which threatened many aspects of ecclesiastical practice - an obsession with the superficial and a neglect of the spiritual significances which underlay the superficial. However, this was a danger also recognised by orthodox apologists, both in Britain - as with the author of that formidable encyclopaedia of orthodoxy, Dives and Pauper,¹⁶⁴ which was compiled at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and on the continent.¹⁶⁵ The difference between

the two sides was rather one of emphasis. Dives and Pauper, for instance, gives full weight to the virtues of images and indeed of all decoration and adornment in churches, if their significance is properly appreciated. Lollard writings, however, tended to be obsessed only with the abuses associated with images. Though images could be of value, the Lollard emphasis was on the fact that they almost never were. Thus the Lollards ultimately allowed their own observations to outweigh official teaching, and, by so doing, challenged the authority of that teaching in this matter as in the more obvious disagreement over the Eucharist.

It is this last point which is important to remember when considering other aspects of Lollard teaching¹⁶⁶ - their concern with the abuses relating to tithes, temporal possessions of the clergy, swearing, demands for vernacular scripture, clerical celibacy, mendicancy, the regular orders, can often be paralleled in apparently orthodox writings. What cannot be found in orthodox writings is the persistent challenge to the authority of the church which characterises Lollard writings, and the ultimate refusal to submit to the judgement of the church in matters of faith and observance. It is precisely this challenge and this refusal which mark the Plowf as a product of Lollard literary activity.

The Plowman's Tale and the Challenge to Authority.

Despite the superficially rambling nature of its argument, the Plowf has a central focus which sustains it throughout. That focus undoubtedly rests on an examination of the true nature of authority within a Christian society. What are the ultimate standards of judgement and reference by which the life and worship of an individual must be guided? This is the most important question which the poem sets out to answer and it is in this answer that the reader is offered the clearest glimpse of the way in which the poets' traditional material of complaint against clerical abuses is bounded by attitudes which unmistakably bear the mark of Lollard influence. In its discussion of the real basis of authority, the poem illustrates precisely the sort of conflicts and tensions which, as we have already noted, stand at the root of so much of the controversy between the Lollards and the orthodox church.

One of the fundamental beliefs of the orthodox at the end of the fourteenth century was that there existed, within the visible church, an institution whose authority was supreme in the interpretation and propagation of scriptural and patristic teaching, and whose responsibility it was to ensure that the souls of the faithful were not endangered by contamination with views which deviated from explicit and authorised church teaching. The exact nature of this institution - the papacy - was, it is true, the

source of some controversy at the time as a result of the increasing prominence of views which came to be harnessed in the Conciliar movement, whose aim it was to vest more of the authority of the papacy within the councils of the church, and less in the figure of the pope himself who had, in the past been regarded as an absolute figure of authority. However, in whatever form it assumed, there was general agreement amongst the orthodox in the notion of the papacy as the supreme and unquestionable authority in the visible church.

The Griffon's accusation against the Pellican at the end of the Flowf is one which implies that the Pellican has rejected this belief. He is accused of having stated that 'the pope is nat worth a pease' (l.1163), and also, by so saying, of having stirred up the common people to 'ayen hym [the pope] gruche' (l.1164). The Pellican denies that his criticism represents an absolute denial of the concept of the papacy as an institution - 'I dispysed nat the pope' (l.1178) - but that it does represent a total denial of the riches, pride and wickedness of successive incumbents of the holy see. This part of the denial merely takes up points which the Pellican had illustrated and inveighed against much earlier in the poem. He had accused the pope of being culpably negligent in the appointment of bishops, many of whom were inefficient and ignorant, as a result of the importuning of patrons (l.390f). The Pellican also claimed that all officers of the church, pope included, were 'false' (l.831) who were guilty of the sale of sacraments. The Pellican proceeds, however, to take his denial a stage further:

If pope or cardynall lyve good lyve
As Christ commaunded in his gospell,
Ayenst that woll I nat stryve; (11.1225-7)

These lines declare that the Pellican's obedience to the papacy is a conditional one, dependent on conditions which, as he straightaway makes clear, are unlikely in his opinion to be fulfilled - 'But me thynketh they lyve nat well' (1.1228). The use of an independent standard of judgement - the scriptures - in the critical assessment of an institution such as the papacy must be seen as a calculated refusal, on the part of the Pellican, to submit unreservedly to papal authority. The Pellican knows that 'They say the pope may not erre' (1.971), with 'they' apparently having the force of 'orthodox apologists' and yet he has already declared that the pope 'erreth' in the case of the choice of bishops, and he will show, before the end of the poem, that, judged by the ultimate authority of the scriptures, the pope may frequently err and, in so doing, surrenders any lingering claim to obedience and authority on the part of the truly faithful. This is certainly not the voice of an early fifteenth century conciliarist who is attempting merely to limit the absolute nature of the pope's authority. The Pellican would have judged any decisions made by the church councils by the same scriptural criteria and would, if necessary, have rejected them also.

There can, moreover, be no mistaking the Lollard tone of the Pellican's line - 'The pope and he were Peters heyre' (1.389), with 'and' clearly meaning 'even if', or perhaps 'even supposing', where the speaker treats as hypothetical what had been, since the days of

Pope Leo I, explicit church teaching - namely, that the pope was Peter's direct successor. As Walter Ullmann has remarked, 'the pope was St. Peter who continued to function in the pope, however unworthy'.¹⁶⁷ In the eyes of the church it was the job of no-one, least of all an unknown clerk in minor orders as the poet(s) of the FlowT could well have been, to question, or to cite as conditional, what was official teaching:

The pope ... was removed from all judgement by his subjects because they themselves had nothing to do with his function and had not conferred any office upon him.¹⁶⁸

The Pellican's same willingness to question, or even to contradict, official teaching reflects itself again in the lines:

Peter erred, so dyde nat Iohn;
 Why is he cleped the principall?
 Christ cleped hym Peter but hymselfe the stone; (ll.441-3)

where the orthodox exposition of Mathew xvi.18 is set, by the Pellican, against I Corinthians x.4 in such a way as to cast doubt upon the orthodox view of the Mathew text.

The importance and authority which the Pellican ascribes to the scriptures is constantly apparent. Lines such as 'To counsaile Christ ever gan he call' (l.90), 'Christes gospels biddeth also' (l.703) and 'As Christ commaunded in his gospels' (l.1226), indicate the yardstick by which all conduct is to be judged, and it is the importance of the scriptures which makes the activities of those priests who cannot read the gospels (l.415), or who 'glosed the gospels false' (l.312) and 'untruelly of the gospels talke' (l.491), or worst

of all, who 'hyde' the 'holy gospels' (l.935), all the more reprehensible in his eyes. It is Christ - his works and words as set out in the scriptures - whose rightful authority has been ignored by the organs of the visible church. A numerical count of references shows conclusively where the Pellican believes authority truly to exist. There are 64 references to 'Christ' and 'Christes' in the poem and only 9 references to 'church' in the sense of 'holy church' as opposed to actual buildings in a particular location. Moreover, of those 9 references, 7 are put in the mouth of the Griffon in his capacity as apologist for the official position. For the Pellican there is no doubt as to the identity of the head of the true church:

Christ is our heed that sytteth on hye;
 Heddes ne ought we have no mo; (ll. 1111-2)

and this represents a total rebuff to the concept of church headship understood by the Griffon. For him it is the pope who is spoken of as head of the church (ll.201, 205, 230, 1077, 1089, 1111) and there is little emphasis on anything other than temporal and visible headship. Indeed the Pellican remarks:

They ne clepen Christ but Sanctus Deus, ^{ll.}
 And clepen her heed [the pope] Sanctissimus; (229-30)

It is precisely this imbalance which the Pellican seeks to pillory. It is his wish to restore Christ, through the medium of the scriptures, to a position of dominance in all ecclesiastical conduct and observance.

Moreover, the symbolic significance of the Pellican when revealed at the end of the poem underlines what would have come as no surprise to a medieval reader or audience familiar with the use of the Pellican figure in medieval art:

For Christ hymselfe is lykened to me,
That for his people dyed on rode;
As fare I right so fareth he,
He fedeth his byrdes with his blode; (ll.1293-6)

The problem of permanent reform within a church thus afflicted is of the greatest concern to the poet, and two basic forms of correction are contemplated. Firstly, reform is shown to be in the hands of the ultimate authority - God. It is his law which is despised (l.363), or distorted and contradicted (l.488), or defamed (l.811); his commandments are 'glosed' (l.1155), and broken (l.1315), and his words contorted and concealed (l.1187). God himself is beguiled (l.980), betrayed (l.848), not feared (ll.307, 433), forgotten (l.711), offended (l.602), not spoken about (l.487), whilst his goods are falsely devoured (ll.924, 967). Nor is the visible church satisfied with treating God in so inappropriate^a way themselves. They make strenuous efforts to ensure that others behave similarly. For instance, permission - 'a token of Anti-christ' (l.541) - has to be sought before^a licence to preach God's otherwise neglected word is granted, and this in spite of the Pellican's view that:

Eche christen preest to prechyn owe;
From God above they ben sende,
Goddess worde to all folke for to showe,
Synfull man for to amende. (ll.545-8)

The Pellican, however, is confident that the God whose authority is so constantly affronted in all these ways will be able to 'amend' the situation as and when he desires. The refrain in Part Two of the poem suggests both the poet's anxiety for reform to be effected - 'God for his pytie (l.500), grace (l.516), mercy (l.532) it amende' - and also his faith that such reform will indeed come 'whan God woll' (ll.508,652). Towards the end of the section, there are clear hints of a greater sense of urgency in the poet, as if he wishes to advocate that more immediate and definite action be undertaken with God's help (l.692), by the secular authorities:

For nowe these folke be wonder stoute; ll.
The king and lordes nowe this amende. (699-700)

with the urgency suggested both by the repetition of 'nowe', and by the structural emphasis given to the lines by their position at the very end of the section.

This shift in narrative emphasis from a quietist belief in reform to be enacted in God's own time to a more energetic and impatient desire to act immediately through human agencies is illustrated elsewhere in the closing stanzas of the second section. The king's authority which is reflected in a law that is never angrily administered (l.645), or without proper assent (ll.653-4), is contrasted with the authority of the pope who has usurped the position of the Holy Roman Emperor (ll.126, 693-4). The continuing encroachments of this false authority lead the poet to warn that 'this realme is in doute' (l.697). Action should already have been taken:

Wonder is that the parlyament,
 And all the lordes of this londe,
 Herto take so lytell entent,
 To helpe the people out of her [the church's] honde. (11.677-80)

lines which anticipate the Pellican's final exhortation (1.700) to the king and lords.

The poet is not hostile to secular lordship and authority - 'kings and lordes shulde lordshyp hane' (1.1119). However, the association of any form of lordship with the spirituality is to him anathema. The Pellican notes that 'As lordes they [the clergy] ben brode ykende' (1.530) and that they insist on being treated as superior lords by those whose claim to lordship is genuine and not, like their's, manifestly contrary to scriptural precept (1.1122). Thus 'Lordes must to hem loute' (11.181, 303), and must call them 'lords' (1.154), and the same treatment must be accorded the regular orders (1.997). True secular lords are warned to beware and defend themselves against these clergy (1.698), for the clergy have come to regard themselves as 'kynges peeres' (1.125) or even 'gretter than the kyng' (1.828), with their 'seales by yere better ... /Than is the kynges in extende' (11.184) and indeed they have come to have 'more myght in Englande here/Than hath the kyng and all his lawe' (11.637-8). They have forsaken 'Christ her kyng' (1.429) and behave instead like earthly kings (1.184), having usurped their power. All rightful law and authority has been ignored by the clergy, whether it be 'Goddess lawe' (11.363, 1239), Mosaic Law (1.701), or the king's law (11.638, 645). They have substituted their own laws (11.257, 357, 946), as a standard

by which heresy is judged (ll.632, 641, 836, 1145). True authority had been deposed.

So it is that it was not in the oft-repeated charges of ignorance, simony, incontinence and extortion levelled against the various groups within the church, that the significance of the poem lay. What must have rendered the poem basically heretical in the eyes of the fifteenth century church was the undertow, persistent throughout, which challenged and devalued the authority of the church as it was officially conceived and understood. So jealously guarded was this authority that, as we shall see, even those who sought to write in its support or defence had to tread warily. The greatest safety lay in an acceptance of ecclesiastical authority so unquestioning that it recognised the need only to assert that authority, and did not recognise the need to justify it. The way to safety certainly did not lie on the road taken by the FlowT poet, who recognised the impossibility of defending the authority of the church as it was understood, and who made the rejection of such an erroneously based authority the centre of his poem.

The Orthodox Reaction.

The reaction of the early fifteenth century orthodox to those Lollards who wilfully defied the authority of the church is interestingly set out in a poem attributed to Thomas Hoccleve in which the poet seeks either to cajole or to persuade the erring Sir John Oldcastle to

return to the community of the obedient faithful.¹⁶⁹ In some ways the poem may be regarded as a literary parallel to the FlowT for though the first half of it addresses Oldcastle directly, there can be no doubt that the poem as a whole was intended to influence a much wider audience, and the content and argument of the poem suggests that the wider audience aimed at was very much the same as that addressed in the FlowT. The intentions of the two poets are, of course, opposed. The FlowT poet wishes to encourage and sustain persecuted Lollards in the maintenance of their faith in the face of concerted official efforts to deflect them from all adherence to Lollard attitudes. Representative of the persuasive, as opposed to coercive, aspect of these efforts is Hoccleve's poem, which opens by defining the motive force which impels the poet to attempt the correction of those who have erred:

..... charitee,
 Comandith vs, if our brothir be falle
 In to errour, to haue of him pitee,
 And seeke weyes in our wittes alle
 How we may him ageyn to vertu call; (v.1)

These lines recall the justification offered by the Pellican for his own desire to correct the clergy - he also claimed to speak 'in charite' (l.1180).

The central statement of Hoccleve's position occurs soon after the start of the poem:

Lete holy chirche medle of the doctryne
 of Crystes lawes, and of his byleeue,
 And lete all othir folke therto enclyne,
 And of our feith noon argumentes meeue. (v.18)

Such a view can be paralleled elsewhere in the orthodox apologetic of the period: several of the items in a collection of vernacular sermons edited by Woodburn O. Ross constitute 'an elaborate defence of the priesthood',¹⁷⁰ and include such statements as:

me þenkeþ þou þat arte a lewde man, þou shudest not fardere
enternett þe þan holychurche techeþ þe.

(p.127, ll.12-14)

and again:

þou þat arte a lewd man, it suffice to þe to beleue as
holychurche techeþ þe.

(p.127, ll.35-6)

culminating in the unequivocal demand that:

we must beleue þat þoo þinges þat ben in þe mater
of fey \neq the determyned by Cristes church ben trewe,
and suche determynacions and ordinaunce, to obeys þem
[we ought] ...

(p.223, ll.31-4)

What appals Hoccleve is that all sorts of ill-qualified people 'wole argumentes make in holy writ' (v.19) - women with 'thynne' intellects dispute theological matters instead of ceasing to cackle, and busying themselves with the spinning (v.19). Hoccleve disapproves of the faith being discussed 'openly' (v.24) in this fashion and cannot accept the current practice of ordained ministers of the holy church being subject to the judgement and criticism of lay folk. In this context he commends to his readers the behaviour of Emperor Constantine:

Thow took nat on thee hir [the priests'] correction,
 Ne vp on hem thow yaf no iugement.
 Swich was to god thy good affection,
 Thow seidest they been goddes to vs sent,
 And γ^t it is nothing conuenient,
 That a man sholde goddes iuge and deeme. (v.29)

There was no justification, in Hoccleve's eyes, for lay correction of the church. He sets out clearly his support for the principle that all temporal power derives from the pope:

Alle earthely princes and othir men
 Bysshops to obeie commandid he,
 Yee han no ground to holde ther ayen;
 Spirituel thynges passe in dignitee
 Alle the thynges temporel γ^t be,
 As moche as dooth the soule the body. (v.38)

and develops the theme with reference to the image of the sun as the pope's authority from which is derived the moon light - the king's power (v.39f).

The conditional nature of so much of the Lollard acceptance of all ecclesiastical authority is challenged by Hoccleve:

Yee seyn also ther sholde be no pope
 But he the beste preest were vp on lyue;
 O ! wher to graspen yee so fer and grope
 Aftir swich thyng, yee mowe it neuere dryue,
 To the knowleche nothyng there of stryue,
 Medle nat ther with, let al swich thyng passe,
 For if γ^t yee do shul yee neuere thryue ... (v.44)

No man be Juge of γ^t but he be wood,
 To god longith γ^t knowleche and no mo. (v.45)

The Lollards are claiming the right to judge the suitability of pope and priesthood on the basis of knowledge which no-one except God possesses, says Hoccleve. Such presumption is, the poem alleges, a

characteristic of all Lollard teaching - whether it concerns the authority of the church directly, or on subsidiary issues such as the efficacy of saint-worship (v.51), the veneration of images (v.52) and the possessions of the church (v.54f.). All these criticisms are motivated by 'presumpcion of wit, and ydilnesse/And couetyse of good ...' (v.57), an allegation which parallels that made against the Pellican by the Griffon in the FlowT. Hoccleve would have had no doubt that the willingness of the Pellican to accept death (l.1251) in anticipation of a greater reward in heaven (l.1241) is misguided. He states that:

Thogh ^t an heretyk for Crystes name
 Shede his blood, and his lyf for Cryst forgo,
 Shal nat him saue; ... (v.6)

The overall tone of Hoccleve's poem is suggestive of a piece written as much in sorrow as in anger. Though its date, 1415, means that, in the eyes of many, Oldcastle's name, and with it Lollard heresy, had already become associated with treason and sedition, the poem nevertheless makes it clear that Oldcastle himself had been a 'manly knyght' who had:

... shoon ful cleer in famous worthynesse,
 Standynge in the fauour of euery wight, (v.2)

but who had been perverted and led astray in his faith by 'folk desapnable' (v.35). It is the poet's constantly expressed wish that Oldcastle will repent and resume the former glories of his military career. Others, less charitable and optimistic, must have regarded

the execution of Oldcastle as a more immediate desideratum.

Surprisingly little stress is placed, by Hoccleve, on Oldcastle's part in the attempted insurrection in 1414, and this omission becomes more noteworthy when it is set against the content of another poem which attacks Oldcastle in a rather more uncompromising way, both for his heresy and also for his treason.

Defend us from all Lollardy¹⁷¹ clearly represents a differently emphasised orthodox view from that expressed by Hoccleve. In this piece, Oldcastle's dereliction of his knightly duties is more forcefully stressed:

Hit is vnkyndly for a kniȝt,
Ȝat shuld a kynges castel kepe,
To bable ȝe bibel day and niȝt (11.25-7)

He has forsaken 'sperre and bowe' (1.69) in the service of the king, and has turned instead to both doctrinal error and finally:

To ... sodeyn surreccion
Agaynst oure liege lord kyng, (11.138-9)

and it is this offence which dominates the reader at the end of the poem:

For holy writ berith witnes,
He Ȝat fals is to his kyng,
Ȝat shamful deth and hard distres
shal be his dome at his endyng.
Ȝan double deth for suyche lollynge
is heuy, when we shul hennes hye. (11.145-50)

lines which, as well as climaxing the condemnation of the new seditious activities for which Lollards in general and Oldcastle in particular

stood convicted, also aim to show how 'holy writ' which for so long had been used by the Lollards as a justification for their attitudes and actions, could now be used against them by an apologist of orthodoxy.

It was not until later in the fifteenth century that a major vernacular refutation of Lollardy was undertaken. It may be found, together with what was, to the author at least, a complete defence and vindication of the orthodox position, in the extensive writings of Bishop Pecock of Chichester. The fact that Pecock's books¹⁷², like those of Wyclif, should have ended up providing fuel for a ceremonial book-burning at Oxford is a supreme irony, and illustrates clearly the point at which official church authority believed argument should stop and assertion should begin. It is perhaps a little unfair of E.F. Jacob¹⁷³ to suggest that Pecock's use of argument rather than straight assertion and demands for obedience was wholly original. Devotional works such as Dives and Pauper succeeded in the course of asserting the official teaching of the church, in anticipating and attempting to answer a number of the possible objections which could have been raised against their attitude towards, for example, images and pilgrimages. Nevertheless it is true that Pecock faced up to the intellectual challenge of Lollardy more directly and explicitly than was normally the case in the fifteenth century.

In his Repressor of over much Blaming of the Clergy, Pecock set out to demonstrate what he regarded as the intellectual poverty of

the Lollard position as it was understood by him in 1450. He did not share the illusions of those later historians who believed that Lollardy was moribund by this time. He speaks in the Repressor of:

simple lay peple, yuel lad forth bifore and
wors confermed bi a wickid scole of heretikis,
which is not ζ it al quenchild (I,48)

and, referring to the past failure to employ a sufficient degree of serious argument against the Lollard point of view, he states:

as sikir as the sunne schineth in somerys dai,
the vnconsideracion of this, whereof y have ζ ouen
now warnyng, hath be a greet cause of the wickidli
enfectid scole of heresie among the lay peple in
Ynglond, which is not ζ it conquerid. (I,89)

The time has come, he feels, for the king to concentrate on the total repudiation and removal of heresy rather than on conquests in France (I,90), and for the church to offer energetic intellectual support instead of relying too much on the weight of an authority which many Lollards manifestly rejected.

Pecock goes on to list eleven points characteristic of Lollard thinking in this period - complaints about images, pilgrimages, clerical possession of property and goods, the hierarchical structure of the church, the framing of ecclesiastical laws and ordinances by papal and episcopal authority, attacks on the Religious orders and on the invocation of saints, disapproval of excessive ornamentation within churches, and of the superstitions too commonly associated with the sacraments, and criticism of the abuse of oaths and of the

ecclesiastical approval given to capital punishment. If this represents what was officially regarded as Lollardy in the mid fifteenth century, there is little doubt concerning the heretical nature of the FlowT, which qualifies under virtually every heading listed! The Repressor deals in considerable detail with five of the complaints each of which is set out fully prior to its refutation. For instance, Pecock (I,191-208) cites fifteen separate articles made by the Lollards against images and proceeds, then, to answer each one in turn by reference to arguments from history, patristic writings and scripture.

Pecock was conscious, however, that some aspects of everyday secular and religious behaviour could not be 'grounded' in the scriptures (I,117-24), but had to be explained in terms of the human reason alone. Pecock does not shrink from this challenge. The most pervasive theme of his attack on the Lollards is his refusal to accept what he understands to be their acceptance of scripture as the sole, supreme and unquestionable authority and standard by which all behaviour must be judged. It is likely that Pecock was correct in his understanding of later Lollard attitudes to the scriptures. Whatever doubts or qualifications have to be prefixed to a discussion of Wyclif's view of the Bible, it seems very possible that an increasing literalism and fundamentalism must have characterised the thinking of later Lollard adherents. Such attitudes were unacceptable to Pecock. His belief was that scripture's task

involved the making known of truths of faith which were beyond the reach of human reason (I,10). For the rest, reason was to be regarded as an ultimate standard of reference. To Pecock, successive Lollard incantations that much contemporary ecclesiastical life and observance was unscriptural, did not represent meaningful criticisms of those practices. Pecock had erected a new authority, a new standard of judgement by which, for instance, clerical non-residence and ownership of possessions could be justified. It was in his consistent use of reason combined (whenever possible) with scriptural, historical and patristic precept and example, which characterised Pecock's refutation of the Lollard position.

The hostility of the church to Pecock can be traced to the fact that, by choosing both to refute the Lollards in the vernacular, and to refute them by argument rather than by bland assertion, he must have been seen as a man who had lost faith in the weight of church authority on its own - a man who sought to justify by reason practices which the church did not feel the need to justify at all - a man who believed that assertion backed up by the authority of the church was no longer a sufficient response to the challenge of heresy. That Pecock's writings were motivated by a detestation of Lollardy which was every bit as keen as that felt by the church authorities was, in the eyes of officialdom, no defence of Pecock. His writings, in their own way, were regarded as being every bit as subversive of the church's jealously guarded authority as the heresy which had caused them to be written. The medieval church sought to protect itself

from its supporters as well as from its opponents.

Contemporary with Pecoock was the author of Friar Daw's Reply¹⁷⁴, an alliterative poem which aims to refute the charges which had previously been made by the Lollard author of the prose tract Jack Upland¹⁷⁵ at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Though the prose piece begins as if it intends to be a comprehensive indictment of all orders within the church, it settles into a concerted attack on the mendicant orders and may be regarded in some ways as a compendium of many of the charges which had been made against the friars throughout the middle ages. The various accusations made in the Lollard Pierce the Ploughman's Crede are also repeated - unlawful begging, simony, avarice, pride, jealousy, ignorance - and yet they are set out in a markedly less refined literary form than those in the Crede. Instead the tract consists of an endless series of starkly tendentious questions which were perhaps more likely to provoke a response than a series of complaints clothed in a more artistic and sophisticated literary form. The absence of any elaborate fictional structure within the piece is suggestive of the author's view that the subject required the most direct and forceful invective, which could not be compromised in the interests of literary considerations.

This uncompromising attitude is to be found in the tone of the piece also, as compared with the Crede. The Crede poet laments that Friars:

... don nouzt after Domynick but drecche) þe puple,
 Ne folwen nouzt Fraunces but falslyche lybben;
 And Austynes rewle þei rekne) but a fable, (11.464-6)

with the implication that, at their inception, the orders as understood by St. Dominic, St. Francis and St. Augustine had something to commend them, but that a degeneration of standards within the orders had led to a refusal to adhere both to Christ's example and also the example of their founders. The FlowT poet is similarly willing to concede that the monastic standards set out by St. Benet may be commendable but that these are ignored by monks today:

Saynt Benet that her order brought,
 Ne made hem never on suche manere; (11.993-4)

In both the FlowT and the Crede the writers had compromised the logical conclusion to which their beliefs should have led them. If 'Goddess lawe' and scriptural precept were to be regarded as the ultimate authorities, how, logically, could Lollards have any respect for man-made rules in a religious order? Their position should have represented a clear attitude which said that if the rules of a religious order contradicted God's teaching, then those rules were iniquitous; if they did not contradict his teaching, they must, by definition, have agreed with it, in which case they were unnecessary, and redundant. In the Crede and the FlowT, the authors draw back from this extreme position. They insist instead that even by the standards which the monks have had set for them by their founders, their conduct is sadly inadequate. There is no suggestion that their founders were wrong in establishing the orders.

No such concession, however, is to be found in Jack Upland. The only remedy for the friars is that they 'schulen be distried' (1.84).

The opening questions in the piece show that the author has fully accepted the logical implications of Lollard doctrine from which earlier writers had drawn back:

Frere, is þer ony ordre more perfizte þan Crist hym silf made?

Frere, if Cristis rule is moost perfizt, whi rulist you þee not þeraftir?

Whi schal a frere be more punyschid if he breke þe rulis þat his patroun made, þan if he breke þe heestis þat God hym silf made?

(11.107-113)

Here the position is clear and uncompromising - if the religious orders follow Christ's rule, they are redundant as orders; if they do not, they are worthy of abolition.

It was this direct and forceful attack on the very existence of the mendicant orders, as well as on their particular activities, which Friar Daw set out to refute about 1450. No matter how many of Upland's criticisms can be paralleled in pre-Wycliffite complaint and satire, Daw has no doubt that Upland is a Lollard - 'moost verrelli was Wiclif þour maistir' (1.150). Like Pecock, Daw felt that it was both important and possible to destroy by argument the charges which Upland had made - 'Frere Dawe is scharpe ynowe for al sich enditinge' (1.928). Daw shows confidence in the power of his arguments and ends his poem by ordering Jack 'nomore of freris ... to preche' (1.930), only after he states that if there remain any who believe that he has failed adequately to explain any point of criticism cited, let those people 'senden azen, it shal be amendid' (1.926). He does not wish

to order Jack to silence until he is sure that he has, through argument, convinced every doubter. In that way he clearly believes that the ensuing silence will be a more permanent one - based on arguments refuted and not on doubts silenced by oppression and coercion.

The intellectual level on which Daw's reply is written cannot and did not seek to match that level to be found in the writings of Pecoek. The poet believes that it is unnecessary to take a scholarly sledgehammer to crack what he regards as an essentially unintellectual nut!

But Iak þouȝ þi questions semen to þee wyse,
 ȝit listly a lewid man maye leyen hem a water;
 For summe ben lewid, summe ben shrewid, summe falsly supposid
 And þeffore shal no maistir ne no man of scole
 Be vexid wiþ þy maters but a lewid frere
 Þat men callen Frere Daw Topias, as lewid as a leke.
 (11.40-45)

The poet believes, however, that the arguments of Jack Upland, whether 'lewid' or not, could and should be answered fully by someone rather than ignored. Moreover, despite the claim that Daw is as 'lewid as a leke', he answers in a well argued piece which displays a range of learning not incompatible with a rudimentary scholastic training and certainly in excess of that shown by Jack Upland in the earlier piece.

What makes Jack Upland and Friar Daw's Reply particularly notable is the fact that they are almost the only instances in all the vernacular polemical writing associated with the Lollard controversy in which an individual attack by one side provokes a specially written retort by the other side. The debate does not end with Daw's Reply however, for in the unique MS. Digby 41¹⁷⁶, which contains the Reply,

may be found a tract which sets out to refute all Daw's answers and to reassert the views of Jack Upland as expressed in the original piece. Upland's Rejoinder, which may be found in the upper and lower margins of leaves in the Digby MS., seems to have been specially written for inclusion in this particular MS. Indeed, as P.L. Heyworth has persuasively argued, the version of the Rejoinder found in the Digby MS. is probably a holograph¹⁷⁷. Though the author of the Rejoinder assumes the identity of Jack Upland, there can be no question of his being the same author as the one responsible for Jack Upland. Quite apart from the gap in time between the composition of the two pieces - at least 30 years as understood by Heyworth¹⁷⁸ - the Rejoinder reveals both the author's Latinity and range of learning which is nowhere paralleled in Jack Upland. The Rejoinder, too, is written in an alliterative line which displays a control and vigour contrasting with the rather formless prose of Upland.

The Rejoinder offers some interesting evidence concerning the fifteenth century reputation of Wyclif and his influence on later Lollards. There may, of course, have been many Lollards whose mechanical repetition of simplified and degenerate Wycliffite beliefs suggests a nearly total severance of the movement's later adherents from the source of original inspiration. The Rejoinder poet on the whole does not seem to be one of these. He is indignant at Daw's

attack on Wyclif:

Me merueliþ, Daw, þou darst þus lie on suche a gret clerke,
 And in hys tyme knowen wel a vertuouse man,
 Of riche and pore þat hym þo knewe.

(11.85-7)

and shows that on most matters he is fully capable of sustaining an argument in a way hardly compatible with McFarlane's 'bumpkins' notion¹⁷⁹.

There is one topic, however, which does occasion a degree of confusion in the two Lollard apologists, and that is the doctrine of the Eucharist. If one is seeking signs of the sort of area in which intellectual degeneration and misunderstanding might manifest itself, the question of accident and substance in the Eucharistic sacraments, as treated in Jack Upland, provides material for discussion. In the prose tract, Upland utterly confuses the two conflicting positions held, respectively, by the Lollards and the orthodox. Consequently he ascribes to the friars, the position which had been adopted by Wyclif and many of his later adherents:

þe seien þat it is an accident wiþ outen subiect,
 and not Goddis bodi.

(11.392-3)

a confusion which leads to the neat reply from Daw to the effect that 'þou drawist a þorn out of þin hele and puttist it in oure' (1.841).
 Daw's reaffirmation of the orthodox position:

Iak, we seie wiþ Holy Chirche þat þer is Cristis bodi
 and not material breed with Wiclyf þour maistir,

(11.844-5)

is, in turn, taken up by Upland in his Rejoinder, in lines of which, Heyworth states that he can make nothing.¹⁸⁰ Some 'confusion of thought',¹⁸¹ or, at least, some over-compression of phrase there certainly seems to be. Upland's attempts to draw a distinction between Daw's Eucharistic position - 'þou saist ... þat þere is Cristis body' (1.380) - and his own view - 'Bot I afferme fai)fully þat þat is Cristis body' (1.381) - are only made fully meaningful by a subsequent Lollard interpolator who explains more clearly the nature of the distinction:

for we sey alle þe sacrid oste þat is sene with eye
 is verey cristes body but þy sette sey not soo
 but ze sey þer is cristes body but ze tel not where
 but crist sey) þis is my body and not þer is my body¹⁸²

It is likely that the interpolator was moved to action at this particular point by Upland's failure to make clear his position on the Eucharist.

Upland's Rejoinder is the latest of the surviving works which could be said to comprise the fifteenth century vernacular debate between, on the one hand, the remaining adherents of the Lollard movement, and, on the other hand, those individuals (both lay and clerical) who wished to reason Lollardy out of existence. The church as a whole, as we have seen from the hostility shown to the writings of Bishop Pecock, had no such wish. Its unyielding insistence upon an individual's unconditional submission to its authority in matters doctrine ensured that any book (or writer of books) questioning authority was likely to be consigned to the flames. How many

vernacular Lollard works perished in this way cannot be known, but it is ironic that a piece which made the denial of ecclesiastical authority its central emphasis, and which was one of the few vernacular Lollard works which, by its form and level of argument, could have hoped to achieve a rather wider popular audience than that enjoyed by the often involved and turgid Wycliffite prose tracts, should have escaped the censor's flames, and survived to influence generations of readers before, during and after the Reformation in England. This piece was the Flowt.

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Chapter Four - Notes.

1. See D. Knowles, 'Cistercians and Cluniacs: The Controversy between St. Bernard and Peter the Venerable', Friends of Dr. Williams' Library - Ninth Lecture (Oxford, 1955).
2. See F.J.E. Raby, A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages, 2 Vols. (1934 - Second Edition, 1957), II, 94-100. Wirecker's best known work is the Speculum Stultorum, ed. J.H. Mozley and R.R. Raymo, University of California English Studies, 18 (1960).
3. The Monastic Order in England (Cambridge, 1940), p.314.
4. Particularly in his Speculum Ecclesiae in Opera, ed. J.S. Brewer and G.F. Warner, Rolls Series, 21, 8 Vols. (1861-91), IV, 3-354. See Knowles, Monastic Order, Chapter 39.
5. See The Latin Poems commonly attributed to Walter Mapes, ed. T. Wright, Camden Society, First Series, 16, (1841), esp. 1-20; also De Nugis Curialium, ed. T. Wright, Camden Society, First Series, 50 (1850). Also Knowles, Monastic Order, Chapter 39.
6. Quotations from Knowles, Monastic Order, pp. 677-8.
7. See Knowles, The Religious Orders in England (Cambridge, 1948-59), I, 292f. Also V.H. Galbraith, 'Roger of Wendover and Mathew of Paris', Glasgow University Publications, 61 (Glasgow, 1944).
8. For the troubles at Oxford, see H. Rashdall, The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1895), II, Part 2, 376-86; also C.E. Mallett, A History of the University of Oxford, 3 Vols. (1924-7), I, 72-6.
9. H.W. Bloomfield, 'Joachim of Flora: A Critical Survey of his Canon, Teaching, Sources, Biography, and Influence', Traditio, 13 (1957), 249-311.
10. For a short account of reactions to Joachism and the mendicant orders from the time of William of St. Amour, see A. Williams, 'Chaucer and the Friars', Speculum, 28 (1953), 499-513, and

Bloomfield, art. cit. 294f. For the controversy between Fitzralph and the friars, see A. Gwyne, The English Austin Friars in the Time of Wyclif (Oxford, 1940), pp. 80-9.

11. See Owst, Literature and Pulpit, pp. 247-66, and *passim*.
12. See Owst, Literature and Pulpit, pp. 266-75, for remarks on these preachers. Owst makes constant use of the sermon material of Bishop Brinton. Some of Brinton's Latin sermons are printed in The Sermons of Bishop Brinton Bishop of Rochester (1373-1389), ed. Sister Mary Aquinas Devlin, Camden Society, Third Series, 85-6, 2 Vols. (1954).
13. Sister Devlin, 'Bishop Thomas Brunton and his Sermons', Speculum, 14 (1939), 324-44, suggests (p.334) that those of his sermons which were delivered to a congregation consisting of both clerics and the laity would 'doubtless' have been preached in English - the Latin represents a summary of their contents.
14. See Maria Wickert, Studien zu John Gower (Köln, 1953), p. 68, note 10. She refers to Alain of Lille, Summa de arte praedicatoria as an example. Amongst the most celebrated of such sermon collections was the Sermones Vulgares of Jacques de Vitry - see The Exempla of Jacques de Vitry, ed. W.F. Crane (1890), pp. xl - xlvi, where the range of audience and material is listed.
15. See Raby, Secular Latin Poetry, II, 49-54.
16. Medieval society was commonly thought of as organised around three divinely ordained estates. The fullest account of the growth and application of this belief may be found in Ruth Mohl, The Three Estates in Medieval and Renaissance Literature (New York, 1933)
17. Robert of Brunne, Handlyng Synne, ed. F.J. Furnivall, EEES, OS 119, 2 Vols. (1901 - 3). This work is a translation of William of Wadlington, Manuel des Pechiez which was written during the reign of Edward I. Robert of Brunne made a number of alterations, excisions, and additions to his original. For the genre of which the work is an example, see D.W. Robertson Jr., 'The Cultural Tradition of Handlyng Synne', Speculum, 22 (1947), 162-85.

- 18. Dan Michel, Ayenbite of Inwyt, ed. R. Morris, ETS, OS 23 (1866). This was the work of a Canterbury Benedictine and was translated from a French original - Friar Lorenz, Le Somme lei Roi (also known as Le Somme des Vices et des Vertues).

- 19. G.R. Owst, Preaching in Medieval England (Cambridge, 1926), p.21.

- 20. Recent editions are Wimbleton's Sermon: Redde Rationem Villicationis Tue, ed. Ione Kemp Knight (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1967) - all quotations are from this edition - and ed. Nancy H. Owen, Medieval Studies, 28 (1966), 176-97. See, too, Nancy H. Owen, 'Thomas Wimbleton', Medieval Studies, 24 (1962), 377-81.

- 21. It survives in 15 MSS - 13 English and 2 Latin - see Miss Knight's edition, pp. 3-22.

- 22. See Wykeham's Register, ed. T.F. Kirby, Hampshire Record Society, 2 Vols. (1896-9), II, 370-1.

- 23. A typical expression of this opposition is found in the FlowT, II. 543-8.

- 24. See J.A. Mosher, The Exemplum in the Early Religious and Didactic Literature of England, (New York, 1911), pp. 84f. Also H.G. Pfander, The Popular Sermon of the Medieval Friar in England (New York, 1937), p.24. For an interesting discussion of the theory and practice of Dominican preaching in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, see W.A. Hinnebusch, The Early English Friar Preachers (Rome, 1951), pp. 279-331.

- 25. It is a central theme in Archbishop Fitzralph's sermon Defensio Curatorum. A translation, thought to be the work of John Trevisa, has been edited by A.J. Perry, ETS, OS 167 (1925), 39-93.

- 26. Notably in the 'Land of Cockayne', printed (from Harley MS. 913) in Historical Poems of the XIVth. and XVth. Centuries, ed. R.H. Robbins (New York, 1959). pp. 121-7. Hereafter cited as Robbins.

27. See Robbins, pp. 157-68.
28. The category is used by Robbins.
29. Wright, Pol. Songs. A., pp. 323-45
30. Medieval chivalric theory stressed both the derivative nature of a knight's authority - from Emperor to king to baron to knight - and the responsibilities of a knight to his superiors. One of these responsibilities involved the controlling of fellow knights who go against the commands of their lord. Acting in this corrective capacity, knights are demonstrating a lord's ultimate authority over the knightly estate - see The Book of the Ordre of Chyualry, trans. W. Caxton (from Ramon Lull's Spanish original), ed. A.T.P. Byles, ETS, OS 168 (1926, for 1925), 27-30.
31. Mum and the Sothsegger, ed. Mabel Day and R. Steele, ETS, OS 199 (1936, for 1934), 11.1632-3.
32. Set out, in an English translation, in Foxe, III, 242-8.
33. Mum and the Sothsegger, Passus 2, 11.72-4.
34. Handlyng Synne, 11.8999-9000.
35. Songs, Carols and other Miscellaneous Poems, ed. R. Dybeski, ETS, ES 101 (1907, issued in 1908), Poem 74a, 1.47.
36. The Minor Poems of the Vernon MS., ed. C. Horstmann and F.J. Furnivall, ETS, OS 98, 2 Vols. (1892, 1901), II, 684-5, 11.54-5, 59-60.
37. The other poem is printed in Minor Poems of the Vernon MS., ed. C. Horstmann and F.J. Furnivall, ETS, OS 98 (2 Vols. 1892, 1901), II, 740-3.
38. Quoted by G.R. Owst, The Destructorium Viciorum of Alexander Carpenter (1952), p.7.

39. The Poems of John Audelay, ed. Ella Keats Whiting, EMTS, OS 184 (1931), 141, 11.250-60.
40. J.H. Dahmus, William Courtenay: Archbishop of Canterbury (Pennsylvania and London, 1966), p.226.
41. In particular, see J.A. Robson, Wyclif and the Oxford Schools (Cambridge, 1961); G. Leff, Heresy in the Later Middle Ages, 2 Vols. (Manchester, 1967), II, Chapters 7,8; G. Leff, 'John Wyclif: The Path to Dissent', Proceedings of the British Academy, 52 (1966), 143-80. It is not the intention of this section to provide a fully documented account of the nature and development of all Wyclif's ideas. The works of Robson and Leff (cited above) and of Raby, Dahmus and Workman (cited below) have formed the basis for my discussion of the essential positions in Wyclif's thought, and it is to these works that reference should be made for more extensive illustrative quotation from Wyclif's Latin tracts.
42. His eminence is reflected in the respectful tone in which he is addressed even by his opponents. John Kenningham refers to him as 'profundus clericus', and believes his reasoning often to be 'pulchre dictum, et egregie' - see Fasciculi Zizaniorum Magistri Johannis Wyclif Cum Tritice, ed. W.W. Shirley, Rolls Series, 5 (1858), 12, 14. This work will, in future reference, be referred to as Fasc. Ziz. William Thorpe represents Archbishop Arundel, no friend of the Lollards, as having said of Wyclif: '[he] was a great Clerk and ... many men held him a perfect liver' - see Fifteenth Century Prose and Verse, ed. E. Arber, with fresh material and introduction added by A.W. Pollard (1903), p. 120. Adam Stockton, the Cambridge Austin friar, as late as 1379-80 called Wyclif 'venerabilis doctor', and only changed the ascription to 'execrabilis seductor' in 1380-1, after Wyclif's teaching on transubstantiation had become openly heretical - see Robson, p.222.
43. For an account of the attention paid by the court to a number of Wyclif's treatises, see H.B. Workman, John Wyclif: A Study of the English Medieval Church, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1926), I, 275-324. For more detailed accounts of Wyclif's political forays, see T.J. Hanrahan, 'John Wyclif's Political Activity', Medieval Studies, 20 (1958), 154-66; also J.H. Dahmus, 'John Wyclif and the English Government', Speculum, 35 (1960), 51-68. Both articles ^{speaks} of Wyclif as an embarrassment to those in authority who, otherwise, could have made use of much of his writing. His theological unorthodoxy became increasingly unacceptable.

- 44. In 1372-4 - see Robson, p.163. The debate with Kenningham is recorded in Fasc. Ziz., pp.4-103. For discussions of the genesis and authorship of this work, see Shirley's introduction, esp. pp. lxxvi-lxxviii, and J. Crompton, 'Fasciculi Zizaniorum II', The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 12 (1961), 155-66. Accounts of Wyclif's early disputes with two other scholars, William Vyrinham and the Benedictine Uhtred of Boldon, may be found in Opera Minora, ed. J. Leserth, Wyclif Society (1913), XLVIII-LVI, 405-30.

- 45. K.B. McFarlane, John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity (1952), p.59. This work will, in future, be referred to as McFarlane.

- 46. Margaret Aston, 'John Wycliffe's Reformation Reputation', Past and Present, 30 (1965), 49.

- 47. A recent study of some Latin sermons of Wyclif - W. Mallard, 'Dating the Sermones Quadraginta of John Wyclif', Medievalia et Humanistica, 17 (1966), 86-105, shows that these sermons were composed in Latin, probably to be used by Wyclif in the pulpit for either latin or English delivery, depending on his audience. These audiences were not always exclusively clerical - Mallard cites several sermons which were written for 'an intelligent mixed audience assembling to hear the highly reputed doctor' (p.91), and believes that Wyclif's reputation 'must have drawn an increasing variety of people to hear him' (p.95).

- 48. For this view, see H.L. Cannon, 'The Poor Priests: A Study in the Rise of English Lollardry', Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1 (1899), 451-82. Also Workman, Wyclif, II, 201-20. McFarlane, p.101, and subsequent writers have doubted the whole notion.

- 49. It is not possible to state exactly when Wyclif first went to Oxford. There are few details of Wyclif before 1360 and some of those are confused. Robson states: 'that he was in Merton and a Bachelor of Arts by this time [1360] is all that we know for certain' (p.12).

- 50. There are many histories of medieval philosophy with material on Ockham, his predecessors and successors. Particularly useful are F.C. Copleston, A History of Philosophy, III (1953), esp. 43-61; D. Knowles, The Evolution of Medieval Thought (1962), pp.318-36; G. Leff, Medieval Thought (1958), pp.279f.

- 51. G. Leff, Heresy in the Later Middle Ages, II, 501-2.
- 52. Leff, Medieval Thought, pp. 104-14, has a good, short discussion of the early notions of Realism.
- 53. Wyclif's definition may be found in De Ente Librorum Duorum, ed. M.H. Dziwicki, Wyclif Society (1909), 101-2. My account of Wyclif's philosophical position draws on the writings of Robson, Leff and Workman, and also S. Hamilton Thompson, 'The Philosophical Basis of Wyclif's Theology', Journal of Religion, 11 (1931), 86-116.
- 54. Robson, p.98.
- 55. Robson, pp. 100-1.
- 56. Workman, Wyclif, I, 113.
- 57. Leff, Academy Lecture, p.161.
- 58. Robson, p.146.
- 59. For a recent account of Wyclif's attitude to the Bible and the extent to which it marks a break with traditional attitudes, see M. Hurley, "'Scriptura Sola': Wyclif and his critics", Traditio, 16 (1960), 275-352. Hurley's definition of an adherent to the notion of 'scriptura sola' is: 'a theologian who grants no say in matters of faith to the Church: its Creeds, Fathers, Popes, Councils, bishops, theologians and ordinary faithful' (p.278). Hurley believes that no matter what lip-service Wyclif played to the acceptance of traditional teachings, ultimately his practice was to respect tradition only in so far as it supported his particular point of view. If Wyclif disagreed with the teachings of the past - even if they were unanimous on a particular point - he would ignore them. The opposite view of Wyclif's attitudes - that Wyclif consistently showed respect for traditional teaching has been put forward by P. de Vooght, and is discussed by Hurley, pp.337f.
- 60. A position which he tried to defend against Kenningham - see Fasc. Ziz., p.20.

- 61. The story of the Emperor Constantine having given lands and goods to Pope Sylvester I in the fourth century was frequently used by Wyclif and his adversaries in argument. In one version of the story, the moment of the donation was marked by an Angel from heaven speaking and lamenting that poison was being poured into the church. An alternative version had a Devil speaking. The Donation of Constantine theory was discredited during the fifteenth century as a result of the writings of Nicholas of Cusa, Lorenzo Valla and, interestingly, Bishop Pecock - see A.B. Ferguson, 'Reginald Pecock and the Renaissance Sense of History', Studies in the Renaissance 13 (1966), esp. 155-7. Though discredited, the story still appeared in writings of the English Reformation, as in The Works of John Jewell, ed. J. Ayre, Parker Society, 4 Vols. (1845-50), II, 992.
- 62. Such pleas were not uncommon - see *Anglia*, 5 (1882), 9-42 for one such plea asking that Sir John Oldcastle be brought to heel.
- 63. Discussed by W. Ullmann, A History of Political Thought; The Middle Ages (1965), p.114f.
- 64. Ullmann, p.110.
- 65. Quoted Ullmann, p.115.
- 66. See Copleston, History of Philosophy, III, 168-80; also Ullmann, p.204f.
- 67. Copleston, III, 11-21. A very good example of the form in which the debate between the papal and anti-papal attitudes was made available to vernacular readers at the time of Wyclif and immediately afterwards is John Trevisa's translation of William of Ockham, Dialogus inter Militem et Clericum, ed. A.J. Perry, ETS, OS 167 (1925), 1-38.
- 68. Statutes passed in 1351, 1353, 1365, 1389 which sought to check the papal practice of nominating prelates to vacant benefices without seeking the permission of the Bishop in whose diocese the vacancy occurred - see Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church.
- 69. Statutes passed in 1353, 1365, 1393 which sought to limit papal encroachments upon judicial rights claimed by the Crown - see Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church.

- 70. This so-called Erastian point of view is discussed by L.J. Daly, The Political Theory of John Wyclif (Chicago, 1962), pp.85-9.
- 71. This is Wyclif's ~~doctrine~~ doctrine of Dominion. There is disagreement amongst scholars as to the precise implications of Wyclif's theory. In particular, there are those who believe that, potentially at least, it was capable of destroying the whole fabric of society - see, in particular, M. Kominsky, 'Wyclifism as the Ideology of Revolution', Church History, 32 (1963), 57-74. Others claim that Wyclif's theory, properly understood, is the reverse of revolutionary - see M. Wilks, 'Predestination, Property and Power: Wyclif's Theory of Dominion and Grace', Studies in Church History, 2 (1965), 220-236, who argues that 'common possession by the good means ownership by the abstract reality of the community - the 'ecclesia' or 'regnum', ... which is represented for practical purposes by the ruler. For this reason, Wyclif defines the lay prince as the vicar of God' (p.233). The best documented account of Wyclif's overall political stance is to be found in Daly.
- 72. Leff, Academy Lecture, p.173.
- 73. Leff, Heresy, II, 542.
- 74. On the whole complex subject of Eucharistic teaching in the medieval church, see G.W. Dugmore, The Mass and the English Reformers (1958), esp. pp.48f. for the divergence of opinion between Aquinas, Ockham and Scotus on the question of the possible annihilation of the substance of the bread and the wine at the moment of consecration in the Mass. Dugmore concludes: 'Indeed the teaching of orthodox 'Papal' Catholics was not clearly, consistently, or rigidly defined in the medieval period ... It has been too often assumed by writers on the Reformation period that there was one universally accepted body of Catholic doctrine, such as existed after the Council of Trent (1546-63), which was called in question for the first time by the 'Protestant' Reformers' (p.58).
- 75. Dugmore, The Mass and The English Reformers, p.42.
- 76. Dugmore, The Mass and The English Reformers, p.52.
- 77. On Wyclif and the friars, see A. Gwynne, The English Austin Friars, pp.225-39.

78. See J.H. Dahmus, The Prosecution of John Wyclif (New Haven, 1952), pp. 133f. Dahmus argues that Wyclif was left in relative peace after he had given a personal assurance to John of Gaunt to the effect that he would not promulgate his unorthodox views within the University and would not discuss them outside.
79. The exact date is uncertain. Dahmus, Prosecution, p.129 puts it 'probably a short time before May, 1381'.
80. The exact dates of Wyclif's movements at the end of his life are not clear. See Dahmus, Prosecution, p.80, n.8, for evidence of his not having had rooms in Oxford after 1381.
81. The best short account of the Blackfriars Council and its repercussions is Dahmus, Prosecution, pp.89-128. Dahmus's William Courtenay: Archbishop of Canterbury (Pennsylvania and London, 1966), pp.78-106 adds little to his earlier account.
82. Workman, Wyclif, II, 290.
83. Repington's action against heresy at Oxford is noted in The Register of Philip Repington 1405-19, ed. Margaret Archer, Lincoln Record Society, 57, 2 Vols. (1963), I,xxxv, who cites f.151 in the Register.
84. J.A.F. Thomson, The Later Lollards (Oxford, 1965), pp.212-3. An interesting illustration of the spread of Lollardy into Universities far removed from Oxford is the St. Andrews University Master of Arts graduation oath which was administered in 1416 and which required all candidates to declare against Lollardy - see T.M. Lindsay, 'A Literary Relic of Scottish Lollardy', Scottish Historical Review, I (1904), 260-73.
85. Robson, p.170.
86. Dynok's important work, a series of long replies, written in Latin, to the so-called Twelve Conclusions of the Lollards, is discussed briefly by H.S. Cronin, 'The Twelve Conclusions of the Lollards', EHR, 22 (1907), esp. 293-5; and by V.H.H. Green, Bishop Reginald Pecock: A Study in Ecclesiastical History and Thought (Cambridge, 1945), pp.105-6.

87. See V.H.H. Green, Bishop Reginald Pecock, p.106.
88. Of the other orthodox apologetics, see for instance, Joy M. Russell-Smith, 'Walter Hilton and a Tract in Defence of the Veneration of Images', Dominican Studies, 7 (1954), 180-214.
89. Thomson, Later Lollards, p.212.
90. See R.L. Poole, ^{On the} ~~Inter~~ ^{years of the} intercourse between English and Bohemian Wycliffites in the Early Fifteenth Century', EHR, 7 (1902), 306; also O. Odlozilik, 'Wycliffe's Influence upon Central and Eastern Europe', Slavonic Review, 7 (1928-9), 634-48. Amongst Wyclif's most prominent Eastern European disciples was John Hus. The most recent treatment of the relationship between Hus and Wyclif is M. Spinka, John Hus and the Czech Reform (Chicago, 1941), esp. pp.12-52.
91. Margaret Deanesly, The Lollard Bible (Cambridge, 1920 - reprinted, 1966), p.240, notes that two Bohemian Wycliffites were in Oxford in 1407 - Nicholas Faulfisch and George of Knychnicz - and they copied and corrected a number of Wyclif's tracts and took them back with them to Prague.
92. The great edition of this Bible remains The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, with the Apocryphal Books, in the earliest English Versions from the Vulgate by John Wycliffe and his Followers, ed. J. Forshall and F. Madden, 4 Vols. (Oxford, 1850).
93. As listed in Forshall and Madden's edition.
94. Since Forshall and Madden's edition in 1850.
95. Reviewing a new edition of Bodley MS. 959 (the earliest extant MS of any part of the Wyclif Bible - EV1), E. Colledge, MLR, 59 (1964), 624 remarked: 'It was never meant to be read except as a crib to the Vulgate Latin. The dozen surviving manuscripts indicate that it was found useful and copied, but as a means to advancing the Lollard programme for the dissemination of the word of God among the people, it was from the outset misconceived, as was shown by the haste with which the second version was made.'

96. See D.C. Fowler, 'John Trevisa and the English Bible', MP, 58 (1960), 88f.
97. Quoted in S.L. Fristedt, The Wycliffe Bible: Part 1, in Stockholm Studies in English, 4 (1953), 115.
98. Quoted Fristedt, p.116.
99. Fristedt, p.116.
100. A true conye of a Prolog (STC 25588), Sig. R.i.-R.i^v. Purvey's authorship of the Prologue is discussed by Margaret Deanesly, Lollard Bible, pp.376f.
101. In the edition reviewed by Colledge (see note 95). The edition is MS. Bodley 959, ed. C. Lindberg, in Stockholm Studies in English, 6, 8, 10, 13, 20 (1959-69). His conclusions may be found in XX, 97-8, with questions of authorship discussed on pp. 90f.
102. The possibility of a revised version in between the two versions noted by Forshall and Madden was first hinted at by E.W. Talbert, 'A Note on the Wyclifite Bible Translation', University of Texas Studies in English, 20 (1940), 29-38. The idea was taken up and examined more fully with confirmatory conclusions by S.L. Fristedt in his The Wycliffe Bible: Part 1, and further amplification of the theory came in his 'The Authorship of the Lollard Bible', Studier i Modern Språkvetenskap, 19 (1956), 28-41. See, too, H. Hargreaves, 'An Intermediate Version of the Wycliffite Old Testament', Studia Neophilologica, 28 (1956), 130-47.
103. Fristedt, Authorship Article, p.32 remarks: 'The manuscripts of EV, as well as those of LV, were corrected off and on, but in point of EV we have to distinguish between such emendations as were made prior to the adoption of the principles on which LV was translated and those obviously taken from manuscripts in the Later Version'.
104. The true conye of a Prolog ... Sig. R.i^v.

105. See Foxe, III, 245: 'Item, It is a dangerous thing, as witnesseth blessed St. Jerome, to translate the text of holy Scripture out of the tongue into another; for in the translation the same sense is not always easily kept, as the same St. Jerome confesseth, that although he were inspired, yet oftentimes in this he erred: we therefore decree and ordain, that no man, hereafter, by his own authority translate any text of the Scripture into English or any other tongue, by way of a book, libel, or treatise; and that no man read any such book, libel or treatise, now lately set forth in the time of John Wickliff, or since, or hereafter to be set forth, in part or in whole, privily or apertly, upon pain of greater excommunication, until the said translation be allowed by the ordinary of the place, or, if the case so require, by the council provincial.
106. Both quoted Deanesly, Lollard Bible, p.234, notes 5 and 6.
107. Purvey was probably responsible for the two accounts, one in Latin, the other in English, of the substance of the debate between the Dominican Thomas Palmer and the Lollard Peter Payne which took place at Oxford between 1403-5 - see Deanesly, p.290. Also see Appendix II, pp.399-445 which contains material on the dispute as to the efficacy of vernacular scriptures, including the texts of Palmer's Determination and Purvey's English reply. For an earlier debate on the same subject, see Dialogue between a Lord and a Clerk upon Translation, which was prefixed by John Trevisa to his translation of Higden's Polychronicon, and is printed in Fifteenth Century Prose and Verse, ed. E. Arber (and A.W. Pollard) (1903), pp.203-8.
108. The Lanterne of Lizt, ed. Lilian W. Swinburne, EETS, OS 151 (1917).
109. On Payne, see A.B. Emden, An Oxford Hall in Medieval Times (Oxford, 1927 - reprinted 1968), esp. pp.133-61; also J. Baker, A Forgotten Great Englishman (1894).
110. Fifteenth Century Prose and Verse, ed. Arber and Pollard, p.105. All subsequent references are given after quotations in the text.
111. Notably Thomson, Later Lollards (Oxford, 1965); see also A.G. Dickens, Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York (Oxford, 1959).

112. J.F. Davis, Lollardy in London and the South East 1414-1534, Unpublished University of Birmingham Dissertation (1961), pp.101-10.
113. Quoted Thomson, Later Lollards, p.42.
114. Chronicon Henrici Knighton, ed. Lumby, II, 313.
115. Foxe, III, 596-7, for both cases.
116. A Londoner John Claydon was found to possess such a work at the beginning of the fifteenth century - see Thomson, Later Lollards, p.140.
117. This was amongst the books of Richard Collins of Ginge - see Foxe, IV, 236.
118. Thomson, Later Lollards, p.78.
119. Thomson, Later Lollards, p.114.
120. W.H. Summers, The Lollards of the Chiltern Hills (1906), pp.126-7, tells of a case from 1506 in which a physician, John Phip, who was a leader of a group of Lollards and who possessed a valuable collection of books - including scriptures - burnt them when he found himself in danger. His reply to a neighbour who remonstrated with him about such a destructive act was: 'I had rather burn my books, than that my books should burn me'.
121. Quoted Thomson, Later Lollards, p.114.
122. Thomson, Later Lollards, p.68.
123. Writings of the Reverend and Learned John Wickliff D.D., printed for the Religious Tract Society [n.d.], p.122.

124. The most notable upper class support from the laity for the Lollards during the early days of the movement seems, if Knighton's Chronicle is to be believed, to have come from some half dozen influential Lollard knights. An important article by W.T. Waugh, 'The Lollard Knights', Scottish Historical Review, 11 (1914), 55-92 finds Knighton guilty of exaggeration in ascribing fervent Lollard adherence to knights whose association with Lollardy was either, he believes, non-existent or peripheral. The concept of Lollard knighthood is certainly best illustrated from the career of just one knight - Sir John Oldcastle - whose rebellious activities in 1414 were instrumental in the linking, judicially, of the notions of heresy and treason, with the result that heresy could now be regarded as the direct concern of the state. The increased vigilance of authorities against Lollardy after its association with civil sedition had become apparent, made the survival of the movement after 1414-17 even more hazardous. See Margaret Aston, 'Lollardy and Sedition', Past and Present, 17 (1960), 1-44. On Oldcastle, see W.T. Waugh, 'Sir John Oldcastle', EHR, 20 (1905), 434-56; 637-58.
125. An impression given by K.B. McFarlane, p.184.
126. See C.F. Buhler, 'A Lollard Tract: On Translating the Bible into English', MAe, 7 (1938), 167-83, where the text contains only the allusion to Arundel. A later MS., with the Fleming allusion, formed the basis for all subsequent printed editions.
127. Quoted in Hope Emily Allen, Writings Ascribed to Richard Rolle, Hermit of Hampole (1927), p.174.
128. See E. Colledge, 'The Recluse: A Lollard Interpolated Version of the Ancren Riwle', RES 15 (1939), 1-15 and 129-45. The Recluse is edited by J. Pöhlsson (Lund, 1911 - reprinted 1918). See esp. pp.74-5 (Donation of Constantine material interpolated) and pp.97-9 (material on the importance of preaching and the questionable value of man-made Regular orders interpolated).
129. See Sister Mary Theresa Brady, 'The Apostles and the Creed in Manuscripts of The Pore Caitif', Speculum, 32 (1957), 323-5. See, too, her 'The Pore Caitif: An Introductory Study', Traditio, 10 (1954), 529-48. Her promised and much needed edition of the work has yet to appear - see note 13, p.530.

130. The Lay Folks Catechism, ed. T.F. Simmons and H.R. Nolloth, EEFS, 08 118 (1901). References are given after quotations in the text.
131. See Hope Emily Allen, Writings Ascribed to Richard Rolle, pp. 387-94.
132. See A.L. Kellogg and E.W. Talbert, 'The Wyclifite Pater Noster and Ten Commandments, with special reference to English MSS. 85 and 90 in the John Rylands Library', Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, 42 (1959), 345-77.
133. See E.W. Talbert, 'A Fifteenth-Century Lollard Sermon Cycle', University of Texas Studies in English, 19 (1939), 5-30.
134. Deanesly, Lollard Bible, p.347.
135. Deanesly, Lollard Bible, p.347. Sister Brady - Traditio, 10 (1954), 542-8 examines all the evidence of association between the tract and Lollardy and confirms Miss Deanesly's view.
136. For example, the notes on pp.58-9, and 64, of the Religious Tract Society edition.
137. The relevant passage from the Prologue is quoted by Deanesly, Lollard Bible, pp.320-1.
138. Quoted by Sister Brady in her article in Speculum, 32 (1957), 323.
139. Sister Brady, art. cit., p.324.
140. Sister Brady, art. cit., p.325.
141. Thomson, Later Lollards, p.13.
142. E. Colledge, RES, 15 (1939), 145.

143. Hope Emily Allen, Writings Ascribed to Richard Rolle, p.189.
144. The Lay Folks' Catechism of the English and Latin Versions of Archbishop Thoresby's Instructions for the People, ed. T.F. Simmons and H.E. Nolloth, EETS, OS 118 (1901). All references to passages discussed are given in the text.
145. See, for instance, An Apology for Lollard Doctrines, ed. J.H. Todd, Camden Society, First Series, 20 (1842), 30-7.
146. Thomson, Later Lollards, p.125.
147. Quoted in Foxe, III, 243. Further references to the Arundel Constitutions are given after quotations in the text.
148. Foxe, III, 244.
149. Foxe, III, 110. In using Foxe as a source for information on the various articles cited against Lollard suspects, it is necessary to be aware of Foxe's desire to present as favourable a picture of Lollardy as possible, with the result that some articles which accused Lollards of holding doctrines which would not have been acceptable even after the Reformation, were either suppressed or distorted or suitably modified. Nevertheless, J.A.F. Thomson, 'John Foxe and some Sources for Lollard History: Notes for a Critical Appraisal', Studies in Church History, 2 (1965), 251-7, examines some of Foxe's evidence against material from other verifiable sources and concludes that 'on the whole he emerges with reasonable credit from the investigation' and that 'a basic substratum of useful historical fact lies below ... [his] more tendentious comment' (p.257).
150. Foxe, III, 135.
151. Foxe, III, 111, articles VI-VII.
152. Foxe, III, 222, article VII.
153. Foxe, III, 235.

154. Foxe, III, 286.
155. Foxe, III, 187 - the form of submission used by Walter Brute.
156. Foxe, III, 127.
157. Fifteenth Century Prose and Verse, ed. Arber and Pollard, p.132.
158. Cecilia P. Cutts, 'The Croxton Play: An Anti-Lollard Piece', MLQ, 5 (1944), 45-60.
159. See M.D. Anderson, Drama and Imagery in English Medieval Churches (Cambridge, 1963), pp.182-5, esp. fig. 12, p.184.
160. See Foxe, III, 175, esp. the last paragraph.
161. For an extreme position imputed to John Purvey by Richard Lavingham, see Foxe, III, 287-8; see also Brute's extended discussion, Foxe, III, 169-71.
162. Foxe, III, 288-9 for a statement of this belief which is said to have been drawn out of Purvey's books by Lavingham.
163. See, for instance, the tenth article in H.F.B. Compston, 'The Thirty Seven Conclusions of the Lollards', EHR, 26 (1911), 743.
164. STC 19214, printed by Thomas Berthelet, 1536. The STC attributes the work to Bishop Henry Parker, but this had been shown to be an erroneous attribution by H.G. Richardson, 'Dives and Pauper', N & Q, Eleventh Series, 4 (1911), 321-3. See, too, H.G. Pfander, 'Dives et Pauper', The Library, 14 (1934), 299-312; and H.G. Richardson, 'Dives and Pauper', The Library, 15 (1935), 31-7.
165. See J. Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages (1924, reprinted 1952), pp. 148-59.

- 166. Two useful summaries of Lollard tenets of faith are The Thirty Seven Conclusions of the Lollards (see H.F.B. Compston, EHR, 26 (1911), 738-49), and The Twelve Conclusions of the Lollards (see H.S. Cronin, EHR, 22 (1907), 292-304).

- 167. W. Ullmann, A History of Political Thought: the Middle Ages (1965), p.26.

- 168. W. Ullmann, A History of Political Thought: the Middle Ages (1965), p.29.

- 169. Lucy Toulmin Smith, 'Ballad by Thomas Occleve Addressed to Sir John Oldcastle', Anglia, 5 (1882), 9-42. All references are given after quotations in the text.

- 170. Middle English Sermons, ed. W.O. Ross, EETS, OS 209 (1940, for 1938), xxxv. All other references are given after quotations in the text. See, too, Three Middle English Sermons from the Worcester Chapter Manuscript F.10., ed. D.M. Grisdale in Leeds School of English Language Texts and Monographs, 5 (1939), Third Sermon, esp. pp.51, 64-6 for hostile remarks about the Lollards.

- 171. In Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries, ed. R.H. Rebbins (New York, 1959), pp.152-7. All references are given after quotations in the text.

- 172. Pecoock's most important English works are The Repressor of over much Blaming of the Clergy, ed. C. Babbington, Rolls Series, 19, 2 Vols. (1860): references are given after quotations in the text; The Reule of Crysten Religioun, ed. W.C. Greet, EETS, OS 171 (1927, for 1926); The Donet, ed. Elsie Vaughan Hitchcock, EETS, OS 156 (1921, for 1918); and The Folewer to the Donet, ed. Elsie Vaughan Hitchcock, EETS, OS 164 (1924, for 1923). It is clear from The Folewer, pp. 11f. that Pecoock conceived of the last three works as a group with The Reule and The Donet dealing with particular and practical aspects of faith and observance, whilst The Folewer discussed the more difficult general questions.

173. E.F. Jacob, 'Reynold Pecock, Bishop of Chichester', in his Essays in Later Medieval History (1968), p.9. The fullest account of Pecock's career and influence is V.H.H. Green, Bishop Reginald Pecock (Cambridge, 1945) - see esp. pp.122-169 for a detailed analysis of Pecock's anti-Lollard position.
174. In Jack Upland, Friar Daw's Reply and Upland's Rejoinder, ed. F.L. Heyworth (Oxford, 1968), pp.73-101. All references to all three works are given after quotations in the text. The edition will subsequently be referred to as Heyworth.
175. Heyworth, pp. 54-72.
176. The essential features are described in Heyworth, pp.2-3.
177. See Heyworth, pp.41-4.
178. Heyworth (pp.18-19) dates the Rejoinder c1450 and Jack Upland c1419-20 (pp.9-17). His evidence in favour of c1450 for the Rejoinder is convincing, but a question mark must remain against his choice of 1419-20 rather than 1404 for Upland. Whilst his association of the accusation of sorcery made against the Lollards by Daw (Reply, ll.898-901) with the autumn of 1419 when 'sorcery was very much in the air' (p.16) is plausible, his supporting evidence is very thin. His belief that no-one would attack Wyclif with the vehemence employed by Daw, before 1415 (the date of Wyclif's condemnation at the Council of Constance) has to be set against the fact that Wyclif was called 'execrabilis sedactor' by one of his fellow scholars at Oxford whilst he was still alive (Robson, p.222). Secondly, Heyworth's attempt to relate ll.865-8 in the Reply and their allusion to Lollard artisans discussing the Eucharist, with the involvement of Lollard artisans in Oldcastle's 1414 rising and hence to suggest that the allusion must refer to some time after 1414 is not convincing. Lollard artisans are surely likely to have discussed the Eucharist from the moment that Lollard preachers first reached into the English countryside - that moment was in the 1370's and not after 1414. The lines nowhere refer to artisan involvement in insurrection.
179. K.B. McFarlane, John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity (1952), p.184.

180. Heyworth, p.171, note to Rejoinder 11.380f.

181. Loc. cit.

182. Quoted Heyworth, p.172.

CHAPTER FIVE.The Plowmen's Tale and the Reformation.

In the early years of the sixteenth century, authority - whether lay or ecclesiastical - had not yet come to look favourably upon the contents of any Lollard work, with the result that the circulation of such material persisted in spite of rather than because of official approval.¹ The absence of this official sanction did not, however, prevent the works from serving as a covert means of inducing and sustaining an anti-clericalism which was to provide a valuable base on which the official propagandists of the 1530's could build, in support of the subsequent Henrician programme of legislation. If the government was aware of the valuable service which the clandestine circulation of Lollard material was giving them, they must also have been aware, and have viewed with strong disapproval, the likelihood of such works rendering the reading public particularly receptive to officially unacceptable Lutheran writings, by their stress on the directness of man's relationship with his creator and the consequent need for the strictest sacramental discipline within the visible church.

The growth of an illicit trade in imported Lutheran books was viewed with alarm by the church, whose responsibility it was, and had been since the reforms of Archbishop Arundel, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, to control the machinery of censorship.² The dangers which had long been implicit in the possession of works of doubtful orthodoxy were increased after 1520. The church, mindful of the potential threat of Lutheran teachings being circulated in book form throughout England, and spurred into action by Pope Leo X's Bull

Exsurge, Domine which was proclaimed on June 15th 1520, and which demanded that the most urgent action should be taken to remove from circulation all Lutheran books, took additional steps both to regulate the import of books printed abroad - particularly in the Low Countries - and to seek out all such books which had already found their way into England.³ This renewed vigilance on the part of the church reflected the inadequacies of their existing machinery of censorship which had been devised before the days of the printing press and which could not cope satisfactorily with the problem posed by the sheer numbers of printed books which issued from both foreign and, eventually, domestic presses. If the church needed proof of the potential pervasiveness of heretical printed books it had only to examine the effects of the publication of Luther's writings in Germany in popular, inexpensive editions within the reach of many of the most humble literate laymen and clerics.⁴

Responsibility for the implementation of the pope's demands as set out in his Bull lay with the English episcopacy and little time was lost in making the first grandiloquent gesture against Lutheranism. On May 12th 1521, Paul's Cross was the scene of a ceremonial conflagration at which all confiscated Lutheran books were publicly burnt, and Luther himself was declared to be an heretic. Action had also to be taken against all those connected with such books - whether as readers, owners, printers or publishers. So it was that Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of London, summoned the local booksellers on

October 12th 1524 and warned them against the importation and distribution of Lutheran books. Two years later - on October 25th 1526 - Tunstall issued a similar warning which specifically mentioned the English translation of the New Testament as one of the books to be eliminated from circulation. On the previous day in 1526 he had issued a list of books which, he demanded, should be surrendered within thirty days on pain of excommunication. This was only the first of a series of such catalogues of officially banned books which were issued periodically from that time. Some of these lists were issued by the Bishops, whilst others formed part of Royal Proclamations, a fact which illustrates the identity of interest between church and state at this time on the question of heretical books. These lists give a very clear picture of the sort of ideas which were circulating in book form at any particular time, and each new proclamation and edict containing the ever lengthening lists of officially unacceptable publications serves only to indicate the relative ineffectiveness of the suppressive measures accompanying each previous order. The clandestine traffic in banned books came to be recognised as a steadily growing influence on many sections of public opinion - an influence which was greatly extended after 1528 as more and more vernacular books became available to the community. Detailing the contents of the list issued at the time of Tunstall's Prohibition Order in 1526, we note only seven English titles:⁵

- The Supplication of Beggars
- The Revelation of Antichrist, of Luther

The New Testament of Tyndale
 The Wicked Mammon
 The Obedience of a Christian Man
 An Introduction to Paul's Epistle to the Romans
 A Dialogue betwixt the Father and the Son

together with a rather longer list of Latin titles written by Luther, Hus, Zwingli and other continental reformers. By 1529, says Foxe, the number of Latin works had been greatly increased, with the addition of over eighty new titles. A similar increase in the number of vernacular works may be noted. A list compiled by the Bishops after the Royal Proclamation, which called for action against Lutheran heresy, includes:⁶

A Disputation between the Father and the Son
 A Book of the old God and new
 Godly Prayers
 The Christian state of Matrimony
 The burying of the Mass
 The Sum of the Scripture
 Mattens and Even-song, Seven Psalms, and other heavenly Psalms, with the Commendations, in English.
 An Exposition upon the seventh Chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians.
 The chapters of Moses called Genesis.
 The chapters of Moses, called Deuteronomy
 The Matrimony of Tyndale
 David's Psalter in English
 The Practice of Prelates
 Hortulus animae in English
 ABC against the Clergy
 The Examination of William Thorpe

and other English works are mentioned in a list of the proscribed books which were found in the possession of Richard Bayfield, a Benedictine Monk of Bury St. Edmunds who was examined and dealt with as a relapsed heretic. Amongst the books were several titles not

previously listed:⁷

An Answer of Tyndale unto Sir Thomas More

A Disputation of Purgatory, made by John Frith in English

A Prologue to the third Book of Moses, called Leviticus

A Prologue to the fourth Book of Moses, called Numbers

A Prologue to the second Book of Moses, called Exodus

The Primer in English

A Dialogue betwixt the Gentleman and the Ploughman

and still more new English titles are named by Bishop Stokesly at Paul's Cross in December, 1531:⁸

A Boke a-yenst Saynt Thomas of Canterbury

A Boke made by freer Royle ayenst the sevyn sacramentes

Though they had been deprived of the opportunity for printing in England, the Reformers were able to turn to continental centres - notably Antwerp and Strassburg - where a great many of the books listed above were printed prior to their being smuggled into England, despite the efforts of Wolsey's agents abroad to cut off the supply of this illegal material before it had a chance to reach England.⁹

It is clear from such lists that Protestantism, at least, had accepted the potential power of the printed word in the directing and influencing of popular opinion and had energetically yoked the press to its service. The lesson which the church authorities learnt in England during the 1520's was that the power of the press could not adequately be countered by coercive legislation alone. The persistent necessity for issuing ever-expanding lists such as those set out above tells its

own tale. The church was thus faced with the necessity of first accepting the existence of the printing press as a major organ of propaganda, and then turning it to the church's advantage, by producing tracts which set out both to devalue criticism of official teachings and also to justify and proclaim those teachings and attitudes now that appeals for an acceptance of the church's authority were ineffective.

So it was that the sermon preached by John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, at Paul's Cross in 1521, was twice printed shortly afterwards by Wynkyn de Worde (STC 10893-4), and a second edition made available about 1528 (STC 10895). Another anti-Lutheran sermon of Fisher's which was preached on February 11th 1525 was printed by Thomas Berthelet, the king's official printer, probably in the Spring of 1526 - (STC 10892) - the identity of the printer alone demonstrates again that there was as yet no conflict of interest between the king and the clergy over the sort of propaganda material which should be printed by the Royal press. Initially, Fisher was on his own as a vernacular writer of Catholic apologetic, but after 1528, with the spread of Lutheranism in books becoming ever more apparent, further combative literary measures were taken. Bishop Tunstall wrote to Thomas More stressing the danger from the one-sidedness of currently available printed propaganda and suggesting that he (More) should begin 'putting forth sound books in the vernacular on the catholic side'.¹⁰

Failure to do so could result in the very existence of the Catholic faith being endangered. More obliged with a series of very lengthy refutations of the Lutheran position, and aimed particularly to discredit the works of Tyndale, many of which, as we have seen, were already available in print.

For present purposes it is important simply to realise that the potential power of the printed word came to be actively acknowledged by both sides in the early days of the Reformation controversy in England. The production and publication of works in English was accepted as a vital part of the process of engaging and controlling the opinions of the ever increasingly literate lay society.

Thus far, official sponsorship of anti-Lutheran material was the result of the unified policy of church and state. Heresy was as anathema to the king as it was to the church. The king, up to 1529, had no compelling reason to wish that the traditional processes of book censorship, which had long been in the hands of the church, should be transferred to the laity. However, after this point, the interests of the church and state became increasingly irreconcilable, and it was this clash which led the king first to reconsider his position with regard to clerical control of the press, and then to move towards a system whereby it was upon him, and not upon the clergy, that a final decision concerning the suitability of a printed book fell. The time came when he was no longer prepared to entrust such a power to those with whom he was now in dispute.¹¹ The move towards Royal control

of the press was accelerated with the rise to prominence and power of Thomas Cromwell,¹² a layman with great administrative skill and some sympathy for the Lutherans, who set about removing the last vestiges of clerical control of printing which had survived from the days of Wolsey and More. Control of the press came thus to be vested in the hands of those who had no doubt that, in a sense, they were God's servants but the king's first - there was no virtue in Henry leaving control with those who, at best, had to think twice before offering him their support.

With Royal control established, the king could begin to examine more fully the ways in which the press could serve his particular purposes of the moment. The problems with which he was to be confronted during the 1530's were fourfold. Firstly, there was the immediate question of the divorce which the king wished to obtain from his queen, Catherine of Aragon. Secondly, there was the eventual need to establish and justify his policy of Royal supremacy which related directly to his repudiation of papal authority in England. Thirdly, he came to be concerned with the dissolution of the monasteries and shrines and, lastly, he was confronted by the problem of civil sedition, notably as manifested in the Pilgrimage of Grace during 1536. With each of these problems the king could, and did, take the appropriate statutory or military measures. The denial of papal supremacy, for instance, was given statutory effect in The Act of Supremacy in 1534, and amongst other acts passed to bring the clergy to heel and to devalue the authority of what the king had come to regard as an alien

jurisdiction - the papacy - were The Act for the Submission of the Clergy, The Act in Restraint of Annates, The Act in Restraint of Appeals, and the Dispensation Act.¹³

All this legislation was rendered more effective by its being preceeded and accompanied by a systematic attempt to prepare the country psychologically for such measures. If any law could be shown, both at the time of its enactment and during the period of its subsequent enforcement, to be both justifiable and necessary, its acceptance in the community was likely to be more firmly based than if it simply took the form of a bald statement of intent, with the implementation of its provisions ensured by repressive measures. The enforcement of such legislation was certain to be facilitated if it was accompanied by a constant output of explanatory and justificatory material - art, drama, and literature - aimed at ensuring that the law in action was not merely to be obeyed in blindness, but could be seen to have a clear and meaningful purpose behind it.

Though it is the printed word which represents the most lasting monument to the energy which went into the organisation and production of Henrician propaganda, it was not the only medium of communication whose potential was tapped. It has been said, for instance, that:

The whole fabric of the artistic policy of the Crown during the 1530's is woven around a never-ending theme of the triumph of the King over the Pope, of the crown over the tiara.¹⁴

This observation is confirmed by an examination of paintings such as The Four Evangelists stoning the Pope,¹⁵ by Girolamo da Treviso, a

Florentine in the service of Henry. The works of Hans Holbein - his woodcut for the title-page of the 1536 Bible Translation, for example - also justifies Strong's view that:

Holbein should be seen as one of this team of Morison and his companions, as one facet of the whole apparatus which was unloosed around the Crown in the 1530's to create an image potent enough to hold together a people in loyalty to the Crown in the face of a break with the ancient historic claims of a united Christendom.¹⁶

If this image was to have a more pervasive influence than that afforded by a series of paintings adorning the walls of Royal palaces, it was necessary to utilise media of communication which were more popularly accessible. Henrician propagandists were aware of this, and one of them, Richard Morison, set down a programme of ways in which the common people could be reached and influenced:

Into the common people thynges sooner enter by the eyes, then by the eares: remembryng more better that they see then that they heere...¹⁷

With this in mind, symbolic tableaux were arranged. In one of these, which took place on the Thames, the occupants of two barges were dressed as adherents of the king and pope respectively. The papal barge came to grief and the pope and his supporters were unceremoniously dumped in the river!¹⁸ There is evidence, too, that anti-papal sports and pastimes were a commonplace feature of village-green activities.¹⁹

Elsewhere in his programme, Morison states that official views are to be:

daily by all meanes opened iculked and dryven into the peoples heddes, taught in scoles to children, plaied in playes before the ignoraunt people, songe in mynstrelles songes...²⁰

Nearly all the minstrels' songs may have disappeared,²¹ but a number of plays - notably those of John Bale - survive.²² To be used as an overt organ of official propaganda was not, in a sense, a completely new experience for the stage. Pieces such as the Croxton Play of the Sacrament and even Everyman served clerical officialdom by providing a calculated re-assertion of points of doctrine as well as of the power and authority of the clergy.²³

However these plays have only to be contrasted with those of Bale for a clear picture to emerge of how far propagandist drama had developed by the time of the Reformation. Bale's connection with the Henrician propaganda organisation is indisputable. Cromwell was responsible on at least two occasions for paying Bale, and the company of players whom he had gathered together, for particular performances which they had given.²⁴ An examination of the contents of some of Bale's surviving plays reveals exactly why he was so valuable an asset to Cromwell.

Though Bale wrote more than twenty plays during his career, only five of them now survive. One of these, Comedy concernynge Thre Lawes²⁵ sets out the sequence of events attending the gradual corruption of these three laws - of nature, Moses and Christ. Personifications of various aspects of Catholicism - Ambitio, Pseudodoctrina, Sodomismus and Hypocrisis, for instance - take it in turns, each dressed as a representative of a clerical office,²⁶ to abuse the laws. In the eyes

and ears of the audience, these characters stand condemned not only because of the outrageous statements which they themselves make, but also as a result of the choric comment provided by the personified characters of the three laws, whose criticism of current abuses leads to the exhortation from Moseh lex to all Christian princes:

...God hath geuen yow the poure,
 With scepture and sworde, all vyces to correct.
 Let not Ambycyon, nor Couetousnesse demoure,
 Your faythfull subiectes, nor your offycers infect. (ll.1313-6)

The end of the play celebrates the actions of the particular Christian prince - Henry VIII - who took steps to restore the three laws:

No prynce afore hym, toke euer yet soch payne,
 From Englande to bannysh, Idolatrye and fowle sodomye
 Couetousnes. Ambycyon, false doctryne and hypocresye.
 It was he that brought, Christes veryte to lyght,
 Whan he put the pope, with hys fylthynes to flyght.
 (ll.2063-7)

If no prince 'afore' Henry had been as successful in countering the power of the church, there were many who had been confronted with the same problem and one of them was the subject of another of Bale's plays - Kyng Johan.²⁷ In his treatment of the king as the central heroic character in the play, Bale reverses the traditionally hostile view of John which had filtered down from the writings of the monastic chroniclers. John, for Bale, becomes the champion of monarchial authority against the usurping force of the church, and the treacherous circumstances surrounding his death ensure that Protestant polemics were able to use the story of King John as one of the starting points from which to build a martyrology.

The play offers a vindication of Henry's assumption of supremacy. The audience sees the excommunicated King John deserted by both the clergy and the nobility in his dispute with Usurpyd Power (Pope Innocent III), and Sedicyon (Stephen Langton). The infidelity of those whose responsibility it was to support the king leaves him first to lament the likely destruction of the realms by the French and the Scots unless he submits to the pope and, ultimately, to suffer death at the hands of a treacherous monk. At this point, the erring clergy and nobility are brought out of the historical context in which they have performed, in order to be admonished by and finally to submit to Imperiall Majestye, the current (from the audience's point of view) representation of that concept of monarchical authority which did not die with King John, but which lives on in King Henry. There is no doubt that Bale (and Cromwell) would wish the audience to carry away from the performance, the words of Veryte:

...in hys owne realme a kynge is judge over all,
 By Gods appoyntment, and none maye hym judge agayne
 But the Lorde hymself: in thys the Scripture is playne.
 He that condempeth a kynge condempeth God without dought,
 He that harmeth a kynge to harme God goeth about,
 He that a prynce resisteth doth daspne Gods ordynaunce
 And resisteth God in withdrawynge hys affyaunce.
 All subjectes offendynge are undre the kynges judgement.
 A kynge is reserved to the Lorde omnyotent.
 He is a mynyster immedyate undre God,
 Of hys ryghteousnesse to execute the rod.
 I charge yow, therefore, as God hath charge me,
 To gyve to your kynge hys due supremacyte,
 And exyle the pope thys realme for evermore. (Part 2, ll. 1229-42)

It was these ideas which received popular expression from Bale's travelling company of players wherever it performed - in the houses of

distinguished citizens, in churches, or at the market cross. Cromwell kept closely in touch with propagandist dramatic activity both in England and also in Scotland²⁸ and, in so doing, demonstrated the importance which he placed on Drama as a means of enabling official thinking to filter down amongst those who were unable to avail themselves of the officially sponsored printed material.

The illiterate would also be amongst those who could be reached by sermons. There is evidence that efforts were made on a national scale to enlist the pulpit in the service of the king.²⁹ Preaching activities in London mirror something of what must have happened elsewhere in the country. At Paul's Cross, variously described as The Times newspaper, and the Broadcasting House of the Henrician era,³⁰ a constant stream of sermons were delivered³¹ in which defences of the royal divorce and supremacy were alternated with anti-papal and anti-clerical attacks, and condemnations of the 1536 Northern rebels. Some of these sermons were subsequently printed by the royal printers,³² and so joined the mass of officially sponsored printed material on which attention must now be focussed.

Printed material in the Reformation controversy had two aspects. It could aim at discrediting the papal viewpoint either by revealing its intellectual or patriotic poverty, or by resorting to personal abuse. It could, alternatively, set out to offer a clear and positive statement of the king's position, and to show how that position was reinforced by the precept and example of authorities whose voices, either because of their eminence or their antiquity, or both, could lend decisive

weight to the king's cause by contradicting those who saw, in the Royal policies, evidence of new and unprecedented attitudes. In this way, the official presses could provide a constant antidote to whatever undertow of doubt and confusion may have afflicted the minds of those who were witnessing the abolition or modification of doctrinal assumptions and practices of worship which had prevailed throughout their lives.

The benefits which would accrue from the organisation of such propaganda were immediately apparent to the king. His task lay in finding suitable material favourable to his cause which he could arrange to have printed. Three ways were open to him. Firstly, he could ransack the libraries both at home and abroad in a systematic search for material which, though written in support of other causes in former days, had a self evident relevance to Henry's current problems and policies. Secondly, he could ensure freedom from molestation by the censor for all current uncommissioned Reformation writings which were not theologically offensive to the king. Thirdly, he could arrange for pieces to be specially written by writers known to be sympathetic to his cause. That either of these last two possibilities ~~was~~ open to him is a significant comment on the willingness of Reformation citizens in England to offer their intellects, and their skill as writers in the service of the state. The rise and development of such a willingness is a phenomenon worth dwelling upon as a means of understanding the nature and motives of those who analysed the political, religious and economic issues in the early

sixteenth century.³³

As generally understood in medieval times, it was the primary function of the knightly classes to defend the church from all assailants whilst the clergy went about their dual function of ministering to the spiritual needs of the community, and of offering wise counsel to the king.³⁴ To the medieval mind good government depended to a large extent on the quality of counsel which was available to the king. A king surrounded by inadequate advisors was likely to reign disastrously whereas that same king counselled by wise men would be likely to prove successful. By the beginning of the sixteenth century the potential sources and form of this counsel had been altered and extended. The days when the knight's primary responsibility to the king was as a soldier had passed. Malory was not offering a true view of the knightly function in fifteenth century England - rather was he portraying nostalgically a view which had long ceased to reflect reality.³⁵ The knight, deprived of his military function, sought other means of service, and it soon became clear that the trend was to forsake the sword for the pen - to offer brain rather than brawn in the king's service. Thus the preponderance of ecclesiastical counsellors was reduced - the counselling process became increasingly laicised.

It was not just that the type of person offering counsel to the king was beginning to change. There was also a marked change in the nature of the counsel which was offered. It is perhaps possible to exaggerate the extent to which all medieval thought was governed by an

obsession with viewing temporal considerations against an eternal perspective, yet such was generally the case, and this is to be expected. The articulate citizen in medieval England tended either to be a churchman, or a layman whose education and outlook had been indelibly influenced by ecclesiastical patterns of thought. So it was that, in the counsel offered by writers, all problems - social, economic and religious - tended to be analysed almost exclusively in absolute moralistic terms. The constant frame of reference seemed to be the seven deadly sins. For instance, it was envy and avarice which would figure most prominently in any list of reasons why people chose to steal from or rebel against their lords. There was little inclination to seek more immediate causes by asking whether theft, for example, was not the result of a poverty caused in turn by rising prices which were beyond the resources of those on fixed incomes. The inevitable result of this unwillingness to adopt more empirical and pragmatic methods of social and economic analysis than had hitherto pertained was that remedies for the various social ills were conceived of as being largely in the hands of God. There could be no question of man, himself, taking specific practical steps to ameliorate a set of circumstances which were, it was alleged, a direct result of man's fundamental moral imperfection.

Before the end of the fifteenth century, however, there are indications that this traditional form of analysis was being challenged. There developed a tendency towards viewing temporal problems as being capable of some rectification by government action. If the primary cause of all ills was still conceived of in moral terms, there was a growing

willingness to face up to the challenge of the secondary causes and to initiate action to overcome them. Government had long been thought of as a personalised institution, dependant on the characters of the monarch and his advisors, and concerned to act solely as a preservative and protective force within society - preserving and protecting a social order which was divinely ordained. It came, however, to be thought of in much less personalised terms, as an institution not wholly dependant on the character of the monarch but dependant increasingly on the intellectual participation of society's articulate citizenry. This participation was not directed solely to protective and preservative ends - government was seen to have a creative potential within society as an initiator of specific policies designed to solve specific problems that were not thought of as divinely ordained but as capable of solution by governmental action.

This change in the intellectual frame of reference of writers offering counsel to the government received an additional impetus in the early sixteenth century from the humanists with their characteristic practicality and willingness to submit their learning to the service of the state. The total effect was that Tudor England became dominated by pamphlet literature as men engaged in:

intellectual participation in the work of governing which, however illusory it (the notion of participation) may often have been, made them ready to speak their mind on a multitude of issues, confident that they would be heard for their much speaking.³⁶

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that when Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell began to seek for potential apologists for the Royal cause, there was already no shortage of those whose habit it was to

authority which he desired. The more radical elements in the movement, however, felt able to support the king's wish to free himself from the pope's jurisdiction, for in their eyes, such a step did not represent a threat to their fundamental aim, which was a desire to reform the church by encouraging:

a return to Scripture and the early sources of Christianity (which) would provide a sovereign remedy for contemporary decay.³⁸

Such people as Richard Starkey, Thomas Lupset and Richard Morison, for instance, accepted the Erasmian distinction between, on the one hand, practices and beliefs which were essential parts of Christian observance and, on the other hand, aspects of observance which could be classed as 'adiaphora' - things indifferent and inessential to Christian worship. They saw no harm in lending their support to a king whose aims were, as it seemed to them, so much in harmony with their own - to a king whose policy of removing much of the externalia of medieval Catholicism did not mean that he was veering towards the doctrinal positions of the more radical continental reformers which were unacceptable to the humanists. In matters of doctrine, they believed that the king was guided:

by neither German nor Papal views, but by the authority of the early Christian Church.³⁹

The sort of contribution made by the humanists in Henry's propaganda campaign may be seen in the career of Richard Morison,⁴⁰ an Oxford graduate who, after spending time in Pole's household at Padua, returned to England in 1535 with the help of financial assistance

arranged by Thomas Cromwell. It was not long before his services were urgently required, for in the following year, the king was confronted with the Pilgrimage of Grace. This Northern rising was energised by a variety of complex and often conflicting interests.⁴¹ Amongst its most prominent leaders was the Protestant, Sir Francis Bigod, and yet in so far as the movement was motivated by religious rather than economic considerations, it seems to have been dominated by a conservative faction who were protesting against the dissolution of the monasteries now that this process, begun under Cardinal Wolsey, had been speeded up and was affecting many parts of the country including the North East. The Pilgrimage was firmly dealt with by Henry and, amongst the measures which he took, was the publication of a series of tracts which criticised the actions of the rebels, and which attempted to explain and justify the Royal policy regarding the dissolution. These tracts - A lamentation in whiche is shewed what Ruyne and distruction cometh of seditious rebellyon (STC 15185) and A Remedy for Sedition (STC 20877) - were the hastily produced work of Morison whose commission seems to have been a very sudden and urgent one. Writing later to a friend in Italy, Morison describes the circumstances of the tracts' composition:

...I dyd it in my botes as my lord and the king also doth know in a after none and a nyght. Thought it be not done as it myght have ben done, yet the lital tyme, marketh my great scuse. I made a reamedy of sedition, I am compelled to do thynges in such haste, that I am ashamed to thynke they be myn when I se them a brode.⁴²

Cromwell clearly regarded the composition and publication of these tracts as being sufficiently important to justify the haste involved in their preparation.

The rebellion over, the trial and conviction of the conspirators and their subsequent punishment met with sufficient hostility to necessitate the publication of an explanation of and justification for the severity shown by the king to the rebels. So it was that Morison prepared An Invective Aynste the great and detestable vice, treason, which was printed in three editions by Berthelet in 1539 (STC 18111-3). Morison's other important work, the Latin Apomaxis (STC 18109) was written in order to refute the writings of the continental Catholic apologist Cochlaeus. The work was concerned with another of Henry's perennial requirements - the need to justify his assumption of supremacy - and testifies to the range of Morison's printed material. He was called upon to write short occasional pieces in English which were relevant to a particular set of circumstances that had suddenly arisen - as with his tracts on the Pilgrimage of Grace and its implications - but was also occupied in producing lengthy Latin works on more long term issues, as with Apomaxis.

In order to appreciate the range of specially commissioned material issuing from the king's propagandists, it is necessary to examine not the writings of one man, but such books as came from the king's official presses during the 1530's. The books printed by Thomas Godfray are particularly relevant in this context.

It is possible to connect Thomas Godfray with the organised printing and distribution of propaganda during the reign of Henry VIII. There is strong evidence to support the belief that Godfray was

constantly associated with the activities of Thomas Berthelet whose job, as king's printer after 1530, was to supervise and direct the printing of the vast number of proclamations and tracts which were prepared for publication as a result of the patronage of Henry, through his chief minister Thomas Cromwell. The first piece of evidence is derived from Leland, a contemporary of both printers, who appears to believe that the 1532 edition of Chaucer, which had been printed by Godfray, was in fact issued by Berthelet.⁴³ Secondly, there are significant similarities in the title-pages used in books printed by the two men. For instance, two books which have Godfray's name on the colophon - the 1532 Chaucer and A treatyse of the donation gyuen vnto Syluester, pope of Rhome (STC 5641) - both have the same title-page as a succession of books printed, bearing Berthelet's name, between 1530 and 1549. Similarly, Godfray's printed text of Giles Duwes' An introductorie for to lerne Frenche (STC 7377) uses a title-page which can also be found in books attributed to Berthelet's press which were printed as late as 1541.⁴⁴ Thirdly, the colophon of the 1536 edition of Dives and Pavper (STC 19214) declares that it was printed 'in aed.T.Bertheleti'. This is highly significant for, in the pagination of the book, there are several examples of the number 4 being misprinted as **f** on pp.14 and 40 for instance. Mention was made, in the opening chapter of the thesis, of the fact that this particular error is a characteristic of works printed by Godfray. Perhaps the most notable occurrence of the error is to be found in

The Fountayne or well of lyfe (STC 11211) in which there are 22 examples of the misprint in Sig.A. alone. Clearly in this instance, previously unnoted, the work has been printed for Berthelet by Godfray.

When examining this evidence as a whole, it is important to recall R. B. McKerrow's remark that:

When we find an early work described as 'printed by' a certain person, we cannot by any means always assume that it was actually the work of a press owned by him. It often means no more than 'printed for'.⁴⁵

Such a view certainly accords with the evidence set out above,⁴⁶ and can also be understood and accepted when it is set against what is known of Berthelet's position. The demands placed upon him, the sheer bulk of the material which he was asked to print at all hours of the day and night must have led to his assigning some work onto other reliable printers - such as Godfray. Acting in this capacity, Godfray may thus be regarded as a supplementary king's printer who sometimes set his own name in the colophon of works for whose printing he had been responsible, whilst on other occasions being content to assign the book either to 'in aed. Berthelet', or 'in the house of' that same printer. The use of identical title-pages seems to indicate that the two men may have pooled their equipment at some stage, thereby resulting in Godfray's use of what was predominantly Berthelet's title-page border.

A closer look at the books which came to be printed by Godfray under the arrangement with Berthelet reveals that a great many of them are precisely the sort of material which one would expect to find coming from an official propagandist press during the 1530's. The list of books with Godfray's name on the colophon includes:

<u>Date</u>	<u>STC</u>	<u>Title</u>
n.d.	16818	The pater noster spoken of the sinner: God answerynge him at euery peticyon.
153-	24462	A pathway into the holy scripture.
?1530	1911	An Epistle of saint Bernarde, called the golden epistle.
?1530	3816	The history of kyng Boccus, and Sydracke.
?1530	10489	An Epystell vnto Christofer bysshop of Basyle concernyng the forbedyng of eatynge of flesshe.
?1532	2371	The Psalter of Daudid in Englyshe.
?1532	2752	The proverbes of Solomon newly translated into Englyshe.
1532	5068	The workes of Geffray Chaucer.
?1532	10634	Exonoratorium Curatorum.
?1532	11211	The Fountayne or well of lyfe
?1534	3321	The boke of marchauntes.
1534	5641	A treatyse of the donation gyuen vnto Syluester, pope of Rhome.
?1534	7377	An introductorie for to lerne Frenche.
?1534	24463	A path way into the holy scripture
?1535	659	An answeare to a letter.
?1535	1915	Hereafter foloweth the golden epistle.
?1535	4240	A treatise concernynge impropriations of benefices.
?1535	4370	A dyalogue bitwene the playntife and the Defendaunt.
?1535	10084	A treatise concernynge diuers of the constitucyons prouynciall and legantines.
?1535	15988a	A primer in Englysshe.
?1535	21588	A treatyse concerninge the power of the clergie, and the lawes of the realme.
?1535	23963	Of the folowyng of Christe.

- | | | |
|------|-------|--|
| 1535 | 26119 | The forme and maner of subuention for pore people practysed in Hypres. |
| 1536 | 22575 | A sermon preached at Poules Crosse, 1535. |

A number of other books have been ascribed to Godfray's press in various catalogues:

- | | | |
|--------|-------|--|
| 21136] | 24460 | <i>The parable of the wicked manne (G. B. B. B.)</i> |
| ? | | Colyn Cloute. (Ames) |
| ?1533 | 11385 | An other boke against Rastel. (STC). |
| ?1533 | 11387 | A disputacion of Purgatorye. (STC). |
| ?1536 | 24448 | The Obedyence of A Christian man. (Quarritch). |

Mention should also be made of at least two books which, though not bearing Godfray's name in the colophon, exhibit the characteristic typographical error to be found in many books demonstrably printed by Godfray:

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| 1536 | 19214 | Dives and Pavper |
| ?1537 | 24239 | A treatise declaryng...that pycles and other ymages...ar in no wise to be suffred in the temples and churches of Christen men. |

An examination of the works listed above reveals immediately that by no means all of them are of a propagandist nature and there is no reason to assume that all or any of this non-controversial material was commissioned by the state. Thomas Godfray's activities as a printer of officially sponsored books need not have prevented him from continuing to derive an income from his private printing work. The sort of pieces which he seems to have put out as a private printer appear to reflect the popular tastes of Tudor readers. Several of his books, for instance, had already been printed on more than one occasion earlier in the century

and were clearly works of considerable popularity. His versions of Thomas a Kempis (STC 23963), Chaucer (STC 5068), and Peckham's Constitutions (STC 10634) come into this category. Amongst his other printed works, we find a French text-book (STC 7377) and a series of pietistic and moralistic treatises such as The Fountayne or well of lyfe, which consisted of a wide range of scriptural quotations illustrating moral commonplaces; The history of kyng Boccus and Sydracke, a work of over 350 pages, which consists of a seemingly unending succession of answers to all manner of questions concerning the world - its creator, its creation and its inhabitants; also two editions of St. Benedict's Golden Epistle (STC 1911, 1915), which set out the precepts by which a true follower of the contemplative life should live.

It is, of course, inevitable that in works of this nature, there is material which could be seen to imply criticism of the manner of contemporary religious (and secular) living. However, such criticism is in no way obtrusive, for it is positive precept which is constantly stressed. To regard their being printed as a controversial gesture involving Godfray and the state would be completely to misrepresent the essential character of the books.

The two editions of English Primers which Godfray printed raise different problems. The second of these, which seems to date from some time in 1534, may perhaps be said to represent a desire to tone down the characteristics of the earlier and more radical primers compiled by William Marshall and George Joye.⁴⁷ Joye's Primer, the Hortulus Animae, had been reprinted by Godfray in 1532 (STC 2371). Godfray's later

Primer retains some of the features of these editions - notably the omission of both the Litany and the Dirige, which were subsequently restored in the somewhat more conservative⁴⁸ second edition of Marshall's Primer in 1535. Nevertheless, Godfray does restore the more orthodox Calendar form - unglossed and in Latin - and rejects the various alterations involving the addition of Protestant saints and the omission of Catholic ones which were a characteristic of the Joye and Marshall versions. Godfray also has nothing to correspond with the rather tendentious Preface to be found in the first Marshall version. Godfray's Primer cannot strictly be thought of as an official publication - the first Primer bearing the king's name was not issued until 1545. It is not even certain whether the work was prepared by Godfray on his own initiative and can thus be said to represent his personal position - a cautiously radical one - with regard to various aspects of observance and worship, or whether it was given to him to print either by Cromwell, acting independently of the king, or by some private individual. It does seem fair to assume, however, that Godfray was not likely to print something with which he violently disagreed both because of his desire not to alienate the officials for whom he frequently worked, and also simply because he seems to have been sufficiently prosperous to enable him to pick and choose which work he wished to undertake. Thus the impression which the content of the Primer gives of a willingness to reexamine and, if necessary, to cast off some of the medieval accretions

in the form of contemporary worship, together with a wariness about too inflammatory an approach to this process, may well tell us something about the views of the man responsible for the first printed edition of the PlowT.

Turning now to more overtly controversial material it is clear that a sufficiently large number of significant propagandist works were printed by Godfray to confirm the external evidence already discussed concerning Godfray's connection with official channels of publication. Whilst there is a considerable range of style and content amongst these works, they all work, at their respective levels, towards a justification of the attitudes adopted by the king against the clergy and their adherents.

One of Godfray's earliest printed books - An epystell vnto Christofer bysshop of Basyle concernyng the forbedynge of eatynge of flesshe (STC 10489) - was characteristic of the early days of the Henrician propaganda movement when efforts were made, particularly by scholars such as Richard Taverner, to render more generally available English translations of the writings of Erasmus. There is clear evidence to link Cromwell with the efforts of Taverner to translate another Erasmian work, Epystle in laude and prayse of matrimony (STC 10492),⁴⁹ and it is reasonable to believe that Cromwell was also implicated in the publication of the Godfray volume. The epystell vnto Christofer has many of the characteristic Erasmian emphases. It stresses that adherence to the essentials of religious observance is infinitely more important than an

obsessive concern with what came to be known as adiaphora - things indifferent. Thus adherence to man-made laws concerning fasting, clerical chastity and holy days, for instance, should be exchanged for a renewed concentration on the enforcement of God's scriptural law. This same basic emphasis can be seen to underlie so much of the material printed by Godfray in later years, and indeed by all the royal printers throughout the 1530's.

Probably the most weighty and influential propagandist works printed by Godfray were three of Christopher St.German's most radical tracts,⁵⁰ in which the themes which are never far from the surface in all the propaganda printed by Godfray - the Royal supremacy and the untenable claims made by the church and pope for authority in England - are most fully and soberly dealt with. These are works which face up to the intellectual challenge of justifying by reasoned argument rather than by bland assertion the authority which was to be, or had already been, vested in the king by virtue of the 1534 legislation. The fullest statement of the apologist's position may be found in A treatyse concerninge the power of the clergye and the lawes of the realme (STC 21588), which includes a formidable array of scriptural passages in support of the king's position, and which discusses such controversial topics as the biblical basis of the medieval Two-Sword theory of government which had previously been cited as justification for the belief that a king's authority derived from the church and not directly from God.

St. German rejected this interpretation and was anxious to emphasise that the assumption of the supremacy by the king did not represent a departure from a previously existing situation but was rather a confirmation and codification of an authority which had been vested in monarchs since the time that God first granted it directly to them.

One particular section of the work - Chapter Seven - is concerned to examine the conflicting and incompatible claims of, on the one hand, the laws of the realm and the king's authority, and, on the other hand, the constitutions promulgated by the papal legates, Otho and Othobon. This theme is treated at greater length in St. German's A treatise concernynge diuers of the constitucyons prouynciall and legantines (STC 10084). The legantine claims are constantly shown to be unacceptable and erroneously based.

A third work of St. German's printed by Godfray was An answeere to a letter (STC 659), which is set out in the form of a series of lengthy replies to issues and questions which had been raised by a correspondent. This tract is particularly notable for its statement regarding the pope's - or, as he was now to be known, the Bishop of Rome's - position as a result of the king's refusal to recognise his authority within the realm. The change in the pope's title in itself reflects the change in attitude which had taken place. The pope was no longer regarded as head of the Universal church. His authority was now not only limited to a particular geographical area -

Rome - but also to just one part - the clergy - of the much wider body of Christian people who were now thought of as representing the church of Christ.

An answer does not deal exclusively with the Royal supremacy. It has sections on, amongst other things, saint-worship, pardons, and the exposition of scripture. Other controversial works printed by Godfray also range over a variety of issues, though in all of them there is some material which points more or less directly towards the justification of the supremacy. Some of these works celebrate the demise of clerical power and abuses; others look forward to such a demise in the future. Amongst the former, Godfray printed A dialogue bitwene the playntife and the Defendaunt (STC 4370), a work which the colophon attributes to William Calverley. This verse piece has the Defendaunt, representing Reason, explaining the fall of clerical authority:

Fortune pulled them nat from that place
It is the scourge of god, for that they lacked grace
(Sig.B.i^v)

and the poem's attitudes towards Rome and the king are fully representative of so much Henrician propaganda. Speaking of Rome, the poet declares:

To lyght is come all thy iniquite
Thy decrees sent forth in to euery countre
Suche as agreed nat with Christes scripture
Ar clene extyncke, no lenger may endure...
Iour hye prydes are now defaced (Sig.B.vi.)

and in the course of a long eulogy to the king, the poet discusses the obedience due to the supreme head of the church:

Thy obeysaunce playnly, at a worde
By god thou arte commaunded to owe in souerente
Unto thy kynge, thy gouernour and thy lorde
In payne of dedly synne, so he commaundeth the (Sig.B.vi^v)

This is a poem of celebration written in a style and at an intellectual level more accessible to ordinary folk than the weightier treatises of

St. German, which painstakingly explain and justify those positions which Calverley proclaims, without argument, as an accomplished fact.

Of the books which looked forward to reform in the future - books which appeared in anticipation of official action - Godfray printed The boke of marchautes (STC 3321), which attacks the clergy - those 'subtyll foxes' (Sig.A.v.), 'graete [sic] mastiues' (Sig.A.viii), and 'heuy wolues' (Sig.B.vi.) - whose custom it was to act like dishonest merchants dealing with spiritual goods. They sell that which they do not own and which they should not sell. Their every action is guided not by a concern for the spiritual welfare of the community but by an obsession with the acquisition of wealth. The writer has no doubt that the ordinary people who suffer from the whole variety of exactions imposed on them by the church are in need of relief. They are:

so drowned, shorne and deuoured, and from their god, so farre sette a syde, that it is nat possyble to beleue it. (Sig.A.vii^v)

The final call is to the laity:

What you noble and vertuous princes, lordes, and ladyes: why do ye nat loke on these marchautes? And yet, nat withstanding, that by pride, that they will nat be visited: yet haue you, whether thei wyll or no, auctorite ouer them, and vnto you, it appertaineth to chastyse, to correcte [text reads rorrecte] and to put downe the great excesse of suche theues. (Sig.C.i^v).

The book may thus be seen as preparing the way for official action, in the form of statutory legislation against the clergy.

The explaining and justifying to the community of official action against the monasteries was another task of the official propagandist, as we have already noted in the work of Morison. Henry's reportedly favourable reception⁵¹ of Simon Fish's A supplicacyon for the beggers

(STC 10883) in 1529 makes the publication, in 1534 of Sir Francis Bigod's A treatise concernynge impropriations of benefices (STC 4240) not at all surprising. Though less radical in import than Fish's work, which demanded the abolition of all monasteries, Bigod's tract,⁵² printed by Godfray, nevertheless stresses the harm done to the spiritual life of a community as a result of so many benefices having been impropriated to monastic houses which did not, in return for the revenues gained from each benefice, supply a cleric to minister to the communicants in the benefice. Though Bigod's attack is against the evils of these impropriations, rather than the evils of monasteries, and though his remedy envisages the removal of the system of excessive impropriations rather than the removal of monasticism, the treatise as a whole adds significantly to the weight of criticism against current monastic practice, criticism which must have been officially regarded as playing a significant part in the psychological preparation of much of the country for the eventual abolition of monasticism.

The way in which the population, particularly the oppressed, could benefit from the complete redistribution of monastic wealth had been shown, with the aid of some fairly primitive statistics, by Fish. The way in which the oppressed failed thus to benefit was a recurrent complaint of later writers such as the author of I playne Piers which can not flatter (STC 19903a), and Henry Brinkelow.⁵³ During the 1530's, however, hopes had not yet been dashed and there was an attempt to provide a theoretical rationale for the notion of wealth redistribution. Much of this propagandist theory harks back to the

basic belief that so many of the abuses, not just within the monasteries but in the church as a whole, could be traced to the initial endowment of the church with temporal goods. There were those amongst the clergy who had been prepared to cite the story of the Donation of Constantine to Pope Sylvester as a justification of clerical ownership of property. This story had as we have seen, been discredited during the fifteenth century and it was thus of great propaganda value to make available in print a concise summary of the evidence which had been brought against the story. So it was that Godfray printed A treatyse of the donation gyuen vnto Syluester, pope of Rhome (STC 5641), in which the evidence, particularly from the writings of Nicholas of Cusa and Lorenzo Valla, was set out.

The opportunity of citing, as authorities, the writers - whether named or anonymous - of previous ages was seldom missed either by the official Henrician propagandists of the mid 1530's or by those whose association with the official propaganda organisation cannot be firmly established. Three examples will serve to illustrate the activities of this latter group. In the Preface to The prayer and complaynt of the Ploweman unto Christ (STC 20036), the reader is assured that:

thou mayst se playnly that it is no newe thyng, but an old practyse of oure prelates lerned of their fathers the bysshops, pharyses and prestes of the olde lawe. to defame the doctrine of Christ with the name of newe lernynge, and the techers thereof with the name of new maisters.

(Sig.A.iii^v)

and the promise is made that:

if here after there shall chaunce to come into my handes any more suche holy relyques...I shall spare nother laboure nor cost to distrybute it in as many partes as I haue done this, by the helpe of god, to whome be all honour, glorye, and prayse for euer... (loc.cit.)

In another work, A compendious olde treatyse, shewynge, howe that we ought to haue the scripture in Englysshe, the reader is introduced to a passage 'more than an. C.yere olde'which claims, in its 'excusacyon of that treatyse', to tell the truth 'though I am olde, clothed in barbarous wede'.⁵⁴ In support of his contention that 'aforetymes against the spiritualte/Men dyd invey...',⁵⁵ the Husbandman in A proper dyaloge, betwene a Gentillman and a husbandman, quotes 'an olde treatyse made aboute the tyme of kynge Rycharde the seconde'.⁵⁶ It is clear that the antiquity of the language of these ancient tracts did not disqualify them from use. That the language of the late fourteenth century posed considerable difficulties for the Tudor reader is certain.⁵⁷ However, some texts - The prayer and complaynt, for instance - minimised the difficulties by including a table of obsolete words with their meanings, and all texts would gain from the overall caste of antiquity lent to the tract by its language - andperhaps this impression of age lent to the work an authority which more than compensated for the difficulties encountered from time to time in the reading of parts of the material.

Sometimes, such 'olde treatyses' must have been discovered as a

result of a search of libraries. More often, perhaps, they came to light as a result of information supplied to the authorities by a member of a family or community in whose possession the book had been since the early days of Lollardy. The case of the Lollards of Steeple Bumpstead is illuminating in this context. Two from that community - John Tyball and Thomas Hilles - journeyed to London in 1526 ostensibly for the purpose of purchasing a copy of the Tyndale New Testament. They brought with them 'certayne old bookes' which they showed to the Cambridge Lutheran Dr. Robert Barnes. Barnes treated their ancient literary relics with scorn on this occasion - Wycliffite scriptural translations clearly had a limited appeal for one who was labouring to publicise and sell the newer translation. It is, however, not hard to imagine different circumstances when more serviceable material would have met with a much more favourable reception in reforming circles when its existence was revealed.

Officialdom, too, placed great importance on harnessing the force of antiquity to their cause - in Pierre Janelle's words 'd'établir l'existence en Angletterre d'une 'continuité' anti-papale antérieure à la réforme'.⁵⁸ The search for historical support and precedent for a particular action resulted, for instance, in the ransacking of the great English and European university libraries by the King's representatives at the time of his protracted divorce proceedings.⁵⁹ Some of the material which was, from time to time unearthed, was printed. A notable example is Marsilius of Padua's

Defensor Pacis, which was translated by William Marshall and printed by Robert Wyer. The introduction describes the work as having been written 'more than two hundred yeres a go' by Marsilius - 'the noble and vertuous clerke' - in support of 'the most gentle prynce & Emperour Lewes of Bauary' in his dispute with the Pope. It was the continuity of the current Henrician struggle against the pope with similar struggles in the past which was emphasised, together with the fact that a distinguished scholar of a former generation held views which were in accord with the current views held by the king.

With other distinguished medieval writers, there were greater difficulties to be overcome before their works could be used as propaganda. Certain features of the political theory of both William of Ockham and John Wyclif would have served Henry's cause admirably had it been set down in print. Yet Henry seems to have wished to maintain, in his printed propaganda the combination of, in Janelle's words, 'l'orthodoxie dogmatique avec le pouvoir divin de princes'.⁶⁰ Thus Ockham, who accepted papal headship of the church, and Wyclif, who was tainted with heresy, were of limited usefulness to Henrician propagandists. The writings could either be ignored completely, or published in parts without identification of the author - a procedure which would allow the propagandists certainly to benefit from the content of a work, possibly to benefit from its acknowledged antiquity, without being able to benefit by citing the name of its distinguished author. The fact that none of Wyclif's Latin works

appeared in print during the years of Henry's reign indicates that the former course was adopted in his case. With Ockham, the situation is slightly different, if the attribution to him of the original Latin version of A dialogue betwene a knyght and a clerke concernynge the power spirituall and temporall⁶¹ is accepted, for this work was published by Berthelet in 1533. Two factors probably account for its publication. The work had already been translated at the end of the fourteenth century and, as a result, would require less preparation for the press than an untranslated Latin work. More importantly, the work is devoted to a refutation of the claim that 'spirituall power ruleth and gouerneth the temporalitie' (p.18). Its central theme may be summed up in the words of St. Paul which are quoted by the knyght (Miles):

Euery bysshop is taken of men, and ordeyned for men in that that longeth to God, and in that the spirituall power shall rule and gouerne vs and not in that that longeth to the worlde; for it longeth nat to holye churche to deeme in that that is outwarde. (p.18)

Moreover, the citing of precedents from the Old Testament to the effect that:

kynges ordeyned who shulde be priestes; but priestes dyd not ordeyne, who shuld be kynges. And priestes were not worshypped of kynges; but kynges and pryncis were worshypped of priestes and prophetes, and myghte calle them and commaunde them to do what pleased the kynges. (pp. 18-19)

meant that the publication of the dialogue, far from endangering Henry's position by publicising an Ockhamist statement of belief in the papal headship of the church, was an extremely desirable move from Henry's point of view.

The rationalisation of and justification for using, as official propaganda, parts of works whose authors were regarded as heretics by the church, was clear to Henry. In Thomas Starkey's Dialogue between Cardinal Pole and Thomas Lupset, Pole is accused by Lupset of approving 'the Lutherany's maner'⁶² of worship in churches, with its dislike of elaborate music and disapproval of the use of Latin. Pole's reply is significant:

I wyl not folow the steppys of Luther, whose judgement I estyme veray lytyl; and yet he and his dyscypullys be not so wykkyd and folysch that in al thyngys they erre. Heretykys be not in al thyngys heretykys.⁶³

Nevertheless, how much more effective for the royal cause would be works which, whilst not specifically commissioned, nevertheless combined a relatively acceptable (in official eyes) degree of theological orthodoxy, with an uncompromising attack on many of the claims and practices of the church.

Some material of this sort was immediately available, having been written in the king's court, a little before the days of concerted Cromwellian propaganda, by John Skelton. Whilst most of Skelton's verse was not printed before the end of Henry's reign, two pieces appeared in print during the most prolific propaganda years of the 1530's. One was Magnyfycence (STC 22607) which was printed by John Rastell in 1533. This work can scarcely be thought of as having received official encouragement, in view of its singularly unflattering portrait of its central character, Magnyfycence, whose identification with the king in 1516 (the probable date of the

work's composition) can hardly have been doubted.⁶⁴ However, a second work of Skelton's - Colyn Cloute - was printed, in an undated edition, by Thomas Godfray. This edition, of which only one copy now survives (in Woburn Abbey)⁶⁵ is not recorded in STC. The content of the poem admirably satisfies the requirements of doctrinal orthodoxy, for in it Skelton shows an intense detestation for those who 'haue a smacke/ Of Luthers sacke' (ll. 542-3),⁶⁶ and for the adherents of Wyclif, 'the deuelysshe dogmatista' (l.552), who 'clatter and carpe/Of that heresy...' (ll.549-50). In addition to its orthodoxy, the poem reinforces the sustained anti-clericalism in the community which had long been nourished by the covert circulation of Lollard writings, as well as by recently imported Lutheran material. Whatever complexities and tensions may be noted in the poem by modern critics,⁶⁷ it is certain to have been regarded by its Reformation readers as 'a sustained attack on a corrupt Church'.⁶⁸ For Tudor readers, the inconsistencies and confusions which such an interpretation holds for at least one modern critic would have been swallowed up in the sheer weight of material which was critical of all aspects of the secular and religious clergy. In particular, the rhetorical technique of prefacing criticism of something by a form of the phrase 'Some people say...' (as in ll.132, 639), would not have been regarded as an indication of Skelton's genuine desire to disassociate himself from the criticism being offered, or as a sign of his 'indecisiveness...the rhetorical

manifestation of a troubled soul'.⁶⁹ No such significance would have been attached, in the 1530's, to a technique already enjoying great popularity in the works of St. German, even to the extent of being parodied by Thomas More in his dispute with St. German.⁷⁰ Skelton must surely have been regarded as unequivocally pro-royalist and anti-clerical - precisely the characteristics that Cromwell was looking for in officially sponsored publications issuing from Godfray's presses.

Written before Skelton's poem was John Colet's celebrated Convocation Sermon which was delivered to the Convocation at St. Paul's in February, 1511-12.⁷² Like Skelton, Colet could have had no idea that his work was to enjoy a second life twenty years later as a piece of official government propaganda, and yet its content made it precisely the sort of piece which, brought to Cromwell's attention, was likely to find itself in the service of the state. Colet, addressing the gathering of bishops, strongly attacks their involvement in secular affairs which has led to a neglect of their true spiritual function - a neglect which he calls heretical in as much as it is wilfull and not born out of ignorance, for it represents a clear contradiction between their teachings and their actions. He reminds his audience of Christ's words:

The princis of people (sayth he) haue lordshyp of them, and those that be in auctorite haue power; but do ye nat so: but he that is greater amonge you, let him be minister; he that is highest in dignitie, be he the seruant of all men. The sonne of man came nat to be minystred vnto but to minstre.⁷³

and comments:

By whiche wordes our Sauour doth playnly teache that the maistry in the churche in none other thyng than a ministracion, and the hygh dignitie in a man of the churche to be none other thing than a meke seruice.⁷⁴

Colet's distinction between the rightful lordship of the 'princis of the people' within the community, and the 'meke seruice' which should characterise clerical activity was exactly the balance which the Cromwellian propagandists sought to stress. That they could cite in their own support, the words of a former Dean of St. Paul's, a distinguished servant of the same church with which they were now in conflict, must have made the 'resurrection' of Colet's sermon - it was printed in two editions by Thomas Berthelet in 1530 (STC 5550) - seem thoroughly worthwhile.

Colet's sermon came to enjoy this second life after twenty years apparently as a direct result of the activities of the Henrician propaganda organisation. Whether all the Lollard material, which underwent this same revivification over a hundred years after its composition, also received official sanction is more difficult to decide. It is fairly certain that several Lollard works were either printed abroad, or printed at home with a colophon stating that they were printed abroad, precisely because their editors and printers believed that they would not receive any sort of official favour. For instance, A compendious olde treatyse, A proper dialoge, betwene a Gentillman and a husbandman, The examinacion of Master William Thorpe and The prayer and complaynt of the Ploweman unto Christ were all printed in Antwerp, and the 1546 edition of the Wycliffite Wycket,

whilst it is attributed to the London press of John Day by the STC, declares itself to have been printed in Norenburgh (Nuremberg). With this last piece, the anticipation of official disfavour was well founded - it is difficult to believe that an extreme, sacramentalist interpretation of the Eucharist, strongly suggestive of the attitudes of the continental reformers, would ever receive official sanction. With the other works mentioned, there is no certain way of knowing how they were regarded during the peak propagandist years under Cromwell from about 1534 to 1540. Whilst it is true that both A proper dyaloge and The examinacion of Master William Thorpe were included in lists of proscribed books in 1531, and The proper dyaloge appeared in another list in 1542,⁷⁵ one wonders how zealously they were tracked down and destroyed during Cromwell's period of supremacy when so much that was in them must have seemed favourable to the Royal cause. Of other printed Lollard works, The Lanterne of Lizt was printed by Robert Redman who did some official printing for Berthelet before the end of his career.⁷⁶ However, if the STC is correct in its suggestion that the book was printed in 1530, then the work seems to antedate the main flood of officially printed material, and consequently, its connection with government propaganda is at best a marginal one. The fact that it does not seem to have been proscribed subsequently might indicate that, having seen it already in print, the Cromwellian propagandists were quite happy that it should remain in circulation.

As regards Jack Upland, it is again a little difficult to believe that its publication was the result of the government arranging to have printed a work which had chanced into its possession, for it is likely that they would have entrusted the work to someone with a record of greater respectability than John Gough, whose name appears on the colophon. Gough had been in trouble with the authorities in 1528 for allegedly trafficking in heretical books.⁷⁷ However, once in print, with Chaucer's name on the title-page, it seems likely that the book had a trouble-free passage through the censorial waters, and may thus, like The Lanterne, be thought of as officially favoured.

The Flowf was more than officially favoured. Here was a work which in every respect met the demands of the Henrician propagandist. It was anti-clerical, anti-episcopal, anti-monastic, anti-mendicant, anti-curial, anti-papal and pro-royalist. It avoided the doctrinal radicalism of The Wycket whilst retaining its caste of antiquity. It was a readable poem, within the limitations of its subject, and, the greatest bonus of all, it was to be known as Chaucer's. Thus, its publication in 1535, fresh from the press of one of the king's respected semi-official printers of propaganda, must at the time have been regarded by the Cromwellian propagandists as a major coup - a rich compensation for all the fruitless hours spent burrowing amongst the dusty, worm-infested manuscripts in this country and on the continent. If Cromwell could have known the subsequent history of the anonymous verse tract which, at the hands of his lieutenants,

Chapter 3 - Index

- 1. had become an integral part of the Canterbury Tales, one feels that like the Griffon he would have 'grynned as he were wode'.
proofs of having at the beginning of the volume... see J. G. Gillingham, Medieval and Modern Manuscripts (1983), I, 14, 27-8.
- 2. For what follows see particularly Gillingham, 'The Influence of the Book Trade before the Reformation of 1534', Manuscripta, 1968, 10, 1-12, 20-32, 54-55, 93-95, and 100-101, and Journal of Medieval Studies (New Series, 1984), pp. 11-12, 28-32.
- 3. As well as importing books printed in the continent, English printers also to have taken a list from their Italian partners and inserted their own material into some of the continental editions which had been printed and were circulating in this country - see P. G. Gasquet, The Rise of the Printing Press (1909), pp. 25-7, and details of two instances of material being thus incorporated into Richard Whittington's printed works.
- 4. See Gillingham, Books and their Readers before the Reformation, p. 25 (New York, 1970) reprinted ibid., II, 25-26. There is also an unexplained circulation of authors' writings via the route of a result of books being sold not only through regular channels, but also in market-places, and by travelling pedlars and hawkers.
- 5. See ibid., IV, 667.
- 6. List quoted ibid., IV, 670.
- 7. List quoted ibid., IV, 670.
- 8. Listed as original, revised and new editions. See Gillingham, ibid., IV, 670.
- 9. Gillingham, 'Notes on English Books Printed before the Reformation of 1534', Manuscripta, 1968, 10, 1-12, 20-32, 54-55, 93-95, and 100-101, and 'The School of Strasbourg and their Books', Manuscripta, 1970, 11 (1971), 102-10. Gillingham also mentions the contribution of some of Italy's Italian agents, Michele Marchi, who drew up, in the mid

Chapter 5 - Notes.

1. See, for instance, J.A.F.Thomson, The Later Lollards, pp.48, 83, 85, 88, 160, 171 - all examples of sixteenth century cases concerning Lollard books. The work of Thomson and A.G.Dickens has been largely responsible for correcting Gairdner's underestimation of the prevalence of heresy at the beginning of the sixteenth century - see J.Gairdner, Lollardy and the Reformation in England, 2 Vols. (1908), I, 14, 273-8.
2. For what follows see particularly A.W.Reed, 'The Regulation of the Book Trade before the Proclamation of 1538', Transactions of the Bibliographical Society, 15(1920), 157-184; also W.A.Clebsch, England's Earliest Protestants: 1520-1535 (New Haven, 1964), pp.11-13, 258-70.
3. As well as importing books printed on the continent, English protestants seem to have taken a hint from their Lollard forbears and inserted their own material into books of unimpeachable orthodoxy which had been printed and were circulating in this country - see F.A.Gasquet, The Eve of the Reformation (1900), pp. 232-3, for details of two instances of material having been interpolated into Richard Whitford's printed works.
4. See G.H.Putnam, Books and their Makers during the Middle Ages, 2 Vols. (New York, 1896-7; reprinted 1962), II, 216-54. Putnam shows how unprecedented circulation of Luther's writings was achieved as a result of books being sold not only through regular channels, but also in market-places, and by travelling pedlars and colporteurs.
5. See Foxe, IV, 667.
6. List quoted Foxe, IV, 679.
7. List quoted Foxe, IV, 685.
8. Listed in Political, Religious and Love Poems, ed. F.J.Furnivall EETS, OS 15 (1866), 34-5.
9. R.Steele, 'Notes on English Books Printed Abroad', Transactions of the Bibliographical Society, 11 (1911), 189-236, for details of books printed at the Marburg Press in Antwerp. See too S.H.Scott, 'The Schotts of Strassburg and their Press', Transactions of the Bibliographical Society, 11 (1911), 165-88. Scott mentions the activities of one of Wolsey's German agents, Hermann Rinck, who discovered, in the nick

of time, a thousand copies of William Roy's Rede me and be nat wrothe, an anti-clerical dialogue, which were ready for shipment to England.

10. Quoted Clebsch, England's Earliest Protestants, p.286. More's polemical refutations of Lutheranism are discussed pp.286-98; also R.Piness, Thomas More and Tudor Polemics (Bloomington, 1968), *passim*.
11. A comparison between two Royal Proclamations illustrates well one aspect of the form and date of the change in control. In Tudor Royal Proclamations, ed. P.L.Hughes and J.F.Larkin (New Haven, 1964), the contrast should be noted between Proclamation 129 (June, 1530) which still asks for prohibited books to be surrendered to the diocesan Bishop, or his commissary (p.195), and Proclamation 161 (January, 1536), in which it is a Bishop's prohibited writings - John Fisher - which are to be delivered up to the Lord Chancellor or to Thomas Cromwell, rather than to any ecclesiastical authority. See, too, J.Gairdner, Lollardy and the Reformation, II, 239, where he quotes a letter from Bishop Nix in which he complains that complete control of the circulation of erroneous books 'passeth my power, or any spiritual man' because people accused of possessing books of doubtful orthodoxy claim that they own them because 'the king's Grace would that they should'.
12. A useful recent account of Cromwell's career is A.G.Dickens, Thomas Cromwell and the English Reformation (1959, reprinted 1964).
13. This legislation is discussed by A.G.Dickens, The English Reformation (1964), pp.113-22.
14. R.Strong, Holbein and Henry VIII (1967), p.9.
15. Reproduced in black and white by Strong, p.9. On Treviso, see P.Founcey, 'Girolamo da Treviso in the service of Henry VIII', Burlington Magazine, 95 (1953), 208-11.
16. Strong, p.18.
17. Quoted in S.Anglo, 'An Early Tudor Programme for Plays and other Demonstrations against the Pope', Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 20 (1957), 179.
18. L. & P. xiv,i,1137. (Henry VIII)

- 19. L. & P. xiv, i, 1261. (Henry VIII)
- 20. Anglo, art. cit., 178.
- 21. One interesting ballad which has survived is A Ballad of Luther, The Pope, A Cardinal, and a Husbandman - see Thomas Percy, Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, ed. H.B. Wheatley, 3 Vols. (1886, reprinted New York, 1966), II, 127-30. From the contributions of all four speakers, it is clear that the poet sympathises with the Lutheran cause - see esp. ll. 49f.
- 22. For a detailed list of Bale's extant and lost plays, see Jesse W. Harris, John Bale: A Study in the Minor Literature of the Reformation (Urbana, Illinois, 1940), pp. 138-9. Bale was not alone in writing propagandist plays for Cromwell. Harris (p. 106) mentions the career of another such playwright - Thomas Wylley.
- 23. See above, pp. 209f. , for a discussion of the Croxton Play. For the stress placed on the role of the clergy in the life of Everyman, see Everyman, ed. A.C. Cawley (Manchester, 1961) - especially ll. 765-8. The propagandist aim of such plays is discussed by D. Bevington, Tudor Drama and Politics (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), pp. 35-41; R. Pineas, 'The English Morality Play as a Weapon of Religious Controversy', Studies in English Literature, 2 (1962), 557-80, shows how the Morality play was adapted to suit the needs of the Reformation when there were two conflicting theological systems which sought to indicate the true means of Everyman's salvation.
- 24. See John Bale King Johan, ed. J.H.P. Pafford, Malone Society Reprints (1931), xvii.
- 25. Ed. M.M.A. Schroeer (Halle, 1882). All further references are given after quotations in the text.
- 26. Thre Lawes, ed. Schroeer, p. 87, quotes the stage direction: 'Lete Idolatry be decked lyke an olde wytche, Sodomy lyke a monke of all sectes, Ambycyon lyke a byshop, Couetousnesse lyke a pharyse or spyrituall lawer, false doctryne, lyke a popysh doctour, and hypocresy lyke a graye fryre'.

27. Quotations are taken from Kyng Johan, ed. E. Creeth in Tudor Plays: An Anthology of Early English Drama (New York, 1966), pp. 101-213. The most recent discussions of Bale's plays are (briefly) D. Bevington Tudor Drama and Politics, pp. 96-105; and (more fully) Thora B. Blatt, The Plays of John Bale (Copenhagen, 1968). See, too, R. Pineas, 'William Tyndale's Influence on John Bale's polemical use of History', Archiv für Reformationgeschichte, 53 (1962), 79-96.
28. Cromwell received, in a letter from Sir William Eure, a detailed account of a performance of Sir David Lyndsay's Ane Satyre on the Thrie Estaitis which was given at Linlithgow Palace in 1540 - see The Works of Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, ed. D. Hamer, STS, Third Series., 4 Vols. (1930-4) II, 1-6
29. See J. Strype, Ecclesiastical Memorials, 6 Vols. in 3 (1822), I, 232.
30. See M. Maclure, The Paul's Cross Sermons 1534-1642 (Toronto, 1958) p. 3.
31. For accounts of some sermons preached at Paul's Cross during the decade after 1534, see Maclure, pp. 184-90. For a broader discussion of the use made of the pulpit by both pro and anti-Reformation forces, see J. W. Blench, Preaching in England in the late Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries (Oxford, 1964), pp. 247-56.
32. See especially A sermon preached at Poules Crosse, 1535 (STC 22575) which was 'A description of the Roman Church as Ishmael or servitude, and of the true Church as Isaac or freedom. The true Church has but now appeared in England. The sermon includes a vigorous attack upon Roman "superstitions", for example, purgatory, and a timely protest against chantry priests and monastic wealth.' (Maclure, p. 186). The preacher was Robert Singleton, and the printer was Thomas Godfray whose other printed works, including of course the PlowT, clearly mark him as an important link in the chain of Henrician propaganda.
33. In what follows, I have drawn extensively on the stimulating study by A. B. Ferguson, The Articulate Citizen and the English Renaissance (Durham, North Carolina, 1965).

34. In Langland's phrase - 'clerkes he [God] made/ For to conseilie the kyng and the comune saue', P.Pl.B.Prol.114-5.
35. See A.B.Ferguson's earlier work The Indian Summer of English Chivalry (Durham, North Carolina, 1960), esp. Chapters 4 and 6.
36. Ferguson, Articulate Citizen, p.141.
37. See W.G.Zeeveld, Foundations of Tudor Policy (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), for an account of the humanist circle centered around Cardinal Pole at Padua, and its relationship with the court in England. Other works dealing with the contribution of the humanists to the Henrician cause are F.L.Van Baumer, The Early Tudor Theory of Kingship (New Haven, Conn., 1940), and, more recently, J.K.McConica, English Humanists and Reformation Politics (Oxford, 1965), esp. Chapters 5 and 6.
38. McConica, p.16.
39. McConica, p.161.
40. On Morison's career, see W.G.Zeeveld, 'Richard Morison, Official Apologist for Henry VIII', PMLA, 55 (1940), 406-25; also Zeeveld's Foundations of Tudor Policy, esp. pp.157-89.
41. The best recent analysis of the Pilgrimage of Grace may be found in A.G.Dickens, Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York (Oxford, 1959).
42. Quoted Zeeveld, PMLA, 55 (1940), 413.
43. See Hammond, p.4, where Leland is quoted: 'Vicit tamen Caxodunicam editionem Bertholetus noster opera Gulielmi Thynni'.
44. Both these title-pages are described in R.B.McKerrow and F.S.Ferguson, Title-page Borders used in England and Scotland 1485-1640 (1932, for 1931), pp. 13f. (Number 16), and 16f. (Number 19).
45. R.B.McKerrow, An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students (Oxford, 1927 - reprinted 1967), p.176, n.2.

46. In the light of the 'evidence set out above', it is interesting to note Berthelet's words in his 1532 edition of Gower's Confessio Amantis (STC 12143). Berthelet refers to a new edition of Chaucer 'nowe of late put forthe together [sic] in a fayre volume' (Sig.aa.iii^v). J.H.Fisher, John Gower: Moral Philosopher and Friend of Chaucer (1965), p.17, remarks that Berthelet's words 'hardly read like an advertisement for a rival printer'. It does seem that Berthelet and Godfray were indeed partners rather than rivals.
47. Details of these and the later Primers are given by C.C.Butterworth, The English Primers (1529-45) (Philadelphia, 1953); also Helen C.White, The Tudor Books of Private Devotion (Wisconsin, 1951), esp.pp.53-118. Godfray's Primer is described by Butterworth, pp.70-8.
48. More conservative in content only. The restorations are made grudgingly and the tone of the Prefatory and later material is even more tendentious than it was in the earlier Marshall Primer - see Butterworth, p.104f.
49. See McConica, pp.117-9 for a discussion and description of both works.
50. These are discussed by H.Le Van Baumer, 'Christopher St.German: The Political Philosophy of a Tudor Lawyer', American Historical Review 42 (1937), 631-51.
51. See Foxe, IV, 656-8.
52. Discussed by Dickens, Lollards and Protestants, pp.69-74.
53. In The co-Plaint of Roderick Mors for the redresse of certeyn wycked lawes (STC 3760).
54. All quotations from the text printed in English Reprints, ed.E.Arber, 28 (1871), 170-1.
55. English Reprints, ed.E.Arber, 28 (1871), 162.
56. English Reprints, ed.E.Arber, 28 (1871), 150. The old treatise referred to, which is quoted in part, is printed in full in Mathew, English Works of Wyclif, pp.359-96. The section quoted begins in the Mathew text on p.382.

57. See Nicholas Udall's remark, made in 1550, about the language of Chaucer, Gower and Lydgate 'whom some euen of the learned sorte doe in some places scarcely take'; also Peter Ashton's comment, in 1546, that Chaucer's language 'by reason of antiquitie be almost out of vse'. Both statements are quoted in A Seventeenth-Century Modernisation of the First Three Books of Chaucer's 'Troilus and Criseyde', ed. H.G.Wright (Bern, 1960), p.8. Also worthy of mention is the comment of Robert Crowley in his Prefatory remarks to the 1550 edition of The Vision of Pierce Plowman: 'The Englishe is according to the time it was written in, and the sense somewhat darcke, but not so harde, but that it may be understande of suche as will not sticke to breake the shell of the nutte for the kernelles sake' (Sig. *ii^v).
58. P.Janelle, L'Angleterre Catholique a la veille du Schisme (Paris, 1935), p.236.
59. See J.J.Scarisbrick, Henry VIII (1968), pp.255-6; 265-6; also his 'Henry VIII and the Vatican Library', Bibl. d'Humanisme et Renaissance, 24 (1962), 211-16. For evidence of Henry's interest in Wyclif's ideas, see L. & P., 22 Henry VIII (1530-1), Items 6546, 6656.
60. Janelle, p.238.
61. Printed in Dialogus inter Militem et Clericum: Richard FitzRalph's Sermon: 'Defensio Curatorum'; and Methodius: 'De Bygynnyng of 'De World and 'De Ende of Worldes (Translations by John Trevisa), ed. A.J.Perry, EETS, OS 167 (1925, for 1924), 1-38. All references given after quotations in the text.
62. England in the reign of King Henry the Eighth, Part II, ed. J.M.Cowper, EETS, ES 32 (1878), 134, l.1197.
63. Op.cit., p.135, ll.1218-22.
64. In the play, Magnyfycence comes to be dominated by such unsavoury influences as Clokyd Colusyon, Fanny, Counterfet Countenance and Crafty Conueyaunce, to the exclusion of Measure. Divorced from reality, Magnyfycence comes to believe that he can dominate Fortune itself, a belief which is rudely shattered by the appearance, first of Aduersyte, then of Pouerte, and, eventually, of Dyspare before he is finally brought to a realisation of his errors by Redresse and Sad Cyrccumspeccyon. Whilst it would have been possible for a reader

to associate the various evils afflicting Magnyfycence with the king's unsatisfactory counsellors - including the clergy - much of the implied criticism in the play falls on the king himself. In 1516, as well intentioned monitory advice to a relatively new monarch, the play must have seemed to have a clear relevance to the contemporary situation. By 1533, however, its publication can hardly be thought of as making a substantial contribution to a propaganda campaign, one of whose aims was to justify the assumption of Royal supremacy. See The Poetical Works of John Skelton, ed. A.Dyce, 2 Vols. (1843 - reprinted New York, 1965), I, 226-310.

65. The copy is noted by W.Nelson, John Skelton, Laureate (New York, 1939 - reprinted 1964), p.228, note 25, and is described in J.Ames, Typographical Antiquities (Augmented by T.F.Dibdin) III (1816), 71.
66. Quotations are from The Poetical Works of John Skelton, ed.A.Dyce, I, 331-2.
67. Notably S.E.Fish, John Skelton's Poetry (New Haven, 1965). The most effective recent study of Colyn Cloute (including a brief analysis of its Lollard antecedents) is A.R.Heiserman, Skelton and Satire (Chicago, 1961), esp. pp. 190-243.
68. Fish, John Skelton's Poetry, p.241.
69. Fish, John Skelton's Poetry, p.183.
70. For a discussion of the 'Some say...' technique as used by St.German and Thomas More, see R.Pineas, 'Sir Thomas More's Controversy with Christopher Saint-German', SEL, 1 (1961), esp. 52-3, 56-7.
71. Some material - notably Vox Populi Vox Dei and The Image of Ypocresye - is best described as attributed to, or influenced by, rather than written by Skelton. These two pieces, together with many other shorter poems not attributable to Skelton but dating from 1520-40 and written by poets of similar sympathies to those of Skelton have been gathered together in Ballads from Manuscripts, ed. F.J.Furnivall (for The Ballad Society), I (1868). The age-old theme of clerical abuses combines with more contemporary material concerning Wolsey and Luther. See, in particular, the poems which Furnivall has entitled Now a Dayes, Against the Blaspheming English Lutherans and the Poisonous Dragon Luther, Of the Cardnall Wolse, An Impeachment of

Wolsey. The volume as a whole bears witness to the amount of poetic activity associated with the Reformation controversy, as well as illustrating the continuity of medieval anti-clerical criticism into the Tudor period. So much of the material found in so many of the poems in the collection is, in subject matter, identical with pieces written any time in the previous four hundred years.

72. Printed as Appendix C in J.H.Lupton, A Life of John Colet, D.D., (First edition, 1887; Second edition, 1909 - reprinted Hamden, Connecticut, 1961), pp.293-304.
73. Lupton, Colet, p.295.
74. Lupton, Colet, p.235.
75. The 1542 list is printed in Foxe, V, Appendix X (no page number).
76. E.G.Duff, The Printers, Stationers and Bookbinders of Westminster and London from 1476 to 1535 (Cambridge, 1906), p.176, notes that Redman and Thomas Petyt were engaged on the printing of a folio edition of the Bible for Berthelet - this was Redman's last important work.
77. See E.G.Duff, A Century of the English Book Trade (1948), p.58.

The text: Principles

The text in the present edition has been based, in accidentals, on G, with the exception of the first 36 lines of the Prologue which, missing from G, have been taken from Th1, the next earliest printed text. The editor has felt free to adopt such substantive variants from any of the later printed texts (and from the MS) which render meaningful lines which were otherwise unintelligible or clearly unsatisfactory in their G form. A full collation of all the printed versions of the poem reveals that most of the printed texts are entirely derivative and represent, essentially, reprints rather than new editions. Apart from occasional misprints and minor accidental variants, H Th St and Spl derive from Th1; SAC derive from U; and Wr derives from Sp3. The only texts in which, occasionally, interesting substantive variants occur are MS Sp2 O6 U and Sk and significant variants from these texts are recorded in the commentary, as are the interesting suggested emendations of Franciscus Junius in his annotated edition of Chaucer which is in the possession of the Bodleian Library (MS. Junius 9). Occasionally, too, the modernisation of parts of the text carried out by William Vaughan in his The Golden Fleece are recorded for the light which they throw upon doubtful readings or meanings.

It became the practice of editors - notably Urry and Skeat - to emend the text by both additions and omissions in order to produce octosyllabic lines. No such practice has been attempted in the present edition. Quite apart from the difficulty of assessing the force of the final e- in lines composed at a time when the earlier inflexional systems of Middle English were fast decaying, it seems to the present editor inappropriate to impose

so rigid a syllabic pattern on a poem which, even in its sixteenth century form (by which time attempts to regularise the metre may already have taken place) often resists such constriction. Though the alliteration in the FlowT does not maintain the consistency it achieves in the early stanzas, and though it must be seen basically as decorative rather than strictly functional, it is nevertheless likely that the FlowT, in its original form, was governed less by continental ideas of syllabic regularity and more by native rhythmic influences. In short, the present editor believes that the poem, in so far as it has any discernible governing metrical principle, is written in four stress lines rather than in lines which sought to be octosyllabic.

Only rarely, too, has any attempt been made to follow Skeat's example by 'restoring' so-called original spelling forms in the text. Occasionally when, by so doing, an apparently poor rhyme can be shown to have been acceptable in its 'original' form, such restoration has been undertaken, but generally the editor has aimed to reproduce a version of the FlowT as it was made accessible to the sixteenth century reader.

In the treatment of the G base text, the capitalization has generally (though not always) been maintained, but the punctuation and uncertain word division have been altered so as to render the text more meaningful to the modern reader. The punctuation is, to an extent, based on that of Sk, though there are some significant differences. The old forms of long g, initial y for u, and medial u for y have been modernised in both the text and, with one exception (1.1011), the variants appended to the text, though the old forms of u and y have been retained in the lists of variants set out and discussed later in this section. No attempt has been made to

reproduce G's marginal attributions of speeches to the two disputants and the Flowman except on the rare occasions when the identity of the speaker is not made absolutely clear in the text. The stanzaic indentations of G have not been reproduced.

The authority of the Texas MS.

Lastly, some account is necessary of the reasons why the Texas MS. has not been used as the base text for the current edition in view of the claims made for its authority by Mrs. Annie S. Irvine (1). Mrs. Irvine believes that the MS text is independent of any known printed text and that it derives from an earlier MS which is no longer extant. In short, she believes that the Texas MS. represents the earliest extant form of the FlowT.

Three categories of evidence are cited in support of this theory.

Firstly, from an analysis of the spelling differences between MS G and Th1, she observes that the MS:

differs from the other two versions more than three times as often as the latter two differ from each other. In lines 101-200, for example, the spelling in the MS. differs from that in the 1535 edition 189 times, and from that in the 1542 edition 194 times; whereas these two printed editions differ from each other only 61 times. (pp.37-8)

and concludes:

Although the unsettled state of spelling during the Middle English period makes it impossible to attach great significance to any one of these variations, at least two conclusions from this study seem to me inevitable: (1) the variations in spelling in the MS. are not due to the normal development of spelling later than 1542; (2) the very large number of differences in spelling between the MS. and the other two versions makes it difficult to believe that the MS. was copied directly from either of them, or vice versa (240)

Neither of these conclusions seems, to the present editor, tenable.

It simply is not possible to talk with any meaningful degree of conviction about 'the normal development of spelling later than 1542' as a criterion

in the dating of the Texas MS. spellings. If it were a question of development over 200 years, then some conclusions would clearly be possible, but, on the best evidence available to the present editor, the handwriting will not admit the possibility of the MS having been written much after the end of the sixteenth century, at the latest, with the result that it seems certain to have been written during a period characterised by such instability in spelling that every one of the spellings listed as 'striking' by Mrs. Irvine would be quite likely to occur. (2). There is no evidence to suggest that the MS spellings represent exclusively medieval spellings. Secondly, though, as we shall see, Mrs. Irvine is probably correct in believing that the Texas MS. was not copied directly from any known printed text, it is quite unsatisfactory to try to prove this fact by the number of spelling variants for, in this way, no account is paid to the particular eccentricities in spelling which may have been peculiar to the Texas scribe. For a scribe who had not been subjected to a lengthy and consistent training in the orthographical characteristics of a particular scriptorium, and for a scribe whose transmission of words from his copy to his own text was still based largely upon auditory rather than visual recollection of the words (3), any number of spelling variants might be possible without justifying the conclusion that he had not copied a particular poem from a particular MS. Thus, to the present editor, neither of the conclusions which Mrs. Irvine derives from her exhaustive examination of the spellings seems tenable.

The second category of evidence concerns various mechanical differences between the three versions which she analyses. Mrs. Irvine notes a few differences in the division of words between the MS on the one hand, and

the two printed texts on the other; there are two instances of the MS reversing the order of two words in a phrase; there are differences in the capitalization and punctuation characteristics of the MS when compared with the printed texts; and there are also differences in the use of abbreviations. Once again, however, all these differences need be of no significance at all in deciding the derivation of the MS text. The particular copying habits of one scribe would fully explain these mechanical variations between the texts.

It is in the analysis of the substantive variants that the most important part of Mrs. Irvine's work may be found. Here again she organises her material into several categories. Firstly she lists several errors which occur in the two printed versions but not in the MS, and states that in each case the MS reading is correct. She concludes:

The existence of these errors in both the 1535 and the 1542 editions seems to me to be very strong evidence that the 1542 edition was based on the 1535 edition, and that the MS., which, in every one of these passages, has the correct reading, could not have been copied from either of the other two versions. (p.45)

It cannot be accepted that the MS has the correct reading in every case - in 1.929 for instance - but several of the variants are worth considering:

- 57. ungrounde / MS on Grounde
- 58. scuble / MS scuple
- 73. Iclepeth G : I clepeth Thl / MS Icleped
- 533. Dyuers / MS dines
- 929. sewe / MS shewe
- 1305. Pelican wrongly prefixed to 1.1305 instead of 1.1303 / MS is correct.
- 1322. they / MS the

All but one of these mistakes were 'corrected' in Sp2, and the other - 1.1322 - was corrected in Th2, and it is in these 'corrections' that the answer to Mrs. Irvine's conclusions may be found. It was evidently possible for nearly all these mistakes to be corrected by one man at the first major re-examination of the text which had taken place since Th1. Mrs. Irvine clearly believes that such corrections could not have been made by a scribe. However, the assumption that the best readings must necessarily be the earliest readings has been shown to be fallacious often enough in recent years for Mrs. Irvine's position to be viewed with scepticism. By no means all scribes were bone-headed automatons who copied more or less everything that was placed before them in their exempla and whose only variations from that exempla were errors. The work of Professor Kane on the Piers Plowman manuscripts is sufficient to show that many scribes were intelligent people who were quite capable of correcting what they thought to be errors as they went along (4). Thus the existence in the printed versions of 9 errors which do not occur in the MS proves nothing - it could mean that the MS was copied from an earlier MS no longer extant, but it could just as easily prove that the MS was copied from G or Th1 by a scribe with as much intelligence as Speght was to show in 1602.

Exactly the same possibility exists when other categories of variant are examined. The following underlined words, not occurring in G and Th1, have been added in MS:

- 5. ben full feble
- 39. to greate payne
- 176. att the full
- 221. aboue hem all

- 246. swerde sothely he shall
- 289. to them hym shrives
- 332. such falsehode shall
- 497. trougthe dothe Glene
- 621. att the laste
- 647. thes men misqueme
- 656. maysterfully ye more
- 673. go forthe a straye
- 695. at the last
- 862. or of an
- 927. kissen, to Counte
- 1109. pelicane seyd & cast
- 1197. in anye mysse manere
- 1228. butt thatt me
- 1309. byrde that flyeth

In nearly every one of these variants, the words of Professor Kane should be borne in mind:

In general they (scribes) were anxious to make the text more easily intelligible. To this end they very often made its utterance more explicit, changing its wording so that relationships of meaning were more fully expressed. (5)

In this way these variants can be explained, without resorting to the belief that the additional words must mean that the Texas scribe was copying from an unknown source which contained these words. Mrs. Irvine's statement that 'the additional words in most cases improve the sense or the meter of the lines in which they occur' (p.47) hardly constitutes proof of her thesis, as Professor Kane has demonstrated.

Another category of evidence consists of words which have been omitted

from the MS though they are found in one or other or both the printed versions. In the following list, the word underlined is the word omitted in the MS:

4. in the grasse Thl
 14. and all forswatte Thl
 27. to go to the plowe Thl
 160. as it were made of G Thl
 350. he maye money pay G Thl
 442. is he cleped G Thl
 547. folke for to shoue G Thl
 578. swerde that contende G Thl
 604. god may well amende G Thl
 610. In all that Christ G Thl
 672. vsen it forthe G Thl
 766. thyder ne sende G Thl
 834. whether that I lye G Thl
 865. beren yuell heuyn (G) heauen (Thl) Kay G Thl
 989. began for to threte G Thl
 1200. this (G): thys (Thl) is my tale G Thl
 1212. and all the other G Thl
 1238. leaue for to preche (G) preache (Thl)
 1276. line omitted in MS.

Mrs. Irvine is probably correct when she cites carelessness as the major cause of omission, and even the three instances which she cites - 11.27, 766, 1200 - as examples of the MS reading being preferable, are open to question for there would be many prepared to state that the reading in the

printed texts is preferable. At all events, none of the variants listed above need in any way be thought of as evidence that the MS. was copied from an independent source.

Mrs. Irvine also admits that the 5 lines (in fact there are at least 9) in which G has a singular noun, and the MS a plural, and the 4 lines (in fact there are at least 6) in which the reverse is the case, throw no light on the relationship of the MS to G and Th1, but proceeds then to list a further series of lines in which the MS differs from the other two printed texts, which are alike. Set out below is an emended version of this list of variants:

- 6. on / Of Th1
- 55. sides / sydes G : sedes Th1
- 60. mvste / mote G Th1
- 69. Thatt / The G Th1
- 115. fflye / flee G Th1
- 141. ponysheth / ponysshed G : punyshed Th1
- 161. butt / both G Th1
- 162. And / With G : with Th1
- 183. a / her G Th1
- 275. thatt / from G Th1
- 282. shippes / shepes G : shyppes Th1
- 336. who / wo G Th1
- 346. Corall / christall G Th1
- 433. them semethe / they seme G Th1
- 438. they / there G Th1
- 463. me thynke / Me thynketh G Th1

523. sett itt to / sette in to G Thl
542. Carectes / careckes G Thl
626. sothfastnes / sothnesse G Thl
652. amande / mende G Thl
659. his / Her G Thl
740. seke / syke G Thl
755. leffe / lele G Thl
790. or / and G Thl
921. hedes / dedes G Thl
943. thes / the G Thl
969. heddes / dedes G Thl
972. mote / must G : muste Thl
996. suche / so G Thl
1000. in (b) / and G Thl
1006. & / or G Thl
- 1050-1. Cherchliche : Churchelich / chereyche : churlyche
G Thl
1079. lede / reed G Thl
1084. mote / must G Thl
1090. men / hem G Thl
1141. ye / He G Thl
1158. ayen / ayenst G Thl
1162. no / none G Thl
1205. doo yuell homage / do the deuyll (G), deuell (Thl)
homage G Thl
1219. maystrie / mastry G : mystrye Thl
1222. substans / subgette G Thl

1223. alyue / on lyue G Th1

1322. the / they G Th1

1347. fflee / flye G Th1

1368. the / these G Th1

All but a handful of these variants in the MS text are minor changes which make little difference to the sense of the line and which could very easily be thought of as accidental or habitual substitutions by the scribe rather than as accurate reproductions of the forms of some unknown exempla. Of the remainder, a few (ll. 141, 542, for instance) represent obvious corrections; ll. 523, 1205 can be attributed to faulty auditory transmission of the original form by the scribe; the two forms of l. 626 were both in common use until the end of the sixteenth century and the use by the Texas scribe of one rather than the other could well merely reflect that scribe's customary practice. As for the few instances where the differences between the readings seem more extensive, they still fall far short of constituting evidence for the MS having been copied from an earlier MS which is no longer extant. For instance, in l. 1050-1, the scribe's alterations can be seen as one attempt (other editors made several others) to make sense of two difficult lines - it is worth noting that his suggested emendations for l. 1051 is a word unrecorded in the OED before 1593. In l. 1222 we may well have an example of the phenomena noted by Professor Kane (6) in which a scribe becomes so involved with his material that he comes to substitute for the form in his exempla, a form which is more meaningful to him. In this case, both words were in common use during the sixteenth century in the vocabulary of Eucharistic discussion, but it may well be that the Texas scribe habitually used the alternative form from that found in G and Th1, and so substituted it

in his copy.

There are, however, one or two interesting hints in the list of variants which suggest that the Texas MS. was in fact copied from a MS. The substitution in 1.346 could be explained by taking the MS reading to be an incorrect expansion of some contracted form of christall; 1.659 could be a misreading of a MS g for a long g. The most important single piece of evidence - one which is not given the prominence it deserves by Mrs. Irvine - concerns the MS form sanctissung (1.230). A contracted form of sanctissimus in a MS might well read something like sanctissim², and it is not difficult to see how such a form could be misunderstood with the m taken as un, and the 2 written low on the line as a g. Neither G nor Thl has an abbreviated form, which suggests very strongly, therefore, that the Texas MS. was copied from some other (MS) exempla.

There is no indication, however, as to whether the MS exempla used by the Texas scribe was written before or after the publication of G cl535. The handwriting cannot be dated with sufficient accuracy to be of assistance. It seems to the present editor quite likely that the Texas MS. is a copy of a MS which itself was copied from one of the early printed editions. This would certainly account for the various divergences in spelling and the mechanical errors in copying. There is certainly no way of proving that the Texas scribe's exempla was written before G, and that fact, taken with the absence from the Texas MS. of any really major and significant textual variants, renders the Texas MS. claims to be taken as the base text for the present edition much less strong than Mrs. Irvine would seem to imply. So it is that, in the present edition, G - about

about whose genesis rather more is known - has been taken as the base text as regards accidentals, and the substantive variants of MS have been taken with those from all the other printed texts and considered solely in the light of which reading renders a particular line more meaningful than the base text reading.

- (1) See F. F. Kelly, *Development of the English Language* (Oxford, 1965), pp. 141-47. Though various systems were employed during the sixteenth century with the aim of regularising spelling their effect was not widespread by the end of the century.
- (2) R. J. Barlow, *English Spelling in 1500* (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 1-10.
- (3) *English Spelling*, ed. G. S. Jones (1971), pp. 1-10. See also Kelly in 1965, pp. 141-47. For a discussion of the development of the spelling system see Kelly, *English Spelling* (1971), pp. 1-10.
- (4) *English Spelling*, ed. Jones, p. 11.
- (5) *English Spelling*, ed. Jones, p. 12.

- (1). Annie S. Irvine, 'A Manuscript Copy of "The Plowman's Tale"', University of Texas Studies in English, 12 (1932), 27-56. All subsequent references will be given after quotations in the text. The categories of variants suggested by Mrs. Irvine, and the contents of her lists have been used as a convenient basis for the discussion in the present section, though occasional omissions, additions and corrections have been made in the light of the present editor's full collation of all the texts under discussion.
- (2). See E. F. Jones, The Triumph of the English Language (Paperback Edition - Stanford, California, 1966), pp. 142-67. Though various systems were propounded during the sixteenth century with the aim of regularising spelling, their effect was not widespread by the end of the century.
- (3). H. J. Chaytor, From Script to Print (Cambridge, 1945), pp. 5-21.
- (4). Piers Plowman: The A Version, ed. G. Kane (1960), esp. pp.128f. The same point is made by E. T. Donaldson in his entertaining article, 'The Psychology of Editors of Middle English Texts', English Studies Today, Fourth Series (Rome, 1966), pp. 45-62.
- (5). Piers Plowman, ed. Kane, p. 136.
- (6). *Op.cit.*, pp. 136-7.

Here begynneth the Plowmans Prologue.

The Plowman plucked up his plowe,
 Whan mydsommer mone was comen in,
 And sayd his beestes shuld eate ynowe,
 And lyge in the grasse up to the chynne;
 They ben feble both oxe and cowe,
 Of hem nys left but bone and skynne;
 He shoke of share and cultre ofdrowe,
 And honge his harneys on a pynne.

5

He toke his tabarde and his staffe eke,
 And on his heed he set his hat,
 And sayde he wolde saynt Thomas seke,
 On pylgremage he goth forth platte;
 In scrippe he bare both breed and lekes,
 He was forswonke and all forswatte;
 Men might have sene through both his chekes,
 And every wang toth and where it sat.

10

15

Our hoste behelde wele all about,
 And sawe this man was sunne ybrent;
 He knewe well by his senced snoute,
 And by his clothes that were to-rent,
 He was a man wont to walke about,
 He nas nat alway in cloystre ypent;
 He coulde not religiouslyche loute,
 And therefore was he fully shent.

20

1 The)THE Th1/ 2 Whan)whan Th1 / 7 ofdrowe) of drowe Th1 /
 20 to-rent) to rent Th1

Our host him axed, 'what man art thou?' 25
 'Syr', quod he, 'I am an hyne;
 For I am wont to go to the plowe,
 And erne my meate yer that I dyne;
 To swete and swynke I make avowe,
 My wyfe and chyldren therwith to fynde; 30
 And serve God as I wyst howe;
 But we leude men bene full blynde.

For clerkes saye we shullen be fayne
 For her lyvelod swet and swynke;
 And they ryght nought us gyve agayne, 35
 Neyther to eate ne yet to drinks;
 They mowe by lawe, as they sayne,
 Us curse and dampne to helle brinke;
 Thus they putten us to payne,
 With candels queynte and belles clynke. 40

They make us thralles at her lust,
 And sayne we mowe nat els be saved;
 They have the corne and we the dust,
 Who speketh theragayn they say he raved.

31 as) and Th1 / 44 theragayn) ther agayn G

'What, man', quod our host, 'canst thou preche? 45
 Come nere and tell us some holy thyng.'
 'Syr', quod he, 'I herde ones teche
 A preest in pulpyt a good prechyng.'
 'Say on', quod our host, 'I the beseche.'
 'Syr, I am redy at your byddyng; 50
 I pray you that no man me reproche
 Whyle that I am my tale tellyng.'

Thus endeth the prologue, and here foloweth the fyrst parte
 of this present worke.

A Sterne stryfe is stered newe,
 In many stedes in a stounde;
 Of sondrie sydes that be sewe, 55
 It semeth that some ben unsounde;
 For some be great growen on grounde,
 Some ben souple, symple and small;
 Whether of hem is falser founde,
 The falser, foule mote hym befall. 60

That one syde is that I of tell,
 Popes, cardynals and prelates,
 Parsons, monkes and Freres fell,
 Priours, abbottes of great estates;
 Of hevyn and helle they kepe the yates, 65
 And Peters successours they ben all;
 This is demed by olde dates;
 But falshed, foule mote it befall.

45 quod) q / 53) G r.h.margin reads Narratio. / 57 on grounde)
 ungrounde G / 58 souple) souble G / 68 befall) be fall G

The other syde ben poore and pale,
 And people put out of prease, 70
 And seme caytyffes sore acale,
 And ever in one without encrease;
 Icleped lollers and londlese;
 Who toteth on hem they ben untall;
 They ben arayde all for the pease; 75
 But falshed, foule mote it befall.

Many a countrey have I sought,
 To knowe the falsen of these two;
 But ever my traveyle was for nought,
 All so ferre as I have go. 80
 But as I wandred in a wro,
 In a wodde besyde a wall,
 Two foules sawe I sytte tho;
 The falsen, foule mote hym befall.

That one dyde plede on the Popes syde, 85
 A Gryffon of a grymme stature;
 A Pellycane withouten pride,
 To these lollers layde his lure;
 He mused his mater in measure,
 To counsayle Christ ever gan he call; 90
 The Gryffon shewed as sharpe as fyre,
 But falshed, foule mote it befall.

71 acale) a cale G / 73 Icleped) Iclepeth G / 77 I) a G /
 86) G l.h.margin reads Gryffon. / 92 befall) be fall G

The Pellycan began to preche
 Bothe of mercy and of mekenesse,
 And sayd that, 'Christ so gan us teche, 95
 And meke and mercyable gan blesse;
 The Evangely bereth wytnesse,
 A lambe he lykeneth Christ overall,
 In tokenyng that he mekest was,
 Sith pride was out of hevyn fall. 100

And so shulde every Christned be;
 Preestes, Peters successours,
 Be lowlyche and of lowe degre,
 And usen none erthly honours,
 Neyther crowne, ne curious covertours, 105
 Ne pelure, ne other proude pall,
 Ne nought to cofren up great treasours;
 For falshed, foule mote it befall.

Preestes shulde for no catell plede,
 But chasten hem in charite; 110
 Ne to no bateyle shulde men lede,
 For inhaunsyng of her owne degre;
 Nat wylne syttynges in hys see,
 Ne soverayntie in house ne hall;
 All worldly worshyppe defye and flee; 115
 For whoso wylleth highnes, foule shal fall.

93) G l.h.margin reads Pellycan / 98 overall) over all G /
 103 Be) Beth G / of lowe) oflowe G / 106 pelure) pylloure G /
 116 whoso) who so G

Alas, who may suche sayntes call
 That wylmeth wolde ertly honour?
 As lowe as Lucifere suche shall fall,
 In balefull blackenesse buylden her boure, 120
 That eggeth the people to errour,
 And maketh them to hem thrall;
 To Christ I holde suche one traytour;
 As lowe as Lucifere suche one shall fall.

That wylleth to be kynges peeres, 125
 And higher than the Emperour;
 Some that were but poore Freres,
 Nowe wollen waxe a warryour;
 God is nat her governour,
 That holdeth no man his peringall; 130
 Whyle covetyse is her counsaylour,
 All suche falshed mote nede fall.

That hye on horse wylleth ryde,
 In glytterande golde of great aray;
 Ipaynted and portred all in pride, 135
 No comen knyght may go so gaye;
 Change of clothyng every day,
 With golden gyrdels great and small;
 As boystous as is bere at baye;
 All suche falshed mote nede fall. 140

123 suche) G has the h almost obliterated / 130 peringall)
 peringall G / 136 comen) comen G

With pride ponyssheth the poore,
 And some they sustayne with sale;
 Of holy churche maketh an hore,
 And fylleth her wombe with wyne and ale;
 With money fylleth many a male,
 And chaffren churches when they fall,
 And telleth the people a leude tale;
 Suche false faytours, foule hem fall.

glut thro bellat

145

With chaunge of many maner metes,
 With songe and solace syttyng longe;
 And fylleth her wombe and fast fretes,
 And from the mete to the gonge;
 And after mete with harpe and songe,
 And eche man mote hem lordes call;
 And hote spyces ever amonge;
 Suche false faytours, foule hem fall.

150

155

And myters mo than one or two,
 Iperled as the quenes hedde;
 A staffe of golde and pyrrey, lo,
 As hevy as it were made of ledde;
 With clothe of golde both newe and redde,
 With glytterande gowne as grene as gall;
 By dome woll dampne men to dedde;
 All suche faytours, foule hem fall.

160

141 ponyssheth) ponysshed G / 156 faytours) faytonrs G /
 160 hevy) heny G / 162 gowne) golde G

And Christes people proudly curse, 165
 With brode boke and brayeng bell;
 To putte pennys in her purse,
 They woll sell bothe hevyn and hell;
 And in her sentence and thou wylt dwell,
 They wylleu gesse in her gay hall, 170
 And though the sothe thou of hem tell,
 In great cursyng shalte thou fall.

That is blessed, that they blesse,
 And cursed, that they curse woll;
 And thus the people they oppresse, 175
 And have their lordshyppes at full;
 And many be marchantes of wolle,
 And to purse pennytes woll come thrall;
 The poore people they all to-pull;
 Suche false faytours, foule hem fall. 180

Lordes mote to hem loute,
 Obeysaunt to her brode blessyng;
 They ryden with her royall route,
 On a courser as it were a kyng;
 With saddyll of golde glytteryng, 185
 With curyous harneys quyntly crallyt,
 Styroppes gaye of golde mastlyng;
 All suche falshed, foule befall it.

166 boke)boke 6 / 179 to-pull) to pull 6

He ordayneth by his ordynaunce
 To parysse preestes a powere;
 To another a greater avaunce, 215
 A greater poynt to his mystere;
 But for he is hyghest in erthe here,
 To hym reserveth he many a poynt;
 But to Christ that hath no pere,
 Reserveth he neyther o pyn ne ioynt. 220

So semeth he aboven all,
 And Christ aboven hym nothyng;
 Whan he sytteth in his stall,
 Dampneth and saveth as hym thynke;
 Suche pride tofore God dothe stynke; 225
 An Angell badde Iohn to hym nat knele,
 But onely to God do his bowyng;
 Such wyllers of worship must rede yvel fele.

They ne clepen Christ but Sanctus Deus,
 And clepen her heed Sanctissimus; 230
 They that suche a secte sewys,
 I trove they taken hem anysse;
 In erthe here they have her blysse,
 Her hye mayster is Bollyall;
 Christ his people from hem wysse; 235
 For all such false wyll foule fall.

220 o pyn)opyn G / 225 God)god G / 226 Iohn)Iohñ G / 227 God)
 god G / 229 Sanctus Deus)Sctūs de? G / 235 Christ his)Christes G

They mowe bothe bynde and lose,
 And all is for her holy lyfe;
 To save or dampne they mowe chose;
 Betwene hem nowe is great stryfe, 240
 Many a man is kylled with a knyfe,
 To wete which of hem have lordship shall;
 For suche Christ suffred woundes fyve;
 For all suche falshed woll foule fall.

Christ sayd, 'Qui gladio percutit,
 With swerde he shall dye.'
 He bade his preestes peace and gryth,
 And bade hem nat drede for to dye,
 And bade hem be bothe symple and slye,
 And carke nat for no catall, 250
 But trusteth on God that sytteth on hye;
 For all false shall foule fall.

These wollen make men to swere,
 Ayenst Christes commaundement,
 And Christes membres all to-tere, 255
 On Roode as he were newe yrent;
 Suche Lawes they maken by comen assent,
 Echone it choweth as a ball;
 Thus the poore be fully shent;
 But ever falshed, foule it fall. 260

243 woundes) woūdes G / 251 God)god G / sytteth) sytteh G /
 254 commaundement)comaundement G / 255 to-tere) to tere G /
 257 comen)ōmen G

They usyn no Simony,
 But sellen churches and priories;
 Ne they usen no Envy,
 But cursen all her contraries;
 And hyereth men by dayes and yeres, 265
 With strength to holde hem in her stall,
 And culleth all her adversaries;
 Therefore falshed, foule thou fall.

With purse they purchase personage,
 With purse they payen hem to plede; 270
 And men of warre they woll wage,
 To brynge her enemyes to the dede;
 And lordes lyves they woll lede,
 And moche take and gyve but small;
 But he it so gete, from it shall shede, 275
 And may suche false right foule fall.

They halowe nothyng but for hyre,
 Churche, font ne vestement;
 And make orders in every shyre,
 But preestes paye for the parchement; 280
 Of riatours they taken rent,
 Therwith they smere the shepes skall;
 For many churches ben ofte suspent;
 All suche falshed, yet foule it fall.

264 her)hem G / 270 payen)paynen G / 276 may)make G

Some lyveth nat in lechery, 285
 But haunten wenches, wydowes and wyves;
 And pnyssheth the poore for putry,
 Themselfe it useth all her lyves;
 And but a man to them shrives,
 To hevyn come never he shall; 290
 He shalbe cursed as be caytyves,
 To hell they sayne that he shall fall.

There was more mercy in Maxinyen,
 And in Nero that never was good,
 Than is nowe in some of them, 295
 Whan he hath on his furred hoode;
 They folowe Christ that shedde his blode
 To heaven as buckette into the wall;
 Suche wrechis ben worse than wode;
 And all suche faytours, foule hem fall. 300

They gyve her almesse to the ryche,
 To maynteynours and to men of lawe;
 For to lordes they will be lyche,
 An harlottes sonne nat worthe an hawe;
 Sothfastnesse suche han slawe; 305
 They kembe her crokettes with christall,
 And drede of God they have downe drawe;
 All suche faytours, foule hem fall.

286 and) & G / 288 Themselfe)Them selfe G / 298 into) in to G /
 307 God)god G

They maken parsons for the penny,
 And canons of her cardynals; 310
 Umethes amongst hem all is any,
 That ne hath glosed the gospell fals;
 For Christ made never no cathedrals,
 Ne with hym was no cardynall,
 With a Redde hatte as usyn mynstrals; 315
 But falshed, foule mote it befall.

Their tythyng and her offryng both,
 They clemeth it by possessyon;
 Therof nyll they non forgo,
 But robben men as ransome; 320
 The tithyng of Turpe lucrum,
 With these maisters is meynall;
 Tithyng of bribry and larsen,
 Wyll make falshed full foule to fall.

They taken to ferme her sompnours, 325
 To harme the people what they say;
 To pardoners and false faytours
 Sell her seales, I dare well say;
 And all to holden great array,
 To multiply hem more metall, 330
 They drede full lytell domes day,
 Whan all suche false shall foule fall.

311 all is any)all any G / 312 That ne hath) That he ne hath G /
 317 both)bo th G / 332 false) G omits.

Suche harlottes shall men dysclaunder,
 For they shullen make her gree,
 And ben as proude as Alexaunder, 335
 And sayne to the poore, 'wo be ye.'
 By yere eche preeste shall paye his fee
 To encrease his lemmans call;
 Suche heerdes shall well yvell the,
 And all suche false shall foule fall. 340

And if a man be falsely famed,
 And wolde make purgacioun,
 Than woll the offycers be agramed,
 And assigne hym fro towne to towne;
 So nede he must paye ransoun, 345
 Though he be clene as is christall,
 And than have an absolutioun;
 But all suche false shall foule fall.

Though he be gyltie of the dede,
 And that he maye money pay, 350
 All the whyle his purse woll blede,
 He maye use it fro day to day;
 These bysshoppes offycers gone full gay,
 And this game they usen overall;
 The poore to pyll is all their pray; 355
 All suche false shall foule fall.

345 ransoun) ransome G / 354 overall) over all G

Alas, God ordayned never suche lawe,
 Ne no suche crafte of covetyse;
 He forbade it by his sawe;
 Suche governours mowen of God agryse, 360
 For all his rules ben rightwyse;
 These newe poyntes ben pure papall,
 And Goddes lawe they dispyce;
 And all suche faytours shall foule fall.

They sayne that Peter had the key 365
 Of hevyn and hell to have and holde;
 I trowe Peter toke no money
 For no synnes that he solde;
 Suche successours ben to bolde;
 In wynnyng, all their witte they wrall; 370
 Her conscience is waxen colde;
 And all suche faytours, foule hem fall.

Peter was never so great a fole,
 To leave his key with suche a lorell;
 Or to take suche cursed suche a tole, 375
 He was advysed nothyng well;
 I trowe they have the key of hell,
 Their maister is of that place marshall,
 For there they dresen hem to dwell,
 And with false Lucifers there to fall. 380

357 God)god G / 360 God) god G / 361 ben) is G /
 363 Goddes)goddes G

They ben as proude as Lucifarre,
 As angry and as envious;
 From good faithe they ben full farre,
 In covetyse they ben curyous;
 To catche cattell as covytous 385
 As hounde that for hungre woll yall,
 Ungoodly and ungratious;
 And nedely suche falshed shall foule fall.

The pope, and he were Peters heyre,
 Me thynke he erreth in this case, 390
 Whan choyse of byssnoppe is in dispeyre,
 To chosen hem in dyvers place;
 A lorde shall write to hym for grace,
 For his clerke anone pray he shall;
 So shall he spede his purchase; 395
 And all suche false, foule hem fall.

Though he can no more good,
 A lordes prayer shalbe spedde;
 Though he be wylde of wyll or wood,
 Nat understanding what men han redde, 400
 A leude boster and, that God forbede,
 As good a bysshoppe as my horse Ball;
 Suche a Pope is foule bestedde,
 And at last woll foule fall.

388 foule) foule G / 401 God) god G / 402 as) is G / Ball)ball G
 403 bestedde) be stedde G

He maketh byshoppes for erthly thanke, 405
 And nothyng for Christes sake;
 Suche that ben full fatte and ranke,
 To soule heale none hede they take;
 All is well done whatever they make,
 For they shall answere at ones for all; 410
 For worldes thanke, suche worch and wake;
 And all suche false shall foule fall.

Suche that canne nat her Crede,
 With prayer shull be made prelates;
 Nouthur canne the gospell rede, 415
 Suche shull nowe welde hys estates;
 The hys goodes frendshyp hem makes,
 They toteth on her somme totall;
 Suche bere the keyes of hell yates;
 And all suche false shall foule fall. 420

They forsake, for Christes love,
 Traveyle, hungre, thirst and colde;
 For they ben ordred ever all above,
 Out of youthe tyll they ben olde;
 By the dore they go nat into the folde, 425
 To helpe their shepe they nought travall;
 Hyred men all suche I holde;
 And all suche false, foule hem fall.

409 whatever) what ever G / 418 somme) some G / 425 into) in to G

For Christ her kyng they woll forsake,
 And knowe hym nought for his poverte; 430
 For Christes love they woll wake,
 And drynke pyement and ale aperte;
 Of God they seme nothyng aferde,
 As lustly lyveth as dyde Lamuall,
 And dryven her shepe into deserte; 435
 All suche faytours shall foule fall.

Christ had twelve apostels here,
 Nowe saye they there may be but one,
 That may nat erre in no manere;
 Who loveth nat this ben lost echone; 440
 Peter erred, so dyde nat Iohn;
 Why is he cleped the principall?
 Christ cleped hym Peter but hymselfe the stone;
 All false faytours, foule hem fall.

Why cursen they the croysery, 445
 Christes christen creatures?
 For bytwene hem is nowe envy,
 To be enhaused in honours;
 And christen lyvers with her labours,
 For they levyn on no man mortall, 450
 Ben do to dethe with dishonours;
 And all suche false, foule hem fall.

432 pyement and ale) pyement ale G / aperte) aparte G /
 433 God) god G / aferde) a ferde G / 434 lustly) lusty G /
 435 into) in to G / 437 twelve) .xii. G / 441 Iohn) Iohⁿ G /
 443 but hymselfe) but hym selfe G / the) \bar{y} G / 451 Ben) But G

What knoweth a tyllour at the plowe,
 The popes name and what he hate?
 His crede suffyseth to hym ynowe, 455
 And knoweth a cardynall by his hatte;
 Rough is the poore, unrightly latte,
 That knoweth Christ his God royall;
 Suche maters be nat worth a gnatte;
 But suche false faytours, foule hem fall. 460

A kyng shall knele and kysse his showe,
 Christ suffred a synfull to kysse his fete;
 He thynketh he holdeth hym hye ynowe,
 So Lucifer dyd that hye sette;
 Such one he thynketh hymselfe foryete, 465
 Eyther to the trowth he was nat call;
 Christ that suffred woundes wete,
 Shall make suche falshed foule fall.

They layeth out her large nettes,
 For to take sylver and golde; 470
 Fyllen coffers, sakes and fettes,
 Thereas they soules catche sholde;
 Her servautes be to them unholde,
 But they can doublyn their rentall,
 To bygge hem castels and bygge hem holde; 475
 And all suche false, foule hem fall.

458 God) god G / 465 hymselfe) hym selfe G / 471 sakes and
 fettes) and sakes fettes G / 472 Thereas) There as G

Here endeth the fyrst part of this boke and hereafter foloweth
the seconde parte.

To accorde with this worde 'fall'
No more Englyshe can I fynde;
Shewe another nowe I shall,
For I have moche to saye behynde, 480
Howe preestes han the people pynde,
As curteys Christ hath me kende,
And putte this matter in my mynde,
To make this maner men amende.

Shortly to shende hem and shewe nowe 485
Howe wrongfully they worche and walke;
Of hye God nothyng they tell ne howe,
But in Goddes worde tilleth many a balke;
In hernes holde hem and in halke,
And prechyn of tythes and offrende, 490
And untruely of the gospell talke;
For his mercy God it amende.

What is Antichrist to saye
But evyn Christes adversary?
Suche hath nowe ben many a day 495
To Christes byddyng full contrary,
That from the trouthe clene varry;
Out of the waye they ben wende,
And Christes people untruely cary;
God for his pytie it amende. 500

477 To) TO G / 487 Of) O G / God) god G / 488 Goddes) goddes G /
tilleth) telleth G / 492 God) god G /

They lyven contrary to Christes lyfe,
 In hye pride agaynst mekenesse;
 Agaynst sufferance they usen stryfe,
 And angre ayenst sobrenesse;
 Agaynst wysedome, wyfulnessse; 505
 To Christes tales lytell tande;
 Agaynst measure, outragiousnesse;
 But when God woll it maye amende.

Lordly lyfe ayenst lowlynesse,
 And demyn all without mercy; 510
 And covetyse ayenst largesse,
 Agaynst trewth, trechery;
 And agaynst almesse, envy;
 Agaynst Christ they comprehende;
 For chastyte, they maynteyne lechery; 515
 God for his grace this amende.

Ayenst penaunce they use delightes,
 Ayenst suffraunce, stronge defence;
 Ayenst god they usen yvell rightes,
 Agaynste pytie, punysshementes; 520
 Open yvell ayenst contynence;
 Her wicked wynayng worse dispende;
 Sobrenesse they sette into dispence;
 But God for his goodnesse it amende.

501 They) That G / 508 God) god G / 523 into) in to G /
 524 God) god G

Why cleyment they holy his powere, 525
 And wranglen ayenst all his hestes?
 His lyvyng folowen they nothyng here,
 But lyven worse than wytlesse beestes;
 Of fysshe and flesshe they loven feestes;
 As lordes they ben brode ykende; 530
 Of Goddes poore they haten gestes;
 God for his mercy this amende.

With Dives suche shall have her dome,
 That sayne that they be Christes frendes,
 And do nothyng as they shulde done; 535
 All suche ben falsen than ben fendes;
 On the people they ley suche bendes,
 As God is in erth they han offende;
 Sucour for suche Christ nowe sende us,
 And for his mercy this amende. 540

A token of Antichrist they be,
 His carectes ben nowe wyde yknowe;
 Receyved to preche shall no man be,
 Without token of hym I trowe;
 Eche christen preest to prechyn owe, 545
 From God above they ben sende,
 Goddes worde to all folke for to showe,
 Synfull men for to amende.

531 Goddes) goddes G / 533 Dives) Dyvers G / 538 God) god G /
 542 carectes) careckes G / 546 (God) god G

Christ sente the poore for to preche,
 The royall riche he dyd nat so; 550
 Nowe dare no poore the people teche,
 For Antichrist is overall her foe;
 Amonge the people he mote go;
 He hath bydden all suche suspande;
 Some hath he hente and thynketh yet no; 555
 But all this God may well amende.

All tho that han the worlde forsake,
 And lyven loly as God badde,
 Into her prison shullen be take,
 Betya and bounden and forthe ladde; 560
 Herof I rede no man be dradde;
 Christ sayd his shulde be shende;
 Eche man ought herof be gladde;
 For God full well it woll amende.

They take on hem royall powere, 565
 And saye they have swerdes two,
 One curse to hell, one slee men here;
 For at his takyng Christ had no mo,
 Yet Peter had one of tho,
 But Christ to Peter smyte gan defende, 570
 And into the sheth badde putte it tho;
 And all suche myscheves God amende.

552 overall) over all G / 555 and) & G / 556 God) god G /
 558 God) god G / 559 Into)In to G / 564 God) god G / 570 Christ)
 christ G / 571 into) in to G / 572 God) god G

Christ badde Peter kepe his shepe,
 And with his swerde forbade hym smyte;
 Swerde is no tole with shepe to kepe, 575
 But to sheperdes that shepe woll byte;
 Me thynketh suche sheperdes ben to wyte,
 Ayen her shepe with swerde that contende;
 They drive her shepe with great dispyte;
 But all this God may well amende. 580

So successours to Peter be they nought
 Whom Christ made chefe pastoure;
 A swerde no sheperde usen ought,
 But he wolde slee as a bochoure;
 For whoso were Peters successour 585
 Shulde bere his shepe tyll his backe bende,
 And shadowe hem from every shoure;
 And all this God maye well amende.

Successours to Peter ben these
 In that that Peter Christ forsoke, 590
 That had lever the love of God lese,
 Than a sheperde had to lese his hoke;
 They culleth the shepe as dothe the coke;
 Of hem taken the woll untrende,
 And falsely glose the gospell boke; 595
 God for his mercy them amende.

580 God) god G / 585 whoso) who so G / 588 God) god G /
 591 God) god G / 593 They) He G

After Christ had take Peter the key,
 Christ sayd he muste dye for man;
 That Peter to Christ gan withsay;
 Christ badde hym, 'go behynde, Sathan!' 600
 Suche counsaylours many of these men han,
 For worldes wele God to offende;
 Peters successours they ben forthan;
 But all suche God may well amende.

For Sathan is to say no more 605
 But he that contrary to Christ is;
 In this they lerne Peters lore,
 They sewen hym when he dyd mysse;
 They folowe Peter forsothe in this,
 In all that Christ wolde Peter reprehende, 610
 But nat in that that longeth to hevyn blysse;
 God for his mercy hem amende.

Some of the Apostels they sewen in case,
 Of ought that I can understonde,
 Hym that betrayed Christ, Judas, 615
 That bare the purse in every londe;
 And all that he myght sette on honde,
 He hydde and stole and myspende;
 His rule these traytours han in honde;
 Almighty God hem amende. 620

601 counsaylours) counsaylours G / 602 God) god G / 603 forthan)
 for than G / 604 God) god G / 620 God) god G

And at last his lorde gan tray
 Cursedly, through his false covetyse;
 So wolde these trayen hym for money,
 And they wysten in what wyse;
 They be seker of the selfe ensyse; 625
 From all sothnesse they ben frende;
 And covetyse chaungen with queyntyse;
 Almighty God all suche amende.

Were Christ on erthe here eftesone,
 These wolde dampne hym to dye; 630
 All his hestes they han fordone,
 And sayne his sawes ben heresy;
 And ayenst his commaundementes they crye,
 And dampne all his to be brende,
 For it lyketh nat hem suche losengery; 635
 God almighty hem amende.

These han more myght in Englande here
 Than hath the kyng and all his lawe;
 They han purchased hem suche powere
 To taken hem whom lyst nat knawe; 640
 And say that heresy is her sawe,
 And so to prysone woll hem sende;
 It was nat so by elder dawe;
 God for his mercy it amende.

628 God) god G / 629 eftesone) efte sone G

The kynges lawe woll no man deme 645
 Angerlyche, withouten answer; 649
 But if any man these mysqueme,
 He shalbe beted as a bere;
 And yet wel worse they woll hym tere,
 And in prysone woll hym pende 650
 In gyves and in other gere;
 Whan God woll it maye mende.

The kyng taxeth nat his men
 But by assente of the commynalte;
 But these eche yere woll raunson hem 655
 Maisterfully, more than doth he;
 Her seales by yere better be
 Than is the kynges in extende;
 Her offycers han gretter fee;
 But this myschefe God amende. 660

For whoso woll prove a testament
 That is nat all worthe tenne ponde,
 He shall paye for the parchement
 The thirde parte of the money all rounde;
 Thus the people is raunsounde; 665
 They say suche parte to hem shulde apende,
 Thereas they grypen it gothe to grounde;
 God for his mercy it amende.

650 hym) hem G / 652 God) god G / 654 commynalte) cōmynalte G /
 660 God) god G / 661 whoso) who so G / 664 The) They G / 667 Thereas)
 There as G

A symple fornycacioun,
 Twenty shyllynges he shall paye, 670
 And than have an absolution,
 And all the yere usen it forthe he may;
 Thus they letten hem go astray,
 They recke nat though the soule be brende;
 These kepyn yvell Peters key; 675
 And all suche sheperdes God amende.

Wonder is that the parlyament,
 And all the lordes of this londe,
 Herto taken so lytell entent
 To helpe the people out of her honde; 680
 For they ben harder in their bonde,
 Worse beate and bytter brende,
 Than to the kyng is understande;
 God hym helpe this to amende.

What bysshoppes, what relygions 685
 Han in this lande as moche laye fee,
 Lordshippes and possessyons,
 More than the lordes, it semeth me:
 That maketh hem lese charyte,
 They mowe nat to God attende; 690
 In erthe they have so hyghe degree;
 God for his mercy it amende.

673 astray) a stray G / 676 God) god G / 690 God) god G

The Emperour yaf the pope somtyme
 So highe lordshyppe hym aboute,
 That at laste, the sely kyme, 695
 The proude Pope putte hym out;
 So of this realme is in doute,
 But lordes beware and them defende,
 For nowe these folke be wonder stoute;
 The kynge and lordes nowe this amende. 700

Thus endeth the seconde parte of this boke and hereafter
 foloweth the thirde.

Moyses lawe forbode it tho,
 That preestes shuld no lordshippes welde;
 Christes gospell byddeth also
 That they shulde no lordshippe helde;
 Ne Christes Apostels were never so bolde, 705
 No suche lordshippes to them embrace,
 But smeren her shepe and kepe her folde;
 God amende hem for his grace.

For they ne ben but countrefete,
 Men may knowe hem by her fruite; 710
 Her gretnesse maketh hem God foryete,
 And take his mekenesse in dispyte;
 And they were poore and had but lyte,
 They nolde nat demen after the face,
 But norisshe her shepe and hem nat byte; 715
 God amende hem for his grace.

Gryffon. 'What canst thou preche ayenst chanons,
That men clepen seculere?'

Pelycan. 'They ben curates of many townis,
On erthe they have great powere;
They han great prebendes and dere,
Some two or thre and some no,
A personage to ben a playeng fere,
And yet they serve the kyngs also;

720

And lette to ferme all that fare,
To whom that woll most gyve therfore;
Some woll spende and some woll spare,
And some woll laye it up in store;
A cure of soule they care nat fore,
So they move money take;
Whether her soules be womne or lorde,
Her profytes they woll nat forsake.

725

730

They have a gederyng procuratour
That can the poore people enplede,
And robben hem as a ravynour,
And to his lorde the money lede;
And catche of quicke and eke of dede,
And richen hym and his lorde eke,
And to robbe the poore can gyve good rede,
Of olde and yonge, of hole and syke.

735

740

717) G l.h.margin reads Gryffon. / 719) G l.h.margin reads
Pelycan

Therwith they purchase hem lay fee,
 In londe there hem lyketh best;
 And buylde also brode as a cyte,
 Bothe in the Est and eke in the West;
 To purchase thus they ben full preest,
 But on the poore they woll nought spende,
 Ne no good gyve to Goddes gest,
 Ne sende hym some that all hath sende.

745

By her servyce suche woll lyve,
 And trusse that other into treasour;
 Though all her parysshe dye unshrive,
 They woll nat gyve a rose floure;
 Her lyfe shulde be as a myrroure
 Bothe to lered and to leude also,
 And teche the people her lele labour;
 Suche myster man ben all mysge.

750

755

Some of hem ben harde nygges,
 And some of hem ben proude and gay;
 Some spende her good upon eygges,
 And fynden hem of great aray;
 Alas, what thynke these men to say
 That thus dispenden Goddis good?
 At the dredefull domes daye,
 Suche wretches shulbe worse than wood.

760

744 West)west G / 747 Goddes) goddes G / 750 into) in to G /
 762 Goddis) goddis G /

Some her churches never ne sye, 765
 Ne never o peny thyder ne sende;
 Though the poore parysshens for hungre dye,
 O peny on hem wyl they nat spende;
 Have they receyvynge of the rente,
 They recke never of the remenant; 770
 Alas, the devyll hath clene hem blent;
 Suche one is Sathanas sojournant.

And usen horedome and harlotry,
 Covetyse, pompe and pride,
 Slouthe, wrathe and eke envy, 775
 And sewen synne by every syde;
 Alas, where thynke suche tabyde?
 Howe woll they accomptes yelde?
 From hye God they mowe hem nat hyde;
 Suche wyllers witte is nat worth a nelde. 780

They ben so roted in richesse,
 That Christes povert is foryet;
 Served with so many messe,
 Hem thinketh that Hanna is no mete;
 All is good that they mowe gete, 785
 They wene to lyve evermore;
 But whan God at dome is sette,
 Suche treasour is a feble store.

770 remenant) remenant G / 772 Suche)Suehe G / 779 God) god G /
 787 God) god G

Unneth mote they matyns saye,
 For countyng and for court holdyng; 790
 And yet he iangleth as a iaye,
 And understont hymselfe nothyng;
 He woll serve bothe erle and kyng
 For his fyndyng and his fee,
 And hyde his tythyng and his offryng; 795
 This is a feble charite.

Outher they ben proude or covetous,
 Or they ben harde or hungry,
 Or they ben lyberall or lecherous,
 Or els medlers with marchandry; 800
 Or maynteyners of men with maistry,
 Or stewardes, countours or pledours,
 And serve God in hypocrisy;
 Suche preestes ben Christes false traytours.

They ben false, they ben vengeable, 805
 And begylen men in Christes name;
 They ben unstedfast and unstable;
 To tray her lorde hem thynketh no shame;
 To serve God they ben full lame,
 Goddes theves and falsly stele, 810
 And falsly Goddes worde defame;
 In wynnynng is her worldes wele.

792 hymselfe) hym selfe G / 803 God) god G / 806 begylen)
 be gylen G / 809 God) god G / 811 Goddes) goddes G

Antichrist these serven all;
 I pray the who may say nay?
 With Antichrist suche shall fall, 815
 They folowen hym in dede and fay;
 They servyn hym in riche array,
 To serve Christ suche falsely fayne;
 Why, at the dredefull doomes day,
 Shall they nat folowe hym to payne 820

That knowne hemselfe that they done yll
 Ayenst Christes commaundement,
 And amende hem never ne wyll,
 But serve Sathan by one assent?
 Who sayth sothe he shalbe shent, 825
 Or speketh ayenst her false lyvyng;
 Whoso well lyveth shalbe brent,
 For suche ben gretter than the kyng.

Pope, bysshoppes and cardynals,
 Chanons, persons and vycayre, 830
 In Goddes servyce I trowe ben false,
 That sacramentes sellen here;
 And ben as proude as Lucifere;
 Eche man loke whether that I lye;
 Whoso speketh ayenst her powere, 835
 It shall be holden heresy.

821 hemselfe) hem selfe G / 822 commaundement) commaundement G /
 827 whoso) who so G / 829 cardynals) cardyuals G / 831 Goddes)
 goddes G / 835 Whoso) who so G

Loke howe many orders take
 Onely of Christ, for his servyce,
 That the worldes goodes forsake;
 Whoso taketh orders otherwyse, 840
 I trowe that they shall sore agryse,
 For all the glose that they conne;
 All sewen nat his assyse;
 In yvell tyme they thus be gonne.

Loke howe many amonge hem all 845
 Holden nat this hye way;
 With Antichrist they shullen fall,
 For they wolden God betray;
 God amende hem that best may,
 For many men they maken shande; 850
 They weten well the sothe I say,
 But the dyvell hath foule hem blende.

Some on her churches dwell,
 Appayrelled poorely, proude of porte;
 The sevyn sacramentes they done sell, 855
 In cattell catchyng is her comforte;
 Of eche matter they wollen mell;
 To done hem wronge is her disporte;
 To affray the people they ben fel,
 And holde hem lower than dothe the lorde. 860

840 Whoso) Who so G / otherwyse) or other wyse G /
 843 his) this G / 844 be gonne) begonne G / 848 God) god G /
 858 To) And G

For the tithynge of a duke,
 Or of an apple, or an eye,
 They make men swere upon a boke;
 Thus they foulyn Christes fay;
 Suche beren yvell hevyn kay; 865
 They mowen assoyle, they mowe shrive,
 With mennes wyves strongly play,
 With trewe tyllers sturte and stryve

At the wrestlyng end at the wake;
 And chefe chauntours at the nale, 870
 Markette beters and medlyng make,
 Hoppen and houten with heve and hale;
 At fayre flesshe end at wyne stale
 Dyne and drinke and make debate;
 The sevyn sacramentes sette at sayle; 875
 Howe kepe suche the keyes of hevyn gate?

Mennes wyves they wollen holde,
 And though that they ben ryght sory,
 To speke they shull nat be so bolde,
 For sompnyng to the consistory; 880
 And make hem saye with mouthe, 'I lye,'
 Though they it sawe with her eye,
 Hir lemman holden openly,
 No man so hardy to axe why.

873 flesshe) fresshe G / 876 the) they G / 881 with) G omits /
 883 Hir) His G

To men and women that ben poore,
 That ben Christes owne lyknesse, 910
 Men shulden offre at her dore,
 That suffryn hungre and dystresse;
 And to suche ymages offre lesse,
 That mowe nat fele thurst ne colde;
 The poore in spyrite gan Christ blesse, 915
 Therefore offreth to feble and olde.

Buckelers brode and swerdes long,
 Baudrike, with baselardes kene,
 Suche toles about her necke they hange;
 With Antichrist suche preestes bene; 920
 Upon her dedes it is well sene,
 Whom they serven, whom they honoren;
 Antichristes they ben clene,
 And Goddis goodes falsely devouren,

On scarlet and grene gay gowmes, 925
 That mote be shape for the newe;
 To clyppen and kyssen counten in townes
 The damosels that to the daunce sewe;
 Cutted clothes to sewe her hewe,
 With longe pykes on her shone; 930
 Eyther Goddes gospell is nat trewe,
 Or they serven the dyvell or none.

924 Goddis) goddis G / 925 On) Of G / 927 counten) coūten G /
 928 daunce) daunce G / 931 Eyther) Our G / Goddes) goddes G /
 932 Or) Eyther G

Nowe ben preestes pokes so wyde,
 That men must enlarge the vestement;
 The holy gospell they done hyde, 935
 For they contraryen in rayment;
 Suche preestes of Lucifere ben sent,
 Lyke conquerours they ben arayde,
 The proude pendautes at her ars ypent;
 Falsely the truthe they han betrayde. 940

Shrifte sylver suche wollen asken,
 And woll men crepe to the crouche;
 None of the sacramentes save asken,
 Without mede shall no man touche;
 On her bysshoppe their warant vouch, 945
 That is the lawe of the decre;
 With mede and money thus they mouche,
 And this they sayne is charyte.

In the myddes of her masse
 They nyll have no man but for hyre, 950
 And full shortely lette forth passe;
 Suche shall men fynde in eche shyre,
 That personages for profyte desyre,
 To lyve in lykynge and in lustes;
 I dare nat sayne, Same ose ieo dire, 955
 That suche ben Antichristes preestes.

941 asken) aske is G / 943 asken) askes G / 946 the lawe)
 lawe G / 948 this) thus G

Or they yef the bysshoppes why,
 Or they mote ben in hir servyce,
 And holden forthe her harlotry;
 Suche prelates ben of feble emprise; 960
 Of Goddis grame suche men agryse,
 For suche matters that taken mede;
 Howe they excuse hem and in what wyse,
 We thynketh they ought greatly drede.

They sayne that it to no man longeth 965
 To reprove them though they erre;
 But falsely Goddis goodeesse they fongeth,
 And therwith maynteyne wo and werre;
 Her dedes shulde be as bright as sterre,
 Her lyvyng, leude mannes lyght; 970
 They say the pope maye nat erre,
 Nede must that passe mannes might.

Though a prest lye with his lemman all night,
 And telleth his felowe and he hym,
 He goth to masse anone right, 975
 And sayth he syngeth out of synne;
 His byrde abideth hym at his inne,
 And dighteth his dyner the meane whyle;
 He syngeth his masse for he wolde wyne,
 And so he weneth God begyle. 980

958 hir) his G / 961 Goddis) goddis G / 967 Goddis) goddis G /
 973 with) w^t G / lemman) lēman G / 974 telleth) tellen G /
 980 God) god G

Hem thynketh long tyll they be mette,
 And that they usen forthe all the yere;
 Amonge the folke when he is sette,
 He holdeth no man halfe his pere;
 Of the bysshoppe he hath powere 985
 To soyle men or els they ben lore;
 His absolutyon may make them skere,
 And wo is the soule that he syngeth fore.'

The Gryffon began for to threte,
 And sayd, 'of monkes canst thou ought?' 990
 The Pellycane sayd, 'they ben full grete,
 And in this worlde moche wo hath wrought;
 Saynt Benet, that her order brought,
 Ne made hem never on suche manere;
 I trowe it came never in his thought, 995
 That they shulde use so great powere;

That a man shuld a monke lorde call,
 Ne serve on knees as a kyng;
 He is as proude as prince in pall,
 In mete and drynke and all thyng; 1000
 Some wearyn myter and ryng,
 With double worsted well ydight,
 With royall mete and riche drinke,
 And rideth on a courser as a knyght.

989) G r.h.margin reads Gryffon./ 991 G r.h.margin reads
 Pelycan. / 992 wrought) Wrought G / 995 his) this G

With hauke and with houndes eke,
 With broches or cuches on his hode,
 Some saye no masse in all a weke;
 Of deynties is her most fode;
 With lordshippes and with bondmen,
 This is a royall relygyoun; 1010
 Saynt Benet made never none of hem
 To have lordshippe of man ne towne.

Nowe they ben queynte and curious,
 With fyne clothe cladde and served clene;
 Proude, angry and envyous, 1015
 Malyce is mouche that they meane;
 In catchyng crafty and covetous,
 Lordly lyven in great lykyng;
 This lyvyng is nat relygyous,
 Accordyng to Benette in his lyvyng. 1020

They ben clerkes, her courtes they overse,
 Her poore tenaunce fully they flyte;
 The hyre that a man amerced be,
 The gladlyer they woll it write;
 This is ferre from Christes poverte, 1025
 For all with covetyse they endyte;
 On the poore they have no pyte,
 Ne never hem cherysshe but ever hem byte.

1005 with (b)) With G / 1011 never) ueuer [sic] G /
 1013 queynte) qneynte G / 1019 lyvyng) lynyng G / 1021
 overse) over se G

And comenly suche ben comen
 Of poore people and of hem begete, 1030
 That this perfection han ynomen;
 Her fathers ryden nat but on her fete,
 And travaylen sore for that they de,
 In povert lyveth yonge and olde;
 Her fathers suffreth drought and wete, 1035
 Many hungry meles, thurst and colde.

And all this the monkes han forsake
 For Christes love and saynt Benette;
 To pride and ease have hem take;
 This relygion is yvell besette; 1040
 Had they ben out of relygioun,
 They must have honged at the plowe,
 Threshyng and dykyng fro towne to towne,
 With sory mete and nat halfe ynowe.

Therefore they han this all forsake, 1045
 And taken to riches, pride and ease;
 Full fewe for God woll monkes hem make,
 Lytell is suche order for to prayse;
 Saynt Benet ordayned it nat so,
 But badde hem be chereyche; 1050
 In churlyche maner lyve and go,
 Boystous in erthe and nat lordlych.

1029 comenly) cōmenly G / 1040 besette) be sette G /
 1043 and) & G / 1047 God) god G

They disclaunder saynt Benette,
 Therefore they have his holy curse;
 Saynt Benet with hem never mette 1055
 But if they thought to robbe his purse;
 I canne no more herof tell,
 But they ben lyke tho before,
 And clene serve the dyvell of hell,
 And ben his treasour and his store. 1060

And all suche other counterfeytours,
 Chanons, canons and suche disgysed,
 Ben Goddes enemyes and traytours;
 His trewe relygion han foule dyspyeed;
 Of Freres I have tolde before, 1065
 In a makynge of a 'Crede,'
 And yet I coude tell worse and more,
 But men wolde veryen it to rede.

As Goddes goodnesse no man tell might,
 Write, ne speke, ne thynke in thought, 1070
 So her falshed and her unright
 May no man tell that ever God wrought.'
 The Gryffon sayd, 'thou canst no good;
 Thou came never of no gentyll kynde;
 Outher, I trowe, thou wexest wood, 1075
 Or els thou hast loste thy mynde.

1053 disclaunder) disclanuder G / 1063 Goddes) goddes G /
 1069 Goddes) goddes G / 1072 God) god G / 1073) G l.h.margin
 reads Gryffon.

Shulde holy churche have no heed,
 Who shulde be her governayle?
 Who shulde her rule, who shulde her reed,
 Who shulde her forthren, who shulde avayle? 1080
 Eche man shall lyve by his travayle;
 Who best doth shall have most mede;
 With strength if men the churche assayle,
 With strength men must defende her nede.

And the pope were purely poore, 1085
 Nedy and nothyng ne hadde,
 He shulde be driven from dore to dore,
 The wicked of hym nolde nat be dradde;
 Of suche an heed men wolde be sadde,
 And synfully lyven as hem lust; 1090
 With strength amendes shulde be made,
 With wepen wolves from shepe be wust.

If the pope and prelates wolde
 So begge and bydde, bowe and borowe,
 Holy churche shulde stande full colde, 1095
 Her servauntes sytte and soupe sorowe;
 And they were noughty, foule and horowe,
 To worshyppe God men wolde wlate;
 Both on evyn and on morowe,
 Suche harlotry men wolde hate. 1100

1077 Shulde) Sulde G / churche) churches G / 1091 amendes)
 amēdes G / shulde) suche G / 1094 and (a)) & G /
 1098 God) gou G

Therefore man of holy church
 Shulde ben honest in all thyng,
 Worshypfully Goddes workes werche;
 So semeth it to serve Christ her kyng
 In honest and in clene clothyng; 1105
 With vessels of golde and clothes ryche,
 To God honestly to make offryng;
 To his lordshyppe none is lyche.

The Pellycan caste an houghe crye,
 And sayd, 'alas, why sayest thou so? 1110
 Christ is our heed that sytteth on hys;
 Heddes ne ought we have no mo;
 We ben his membres bothe also,
 And father he taught us to call hym als;
 Maisters to be called defended he tho; 1115
 All other maisters ben wicked and fals,

That taketh maistry in his name
 Goostly, and for erthly good;
 Kynges and lordes shulde lordshyp hane,
 And rule the people with mylde mode; 1120
 Christ for us that shedde his blode,
 Badde his preestes no maystershyp have,
 Ne carke nat for clothe ne fode;
 From every myschefe he wyll hem save.

1103 Goddes) goddes G / 1107 God) god G / 1109) G r.h.
 margin reads Pellycan / an) on G

Her (riche) clothynge shalbe ryghtwysenesse, 1125
 Her treasour, trewe lyfe shalbe;
 Charite shalbe her rychesse,
 Her lordshippe shalbe unyte;
 Hope in God, her honeste,
 Her vessell, clene conscience; 1130
 Poore in spyrite and humylyte,
 Shalbe holy churches defence.

'What', sayd the Gryffon, 'may the greve
 That other folkes faren wele?
 What haste thou to done with her lyve? 1135
 Thy falshed eche man may fele;
 For thou canst no catell gete,
 But lyvest in londe as a lorell,
 With glosyng gettest thou thy mete;
 So fareth the devyll that wonneth in hell. 1140

He wolde that eche man there shulde dwell,
 For he lyveth in clene envye;
 So with the tales that thou dost tell,
 Thou woldest other people distry,
 With your glose and your herey, 1145
 For ye can lyve no better lyfe,
 But clene in hypocrisy,
 And bringest the in wo and stryfe.

1129 God) god G / 1133) G r.h.margin reads Gryffon./
 1139 thou) thou G

And therwith have nat to done,
 For ye ne have here no cure; 1150
 Ye serve the dyvell, neither God ne man,
 And he shall paye you your hyre;
 For ye woll fare well at feestes,
 And warme be clothed for the colde,
 Therefore ye glose Goddis hestes, 1155
 And begyle the people, yonge and olde.

And all the sevyn sacramentes
 Ye speke ayenst, as ye were slye;
 Ayenst tithinges, offrynges, with your ententes,
 And on our lordes body falsely lye; 1160
 And all this ye done to lyve in ease,
 As who sayth there ben none suche,
 And sayth the pope is nat worth a pease;
 To make the people ayen hym gruche.

And this cometh in by fendes, 1165
 To bryng the christen in distaunce;
 For they wolde that no man were frendes;
 Leave thy chattryng with myschauace;
 If thou lyve well, what wylte thou more?
 Lette other men lyve as hem lyst, 1170
 Spende in good or kepe in store;
 Other mennes conscience never thou nyst.

1151 God) god G / 1154 warme be clothed) warme clothed G /
 1155 Goddis) goddis G / 1158 Ye) ye G / 1159 tithinges)
 tithiges G / ententes) entētes G / 1163 sayth) sayne G /
 1165 cometh) cōmeth G

Ye han no cure to answe're fore;
 What meddell ye that han nat to done?
 Lette men lyve as they han done yore, 1175
 For thou shalte answe're for no man.'
 The Pellycan sayd, 'Syr, nay,
 I dispysed nat the pope,
 Ne no sacramente, sothe to say;
 But speke in charite and good hope. 1180

But I dispysse her hye pride,
 Her richesse, that shulde be poore in spirite;
 Her wickednesse is knowe so wyde;
 They serve God in false habyte,
 And turnyn mekenesse into pride, 1185
 And lowelynesse into hye degre,
 And Goddis wordes turne and hyde;
 In that am I moved by charite

To lette men to lyve so,
 With all my connyng and all my myght, 1190
 And to warne men of her wo,
 And to tell hem trouthe and ryght;
 The sacramentes be soule hele
 If they ben used in good use;
 Ayenat that speke I never a dele, 1195
 For than were I nothyng wyse.

1173 Ye) ye G / 1177) G r.h.margin reads Pellycan /
 1184 God) god G / 1185 into) in to G / 1186 into) in to
 G / 1187 Goddis) goddis G / 1188 In) And G

Ye han no cure to answe're fore;
 What meddell ye that han nat to done?
 Lette men lyve as they han done yore, 1175
 For thou shalte answe're for no man.'
 The Pellycan sayd, 'Syr, nay,
 I dispysed nat the pope,
 Ne no sacramente, sothe to say;
 But speke in charite and good hope. 1180

But I dispysse her hye pride,
 Her richesse, that shulde be poore in spirite;
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 They serve God in false habyte,
 And turnyn mekenesse into pride, 1185
 And lowelynesse into hye degre,
 And Goddis wordes turne and hyde;
 In that am I moved by charite

To lette men to lyve so,
 With all my connyng and all my myght, 1190
 And to warne men of her wo,
 And to tell hem trouthe and ryght;
 The sacramentes be soule hele
 If they ben used in good use;
 Ayenat that speke I never a dele, 1195
 For than were I nothyng wyse.

1173 Ye) ye G / 1177) G r.h.margin reads Pellycan /
 1184 God) god G / 1185 into) in to G / 1186 into) in to
 G / 1187 Goddis) goddis G / 1188 In) And G

But they that usen hem in mysse manere,
 Or sette hem up to any sale,
 I trowe they shall abye hem dere;
 This is my reason, this is my tale; 1200
 Whoso taketh hem unrightfullyche
 Ayenst the tenne commaundmentes,
 Or by glose wrechedlyche
 Selleth any of the sacramentes,

I trowe they do the devyll homage, 1205
 In that they wetyn they do wronge;
 And therto I dare well wage
 They servyn Sathan for all her songe;
 To tithen and offren is holsome lyfe,
 So it be done in dewe manere; 1210
 A man to houselyn and to shryve,
 Weddyng and all the other in fere,

So it be nother solde ne bought,
 Ne take, ne gyve for covetyse;
 And it be so taken it is nought; 1215
 Who selleth hem so maye sore agryse;
 On our lordes body I do nat lye,
 I saye sothe thorowe trewe rede,
 His flesshe and blode, through his mystrye,
 Is there in the forme of brede. 1220

1201 Whoso) Who so G / unrightfullyche) unrightfullyche G /
 1202 commaundmentes) cōmaundmentes G / 1203 wrechedlyche)
 wreched lyche G / 1213 nother solde) nothersolde G /
 1219 mystrye) mastry G

Howe it is there it nedeth nat stryve,
 Whether it be subgette or accydent;
 But as Christ was whan he was on lyve,
 So he is there verament;
 If pope or cardynall lyve good lyve
 As Christ commaunded in his gospell,
 Ayenst that woll I nat stryve;
 But me thynketh they lyve nat well.

1225

For if the pope lyved as God bede,
 Pride and hyghnesse he shulde dyspyse,
 Rychesse, covetyse and crowne on hede;
 Mekenesse and poverte he shulde use.
 The Gryffon sayd he shulde abyge;
 'Thou shalbe brent in balefull fyre;
 All thy secte I shall distrye;
 Ye shalbe hanged by the swyre.

1230

1235

He came you gone to hang-daw
 Ye shullen be honged and to-drawe;
 Who gyveth you leave for to preche,
 Or speke ayenst Goddes lawe,
 And the people thus falsely teche?
 Thou shalt be cursed with boke and bell,
 And dissevered from holy churche,
 And clene ydampned into hell,
 Otherwyse but ye woll worche.'

1240

1225 If pope) Ifpope G / 1229 God) god G / 1233) G
 l.h. margin reads Gryffon/1235 thy) they G / 1237 to-drawe)
 to drawe G / 1239 Goddes) goddes G / 1243 into) in to G

The Pellycan sayd, 'that I ne drede; 1245
 Your cursyng is of lytell value;
 Of God I hope to have my mede,
 For it is falshede that ye sewe;
 For ye ben out of charite,
 And wylneth vengeaunce, as dyd Nero; 1250
 To suffryn I woll redy be;
 I drede nat that thou canst do.

Christ badde ones suffre for his love,
 And so he taught all his servauntes;
 And but thou amende for his sake above, 1255
 I drede^{nat} all thy mayntenaunce;
 For if I drede the worldes hate,
 Me thynketh I were lytell to prayse;
 I drede nothyng your hye estate,
 Ne I drede nat your diseace. 1260

Wolde ye turne and leave your pride,
 Your hye porte and your richesse,
 Your cursyng shulde nat go so wyde;
 God bryng you into rightwysenesse;
 For I drede nat your tyranny, 1265
 Or nothyng that ye canne done;
 To suffre I am all redy,
 Syker I recke never howe soone.'

1245) G l.h.margin reads Pellycan / 1247 God) god G /
 1248 falshede) fashede G / sewe) shewe G / 1262 Your (a))
 your G / 1263 Your) your G / 1264 into) in to G / 1266 Or)
 For G

The Gryffon grynne as he were wode,
 And loked lothely as an owle, 1270
 And swore by cockes herte blode,
 He wolde hym tere every doule;
 'Holy churche thou disclaundrest foule;
 For thy reasons I woll the all to-race,
 And make thy flesshe to rote and moule; 1275
 Losell, thou shalte have harde grace.'

The Gryffon flewe forthe on his waye;
 The Pellycane dyd sytte and wepe,
 And to hymselfe he gan saye,
 'God wolde that any of Christes shepe 1280
 Hadde herde and ytake kepe
 Eche a worde that here sayd was,
 And wolde it write and well it kepe;
 God wolde it were all for his grace.'

I answerde and sayd I wolde, 1285
 If for my travayle any man wolde pay;
 He sayd, 'yes, these that God han solde,
 For they han store of money;'
 I sayd, 'tell me and thou may,
 Why tellest thou mennes trespace?' 1290
 He sayd, 'to amende hem, in good fay,
 If God woll gyve me any grace.

1269 G r.h. margin reads Gryffon./ 1270 lothely)
 lovely G / 1274 to-race) to race G / 1279 hymselfe)
 hym selfe G / 1285) G l.h.margin reads Flowmā /
 1287) G l.h.margin reads Pelycan./ God) god G / 1289) G
 l.h.margin reads Flowmā / 1291) G l.h.margin reads
 Pelycau./ 1292 God) god G

For Christ hymselfe is lykened to me,
 That for his people dyed on rode;
 As fare I, right so fareth he, 1295
 He fedeth his byrdes with his blode;
 But these done yvell ayenst gode,
 And ben his fone under frendes face;
 I tolde hem howe her lyvyng stode;
 God amende hem for his grace.' 1300

Narrator. 'What ayleth the Gryffon, tell why
 That he holdeth on that other syde?'

Pellican. 'For they two ben lykely,
 And with kyndes robben wyde;
 The foule betokeneth pride, 1305
 As Lucifere that high flowe was;
 And sithe he dyd hym in yvell hyde,
 For he agylted Goddis grace.

As byrde flyeth up in the ayre,
 And lyveth by byrdes that ben meke, 1310
 So these be flowe up into dispayre,
 And shenden sely soules eke;
 The soules that ben in synnes seke,
 They willeth hem knele before, alas;
 For bribry Goddis forbode breke; 1315
 God amende it for his grace.

1293 hymselfe) hym selfe G / 1301) G l.h.margin reads
 Flownā / 1305) G l.h.margin reads Pelycan./ 1306 flows)
 flewe G / 1308 Goddis) goddis G / 1311 into) in to G /
 1314 They willeth) He culleth G / before) therefore G /
 1315 Goddis) goddis G

The hynder parte is a lyoun,
 A robber and a ravynere,
 That robbeth the people in erthe adowne,
 And in erthe holdeth none his pere; 1320
 So fareth this foule bothe ferre and nere,
 And with temporell strength, the people chase,
 As a lyon proude in erthe here;
 God amende hym for his grace.

He flewe forthe with his wynges twayne, 1325
 All droupyng, dased and dull;
 But soone the Gryffon came agayne,
 Of his foules the erthe was full;
 The Pellycan he had cast to-pull;
 So great a nombre never sene there was; 1330
 What maner of foules tellen I woll,
 If God woll gyve me of his grace.

With the Gryffon comen foules fele,
 Ravyns, rokes, crows and pye,
 Grayfoules agadred wele; 1335
 Igurde, above they wolde hye;
 Gledes and bosardes weren hem by,
 White molles and puttockes token her place,
 And lapwynges that well conneth lye;
 This felowshyp han forgerde her grace. 1340

1317 a lyoun) alyoun G / 1319 the) they G / adowne) a downe
 G / 1322 the)they G / 1324 hym) hem G / 1325) G r.h.margin
reads Pellycan / 1327) G r.h.margin reads Gryffon./ 1329
 to-pull) to pull G / 1332 God) god G / 1339 conneth)
 cōneth G / 1340 forgerde) for gerde G

Long the Pellycane was out,
 But at last he cometh agayne,
 And brought with hym the Phenixe stoute;
 The Gryffon wolde have flowe full fayne;
 His foules that flewen as thycke as rayne, 1345
 The Phenixe tho began hem chace;
 To flye from hym it was in vayne,
 For he dyd vengeaunce and no grace.

He slewe hem downe without mercy,
 There astarte neyther free ne thrall; 1350
 On hym they cast a rufull crye
 Whan the Gryffon downe was fall;
 He bete hem nat but slewe hem all;
 Whither he hem drove no man may trace;
 Under the erthe me thought they yall; 1355
 Alas, they had a feble grace.

Narrator. The Pelycan than axed I ryght,
 'For my wrytyng if I have blame,
 Who woll for me fyght or flyght?
 Who shall shelde me from shame? 1360
 He that had a mayde to dame,
 And the lambe that slayne was,
 Shall shelde me from gostly blame;
 For erthely harme is Goddis grace.

1357) G l.h.margin reads Pellycan / I) G omits / ryght)
 tyght G / 1359 or) of G / 1364 Goddis) goddis G - the
 first d has lost its top, making it look very like an o.

Commentary.

11. The Pilgrimage

Therefore I pray every man 1365
 Of my writyng have me excused;
 This writyng witeth the Pellycan,
 That thus these people hath dispysed;
 For I am fresshe fully advysed,
 I nyll nat maynteyne his manace; 1370
 For the devyll is often disguysed,
 To brynge a man to yvell grace.

Wyteth the Pellycane and nat me;
 For herof I nyll nat avowe,
 In hye, ne in lowe, ne in no degre, 1375
 But as a fable take it ye mowe;
 To holy churche I wyll me bowe;
 Eche man to amende him Christ sende space;
 And for my writyng me alowe,
 He that is almyghty for his grace. 1380

Finis.

1367 witeth) writeth G

Commentary.

- 1f. The Plowman. The figure described in these stanzas could belong to either the fourteenth or sixteenth centuries. In both periods, a plowman could be the owner of beasts such as cows and oxen. The cow would provide domestic produce whilst the oxen, on their own or with those of a neighbour, would make up a plough-team. The dream of lush pasture lands, and the lamentation over the malnutrition caused by the lack of them, must have been common to both periods. It is unlikely that the Lollard Pellican would have approved of a discontented plowman undertaking a pilgrimage to St. Thomas's shrine at Canterbury, in order, apparently, to petition for an improvement in grazing conditions on his land - see J. F. Davis, 'Lollards, Reformers and St. Thomas of Canterbury', University of Birmingham Historical Journal, 9 (1963), 1-15. For a useful discussion of the medieval plowman and his relationship to the portrait of the plowman in the Canterbury Tales, see J. Horrell, 'Chaucer's Symbolic Plowman', Speculum, 14 (1939), 82-92; also G. Stillwell, 'Chaucer's Plowman and the Contemporary English Peasant', ELH, 6 (1939), 285-90.
2. mydsommer none. The month of June. This was an important time for the plowman when the weeding was done, as recommended by John Fitzherbert - 'wede them clene in mydsommer none or soone after', The Book of Husbandry (Reprinted from the 1534 edition), ed. W. W. Skeat (1882), p.78, l.12. Skeat (p.142) notes the parallel with the PlowT and believes that the phrase is an old one. The earliest OED reference, however, is Fitzherbert, 1523.
- 7-8. share and cultre ... harneys. The normal parts of any plough, whether of the fourteenth or sixteenth centuries - see CT I 3762-3; also Fitzherbert, pp. 10-11.
9. tabarde. The garment here referred to is not that worn by a knight over his armour and emblazoned with armorial bearings. Rather is it the sleeveless coat, usually made of coarse material, which was worn out of doors by people such as labourers - see CT I 541.
11. saynt Thomas. The shrine of St. Thomas a Becket at Canterbury. Until its destruction in September 1538 as a result of Archbishop Cranmer's pressure on Thomas Cromwell, it was the most popular destination for a pilgrimage in England. It is interesting to note that in spite of the systematic process, instituted after 1543, of expunging from all devotional and other books all references to Becket, there was no attempt to remove such references either from the PlowT or from anywhere else in subsequent Chaucer editions.

12. platte. None of the four OED senses, including 'flatly, plainly (of manner)', as glossed by Skeat, suggests the idea of directness in time - 'immediately, at once' - implied in the PlowT context. O6 translates 'he goes directly on pilgrimage without stay or doubt'.
- 17-22. See PilgrT in Animadversions, p.82, ll.181-2.
24. O6 suggests 'perhaps it should be, full ill shent', a suggestion adopted by UBAC.
- 29.34. swete and swynke. A common alliterative phrase - see, for instance, P.Pl. A.vii. 28; C.vi. 57; Crede 622; Song of the Husbandman 20; Cursor Mundi 1047. The phrase is used on five occasions by Spenser - C. G. Osgood, A Concordance to the Poems of Edmund Spenser (Washington, 1915), p.846 - who doubtless derived it from the printed editions of Piers Plowman, or, perhaps, from the PlowT Prologue.
31. as. Th1 reads and, which, taken to mean 'if', would detract from the symbolic value of the plowman as one who is well able to serve and worship God even though, perhaps because, he is not and never has been in cloystre ypent. The plowman is concerned to affirm, and certainly not to cast doubt on, his way of serving God. By taking and to mean 'and', however, the affirmation becomes somewhat arrogant and tendentious and totally alien to the appropriate sense of quiet humility suggested by as.
32. 'But we simple men are (considered) completely blind'.
- 37-40. A reference to the ceremony of Excommunication - see Myrc, Instructions for Parish Priests, ll.750-86. The theme of the unjust and frequent imposition of such a sentence is an important one in the poem - see ll.165, 174, 264, 291, 445, 567. The Griffon's declaration of Excommunication in ll.1241f. illustrates the reason for such complaints. Rosalind T. Hill, 'The Theory and Practice of Excommunication in Medieval England', History, 42 (1957), 1-11, stresses that Excommunication came frequently to be imposed as a penalty for all sorts of minor offences.
44. Skeat believes that four lines are missing at this point and supplies them ingeniously in his notes: 'They have the loof and we the crust / They eten more than kinde hath craved / They been ungentle and unjust /

With sinners shullen such be saved'. All printed and MS texts take ll.41-8 as one stanza, and leave ll.49-52 as an isolated quatrain at the end of the Prologue. This is certainly incorrect. It is clear from the ababab rhyme scheme used in the Prologue that ll.45-52 should be taken as one stanza, leaving ll.41-4 isolated. Skeat may well be right in believing that the quatrain after l.44 has been lost, but it is difficult to understand why this should be so. Why, if the Prologue was specially written to enable the poem to be printed c1535 as a work of Chaucer's, are the lines missing from the very first printed edition? They could, of course, have been suppressed, although it seems likely that the lines were originally composed by one who was intimately connected with the same government officials who would have been responsible for the suppression. However, the idea that an official writer could have allowed a doctrinal indiscretion to creep into the quatrain - an indiscretion of which he himself was not aware - is more likely than an alternative explanation which would involve the sudden departure of that writer's inspiration for four lines only for that inspiration to return, mysteriously, at l.45. G has ll.41-8 copied out in the margin in what seems to be a sixteenth or early seventeenth century hand.

54. 'In many places at the same time'. There is no OED entry to confirm the O6 translation 'on a soudaine', that is 'suddenly'.
55. sydes. There is probably a distinction to be drawn between sydes, 'seeds', and syde, 'side' (l.85). I take syde (ll.61,69) to mean 'seed', so continuing the image introduced in l.55. The OED records side as a sixteenth century spelling of seed, and the form was probably introduced compositorially into G - see syke / eke (ll.738,40). It would, however, be possible to take all forms of syde(s) to mean 'side' and to translate l.55 as 'the various sides (of a field) which have been sown'.
57. on grounde. MS and all printed versions after Sp2 adopt this reading in preference to ungrounde, which was favoured by earlier printed texts, including G. There are two reasons for preferring on grounde. Firstly, the OED lists only one instance (in 1488) of unground as a ppl. adj. meaning 'not ground in a mill', before 1623. With the weight of other vocabulary evidence in favour of a fourteenth century date of composition for this section of the poem, it seems unsatisfactory to adopt as a reading a word which may not have been current in 1400. Moreover the alternative reading was in common use in Middle English meaning 'on earth, in the country' - OED ground sb. III 8 - and this sense is certainly appropriate in the context.

58. souple G Th1 H Th2 St Spl UBAC read souple; Sp2 O6 Sp3 Wr read soukle, which O6 defines as 'poore and thin'; MS and Sk read souple. The OED records neither souple nor soukle, which excludes them from consideration. It does record souple (OF. supple, sople; L. supplicem, supplex), which in this context has the force of 'weak, powerless, undernourished' without the accompanying connotations of submissiveness and compliance which were qualities in no way characteristic of many persecuted Lollards.
70. O6 translates 'Thrist out of the company of men, as not worthy to liue amongst men'.
72. Sk notes 'always in the same condition, without increasing in wealth'. The phrase in one in this sense is recorded twice (in the Cursor Mundi) by the OED - one VIII 30 d (d) - and nowhere else.
74. untall. O6 translates 'who lookes on them, shall see they are lowe, weake, poore'; Sk translates 'whoever looks on them (sees that) they are the reverse of tall'. It is likely that untall is the opposite of OED tall I 3, 'Good at arms, strong in combat'. The OED records only one instance - the PlowT - of untall, though it notes, as a suggested derivation for tall, the Gothic untals, 'unaccomodating, disobedient', and the Old Northumbrian untal, 'evil, improper'. However, neither of these senses fits the PlowT context.
81. in a wro. O6 translates ll.81-2: 'In griefe or anger, as I trauaild from place to place, griued, that I could not learne the truth of this matter'. The OED does not record any form of wro / wra as a contracted form of wroth / wrath, 'anger, grief', but rightly takes this PlowT reference to mean 'in a nook or corner; a retired or sheltered spot', and it is this sense which is adopted by Skeat in his note.
82. a wall. O6 note 'that is, as I take it, a well: for woods vse not to be walled: and in this tale afterward, wall is put for well; As bucket into the wall (l.298)'. OED well sb.la records many instances of the spelling wall(e).
83. The form of introduction to the debate, with the narrator chancing upon the disputants as he walks in the country, may be paralleled by other Chanson d'aventure openings - see Helen E. Sandison, The 'Chanson D'Aventure' in Middle English (Bryn Mawr, 1913), p.39f. See EETS, ES 101,

Poem 74a (The Duty of Prelates) for a not dissimilar opening to another poem critical of abuses within the church. The slight resemblance between this poem and the PlowT is reflected not only in the opening, but in lines such as: 'The sede of syme so thyke ys sowe / Among the clargy, with pompe and pride, / And the gras of grace may not growe, / So your shepe ar hurt on evary syde' (ll.9-12) - see PlowT ll.53-60. The Duty of Prelates also has a recurrent stanzaic refrain involving shepe and folde, and also, as has been noted earlier, reflects one of the central themes of the PlowT with the line 'Idare no more say, lest I were shent' (l.47). It is certainly possible that The Duty, which occurs in the Vernon MS. dating from c1380 was written by a poet who knew the PlowT, but the resemblances between the two poems are insufficiently strong to be certain on this point.

84. Literally 'The falsar (disputant) - may that which is foul befall him'.

86. G margin reads Gryffon. Descriptions of both the Pellican and the Griffon were available to medieval writers in Latin Bestiaries such as that to be found in Alexander Neckham's De Naturis Rerum. By the end of the fourteenth century, there was at least one English translation of a Bestiary available to the PlowT poet, for John Trevisa had translated Bartholomeus Anglicus, De Proprietatibus Rerum. The recurrent features in descriptions of the Griffon are that it has the head and wings of an Eagle and the body of a Lion, and that it dwells in the Hyperborean mountains where it has guard over the treasure of the mountains and will not allow it to be moved. The Griffon is said to be particularly hostile to men and horses - see Medieval Lore, ed. R. Steele (1893), pp. 108, 129; also T. H. White, The Book of Beasts (A Translation of a Latin Bestiary of the Twelfth Century) (1954), pp. 22-4. These same characteristics are to be found in the extended account of the creature included in The Dialoges of Creatures Moralyed (STC 6815), a translation from the Latin, which the STC assigns to the Antwerp press of M. de Keyser (1535). The account (Dialogue 87) is entitled 'Of the Tyrannie the Gryfon' (Sig. FF.iiii), and it talks of his 'Tyranye and Couetyse' as he 'gadryd greate goodes' and 'sleyth and destroyeth all men that dwell nere him' (Sig. FF.iiii). The moral drawn from the story of the Griffon and the refusal of his neighbours to offer food when the elements had caused a famine in his own land is that people, like the Griffon, must expect to be treated as they treat others. I have not found any reference to a connection between the Griffon and the clergy which antedates the PlowT. An oblique reference to the clerical party as 'greedy Griffons and vile todes terrestiall', in Wilfrid Holme's poem, The fall and cull successe of Rebellion (c1536-7)(Sig. F.iiii), almost certainly post-dates the first printed edition of the PlowT and could conceivably derive from it. It would

have been interesting if Edward Arber (English Reprints, 28, p.19) had been correct in his belief that the title-page of the 1528 edition of William Roye's Rede me and be nott wrothe had juxtaposed an axe dripping with blood, a cardinal's hat and a Griffon. In fact, the animals on the title-page are identified clearly in 'The descripcion of the armes' as 'syxe Dull heades' and a 'Bandoge' (Sig. A1^v). The chief feature of the Pellican which is noted in Bestiaries is the love which she shows for her children. This is revealed in two stories. Firstly, when the children strike their father and mother, the mother slays them and then, on the third day afterwards, smites herself in the side so that the blood pours over the bodies of the dead children and revives them. The second story states that the death of the young birds is the result of their being infected and stung by a serpent whilst their mother was away. When she returned, the mother Pellican wept for three days before smiting herself in the breast to save her children, some of whom, out of gratitude, then saved their mother whilst the other less loving children were not allowed to live with her again. For both these stories, see Medieval Lore, ed. Steele, p.109.

88. layde his lure. O6 translates 'cast his liking, or his perwading, spake for these Lolers', which seems the best way of explaining this most curious use of the phrase.
90. 'He continually called upon Christ for counsel'. The theme of setting all observations on current ecclesiastical practice against the eternal perspective of Christ's precepts as set out in the scriptures pervades the whole poem, and the whole Lollard movement.
91. as sharpe as fyre. I have found no other example of this particular simile. More usual similes are - as sharp as a needle, as a razor - whilst also recorded are - as sharp as vinegar, as a thorn, as a sickle. See OED sharp A 1d.; also H. G. Bohn, A Handbook of Proverbs (Sixth Edition, 1889), p.320.
- 97-8. The Evangely is either John himself, or his Gospel, 1.29: 'Anothir day Joon say Jhesu comynge to hym, and he seide, Lo! the lomb of God; lo! he that doith awei the synnes of the world'; also 1.35-6: 'Anothir dai Joon stode, and tweyne of hise disciplis; and he biheeld Jhesu walkynge, and seith, Lo! the lomb of God.' - both verses from The New Testament in English according to the version by John Wycliffe (Later version), ed. J. Porshall and Sir F. Madden (Oxford, 1879), pp. 183-4.
102. O6 takes Peters successours as referring just to the episcopacy, and even to the pope himself, and not simply in apposition to Preestes.

Whilst this could be the correct reading, the same phrase is used earlier in the poem (1.66) as a blanket term for the clergy as a whole, and could well be understood in that same sense here - in which case it would be in apposition to Preestes.

103. Be. All except O6 and the modernisation by William Vaughan in The Golden Fleece read Beth. However the point of the whole poem is not that Priests beth lowlyche and of lowe degre, but that they manifestly are not, yet should be. The shulde (1. 101) governs both Be (1. 103), and usen (1. 105) and must be accompanied by a present infinitive - Be and not Beth. O6 and Vaughan suggest Both - thus: 'Priests, Peters successors' (should be) both lowly and humble', which is a possible but less satisfactory alternative to the emendation adopted in the present text.
106. pelure. Until Skeat restored pelure, 'fur', all earlier printed editions had read some form of pillour, which, if O6 is representative of other editions, was taken to mean 'a Pillor ... one of the ensignes or markes which is vsually carried before Cardinals, to signifie that they forsooth are Pillars of the Church.' If the sense of 'portable pillar borne as an ensign of dignity or office' could be proved, this would be considerable evidence for sixteenth century authorship if not for the poem as a whole, then at least for this stanza, for the OED 5 records the first use in 1518. If, on the other hand, the pelure reading could be established, it would be evidence for an early date of composition, for the OED records no form of the word after 1475. There are four reasons for believing pelure to be the correct reading. Firstly, its context is pelure ne other proude pall, where other suggests that pelure is thought of as part of the proude pall, 'the fine clothing'. Clearly 'fur' is more appropriate than 'pillar' as an article of 'fine clothing'. Secondly, accusations of priests wearing pelure on their clothing are common in Lollard, as well as orthodox criticism of the church - See, for instance, Mathew, English Works, pp. 92, 121, 127, 148. Thirdly, the OED records a fifteenth century variant spelling pillour for pelure, which is identical with a fifteenth and sixteenth century spelling of pillar. Thus what had originally been intended as a word meaning 'fur' could easily have been taken to mean 'pillar'. There is much less likelihood of the confusion occurring the other way round, for there is no spelling of pillar exactly equivalent to pelure, though some forms - pel(1)er, pelyer - bear some similarity. Lastly Junius suggested pelure as a desirable emendation. The case for reading pillour, 'pillar' is put forward by Francis Thynne in the Animadversions, p.63.

110. 'But (should) chasten them (i.e. their parishioners) charitably ...'. Charity was accepted in Medieval theology as the root of all other virtues. Its presence in the actions of the Pellican (ll.1180, 1188), and its absence from the actions of the clergy in general (ll.689, 796), and the Griffon in particular (l.1249) is an important theme in the poem.
- 111-2. A considerable impetus was given to the complaints against warlike clerics at the end of the fourteenth century by the activities of Bishop Henry DeSpenser who, in 1385, led a crusade on behalf of Urban VI against the Flemish supporters of the anti-pope Clement VII. See Wyclif's Cruciata in Polemical Works in Latin, ed. R. Buddensieg, Wyclif Society, 2 Vols. (1883; reprinted 1966), II, 588-632; also Mathew, English Works, p.152.
115. All worldly worshyppe. See Crede 371.
130. peringall. G reads permagall. Sk is almost certainly correct in his belief that the m in the G reading is a misreading of in. The OED records several spellings - perengale, paringal(le) - which approximate to the emended form adopted in the present edition, whereas it has no form which accords with the G reading.
- 132-88. The picture of the extravagance in dress, food and drink amongst the clergy can be paralleled in many other medieval moralistic writings - see, for instance, Owst, Literature and Pulpit, pp. 271-2, 276-7, and esp. 282-4. A representative Wycliffite indictment is Mathew, English Works, pp. 60-1.
135. Inaynted and portred. See, for instance, Crede, 121, 192; W. of P. 619; P.Pl. B.iii,62.
- 138-9. O6 seems to have misunderstood the lines for it translates: 'with girdles of gold massie and strong, as it were a chaine, to holde a Beare to a stake withall, that he may not breake away'. The two lines make better sense if they are taken to mean '(The clergy wear) golden girdles great and small, and are as savage as is a bear at bay'.
- 141-2. 'They punish the poor arrogantly, but the sins of others (i.e. those who are not poor) are upheld in the return for money'. The necessity

of amending the pret. ppl. puny(1)shed to pres. pl. punisheth in order to accord with the present tense of they sustayne (1.142) was first recognised in Sp2. MS reads ponysheth, and Vaughan (1626) reads With Pride they punish the poore. Sk, by placing an hiatus on pride, renders the line octosyllabic - which other editions had done by adding they - and also enables each alliterative element to fall on a stressed syllable - thus With pridē ponyssheth the poore.

144. fylleth her wombe. Vaughan reads 'glut their bellies'.

146. Of the benefices which from time to time became vacant, some were under the patronage of the king, others under that of laymen. The Plowt poet, however, is concerned with the abuses occurring under episcopal patronage. Within a diocese, a Bishop was sometimes the greatest single patron, and the accusation is that the Bishops' only thought is to put benefices on the market to the highest bidder - chaffren. For an account of the system of preferment (with special reference to the fifteenth century), see P. Heath, The English Parish Clergy on the Eve of the Reformation (1969), pp. 27-48. See Mathew, English Works, p.23 concerning the trade in benefices.

147. a leude tale. The complaint made here against the higher clergy is that which was more frequently made against the mendicant orders who preached in the community. Jack Upland asks Friar Daw: 'whi preche ze fals fablis ... & feined myraclys, and leuen (ignore) þe gospel þat Crist bad preche ...' (ll.233-4) and see also Mathew, English Works, pp. 105, 124, 438, and Crede 46. In the sixteenth century, I playne Piers (Sig. E.iii^v), where the complaint is that even with printing, it is 'legenda aurea, Roben Hoode, Bouys & Gower, & al bagage be syd' which take preference over the scriptures. The sort of medieval illustrative story material to which these writers took exception is John Myrc, Festial, ed. T. Erbe, EETS ES 96 (1905); An Alphabet of Tales, ed. Mary Macleod Banks, EETS OS 126-7, 2 Vols, (1904-5); The Early South-Eastern Legendary, ed. C. Horstmann, EETS OS 87 (1887).

149. With chaunge of many. Junius emends to They feed of manie, a suggestion adopted by UBAC. Francis Thynne, addressing Spight (Animadversions, pp. 63-4), says: 'yo wolde have vs reade, "they eate of manye manner meates."' and argues that the original reading With chaunge ... is preferable. In fact both Sp1 and Sp2 read With chaunge ..., thus making it difficult to see why Thynne should have thought that Spight intended otherwise.

- 151-2. Probably the best translation is 'and fill their stomachs, and eat quickly, and then (proceed) from the meal to the privy'.
157. And myters mo than. Junius emends to Miters they weare ..., a suggestion adopted by UBAC. Francis Thynne (Animadversions, p.64) tells Speght 'yo teache vs to reade, "Myters they weare mo then one or two"; whiche, me thinkethe, nedethe not. for the wearinge of their myters is included in these woordes, "and myters moore then one or twee." Whiche woordes are curteyled for the verse his cause, that the same mighte kepe one equall proportione and decorum in the verse, whiche wolde be lengthened one foote or sillable moore then the other verses, yf youre readinge sholde stande'. Once again, as with 11.106,149, Speght is apparently innocent of the charges made against him, for his reading of the line is identical with Thynne's. It is possible that Thynne is commenting in print on suggestions which Speght may have made to him privately concerning future possible improvements to the text. For details of the various types of mitre worn by the clergy, see H. J. McCloud, Clerical Dress and Insignia of the Roman Catholic Church (Milwaukee, 1948), pp. 121-5.
159. lo. Clearly used merely as a line-filler, in order to rhyme with two (1.157).
161. clothe of golde. OED defines 'A tissue consisting of threads, wires, or strips of gold, generally interwoven with silk or wool; Also applied to gilded cloth'. The colour of Gold was often described as reed - see MED gold n.1c, 4b; see also Mathew, English Works, p.88.
162. glitterande gowne as grene as gall. The green gall refers to the gall-apple which was thought to be effective as a medicament - see MED galle n.(3) which quotes from Guy de Chauliac's Grande Chirurgie (? cl425) - 'He helede it with grene galles and wi) vynegre' (46b/b). All printed editions before Sk read golde for gowne. Vaughan reads: With glitter and Gold, as greene as gall. The description of Gold as green is unacceptable. Skeat's suggestion of gowne, which fits both the sense and the alliteration, seems particularly preferable as there is another reference to grene ray gownes (1.925). It would be quite usual for a prominent churchman such as a bishop to wear a green gown at this time - see McCloud, p.46. The reading golde seems to have resulted from repeating the word from 1.161.
166. boke. G reads bokes. The singular boke was adopted by H and all subsequent editions until Sk.

- 169-70. A rather ambiguous passage admitting several possible readings. O6 notes: 'Perhaps hee meanes, if thou wilt like of their sentence, and stand to it, they will entertaine thee as a guest in their braue halles: or else they will here and end thy matter, without any great enquirie, priuately in their houses'. The first explanation takes gesse to mean 'entertain' though neither OED (quest v.) nor MED (gesten v.1) record any forms without the t. The OED does not record dwell in quite the sense of 'stand to it, abide by a decision'. Moreover there is no reason to suppose that the members of a Consistory court would entertain those defendants who chose to abide by the verdict of the court. Rather would they simply punish those who did not so abide. Thus the first translation cannot be satisfactorily justified. The second explanation takes and thou wilt dwell to mean 'without any great enquirie' - that is, 'even whilst you wait', with the suggestion that the verdict is reached without adequate time being taken. It is possible to take gesse to mean 'consider a verdict' - see Lydgate, Pilgr. 2468 (MED gessen lc.) It is this explanation which is adopted in the present edition, although a third explanation - one which takes dwell to mean 'err, do wrong', thus 'if you do wrong' (OED dwele 1; MED dwellen 1) - is an equally possible alternative, and one which would be further evidence for a fourteenth century date of composition for, in this sense, dwele is not recorded after 1400.
- 173-4. These lines represent what the poet thinks that the clerics believe and not what the poet himself accepts. The clerics are said to believe that something (or someone) is blessed or cursed merely by virtue of the fact that a clerical blessing or curse has been passed, irrespective of whether the something (or someone) is held to be blessed or cursed in the eyes of God - see ll.221-4; also Mathew, English Works, pp.74-6.
178. to purse pennyes woll come thrall. 'they will enslave themselves to the pursuit of wealth'.
184. Chaucer's Plowman rode upon a humble mere (CT I 541). The Bishops however ride upon a courser, which was a light and agile horse used in battle, tournaments and hunting - see P. Q. Karkeek, 'Notes on the Horses Mentioned by Chaucer', Chaucer Society, Second Series, 15 (1868), 490-500.
187. golde mastlyng. OED notes, from Trevisa's translation of De Proprietatibus Rerum, 'Laton ... though it be bras of Messelyng: yet it shyneth as golde wythout'.

- 193-4. The name Antichrist is mentioned only twice in the New Testament - I John.ii.18; I John.iv.3.
195. Tyffelers. 'Idlers'. OED records no other use of the word as a noun. The EDD tifle 5(1), records Leicestershire noun forms meaning 'a trifler, idler'. As a verb, tiffle is recorded in the OED as a variant form of tiff v.1 (derived from OF. tif(f)er, to adorn). There is no instance of tiff between c1450 and its antiquarian use after 1700. Similarly, tiffle occurs twice in English Wycliffite works, then in the Dictionaries of 1440 and 1530 and is not found again before the nineteenth century in East Anglian dialectal uses. The EDD locates usages in Warwickshire, Cumberland, Northamptonshire, Northumberland, Nottinghamshire, generally with the sense of 'to trifle, idle, potter about; to work in a trifling, idle fashion; to do any small fidgety job requiring care or nicety'.
198. done to be deed. An awkward phrase which has led editors from Th2 onwards to emend done to dome, domid (UBAC), doomed (Vaughan), and demed (Sk). The phrase to be deed (see OED dead A.1d) was used to mean 'to die at the hands of someone, to be put to death' - thus OED notes 'Condemned to be ded as a trefoure' (Capgrave). The use of a form of done rather than deme need not be rejected, for the expression to do to ded is recorded in the Cursor Mundi (OED do B.1c). The context allows the line to refer either to the sentence of death - deme - or to the execution of that sentence - done.
201. All holyest. See 11.229f. (esp. 1.230).
202. regall. In the generalised sense of 'a prince, a ruler', as opposed to special phrases such as 'the Regal of France, the Regal of Scotland', the OED (regal B 2) records only one instance - Chaucer's I GW 2128 - apart from the PlowT, and even the Chaucer example talks of 'the regals of Athenes'.
206. 'Christ forbad that (practice) to the Apostles'.
218. many a poynt. The present edition draws a distinction between poynt (1.216), 'a degree, extent', and the same word in 1.218 which is taken to mean 'an appointment, a preferment' as recorded once only (in a Wycliffite piece) by the OED - point sb. 2. Thus 'For himself he reserves many a benefice' - i.e. he reserves for himself a great deal of temporal wealth and authority.

220. o pyn ne ioynt. There has been no shortage of speculative emendation in order to make sense of this curious expression. Vaughan suggests neither rib ne ioynt; Sp2 favours opin ne point; Sp3 reads o pin ne point, meaning apparently '(neither) a pin nor a point'; G Th1 read opyn (MS open) ne ioynt(e), apparently with the sense, in Skeat's words, of 'opin, open, a thing that is free; joint, a thing that is connected' - in other words, 'nothing at all'; St Spl read opin (opyn H Th2) no ioynt, whilst UBAC have no pin no ioynt. The reading adopted in the present edition has the meaning '(neither) a pin nor a joint', that is - he reserves not even the smallest thing.
- 229-30. The contrast is noted, in English, in Of Antecrist and his Meynee, in Three Treatises by John Wycklyffe D.D., ed. J. H. Todd (Dublin, 1851), p. cxliii.
243. O6 correctly points to the ambiguity in the use of suche: 'Either we must read it with an interrogation: did Christ suffer five wounds for such kinde of men? referring it to the Pope: or else we must vnderstand it of the Christians, that are slaine in these warres betwixt the Popes, as who would say: They that are slaine in these quarrels, are such as Christ dyed for, and therefore they should be more regarded'. The present writer favours a third alternative. The suche is taken to refer to the pope and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, but the line as a whole is taken not as a question, but as a positive expression of contempt for those whose behaviour shows them to be totally unworthy of Christ's supreme sacrifice.
245. Qui gladio percutit. A composite phrase clearly inspired by Math. xxvi. 52: 'Omnes enim, qui acceperint gladium, gladio peribunt', and Luc. xxii. 49: 'Dixerunt ei: Domine, si percutimus in gladio?'
- 253-6. ^{VI} See CT/472-5; also CT X 590f., and Owst, Literature and Pulpit, pp. 414-25. For a representative Lollard view, see Mathew, English Works, p.278.
258. Clearly the line could be understood to mean: 'Each (person) chews on it like a horse'. This is apparently the sense adopted by some of those texts - H Th2 St Sk - which separate the G reading Echone and read, instead, Eche (various spellings) on. Other texts - Spl Sp2 O6 Sp3 Wr - retain the separation, but restore one for on: 'Each one chews it like a horse'. Whilst both Ech one and Ech on

are possible, the present editor sees no reason to reject the G reading in favour of one which cannot be shown to be a decisive improvement. The meaning of ball adopted by those texts - see Sp2 06 Sp3 Junius UBAC Wr - which read throweth (various spellings) for choweth is clear. 06, for instance, translates: 'every one of these Clergie-men, take and throw the lawes vp and downe like a Ball, as if they were but matters of sport'. The G reading choweth is, however, perfectly acceptable, meaning 'chews, ruminates, considers', if ball is taken to mean 'horse'. The MED notes the word meaning 'a sheep', in the Promptorium Parvulorum, but in The Plowman's Song, a pseudo-Chaucerian balade which occurs in a late fourteenth/early fifteenth century hand in BM MS. Addit. 16165, f. 244b, the following line occurs: 'ffor of my ploughe þe best stotte (horse) is balle'- quoted MLN, 19 (1904), 37. The OED is certainly incorrect in noting Thomas Tusser's Five hundreth pointes of good husbandrie (1573), as the earliest and only instance of ball meaning horse.

- 261f. A frequently used ironic device - ll.261, 3 represent the claims made for themselves by the clergy, and ll.262, 4 represent the contrasting reality as seen by the poet. See also ll.285-6.
- 261-2,269 See l.146. The term Simony derives from the story of Simon Magus as told in Acts. viii. 18-20.
264. contraries. 'enemies, those opposed to them'. See MED contrarie n. 2b; OED contrary sb. B.6.
275. 'But he who acquires (wealth) in this way, shall be separated from it'.
- 278f. It is likely that Churche, font and vestment represent, respectively, 'benefice, baptism and ordination', with the idea that none of these will be administered or granted except for money - for hyre (l.277). The idea of ordination (symbolised by the priestly vestments) being the result of monetary payments to the bishop is developed in the next two lines, in which the orders are 'ordinations' and the parchement is the official document of authorization which is granted only, the poet alleges, in return for money.
281. riatours. Clearly the sense intended here is OED rioter 1, 'one who leads a disorderly or licentious life, or who indulges in debauchery; a dissolute person; a reveller'. The word's other meaning (OED 2a) 'One who takes part in a riot' is not recorded before 1460.

- 282. A difficult expression which seems to mean: 'They take money from the dissolute and regard the act of taking the money as sufficient treatment for the sheep's (i.e. the dissolute people's) sin' - that is, the concern of the clergy for sin does not extend to a desire for its eradication, but merely to ensure that those who wish to continue to live the sinful life are made to pay for the privilege. Compare lines from a Lollard interpolated manuscript of The Prick of Conscience, 'And so he (the priest) bryngeþ his folde in gret perel / And so he leueþ his sheep boþ skabbid and roynous / And defoulid wiþ synne ful venymous ...', quoted in Ballads from Manuscripts, ed. F. J. Furnivall, I (1868-72), 63, ll.20-2. See, too, Mathew, English Works, p.439 (1.3).

- 283. See Mathew, English Works, p.69: 'Þei wolen suffre ... a chirche zerde suspendid and no masse seyð þer-inne'.

- 293. Skeat is surely wrong in identifying Maximyen with Galerius Valerius Maximianus, the Roman Emperor from A.D. 305-11, for as Skeat rightly remarks, this Emperor was usually known as Galerius - as, for instance, in Lydgate's Fall of Princes, Book VIII, ll.904f. where he is clearly distinguished (VIII, ll.780f.) from Maximyen (apparently M. Aurelius Valerius Maximianus who was a member of the Diocletian Tetrarchy between A.D. 286-305). Lydgate cites this Maximyen as the one 'Vndir whos swerd many a martire deies' (1.832), and it is this reputation which is reflected in the FlowT.

- 294,1250. The cruelty and tyranny of the Emperor Nero was well attested in medieval writing - see, for instance, CT VII, 2463f.

- 298. A proverbial sounding phrase found also in the Lollard The Lanterne of Lizt, p.54 ll.18-19, 'For it draweþ hem toward heuene as bocket in to welle'. See also CT I 1533.

- 302. mayteynours. In this context, the word refers to those who wrongfully aid and abet litigation with which they are not concerned - see ORD 4.

- 304. The rise to prominence within the church of low-born people was a source of complaint both to Tudor writers such as Skelton, in his attitude to Cardinal Wolsey, as well as to medieval writers - see Crede 744-53; P.R.L.C.vi. 61-79. See also FlowT, ll.1029-44.

306. See discussion of crocket in Chapter 3, pp. 93f. and notes.

309-10. 'They ordain parsons in return for money, and appoint cardinals to canonries'. It was part of a bishop's duty to control the ordination of priests; the patronage of canonries in the great churches of a see belonged nominally to the archbishop. Hence, in one sense, they could refer in a vague way to domestic episcopal authority in England. In fact, however, the nomination of cardinals to canonries was frequently done on the initiative of the pope, rather than of an archbishop whose consent for an appointment was sought, by the papacy, out of courtesy rather than out of any sense of obligation: see A. Hamilton Thompson, The English Clergy and their organization in the Later Middle Ages, (Oxford, 1947), p.73. Cardinals who held canonries would inevitably be non-resident and their 'connexion with the church was their possession of a stall in choir and voice in chapter which they very seldom occupied or exercised, enjoying, nevertheless, their prebendal incomes', Thompson, p.77. As a matter of historical fact, the FlowT poet's complaint about the practice of appointing cardinals to English Cathedral canonries had rather less justification at the end of the fourteenth century than earlier - see Kathleen Edwards, The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages (Manchester, 1949 - Second Edition 1967), pp.83-5.

311. is. The insertion of is was a constant feature of all editions after its initial inclusion in Spl. It was rejected by Sk.

312. glosed. As a verb, glose can mean 'To comment upon, interpret, explain, paraphrase. To explain or describe something', sometimes, particularly in Lollard writings, in the pejorative sense of priests deliberately obscuring scriptural truth by refusing to preach the naked text but instead embroidering it with all manner of extraneous material. See Crede 275, 345, 585-6.

314. A point frequently made by Lollards - see Mathew, English Works, pp.471, 479, 481.

317f. The obsession of the clergy with tithing is a recurrent theme in the poem - see ll.490, 795, 861, 885, 1159 - and also in Lollard writing as a whole - see Mathew, English Works, pp. 145, 151, 160; also Arnold III, 309-13. Myrc, Instructions, ll.346-59 does remind his clerical reader of the custom of taking tithes, but Chaucer's Parson (CT 486-9) was not willing to curse people for them.

- 321. Turpe lucrum. The phrase occurs several times in the Vulgate New Testament: I Tim. iii. 8; Tit. 1. 7,11; I Petr. v. 2. —

- 322. meynall. Editors have found difficulty with this form. O6 UBAC offer a plausible alternative veniall, but Sp2 Sp3 Wr amend to urniall, a word unrecorded in the OED and whose meaning defies conjecture. There can be no doubt that the original form meynall is correct. In the words of Skeat's note: "It is an adj. formed from M.E. mevnee, a household, and is the same word as mod.E. menial. Wyclif uses mevneal to translate Lat. domesticum in Rom. xvi. 5. The sense here is - 'the exaction of tithes is with these masters, a household business, a part of their usual domestic arrangements'".

- 323. of. Has the sense of 'exacted by means of'.

- 325f. For an account of the office of summoner in medieval life and literature, see L. A. Haselmayr, 'The Apparitor and Chaucer's Summoner', Speculum 12(1937), 43-57, where the PlowT poet is shown to be only one of many who were critical of the corruption which attended the activities of so many summoners.

- 332. false. This is inserted in the present edition, thus following Junius's suggestion and Skeat's example. MS Sp2 O6 Sp3 UBAC Wr all adopt forms of falshed.

- 333. dysclaunder. As a verb, the word is not recorded after 1483, except in Palsgrave's Dictionary (1530). As a noun, however, it is used in the sixteenth century.

- 335. A wide variety of attitudes towards Alexander may be found in medieval European writing. To the court romance writer, he was the epitome of knightly virtues; to the political theorist, he was a successful conqueror; but to theologians and moralistic writers, he represented the personification of much that was evil. Alexander's pride was usually illustrated by the story of the murder of Callisthenes who refused to accede to Alexander's request to be regarded as a God. See G. Cary, The Medieval Alexander (Cambridge, 1956; reprinted 1967), esp. pp.248f.

- 337. 'Every year a priest will squander his income on the purchase of ever more expensive head-dresses for his lady'. OED defines csul as 'A kind of close-fitting cap, worn by women: a net for the hair; a netted cap or head-dress, often richly ornamented': see Fairholt, Costume in England (Fourth Edition), II, 116.

- 341-5. 06 note 'And if a man: Hauue a slander raised of him and would cleare himselfe of it by triall, the officers of the courts will be displeased, and put him off, from time to time, appointing him to appeare now at this towne, then at that towne, so that there is no remedy but he must needs pay the fees of the court, though he be neuer so cleare in the matter'. The process of Canonical Purgation required the accused to affirm his innocence in a spiritual court on oath. It also required confirmatory oaths by several of the accused man's peers: —see Mathew, English Works, p. 184.
346. christall. MS reads Corall. Though one English Lapidary poem does speak of 'The coral clere' - see An Hymne upon Christs being ye true stone upon ye cross by Richardoune, in English Mediseval Lapidaries, ed. Joan Evans and Mary S. Serjeantson, BETS, OS 190 (1933), 61, l.32 - it is more usually associated with the colours Red and Green. Christal, however, is proverbially spoken of as 'clere', and the Peterborough Lapidary (p.76) describes its colour as that of Ice. OED describes it as 'The standard type of cleanness or transparency'. Thus clene would seem to be more appropriate to christall than to corall - MED notes examples from Lydgate's Troy Book 2842, and from Surge nea 9. It is difficult to understand how the MS reading came about. It could be a deliberate and conscious substitution by the scribe of what he considered to be a better reading. It could have come about accidentally. The text from which the MS scribe was copying could have had an abbreviated form of christall - perhaps something like crall - which was incorrectly expanded by the later scribe.
- 349f. After detailing in the previous stanza the fate of the innocent man who has to pay to be rid of his false accusers, the poet turns to the manifestly guilty and shows that for as long as the guilty party's money lasts, he is able to purchase for himself freedom from all clerical interference in his sinful life.
350. and. 'if'.
359. sawe. Th2 St Spl UBAC read lawe. Such an emendation has little to commend it as an improvement in sense, and also means that ll.357,9 would rhyme lawe/lawe which is not to be expected in a poem in which the poet's ingenuity, however limited in other fields, does extend to the provision of different rhyming words in each quatrain of all other stanzas.
361. ben. G and all other texts until UBAC read is, as the verb governed by all his rules. Sp2 06 read right wise for rightwyse; Sp3 reads For al

his rules he is right wise. One must assume that the meaning of For is not 'despite' (!), but that the line as a whole should be translated 'For (in) all his rules he is righteous'.

363. Various attempts, not repeated in the present edition, were made by earlier editors to remove the appearance of undue brevity from the line as now printed. UBAC render the line octosyllabic - And Goddis lawe they all dispi(s)ce, as does Sk - And goddes lawe they dispyse.

370. The line is best understood 'They turn all their ingenuity to the acquisition of wealth'; a less satisfactory alternative would be 'They turn their ingenuity to the acquisition of all wealth'.

375. take. OED 60: 'To deliver, hand over; to give; to give in charge, commit, entrust ... Const. to or dative'. Thus the line means 'Or to entrust to such cursed people such a power'. The sense of take was apparently lost after 1553 and it was not long before editors tried to emend the line into the sense demanded by their different understanding of the force of take. Thus Vaughan, Or to take such a cursed toole; Sp3, Or take such a cursed tole; UBAC, Or take suche cursid soc or tole. Explaining this last emendation, Urry's Glossary states: 'The AS. Soc, signifies Power, Authority or Licence to administer Justice, and execute Laws; Also, the Precinct wherein such Power is exercised. It is sometimes used for Duties and Services due from Tenants to their Landlord, as Mowing, Carriages, Grinding at his Mill, etc., whence Toll taken for Grinding is called Soc ...'. Ingenious as this is, there can be little doubt that the pre-1553 sense of take is the correct one and justifies the adoption of the G reading in the present edition.

401. that. Best understood as referring to the thought eventually expressed by the poet in the next line. Thus 'A common braggart and (God forbid that - i.e. the thought), as good a bishop as my horse Ball'. Sp2 O6 are surely wrong in separating the two lines by a full stop and in taking the that God forbode phrase to imply that 'he would not name some special faults of his' (O6 note).

402. Ball. See note to 1.258.

409-10. The poet is stating not his own belief, but the belief held by the clerics themselves. The sense is 'Whatever they do is, by the very fact that they do it, well done, for they shall immediately be (in their own eyes) the judges of everything.'

- 413f. The prevalence of ignorant and unlettered clerics is frequently attested in Lollard writings - see, for instance, Mathew, English Works, p.246. See Heath, English Parish Clergy, pp.15f, 70-92.
417. O6 takes hve goodes as the subject of makes: 'Their great riches get them friends'. However the link with 1.418 is made more satisfactory if friendshyp is taken as the subject: 'The wealth which friendship makes for them, they add on to the sum total (of wealth)' - they gain money from knowing rich and influential people.
- 423-4. Highly concentrated lines. The sense seems to be: 'For they (such people) are continually being ordained into a position in society in which they consider themselves to be superior to all other people, and they occupy that position from their youth until their old age'. Th2 St Spl Sp2 O6 Sp3 Wr read over for ever; UBAC read or - such readings miss the point, that the ordination of such unworthy people is a continual process which shows no sign of being stopped.
425. G reads ... they go, nat into ..., in which the comma clearly breaks the sense of the line and has therefore been removed from the present edition. The line echoes John. x. 1-2.
427. Hvred. A likely pun intended. They should be herdsmen but are in fact hired men - they minister only in return for money which is their main priority. See John. x. 12-13.
432. pyement and ale. Two separate drinks are referred to here, and not one as the G reading pyement ale implies. The reading adopted in the present edition was first included in Sp2 and kept subsequently by O6 Sp3 Wr Sk. Piment was a drink made from wine which had been sweetened (with honey) and flavoured (with spices). It is distinguished from spiced ale by Chaucer, CT I 3378. Neither the OED or MED refer to pyement ale as a single drink.
434. Lamuall. Sk takes this as a reference to King Lemuel (Vulgate Lemuel) who was warned (Prov. xxxi. 1-5) by his mother against strong drink which destroys a king's judgement. Such an explanation is possible, with the original readings giving a bad rhyme Lemuel/fall or Lamuall/fall. There is, however, another intriguing possibility which was first suggested in the O6 note: 'Lamuall: Was one of the Knights of King Arthurs round table'. Henry Bradley, in his Athenaeum article

(July 12th, 1902, p.62) believes that the allusion could possibly be to 'the lavish use which Launfal (Lanwell) made of gold given him by his fairy bride'. Certainly, there is no doubt that the Middle English Romance Sir Launfal associates the knight with wealth and largesse in a way which would make lustly, 'voluptuously, in a pleasurable manner', an appropriate word to describe the way he lives much of his life - perhaps rather more appropriate than when applied to the somewhat shadowy figure of the biblical Lemuel. Moreover A. J. Bliss, 'The Hero's Name in the Middle English Version of Launfal' MAE, 27 (1958), 80-5 has shown that the name derives from an Old French original Launual which by 'assimilation of the nasal to the labio-dental fricative' (p.82), would become Lanual - he notes a thirteenth century form Launual. Thus the knight's name was almost certainly known in a form which would explain the FlowT spelling and rhyme with fall. The present editor is inclined to accept, therefore, the explanation of those who identify the FlowT allusion with Sir Launfal. One note of caution should be sounded, however. One would not normally expect to find a Lollard writer drawing illustrative material from the world of Romance writing. We have noted already (see note to 1.147) the suspicion with which Lollards viewed any non-scriptural sermon material.

- 439f. The repudiation of the pope's claims to infallibility and impeccability in these lines parallels that set out in Arnold, II, 387-8 and esp. 415; see also III, 345, 407.

- 443. The relevant biblical references are Math. xvi. 18, and I Cor. x. 4. The FlowT poet adopts what was later to become a familiar retort to the Catholic claim that Christ had declared his intention to build his church on Peter, called the stone or rock.

- 445. Though there are many references to croysery meaning 'crusade' in Wycliffite tracts - see Arnold, I, 367; II 115 - the meaning suggested in Urry's glossary: 'those for whom Christ suffered on the Cross' (from It. Groceria) seems preferable, with croysery suggesting 'the Company or Society of Christian people'. This sense was anticipated in the O6 translation 'Why do they accurse them, for whom Christ dyed on the crosse'. Urry suggests also that 1.446 should begin with Of, so as to accomodate this sense. It would be very strange if the FlowT poet who elsewhere, like many other Lollard writers, has inveighed against the latest 'crusade' led by Bishop DeSpenser, were to use croysery to mean 'crusade', thereby rendering the lines to mean 'Why do Christ's Christian people curse the crusade?' He has already shown precisely why such crusades should be cursed.

450. 'Because they do not put their trust in any human being' - apparently a reference to Lollard unwillingness to ascribe primary importance to the ministrations of priests in general and the pope in particular. It was for this refusal that they suffered death (1.451).

457. A difficult and puzzling line. The central problem is the meaning of latte. Two discernible meanings have been assigned to it by early editors. O6 sees it as the pret. ppl. of lead: 'The poore are led out of the right way ... misled ...'. The OED, however, records no pret. ppl. forms with this spelling. Sk takes latte to be an adjective meaning 'late, behindhand', a suggestion which casts little light on the meaning of the line as a whole. Anxious to make sense of its own reading of latte, Sp2 (followed by O6 Sp3 Junius Wr) reads Thus for Rough. If latte were taken as a noun meaning 'appearance, behaviour', unrightly would have to be an adjective - a very rare usage recorded only once (in 1422) in the OED. The meaning with these readings would be: 'Rough is the poor (man) of wrong (improper?) appearance ...' which would be a passable interpretation. If, however, unrightly were to be taken as an adverb, then clearly latte must be a pret. ppl. whether from lead, 'Rough (or Thus) is the poor (man) led astray (in the opinion of the church)', or from OED let III, 15, 'Rough (or Thus) is the poor (man) badly behaved (in the opinion of the church)'. It should be said that the OED records latte as a pret. ppl. of neither of these verbs. The present editor has no hesitation in dropping the suggested Thus reading, but in adopting the latter pret. ppl. meaning - from let, 'to behave, comport oneself', no great conclusiveness is claimed for that reading.

462. See Luke. vii. 38, 45.

465. forvete. OED get entry states that 'forzet disappears in the 15th century except in Sc., where it is not yet extinct'. There is a minor discrepancy between the G catchword on Sig. Bl^v, which reads Suche, and 1.465 which reads Such.

466. Taking the line on its own, it is tempting from the alliteration point of view to emend the G reading call to tall, 'obedient' (OED notes Gothic untals, 'unaccomodating, uncompliant, disobedient'; also Chaucer, Compl. Mars. 38 - 'She made him at her lust so humble and tal'). However, taking the line together with 1.465, there is a clear contrast offered by the poet, and tall ('either such a person forgets himself (accidentally) or was never (from the first) obedient to the truth'), catches that contrast less precisely and with greater strain on the sense than does call ('either such a person forgets himself, or was never

introduced to the truth'). The pret. ppl. form call is unrecorded in the OED or MED, and was presumably dictated by the needs of the rhyme.

471. sackes and fettes. G reads and sackes fettes. G would be translated '(They) fill coffers and bring sacks', with fettes as a plural form of MED fetten. Such a reading makes fairly good sense, but not perhaps as good as a reading which implies that the sacks, like the coffers, had already been brought prior to being filled - '(They) fill their coffers and sacks and vessels' - with fettes taken as a plural noun meaning 'vessels' (Both OED and MED record fet as a singular variant spelling of MED fat, 'open vessel'). The line is given extra force by the addition of an extra category of receptacle which the avaricious churchmen busy themselves with filling. The possibility of sackes and becoming and sackes in the course of scribal transmission is, of course, strong. The emendation adopted in the present edition whilst never previously adopted, was mooted as a possibility in the O6 notes.
- 473-5. 'Their servants are (considered) disloyal to them unless they can double their (the priests') revenue from rent so that they (the priests) can buy or build themselves castles and dwellings' - see MED hold n. 3c.
- 485-6. These lines act as a brief introduction to and explanation of the material which begins on l.487. O6 is certainly mistaken in putting a question mark at the end of l.486. The poet is not asking how wickedly the clergy live but is stating in the most positive terms. O6 translates Shortly, 'sharply' - '... to reprove them sharply'. The OED records no instance of shortly meaning 'abruptly, curtly' (i.e. sharply, in one sense) before the nineteenth century. Thus, though the Plowt poet is clearly wrong in stating that his remarks will be set out shortly, in the sense of 'in a few lines', it is likely that this is the intended meaning of the word. Shortly taken to mean 'presently' does not fit the context as effectively.
487. Of. G reads O. I have adopted the emendation first suggested in the O6 notes, and first incorporated in the text by Urry.
488. The G reading telleth many a balke could have been allowed to stand with balke taken to mean 'error, mistake' - see, for instance, The Image of Ypocresye (a Skeltonic piece), l.1727 in Ballads from Manuscripts, ed. F. J. Furnivall (for The Ballad Society), I (1868-72). However in view of the rarity and relative lateness of uses of balke in this particular figurative sense (OED balk II 5), and in view of the

ingenuity and attractiveness of the alternative reading first included in Sp2, and then in O6 Sp3 Wr, which takes the line in the sense set out in the O6 note: 'they breake vp the limittes and bounds that God hath set in his word to keepe them in', the G reading telleth has been emended to tilleth, and halke is taken in a figurative sense of OED II 3, meaning 'limit'.

489. hernes ... halke. The word halke does occur in Speght's Chaucer (1598), where in lines headed 'The Reader to Geoffrey Chaucer', Chaucer replies to the Reader's question: 'Where hast thou dwelt ... all this while', by saying: 'In haulks, and hernes, God wot, and in exile'. However this usage is almost certainly a deliberate archaism and not a reflection of current usage at the end of the sixteenth century.

493. 'What does the name Antichrist signify'.

501-24. Lollard writers were fond of constructing long lists of Ideal/Actual criticisms of the clergy in their tracts. One work, Of Antecrist and his Meynee, has more than twenty consecutive pages of Christ/They (i.e. the clergy) contrasts, many of which occupy only one line. Thus: 'Crist excusid; & yei schlaundren falsely. Crist seid so; & yei lyzen falsely. Crist demerit; & yei demen wronge ...' (Three Treatises by John Wycklyffe, ed. J. H. Todd (Dublin, 1851), p.cxxxiv.).

501. They. G reads That. It would be possible to make sense of the line in its G reading if the subject 'Those' were to be understood. However, all editors from Th2 to Wr emend That to They before the restoration of the G reading by Sk, and it is the emendation of these earlier editors which has been adopted in the present edition.

514. O6 translates, 'They take counsell against Christ'. A more satisfactory and expansive reading of what is a rather concentrated line is 'They conceive (of the Christian way of life in a way) contrary to (the way) Christ (conceived of it)'.

518. O6 note 'they will defend themselves, by force, rather than they will suffer'.

519. 'Instead of good they employ (respect?) evil rights (or customs)'. O6 note 'They vse euill customes against God', which, by translating ayenst as 'against', interrupts the normal use of ayenst from l.502f. meaning 'instead of'. With this sense of ayenst, god is best taken as 'good' rather than 'God'.

522. 'They spend their ill-gotten gains in an even more disreputable way'.

523. O6 notes 'They dispence with sobernesse, taking libertie to riot'. Though this is, in effect, what the line implies, the noun dispence is not recorded in either the OED or MED in the sense of 'a state of having been dispensed with', which is what the O6 note implies, though in fact the note translates dispence as though it were a verb. Taking dispence in its more commonly recorded sense of 'an act of spending', the line may be understood 'Soberness (or moderation) they have converted into the act of spending', which means, effectively, the same as O6 though differently expressed.

525. holy. Recorded in MED as a frequent spelling of wholly between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. Sp1 Sp2 O6 Sp3 Wr read whol(1)y.

531. gestes. The word could mean 'guests' in the sense 'They refuse to entertain the poor as their guests'. It could also mean 'stories' - thus: 'They have no desire to hear stories of God's poor people'. Whilst either meaning would be equally suitable, the balance is perhaps in favour of the first reading (favoured by O6), if only because of the parallel, noted by Sk, with l.747 - Ne no good gyve to Goddes gest.

533. Dives. G reads Dyvers. Other texts which restore what is clearly the correct reading are MS Sp2 O6 Sp3 UBAC Wr Sk. Though there are many references to Dives in the scriptures, the story which the poet seems to have in mind is Luke. xvi. 19-31 - the story of Dives and Lazarus.

538. 'As God is on earth, they (the priests) have sinned (done wrong)'.

542. caractes. G reads careckes. Neither OED nor MED record a form of caract, 'characteristic, mark, sign' which corresponds with the G reading. Nevertheless, only MS Carectes, and Vaughan charactes attempt to emend - all other texts preserve careckes, and Sk notes 'careckes: characters, signs, marks; see New E. Dict'. There is no reason to believe that readers of editions with the form careckes understood the word in any other way than that set out in the O6 note 'Characters or markes'. It is just possible that careck may have been an alternative form of caract, in the same way that carect, car(r)act(e) was an alternative sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth century form of car(r)ack, 'a large ship of burden, a

galleon'. Nevertheless in the present edition, the G reading has been emended to correspond with the more usual form of the word meaning 'characteristics, marks, signs'.

543-4. Just as in Rev. xiii. 17 no man was allowed to buy or sell unless he possessed the mark, - either the name, or the number - of the beast (Antichrist), so now, says the poet, no man is allowed to preach without licence from the Bishop, who is equated with Antichrist.

545f. One of the most recurrent Lollard complaints. See, for instance, Apology for Lollard Doctrines, pp. 30-7; also Mathew, English Works, pp. 57-60, 70-1, 105-6.

554. suspende. 'To cease (preaching)'. It is difficult to see how Vaughan's emended line Whom he hath bid; But such suspend would have assisted his readers in their understanding of the stanza.

559. 'Into their (the clerics') prison shall be taken'.

560. Betyn and bounden. See Mum and Soth. 172.

570. See John, xviii. 10-11; Mathew. xxvi. 52.

575-6. 'A sword is an unsuitable implement with which to tend sheep unless it is used by shepherds who wish to destroy the sheep'.

589f. Having enumerated reasons for not considering the clergy to be worthy successors of Peter, the narrative switches to material which aims to prove that They seven hym whan he dyd mysse (1.608).

590. There are three possible ways of contorting sense out of this rather awkward line. Firstly, one of the that words could be omitted: 'Successors to Peter are these in (the sense) that Peter forsook Christ'. Secondly the first that could be taken as a demonstrative pronoun, and the second as a relative: 'Successors to Peter are these as regards that over which Peter forsook Christ'. Thirdly, and probably least unsatisfactorily, the second that could be taken as a demonstrative adjective: 'Successors to Peter are they in that Peter forsook Christ'.

591. The subject of lese is these (1.589).
- 591-2. Paraphrased and expanded, the lines mean 'A shepherd, presumably, would have no wish to lose his staff because it is an implement of value to him in his work. Peter's so-called successors, however, would be (indeed are) relatively more willing to lose something of infinitely greater value - the love of God'.
593. They. G and all other texts read He. The subject must be plural. It is not Peter, who is dead, but his so-called successors, who are very much alive, who culleth the sheep (Christ's flock) like the cook, and who, we are told in the next line, take wool from them.
594. A line which has caused much difficulty for editors. Th2 St Sp1 Sp3 UBAC read they for the; Sp2 O6 Sp3 Wr read seeken for taken; Sp2 O6 Sp3 Wr read to rend for untrende. Thus some texts read Of hem taken they woll untrend(e); others read Of hem seeken they woll to rend; Sk reads Of hem (they) taken the woll untrend. The emendation of taken to seeken was evidently forced upon those editors for whom the sense of untrende had been lost - hence also to rend, as in the O6 note 'To rend the woll of his back'. There can be no doubt that untrende is the correct reading. Both the OED and the EDD record the verb trend (OED 2b), meaning 'to wind (wool)', on several occasions in eighteenth century dialectal uses in Herefordshire and Gloucestershire. The OED also records untrende as an 1805 usage meaning 'unrolled, not wound'. Thus the FlowT reference is by far the earliest use of untrende in the precise sense of a technical term for 'unrolled wool', though the word is recorded in 1272 meaning 'to unroll a scroll'. The limited geographical currency of the word must be regarded as important evidence concerning the provenance of the poem.
597. take. See note to 1.575.
598. 'Christ said (that) he (i.e. Christ) ...'
599. Literally 'That (statement) Peter to Christ did repudiate'.
602. '(who counsel) to offend God for temporal wealth'.
- 613f. They are only successors to Peter in a pejorative sense, but there is one apostle whom they resemble in every way - Judas (1.615).

UBAC spot the slight inconsistency between 1.613 which states that they resemble Some of the Apostels and 1.615 which speaks of the singular Hym that betrayed Christ. Thus UBAC read Thei none Apostle sosen ... But him that betrayed ...

624. 'If they knew how to'.

625. O6 note 'They are surely of the very same assize, size, or measure, they are right of the same stampe'. The word ensyse is noted by the OED: '1721-1800 Bailey, Ensize, quality, stem O(1d word)'. Neither OED assize n.8, nor MED assise n.6, notes ensyse as a possible variant spelling, but OED (en-, prefix) notes that the prefixes en-, em-, frequently became an-, am- in Middle English, and, in turn, were often reduced to a-. Conversely, a- was often changed to en-. It is, thus, not difficult to see how ensyse can reasonably be regarded as an acceptable variant spelling of assise.

626. frende. 'Estranged'. OED records fremned (C14) and frenned (C16) as alternative spellings, and the MED notes frend as an alternative form of fremyd in the Prompt. Parv. (1440). Thus it is likely that frende, which cannot, by its position as a rhyming word, be a later scribal variant of the poem's original form frend(e), was extant as a form of frend(e) at the end of the fourteenth century. It is not clear whether the Sp2 Sp3 Wr form friend represents another (and very strange) spelling, or whether these editors have simply misunderstood the line in some way.

634. his. 'True believers in Christ'.

640-1. O6 note 'To take or apprehend them, whom they list not to approue or like of, and they condemne their doctrine for heresie'. Sk reading whom (they) list not knawe confirms this. It would, however, be equally possible to translate 'To capture those to whom it was not pleasing to accept (or recognise)(this power which they have taken)', i.e. those who wished to have nothing to do with the church's claims to authority.

647. mysqueme. 'displease'. Only one recorded instance - in Phillips' Dictionary (1658). Palsgrave (1530) glosses its opposite form queme as being 'nowe out of use'. The latest recorded use of queme (A.S. cweman), referring to persons, is in Dives and Pauper, a work correctly

dated c1410 and not, as in the OED 1496 (see above p.255, n.114) Used 'of things', it is recorded only twice after 1500, once as a conscious archaism by Spenser. It seems fair, therefore, to say that queme was not in general use after the middle of the fifteenth century, and that the use in the PlowT of miscueme argues in favour of an early date of composition.

648-9. The reference is to bear-baiting. Both MS and G read beted which though not recorded as a variant of OED bait, can easily be imagined as a possible sixteenth century way of setting down the tense e sound in the verb. Unaccountably Th2 St Spl Sp2⁵³ Wr read the present tense bai(y)ghteth; H reads bayghteh. There can be no doubt that the pret. ppl. is the correct reading.

650. hym. MS G Th1 H Th2 read hem. Sk reads And in prison woll hem (be) pend. The hym emendation brings the line into accord with the subject of the stanza any man (1.647), and the use of he (1.648) and hym (1.649). It is possible to find pend (OED v.2) as a transitive verb - it is an extended form of pen. Its use in the Castle of Perseverance (c1425) makes it almost certain that the word was extant at the time of the PlowT's composition.

653-4. The force of commynalte here is not certain. It could mean simply 'the people as a whole', or it could (MED 2b) refer to their representatives in parliament, though the word is rarely recorded in this sense. The point being made in the stanza is the contrast between taxation by consent (as carried out by the king), and taxation by force (as carried out by the clergy). It is clear (see, for example May McKisack, The Fourteenth Century (Oxford, 1959), pp. 180-1) that for the period of the Hundred Years' War, the ability of the king to wage an effective campaign was in no small way dependent upon the willingness of parliament to pay for it out of taxes - the assent of the commynalte was, thus, required.

657. seales. The word is used as a symbol for authority of office, with the lines suggesting that the power and authority of the clergy - possibly just in relation to their ability to raise taxes, but more likely in the most general sense - is greater even than the authority vested in the King which is symbolised by his Great Seal.

661-4. The officials whose responsibility it was to supervise the proving of wills are here accused of only granting documents of administration to the executors upon payment of as much as a third part of the total value of the will. There are certainly documented cases of one fifth

the value of a will being demanded - see Margaret Aston, Thomas Arundel: A Study of Church Life in the Reign of Richard II (Oxford, 1967), pp. 93f., where various abuses associated with the proving of wills are discussed.

665-7. There are two possible interpretations of these lines. Either They (1.666) alludes to the people (1.665): 'Thus the people are robbed. They (the people) claim that the money (which they pay to the clergy in return for having a will proved) should belong to them (the people), but whenever they (the people) have the money, it perishes (i.e. is taken from them by the clergy)'. If however, They alludes to the clergy, the lines may be read: 'Thus the people are robbed. They (i.e. those who do the robbing - the clergy) say that such money belongs to them (the clergy). Whenever they take it, it perishes (i.e. it is lost, as far as the people are concerned)'. The present editor favours this latter interpretation. Other examples of go (the) to ground are Row & Ot. 1059; Tolous 1116. The force of Thereas is uncertain. G reads There as, apparently with the sense of 'There, as (soon as) they ...'. Whilst this is perfectly possible, the present edition takes it as one word with the sense of 'Whenever', although in this sense the word is unrecorded in the OED.

669. symple fornyacioun. A legal term for the offence - see Speculum Sacerdotale, p.75, l.27, noted in MED fornicacioun n.l.b: 'In bokis of penaunce is assigned, for a simple fornicacion that is done but oo tyme, penaunce of thre yere'. The imposition of pecuniary penance of twenty shillings - a substantial sum - mentioned in the stanza is one example of a custom which was growing during the first half of the fourteenth century - see Edith K. Lyle, The Office of an English Bishop in the First half of the Fourteenth Century, Unpublished University of Pennsylvania Dissertation (1903), pp. 103-4, and was also a feature of legal practice at the end of the fifteenth century - see Margaret Bowker, The Secular Clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln 1495-1520 (Cambridge, 1968), p. 35. See, too, J. T. McNeill and Helena M. Gamer, Medieval Handbooks of Penance, (New York, 1938), *passim*.

670. The payment of twenty shillings was regarded by the clergy, the poet alleges, as a fair price to pay for a year's uninterrupted lechery - see Mathew, English Works, pp. 35, 62-3.

674. bronde. 'burnt (in hell)'.

681. they refers to 'the people'.

- 682. bytter. Used adverbially - 'cruelly, harshly'. A number of editors have been unhappy with this reading. UBAC emend to cruellir; H Th2 St Spl read better, a singularly inappropriate emendation, for the Lollard poet is hardly making a qualitative judgement on the method of burning employed!

- 685. 'Both bishops and those in regular orders': OED what D II 2a notes what ... what, 'both ... and' - see Chaucer House of Fame 2058-
What aloude, and what in ere.

- 686-8. as moche ... More. Presumably 'Have in this land more lay fee ... than the lords'. The More dominates as moche. A lay-fee was a fee or estate in land held in consideration of secular services, as distinguished from an ecclesiastical fee.

- 693. A reference to the celebrated Donation of Constantine story which played its part in the polemical writings associated both with the Lollards and with the Reformation in England. The story told how the Emperor Constantine gave lands and goods to Pope Sylvester, thereby endowing the church. At the moment of endowment, an Angel (in many Lollard versions), or a devil (in the anti-Lollard versions) came down and said that venom was being poured into the church of God because of the endowment: see Arnold, III, 477 for a typical Wycliffite use of the story; Arnold I, 316-7 (and note) refers to the enfeebled nature of the Holy Roman Empire during Wyclif's lifetime - entirely the result, the writer states, of papal dominance. The Donation story was discredited in the fifteenth century by such scholars as Lorenzo Valla and Nicholas of Cusa and it was their testimony which was gathered together in a book printed by Thomas Godfray which, as we have noted elsewhere, attempted to show that there was no justification for clerical ownership of property by showing the speciousness of the historical story which had been used to justify such possessions. The domination of Papacy over Empire was as much a target for Reformation polemicists as it had been for the Lollards - see R. Pineas, Thomas More and Tudor Polemics (Bloomington, 1968), pp.55f., for an account of Tyndale's treatment of the theme.

- 695. sely kyne. The OED notes only one example - the PlowT - of kyne, and translates it 'simpleton, fool'. The etymology of the word is obscure, but its relation to the exclusively West-Midland dialectal form kimit, 'Silly, half-witted, stupid', seems likely, particularly as the EDD notes that a form of kimit was used substantively. The OED suggests that kyne is the root of akimed, which in turn, according

to Strattman, should be compared with MEG erkumén, 'to become sick and wretched', and which the MED compares with ONG iroueman, 'to be terrified or stupified'. Sk notes ONG kumjan, 'to lament'; OHM mo, 'a lament', and there is also chumig, which corresponds to L. infirmatus. That kyme derives from this group seems likely, and its suggested meaning of 'simpleton, fool', or perhaps 'wretch' seems explicable in terms of its etymology. The fact that the only instances of either kimit or akimed are in exclusively West Midland texts, together with the fact that kyme occurs in the PlowT in a rhyming position, argues strongly in favour of a West Midland provenance for the poem (or at least for part of it). Sk translates sely as 'innocent (or silly)', and certainly the sympathetic sense of 'poor fool' fits the PlowT context well enough. The other sense of sely 'stupid', is not recorded before the sixteenth century, and the sense 'stupid fool' seems a little harsh coming from the lips (or the beak) of the avowedly charitable Pellican, although the admonitory tone of the rebukes to Constantine in Mathew, English Works, p.379 should be noted.

- 697. F. P. Magoun, 'The Chaucer of Spenser and Milton', MPhil, 25 (1927), 132, notes that Milton suggested an emendation to this line. He altered in to no, thereby, as Magoun rightly says, 'destroying the sense'.
- 698. 'Unless lords are wary and defend themselves (and the people in the realm)'.
- 707. smeren, kepe. These are infinitives dependant on shuld(e) (11.702,4). UBAC introduce a most curious emendation - sklere for smeren. The only OED form which resembles sklere is the verb skleir 'to veil', which is recorded once at the end of the fourteenth century. In view of the deterioration in sense caused by Urry's emendation, it is not clear what he had in mind by adopting such a reading.
- 712. 'And regard his meekness with contempt'.
- 713. lyte. Adj. used absol. The word's most general period of currency was up to 1420. After that date its infrequent occurrences are generally confined to fifteenth and sixteenth century Northern texts, and to occasional eighteenth and early nineteenth century uses. Thus its use in a rhyming position in the PlowT is further support for a date of composition well before the period of the English Reformation.

714. demen after the face. Though the phrase could mean 'judge behind people's backs', a more likely meaning is that set out in the O6 note: 'They would not iudge according to the outward estate of men, with partialitie and accepting of persons' - MED notes Arnold, II, 92: 'Nyle ze juge after ye face, but juge ze just judgement'. See, too, I playne Piers, Sig.E.v., where the version of the Plowf line reads they wold not deme the outwarde face.
715. 'But (would) nourish ...'
- 717-8. 'Cathedral canons acquired private property, lived in separate houses, and, in the course of the tenth and eleventh centuries, divided up a large part of the common estates and goods of their churches into separate portions or prebends for themselves. Because of these separate possessions, they came to be called 'secular' canons ...', as opposed to Regular canons whose property was held in common - see Kathleen Edwards, The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages (Manchester, 1949 - Second Edition, 1967), p.5.
723. The canons also enjoy the additional revenues from a particular benefice without fulfilling their spiritual responsibilities: 'They have a parsonage as a plaything'. The alternative reading suggested by O6: 'their parsonages are bestowed on them, that they may be idle companions in hawking and hunting, and serue as iesters to make their patrons merry' - i.e. they have a parsonage so that they can be play-fellows - is not convincing. The latest recorded use of playeng fere, the alternative form of playfere is c1450.
724. they serve the kyng also. Sk believes that the line was 'possibly copied' from P.Pl.B.Prol.92: 'Somme seruen the kyng and his siluer tellen'. The parallel is not startling however. For an account of some fifteenth and sixteenth century prelates who served the king, see Heath, English Parish Clergy, pp.50-2. This service led inevitably to absence from benefices, and it is this which concerns the poet in the following stanza.
- 725-32. 'Absentees were obliged to provide a proctor to administer the temporalities of their benefice and a chaplain to perform the services in their church ... divine service was often left, it is said, to a poorly paid and ~~not~~ too diligent chaplain, while a farmer collected the fruits of the benefice, little, if any, of which he spent on the repair of the chancel and parsonage buildings', Heath, English Parish Clergy, p.63. This represents the sum of the Plowf poet's complaints - see also ll.765-72.

- 727. 'Some (farmers) will spend ... some (others) ... '

- 729-30. 'They (the absentees) care not for the cure of souls, as long as they can make a great deal of money (both from what they earn when they are away, and from the sum they receive for farming out the temporalities)'

- 731. her. ('their (i.e. the parishioners)')', though the implication is clearly that the absentees' preoccupation with making money blinds them to the fate of their own souls also.

- 733. gederyng procuratour. The farmer or proctor referred to in the note to ll.725-32. Sometimes he was employed not by an absentee, but by a resident incumbent who may have wished to devote more time to his cure of souls (Heath, English Parish Clergy, p.68), or by one of the Religious houses.

- 734. enplede. There is no OED or MED en- form recorded after 1465.

- 735. ravyncour. O6 translates 'And rob them, like a rauening cormorant'. The OED records no instance of ravener referring to birds (or indeed to animals or fish) before 1496. After this date, the word was applied to Pikes, Seals, Dolphins, and Eels. The earlier sense 'One who ravens or takes goods by force; a robber, plunderer, despoiler', which dates from 1374 seems more appropriate in the FlowT context.

- 739. the poore. Sp2 O6 Sp3 Wr omit, probably for metrical reasons, or perhaps because they mistakenly took the line to mean 'The poor can give good advice about robbing'. In fact the line should be translated: '(He - the procuratour) can give good advice about robbing the poor'.

- 741f. The subject they presumably now refers to the lord who has benefited from the activities of his procuratour (1.733).

- 743. O6 translates: ' ... and build great houses like Citties'.

- 747. Goddes gest. 'a stranger'. See P.Pl.C.xvi.198-9, the only OED recorded example. Skeat's P.Pl. note remarks: 'God's guests; i.e. guests at the Table of the Lord, communicants'. The OED translates:

'strangers, chance comers', and this same sense is reflected in the MED entry.

749-50. As it stands in its context, l.749 is a little ambiguous. The meaning could be 'Such (people) will live on (what they can earn) from their service at court (see l.724) and will hoard their other (revenue) as treasure (see ll.725-40)', or it can be taken with her seruyce referring to the activities of the procuratour and those like him who have accumulated such a store of wealth for their master that he can live on that and hoard his other income.

755. 'To teach the people their true labour'. lele: MS reads leffe. OED defines lele, 'loyal, faithful, honest, true', and notes P.Pl.C.i.146. After the end of the fourteenth century, the word is generally confined to Northern and Scottish texts. OED translates lief (Cl4-Cl6 spelling leffe) Al: 'Beloved, dear, agreeable, acceptable, precious', which seems less appropriate in the PlowT context.

756. 06 note 'Such kinde of men are wholly out of the right way'. See Spenser's Shep. Cal. Jul.201.

759. vysses. 'loose women'. The word is recorded in this sense only twice after 1350, apart from the PlowT - in 1594 and 1780 - both of which uses must have been deliberate archaisms, for the word had been replaced in general use by giglet/giglot. The MED notes the latest instance of any meaning of gigge as cl425 - the example which the OED dates at cl430 is dated by the MED at cl350. The use of the word, in a rhyming position, in the PlowT argues strongly for a fourteenth rather than sixteenth century date of composition.

769. 'Once they have received the rent' - i.e. their sum from the person to whom the temporalities of the benefice have been farmed.

776. 'And pursue sin by every means'.

780. 'The wisdom (?cunning) of such desirous people is not worth a needle' - see l.228.

783. messe. 'meals'. Sensing the apparent brevity of the line and anxious perhaps to improve the rhyme with richesse (l.781), Sp2 06 Sp3 Wr read

richesses/messes. However there seems nothing wrong (certainly nothing by the overall standard of rhymes in the FlowT) with richesse/messe, and if an editor were anxious to lengthen the line on metrical grounds, many (maner) messe would be a more plausible solution.

791. A familiar alliterative phrase - see Winner and Waster 26,40; OT II 774; Daw's Reply 808.
792. 'Doesn't understand himself (i.e. what he says) at all'.
793. See note to 1.724.
799. lyberall. The OED records no instance of the word in a pejorative sense before the beginning of the sixteenth century. In the FlowT context, however, the word must mean 'extravagant', for the poet, who elsewhere in the poem shows clearly that generosity plays no part in clerical life, would be unlikely to describe the secular canons as lyberall in any complimentary sense. As will be noted from analysis of the vocabulary of the poem, the number of instances of forms which suggest a later date of composition than c1400 is far outweighed by the number suggesting that early date. The existence of lyberall in the poem does little to redress that imbalance in favour of a later date - the transference of sense from 'generous' to 'over generous, extravagant' could well have taken place at any time before 1500.
800. Two types of marchandry were attacked. One was the involvement of the church in secular financial transactions. Commerce played, it was alleged, too prominent a part in ecclesiastical life. Secondly, the spiritual responsibilities of the clergy were also set on a purely commercial footing, according to the critics. The highest bidder benefited most. A Reformation work printed by Thomas Godfray called The boke of marchauntes (STC 3521) is representative of many generations of such complaints.
801. maynteyners. Used in a less specific sense than in 1.302. Rather is it either OED 1b: 'One who fosters or supports (wrong doing ...)'; or 3b: 'One who aids or abets another in wrong-doing or error'. The force of with maistry is 'by their (the clergy's) power, authority'.
810. Goddes theves. Understand 'They are'. 06 note: 'Theeves vnder prete(n)ce of seruing God'.

- 816-7. In G, the catchword on Sig.C.ii. is To, whereas the first word in l.817 on Sig.C.iii. is They.
820. hym. i.e. Antichrist.
828. suche. 'such (prelates)'.
830. vycayre. The rhyme vycayre/here (1.832) probably represents a scribal corruption of the original here/vikere form. The OED notes vikere as a Cl4, and vykere as a Cl4-Cl6 variant spelling. The rhyme is certainly destroyed by MS vicaris, which was probably influenced by other plural forms in the line.
832. (see also 855, 875). For the same charge, see Jack Upland 80-2, and Daw's Reply 75f. See also Arnold, III, 282-6.
835. Skeat (Supplement, p.173), believes that the line should begin Who speke ayeinës, but does not incorporate the suggestion into his text.
- 837-44. Paraphrased: 'Look how many (i.e. how few) take orders solely to serve Christ, and who forsake worldly possessions. Those who take orders for any other reason, shall, I believe, pay dearly for so doing, despite all their pretensions. All who do not follow the example of Christ, are setting out on an evil path'.
850. O6 note 'They make many men doe amisse'. The pret.ppl. shende should perhaps be taken to mean 'disgraced' or even 'punished'. Thus 'They cause many men (to be) disgraced, punished'.
854. 'Poorly clad, but arrogant of bearing'.
857. O6 note 'They will medle in euery matter that may bring them gaine'. In the context this is probably better than the other possible interpretation: 'They will speak on every topic' - i.e. they will make pronouncements even concerning those things of which they know nothing - see OED mell v.1: 'To speak, tell, say', not recorded after 1460; v.2, 6: 'to interfere, meddle'.

858. To. G reads And. Though it would be possible to take And done hem wronge as 'And (to) treat them wrongly', it is clearly less awkward to adopt the emendation previously adopted by Sp2 06 Sp3 UBAC Wr. It is not clear whether hem refers to the people (1.859) - thus, 'to treat them wrongly is their custom' - or to eche matter (1.857), where the contrast would be between the habitual willingness to interfere in every subject (1.857), and the inability to act in a way which would justify such interference. The present editor inclines to this second reading.
860. The point being made is that there is even less regard shown for the people by the secular canons than by the cathedral lorde, who has authority over the canons. The capitalised form Lord adopted by Sp2 06 Sp3 does not mean that they have mistakenly taken the word to refer to the Lord God, for the 06 note reads: '... and hold them in greater subiection, than the Lord of the manor doth'. The present edition takes holde hem lower to refer to the canons' attitudes towards the people (OED hold 12d), though the 06 reading - which takes the phrase to refer to the oppressive actions - may well also be implied in the phrase. This latter idea of holding someone in subjection appears to be the sense of the phrase holdynge hem love in Wimledon's Sermon, ed. Knight, 1.505.
- 861,3. duke/boke. The OED notes the development of three forms of duck in Middle English - dukke, duk; douke, dowke; and döke, dook. It is likely that in its original form, the rhyme was doke/boke and that duke (other editions read duck(e)) is a later scribal form. OED notes G form duke as a Cl6 Scottish form.
868. sturte. A metathetic form of strut, sb. and v. The OED notes only one example - the Plowf - of sturt(e) used intransitively meaning 'To contend, make trouble with': it notes strut, 3 'To contend, strive, quarrel, bluster' which is not recorded after 1400. The transitive uses of sturt(e) are confined to three late Scottish texts - 1513, 1786, 1892 - but as the noun sturt(e) was extant in the fourteenth century, it seems reasonable to accept that the inclusion of the verb in the Plowf need not necessarily be regarded as evidence of a sixteenth century date of composition for the poem. Moreover the fact that the OED records many post 1500 Scottish instances of the phrase sturt and strife is not necessarily significant with regard to the poem's provenance, for the same phrase is also used in the West Midland Wimmer and Waster 265.
869. 06 and Sk are amongst the texts which rightly take this line with 1.868 and end it with either a comma (06 Wr) or a semi-colon (Sk).

Sp2 ends l.868 with a full stop, thus precluding its being taken with 1.869. Concerning clerical participation in wrestling, see Myrc's Instructions for Parish Priests, ll.39-40. See also Mathew, English Works, pp.152 (Cap. 15), 168 (Cap. 4).

870. at the nale. 'From ME onwards it has been common for final n in ȝen < OE ȝaem dat. sing., in an, and in mine, etc. to be added (by misdivision of the words) to a following noun beginning with a vowel, as in for the nones, atte nale ...', E. J. Dobson, English Pronunciation: 1500-1700, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1957), II, 1005. See, for instance, CT III 1349.

871. Markette beters. 'people who idle and lounge around a market'. See Mathew, English Works, p.242. Latest OED reference is 1483 - see market sb. 10b. See Myrc, Instructions, l.45.

872. heve and hale. Amongst the cries attributed to medieval (and later) sailors by the OED and MED are heave and how, hale and how, hoise and hale (see OED hale sb.4). It seems that heve and hale represents an amalgam of the various cries.

873. A puzzling line which cannot, as it stands, be contorted into sense. One possible interpretation 'They were fresh whilst at the fair but by the time they reached the wine-drinking ceremony they were exhausted', is unsupported by an OED instance of wine meaning 'an occasion on which wine was drunk'. If ll.873-4 are to be taken together, it is possible to see how, prior to (or whilst) making debate, they drink the stale wine but how could they eat fayre fresshe? A possible solution is suggested in the O6 note - perhaps it should read fayre flesshe on which they could dine (MED flesh 2d) - see Minot, Poems 1/20. It is this solution which is adopted in the present edition. With this suggestion it is necessary to omit the colon found at the end of l.873 in Sp2 O6 and the semi-colon in Wr.

878,9. they. i.e. the men whose wives have been embraced by the clerics.

881. 'And (they - i.e. the clerics (l.877)) make them (the men) say ...'

883. Hir. G and all other texts read Hi(y)s. The husbands of the wives have been plural throughout the stanza, and should not now become singular. The line as a whole refers to it (l.882).

- 884. 'No man (is) so daring as to disagree'.
- 887. This contrasts with the seven Canonical Hours and one Night Office which he should have sung.
- 889. Myrc, Instructions, l.41 mentions 'Hawkyng, huntynge' as amongst those pursuits to be avoided at all costs by priests.
- 891. The sorcery referred to is dealt with at greater length in ll.893-900. It is interesting to note that Lollardy and sorcery were sometimes linked in the eyes of ecclesiastical officials - see Jack Upland, ed. Heyworth, pp.14 (note 3) -16.
- 893. stocke or stone. See Pearl 380; Lay.626; Jerus.687; Pur.1343,1523, 1720; also Mathew, English Works, p.279, (1.15).
- 893-900. The accusation that superstitions grew up to the effect that one image was more efficacious than another is found elsewhere in Lollard writings - see Apology, p.88, ll.22-4.
- 902. The present edition adopts Sk's emendation and omits the repetitious second thou.
- 901-4. A good deal of paraphrasing is necessary to make sense of these lines. The sense seems to be that the practice (mentioned in the previous stanza) of setting up lights and decorations around certain images enables simple folk to understand that images thus adorned (notably the images of Mary) are especially able to perform miracles. It is around the Marian shrines that men hang all kinds of jewellery.
- 907-8. O6 probably misses the point: 'Wretched, and in a miserable case is the soule, that such a priest sings masses, diriges, or trentalls for, who cares for nothing, but the offrings of the pilgrims'. The phrase precheth ... a pylgrimage surely means 'to recommend, to urge (people) to undertake a pilgrimage' - see OED preach v.2b. The difficulty arises concerning for suche. This phrase may be taken as a disapproving qualitative judgement on the sort of pilgrimage which the priest recommends to be undertaken, with the implication that the poet can conceive of a type of pilgrimage which would be beneficial for people to undertake - perhaps to shrines which are not characterised by the sort of features which have been described in the previous two stanzas.

However, the line could be taken to imply that a priest who recommends suche (people) (i.e. any parishioner) to go on any pilgrimage is unworthy to sing for the soul of anyone. Such a reading would imply a more decisive rejection of the efficacy of all pilgrimages than the first reading. Though without complete conviction, the present editor inclines to the first reading - thus: 'Woe is the soul which has masses sung for it by a priest who advocates the undertaking of such pilgrimages (i.e. pilgrimages to such shrines)'.

912. This line goes with ll.909-10. Precisely the same attitudes set out in the stanza, may be found in other Wycliffite material - see Arnold, III, 463-4.
- 917-20. Compare with the description of the priests quoted in Owt, Literature and Pulpit, p.277 from Myrc's Manuale Sacerdotum.
917. Part of the traditional vocabulary for criticising priests - see, for instance, Poem of the Evil Times of Edward II ll3. Chaucer's Miller (CT I 588) also wore 'A swerd and bokeler ... by his syde'.
918. See Myrc, Instructions, l.48: P.Pl.B.xv.118: Audelay, Poems 2/150.
921. dedes. MS reads hedes - it also reads heddes for dedes in l.969. There can be little doubt that dedes is the correct reading in l.921, and no doubt in l.969. The MS reading may either be a misreading of d, which is perhaps unlikely, or may have been influenced by the preceding h.
925. On. G reads Of. The emendation enables l.924 to be taken with ll. 925-6 as a complete sense unit.
926. 'That must be styled in the latest fashion'.
927. clyppen and kyssen. See P.Pl.A.xi.174; B.xviii.417; W. of P. 63, 859, 3659. The compressed nature of the line as a whole has led several editors to expand it slightly. Thus Sp2 06 Sp3 Wr insert they before counten, whilst MS inserts to in the same place. OED records count v.8: 'To make account of, think (much, little, lightly, etc.) of, care for'. The PlowT sense seems to be 'they think (in the future about)' or perhaps 'they hope'. Although unrecorded in OED, the sense of anticipation suggested by 'hope, expect' seems most appropriate here. 06 note 'They make accompt to kisse ...' (see OED account sb. IV 13)

confirms this. Thus ll.927-8 may be translated 'They hope, in the towns, to kiss and embrace the maidens that go to the dance'.

- 929-30. Myrc, Instructions, l.43 specifically forbids the wearing, by priests, of 'cuttede clothes and pykete schone'. Though it might be argued that sewe in l.929 is an importation from the previous line, and that the MS reading shewe is possible, it is surely better to retain sewe and to read the phrase as 'clothes which match their (the maidens') complexions'.
- 931-2. The sense of the lines is fairly straightforward: 'Either God's Gospel is untrue or else these men serve the devil or no man (or not)'. The or none phrase introduces an unnecessary complication into the series of alternatives and probably owes its presence (in what is an unusually long line) to the requirements of the rhyme. More difficult to explain is the presence in G (l.931) of our. It is possible to understand it as a possessive adjective in the sense '(Either) our God's Gospell ...'. This seems one likely explanation of the G version in spite of the fact that the present editor knows of no other use of the phrase in Lollard writings. However, neither does he know of any example of the alternative explanation which is just possible - Our ... Eyther could be a formula for 'either ... or'. The OED does record a rare early form our from or, conj.2.A.β. and notes that or in or ... or (A 3) can mean 'either'. Similarly, either (OED B II 4) is recorded meaning 'or'. No example is recorded of Our ... Eyther (or indeed Or ... Eyther) used together as a formula meaning 'Either ... Or', however. In view of the difficulties attending both explanations of the G reading, and in view of the immediate solution afforded by the reversal of the two forms and the emendation of Our to Or, these emendations have been adopted.
933. See Chapter 3 pp. 95f. and notes.
- 933-4. It is a little difficult to explain the cause and effect relationship between the two lines. O6 notes ingeniously 'Their cassokes and gowmes are so bigge and wide, that parishoners must make their massing garments larger then ordinary', taking vestment in its specialised ecclesiastical sense (OED 2b) of garments (especially the chasuble) worn at the celebration of the Eucharist. In fact it seems to have been the sleeves of the gowns rather than the gowns themselves which were so large, but perhaps even the size of the sleeves necessitated the enlargement of garments which were to be worn over the long sleeved gowns.

- 935. On its own, it would be tempting to read into this line an allusion to the refusal of ecclesiastical authorities to allow vernacular translations of the scriptures - a theme so often stressed in both Lollard and Reformation polemic, yet so notably absent as an integral part of the PlowT. However it is clear that ll.935-6 are to be taken together - the sense is that by wearing inappropriate garments, the clergy conceal (i.e. do not proclaim by their actions) one aspect of the Gospel teachings. The O6 notes go on to point to Math. xxiii. 5 where fault is found with 'the broad phylacteries and hems of the Pharises garments'.

- 936. contraryen. See Jack Upland 243, 297; Arnold, III, 341. Thus the word was popular amongst, though not confined to, Lollard writings.

- 939. pendauntes. Apparently used in the sense of OED pendant sb.2b: 'The end of a knight's belt or lady's girdle which remained hanging down after passing through the buckle, and was usually fashioned as an ornament' - see 1.138, with its reference to golden gyrdels. The O6 suggestion: 'Their costly silken whoods and such like, hang downe to their hannes', is a less likely alternative.

- 941. Shrifte sylver. See Daw's Reply 83. For asken, G reads aske is. O6 which reads Aske's and translates 'Aske vs'; and Sp2 O6 Sp3 Wr which read aske, have found it impossible to accept the G reading. The present edition emends both aske is (1.941) to asken, and askes (1.943) to asken, 'ashes'. In this way 1.941 is provided with a recognisable plural verb, whilst the rhyme with 1.943 is maintained. The form asken (1.943) is a C13-C14 spelling of OED ash sb.2.

- 942. crepe to the crouche. An old ceremony of penance frequently performed on Good Friday - see P.Pl.B.xviii.428 and note.

- 943. See note to 1.941 for emendation. The allusion in the line is to the Sacrament of Penance and, in particular, to that part of the process - generally consisting of fasts, continence, pilgrimages, floggings and imprisonment, which followed the grant of absolution (see 1.671) - see J. T. McNeill and Helena M. Gamer, Medieval Handbooks of Penance (New York, 1938), *passim*.

- 945. vouch. OED vouch v.3c gives PlowT as the only example of the sense 'To cast the responsibility of (something - in this case, their authorization)on a person (in this case, their bishop)'

- 947. mouche. O6 glosses 'Take vp all, eate vp all' (see OED mouch v.), which parallels the sense recorded in the EDD for Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Berkshire: 'To eat greedily or ravenously'. The EDD quotes Levins (1570) 'mouche, eate, mandere'. Sk glosses 'sneak about', which, however, is unrecorded in the OED entry for mooch v.3 before 1851. Of the other senses mentioned by the OED, 4: 'To pilfer, steal', is unrecorded before 1862, whilst 2: 'To play truant' was not recorded before 1622 and would not, in any case, be particularly appropriate in the Plowt context. OED sense 1: 'To act the miser, pretend poverty' is only recorded once - in a Towneley Mystery Play - but it fits the Plowt context admirably and has hence been adopted in the present edition.

- 949-51. O6 correctly translates 'They will make commemoration of none in their Masse, but such as pay them well for it ... ', but the reading of l.951 ' ... and that but in a word neither' is less clear. The force of the line appears to be that even those who have paid to be commemorated will receive only a brief mention - see Mathew, English Works, pp.166-7 (Cap. 2).

- 954. lykyng and ... lustes. See, for instance, Perf. Liv., p.4,l.7; p.33,l.7; On Prayer, p.299, ll.28,36.

- 955. Sans ose ieo dire. 'I hardly dare say'. Sp3 translates 'Without, shall I be bold to say' in its Glossary, whilst Spl alters the reading in the Glossary and translates the phrase Sans ose ie, ou diray, as 'But dare I, or shall I say' - such an alteration seems unnecessary. The use, as a line-filler, of this French phrase is a strange feature of the poem - the present editor has not come across another instance of the phrase being used in an English poem of this period.

- 958. hir. G reads his. The line must read hir, plural, to agree with bysshoppes, plural (l.957). Thus 'Either they explain why to the Bishops, or they must be in their (the Bishops') service'.

- 959. her. This probably refers to the Bishops: 'And uphold, defend, their (the Bishops') misconduct'. O6 however believes her refers to the priests: ' ... and then they may continue their lewd life'.

- 960. feble emprise. 'little worth'. Sk glosses emprise as 'enterprise' which cannot be correct in this context. OED emprise 3b, 'value, estimation', is the most appropriate sense of those listed in the dictionaries. It is only recorded twice - with the last occasion

- being 1393. The sense 'renown, glory, distinction' could be appropriate were it not for its chivalric connotations - both recorded instances of this sense appear in Romances. In neither of the two MEED senses which are reasonably appropriate - 5: 'Achievement; renown, glory' and 6: 'Excellence, virtue; nobility of character or conduct' - is there an example recorded after 1450.
- 965-6. See Mathew, English Works, pp. 240-1 where the writer sets out clearly his belief that it is the duty of Lords to correct an erring clergy, in spite of protestations such as those in 11.965-6.
967. goddease: the word is discussed in Chapter 3, p. 85.
974. telleth. G reads tellen. An obvious emendation to correspond with the other singular forms - soth (1.975), sarth (1.976), syngeth (1.979) - which refer to the singular preest (1.973). The meaning of the line is: 'And confesses (i.e. admits the fact) to his fellow, who in turn tells someone else (i.e. the story soon achieves wide currency)'.
979. 'He sings Mass in order to acquire wealth' - see 1.950.
982. 'That (behaviour) they continue throughout the year'.
986. The force of lare, 'lost' is here really 'damned'.
987. skere. 'purified'. OH skere a., adv. A1 records the Flowe as the latest use in this sense. Except in the phrase Skere Thursday, the word is not recorded in any sense after 1400. It derives from OH skere. The O6 note misunderstands the word's derivation: 'of skere, to make afraid; but the sense will not beare it, for absolution doth not fright men, but rather free them from feare; What if we take it for cleare? as if it came of skowring'.
988. See 1.907.
993. The use of seven occasions - 11.993, 1011, 1020, 1038, 1049, 1053, 1055 - of St. Benet's (Benedict's) name is interesting. Taken to its logical conclusion, the Lollard attitude towards all new sects and orders within the church was that, in so far as their rules adhered

to Christ's law, such orders were superfluous. In so far as the rules of the orders differed from Christ's law, they were to be condemned. It is clear, however, that Wycliffite writers were prepared to adopt a compromise position for the purposes of some propaganda by stating that even by the rules set out by the founders of each order, the conduct of those who now profess to adhere to those rules is sadly wanting.

998. 'Nor serve (the monk) on his knees as (if he were) a king'.
999. pronde as prync in pall. see Minot, Poems, 7/110.
1002. Chaucer's Friar (CT I 262), and the Friar in the Crede (227-8), both wear copes or semicopes of double worsted, which was a stouter fabric than simple worsted - see J. James, History of the Worsted Manufacture in England (1857; reprinted 1968), p.68.
1004. See note to 1.184.
1005. hanke and ... houndes. The phrase was very frequently used as, in the words of the MED, 'a symbol of wealth and cultivated leisure'.
1009. With lordshippes. Sp2 06 Sp3 Wr read They have lordshippes. Such an emendation is unnecessary - the sense of 11.1009-10 is quite clear from the G reading.
- 1013-14. 'Now they are elegant and fastidious, clad in fine cloth(ing) and waited on hand and foot'. The phrase quevnte and curious (1.1013) is used here to suggest 'fastidious, neat, elegant', and is three times recorded - in sixteenth and seventeenth century examples - in the OED (quaint s.1,4b,6).
- 1015,17. Understand 'they are'.
1016. 06 note: 'most of their deuises and imaginations are malitious'.
1018. 'In lordly fashion (they) live in great pleasure (i.e. self-indulgence)'.

1022. flyte. 'They rebuke, scold'. UBAC amend to slite which doubtless made more obvious sense in the eighteenth century when flyte (in the meaning adopted in the present edition) was a very rare dialectal word located in the North. A different explanation, and one which did not involve the destruction of the alliteration, was suggested in 06. A note translates the word 'They fleets, take of the Creame of their poore tenants: that is, they lick the fatte from their tenants beards, taking away the best of their estate'-see QED fleet v.2. Surely a more convincing sense is offered by QED flite 2b: 'To chide, scold (a person)'. Many more examples of this usage are given in MED fliten 1a and b.
1023. hvra. Used here as a comparative adverb.
1026. 'For they, out of covetousness, accuse all'.
- 1029-44. See note to 1.304.
1042. honed at the plow. See Crede 421; Townely Fl.2/459.
1043. The QED glosses the FlowT line under town 2: 'The house or group of houses or buildings upon this enclosed land; the farmstead or homestead on a farm or holding'. It would perhaps be more appropriately glossed under sense 1: 'An enclosed place or piece of ground, an enclosure' (last use 1368) or 1b: 'The enclosed land surrounding or belonging to a single dwelling; a farm with its farmhouse ... a manor ... the enclosed land of a village community' (last use 1380 plus some seventeenth century onwards explanatory definitions of the term).
- 1050-1. cherelyche, churlyche. MS Sp2 06 Sp3 read, in both lines, church(e)liche (1.1051), and Wr reads churchliche (1.1050). However the QED records no form of churchlike: 'resembling a church; befitting connexion with a church', before 1593. It is unlikely therefore that the word was in the original form of the FlowT. It is possible to regard the two forms as different spellings of MED cherli(ch), 'Rustic, rural'. The MED notes in the Prompt. Parv. (1440): 'Cherlyche or charlysche: Rusticalis ... Cherlyche, or charlyche preste: Ego'. The churl-variant of MED cherlish is recorded and is likely also to have been an alternative form of the word ending in -iche. The present editor

feels inclined, however, to draw a distinction in meaning between the two words, taking chereliche to be an adjectival form of MED cherli, chereli (cherliche, cheerliche are alternative spellings), adv.1a: 'Lovingly, solicitously, tenderly'; and taking churlyche to mean, as suggested above, 'rustic, rural' with the implication of 'simple, humble'. Mention should also be made of Skeat's suggested reading for l.1050: "I have supplied but, but the right word is not. For cherelich means 'expensive' or 'prodigal' from O.F. cher, dear. This we know from the occurrence of the same rare form as an adverb in P.Pl. Crede, 582; where the sense is - 'but to maintain his chamber as expensively (cherliche) as a chieftain'".

1052. Bovstous. 'humble, simple'. For this sense, see, for example, Apology, Introd. p.xiv: 'Criston seith, that fischers and buystous men, makyng iche daye nettis ... '.
1058. the before. 'those of whom I have already spoken' - see especially ll.813f.
1062. Chanons, canons. Thomas Fuller, The Church History of Britain, (1655), Book 6, p.268 speaks of a 'nice distinction' between the two words, but ends^{up}: 'It seems that the H here amounteth to a letter so effectually as to discriminate chanons from canons (though both Canonici in Latine) but what should be the difference betwixt them, I dare not interpose my conjecture' (Quoted Spurgeon, Chaucer Criticism, I, 231.). Neither dare the present editor!
1066. The line is discussed in Chapter 2, passim.
- 1077f. The content of the Griffon's speech is reminiscent of those arguments used to justify the Papacy which are put into the mouth of Antichrist and are set at the head of several chapters - 6,8,10,11,12 - of the Wycliffite tract De Papa - see Mathew, English Works, pp. 460-82.
1078. governayle. In the precise sense of 'One who governs, a ruler', or 'One who exercises personal control or guidance', as opposed to the more abstract idea of 'government', the OED records only two instances - the FlowT and the Mirror of St. Edmund (? c1350). See OED governail 2c and MED 3b.

1089. sadde. 'ashamed'. Sk suggests that sadde is a pret.ppl. form of OED sate: 'To become satiated or weary'. The present edition takes it as an extension of OED sad A I 5: 'sorrowful, mournful'. The Flowt context supports 'ashamed' as a translation.
1090. lyven. '(would) live'.
1091. shulde. G reads suche; Sp2 O6 Sp3 Wr read ... strength to amend such be made, an emendation which still leaves the line basically meaningless. It was left to Sk to provide the obvious correction of substituting shuld for suche.
- 1090, 1092. lust, must. Sk reads list, wist. The adoption by Sk of list rather than lust in 1.1090 must be taken to have been dictated by his belief that the last word in 1.1092 does not come from OED wite v.2, 'to keep', whose pret.ppl. forms are wist and must, but comes instead from OED wise v.1, 'To show the way/a person; to guide, direct', from which no pret.ppl. form wust is recorded. The sense of 1.1092 is surely that suggested by O6: 'Wolues are to be driven or kept from hurting the sheepe with weapons' - a sense which can be sustained as well by the pret.ppl. of OED wite, which would enable the rhyme as recorded in the early printed texts to be maintained. Thus the Sk emendation is unnecessary and has not been adopted in the present edition.
1096. svtte. '(should i.e. would) sit'.
1097. horowe. 'filthy, unkempt'. See Chaucer, Compl. Mars. 206; also glossed in Bullokar's 1616 Dictionary. Skeat, (The Works of Chaucer, I, 503), discussing the etymology of the word, states that the form derives from A.S. sb. horu (gen. horwes) filth; cf. A.S. horweht, filthy, from the same stem horw-. The M.E. adj. also takes the form hori, hory from A.S. horig, an adj. formed from the closely related A.S. horh, horg, filth.
1109. caste ... crve. A very common expression - see, for instance, W. Alex. 1604, 2154, 2345; GGlcn 64; Row. and Ot. 508, 898, 1303.
- 1115, 1122. A reference to Math. xxiii.8f. See Crede 497-500; also 574-6.

- 1116-18. Sk (like Sp2 06 Sp3 before him) puts a comma at the end of l.1116, and takes the line in conjunction with 11.1117-18. Wr interestingly reverts to a full stop at the end of l.1116, in spite of the fact that in most respects his text is a direct copy from Sp3. If That (l.1117) were emended to They, the Wr punctuation would be meaningful. The present edition here prefers to retain the original readings and adopt the punctuation used by Sk and his predecessors. Thus the lines are best understood: 'All other masters are wicked and false that claim authority in his spiritual name and use it for their own temporal benefit', with for being taken, as it was by Urry, to imply 'to win'.

- 1120. mylde mod. A common phrase - see, for instance, ON 1032; Lay. 31390; W. of P. 1985.

- 1133. What. 'Why' - see OED what III 19.

- 1135. lyve. Sk reads leve: 'with what is permitted to them'. The present editor prefers the original form lyve and its meaning in the context: 'What, have you to do with their life (lives)'. There is no reason to suppose that the form lyve could not sustain a pronunciation which would enable the lyve/creve rhyme to remain unimpaired.

- 1143. Probably, as with glosyng (l.1139), there is an allusion here to the preaching activities of the Lollards. The tales referred to should be taken in the OED tale 5 sense of 'falsehoods', rather than in the sense of 'a story or a narrative'. Lollards were, as has been noted, strongly opposed to the use of non-biblical story material in sermons.

- 1148. the. Reflex. 'thysself'.

- 1149-50. 06 note: 'And yet you haue nothing to doe with the matters you medle in, because you haue no charge here in the world'.

- 1154. warme be clothed. G warme clothed. The adoption of the Sk emendation enables the line to be taken as dependent on voll (l.1153). Sk's positioning of be between rather than (as in UBAC) in front of warme clothed is to be preferred.

- 1158. as ve were alve. 'as if you were wise'.

- 1159. with your ententes. Sp2 O6 Wr read and tents. This emendation, apparently made in an attempt to 'restore' the octosyllabic line succeeds only in obscuring the sense. OED tent sb.2 means (1): 'Attention, heed, care' - which makes no sense of the emended line - or (2): 'Intent, purpose' - which makes less sense of the emended line than OED intent (var. entent) 5: 'Meaning, import; purport' does of the original G reading. Sk was also anxious to produce an octosyllabic line and reads with your entents, omitting offrynces with no apparent reason other than metrical considerations. It is curious that O6 whilst incorporating and tents into its text, translates With your entents in the notes.

- 1160. 'And speak falsely on the subject of our Lord's body (i.e. the Eucharist)'. The O6 note translates 'And falsely deny the reall presence that Christ is bodily present'.

- 1162. A rather vague line which seems to refer both to the sacramentes (1.1157), and to tithinges and offrynces (1.1159): 'Like one who says there are (or should be) no such things'.

- 1163. sarh. G reads savna. The verb must agree with the singular verb sarh (1.1162) which is dependent on who, 'a person who'.

- 1171-2. It is not quite clear whether 1.1171 is an extension of 1.1170: 'Let other men live as they please, (let them) spend ... ', or whether it is a separate piece of advice directed at the Pellican and to be taken with 1.1172. By punctuating 1.1171 at the end with a comma, and 1.1172 with a colon, both Sp2 and O6 seem to favour the first interpretation, as do UBAC by their reading Spendin (C Spenden) ther gode ..., and it is this first interpretation which has been adopted in the present edition.

- 1187. 'And God's words (they) distort and (by so distorting them) conceal'. As with 1.935 (see note), there is insufficient evidence here to take the line as a reference to any official hostility towards the provision of vernacular scriptural translations. Sp2 Wr Sk are surely correct in putting a semi-colon (Wr and Sk) or a full stop (Sp2) at the end of 1.1187, and in taking 1.1188 with the next stanza. Though Sp3 has a full stop at the end of 1.1187, it also has one at the end of 1.1188, thus preventing the line being taken with 1.1189.

1198. 'Or put them up for sale'.

1201. As in 1.1197, hem refers to the Sacraments.

1204. Another instance where several texts, including Sp2 Sp3 Wr and Sk correctly punctuate with a comma at the end of the line, in order to enable the line to be taken with the opening line of the following stanza.

1208. for. 'despite'.

1211-12. These lines should be taken with the first half of 1.1209. Thus 11.1209-12 should either be translated: 'It is right for a man (i.e. a priest) to tithe, offer, administer the Eucharist, hear confessions, administer the sacrament of marriage and all the other sacraments, as long as these duties are carried out properly', or 'It is right for a man to pay tithes, and offerings, to receive the Eucharist, to go to confession, to accept the sacrament of marriage and all the other sacraments, as long as everything is done properly'.

1219-24. The O6 note to 11.1219-20 is illuminating as an expression of disappointment that, on the one topic of the Eucharist, the poet seems not to have completely thrown off all vestiges of Catholic doctrine: 'Chaucer saw somewhat, though not all: it is no easie matter to leaue errors that we haue bin nousled in'. Yet if these lines seemed to the annotator, Wotton, to represent a statement of the orthodox medieval Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, it is clear from accounts of the examinations of Lollard suspects that the same lines would not have been so regarded by the ecclesiastical authorities at the end of the fourteenth century. Both Archbishop Arundel and William Thorpe, for instance, would have agreed with 11.1219-20 (see Foxe, III, 263). But the same sentiments found in 11.1221-2 were also expressed by Thorpe (p.264), and were completely unacceptable to Arundel, to whom it was necessary not to 'strive' concerning the existence of substance of bread after consecration, but simply to believe unquestioningly the declaration and determination of the church to the effect that the substance had been annihilated (p.264). This Thorpe, like the Plow poet, was not prepared to do - hence Thorpe's beliefs were pronounced heretical and, in the opinion of the present editor, so would those of the Plow poet. The disappointment of the O6 editor concerning

the Eucharistic beliefs of the FlowT poet was clearly shared by the first editor of Pierce the Ploughman's Crede when he was confronted with a similar expression of views in that work - Crede, ed. Skeat (1906), ll.817-8. Such was his dismay that he found it necessary to suppress the lines and replace them with others written specially for the occasion - see Skeat's note to l.816.

1219. mystrye. G reads mastry. OED records several instances of mystery in this precise theological sense of 'mystical presence', and it is forms of this word which have been included in all printed texts from Thl onwards.

1222. subrette. MS reads substans. As both these terms were in constant use, both at the end of the fourteenth century and in the sixteenth century, as part of the vernacular vocabulary of Eucharistic theology, the MS reading is explicable by relating it to that category of variants, noted by Professor Kane, which are 'almost certainly instinctive substitutions [by a scribe] of a more familiar or habitual locution' - see Piers Plowman: The A Version, ed. G. Kane (1960), p.125.

1225-32. This amplification of l.1178 is, in content, fully in accord with the compromise Wycliffite position which stated that the pope's authority was to be respected only in so far as his teaching reflected Christ's teaching - see De Papa, Cap.4, in Mathew, English Works (pp. 460-82). The whole purpose of De Papa was to emphasise the many divergences between Christian precept and papal practice. The Lollards reserved for themselves the right to decide when the pope was and when he was not following Christian teaching - hence FlowT, l.1228.

1229. bode. 'commanded'. The OED speaks of the 'total confusion after 1400-1500' of ME preterite forms from OE bædan and biddan. It does seem, however, that the preterite form bode is not recorded after the end of the fifteenth century.

1231. The line should be taken with the first half of l.1230.

1233. he. i.e. The Pellican.

1234. Too much significance should not be placed on the similarity between balefull fyre (FlowT) and bale of fiir (Crede 667).

The similarity has been used (by Skeat, Crede (1906), Introd. p.xxv) as 'almost conclusive evidence' that the FlowT interpolator (of the longest interpolation) did not write the Crede himself but was making additions to a poem (the FlowT) which he was willing to attribute to the author of the Crede. Skeat argues that the interpolator read the Crede, saw the phrase hale of fir which 'suggested to him another word altogether ... A.S. bealu, evil, harm; out of which he formed the adjective haleful'. Skeat may be correct in his belief that the interpolator did not write the Crede, but his 'almost conclusive evidence' proves nothing. The interpolator could have decided to use halefull fire without even knowing the Crede. The word haleful in this sense dates back to the beginning of the thirteenth century - it certainly was not 'formed' for the first time by the interpolator - see W. of P. 4261, noted in MED.

- 1245-68. The Pellican's sentiments reflect Arnold, III, 361-2.
- 1260. 'I fear not any harm, injury, molestation, which you can do to me'.
- 1270. lothely. G reads lovely. Whilst it would be possible to take the G reading ironically, Bradley's suggested emendation lothely, 'Loathsome, repulsive', which recalls the Nightingale's description of the Owl at the beginning of the O. and N. 71f, has been adopted in the present edition.
- 1271. cookes herte blode. One of several old forms of oath and exclamation - cokkes is a variant gen. sing. form of God. See MED cok n.5.
- 1272. every doule. 'every smallest feather'. See Skeat's discussion of dowle in his 'Notes on English Etymology', Transactions of the Philological Society, (1888-90), 3-5. Skeat concludes, 'M.E. dowle, soft plumage, is precisely the O.F. doulle, given by Godefroy as an occasional spelling of doille, with the sense of "that which is soft"' (p.4).
- 1280. God wolde. 'Would God'.

1282. Eche a worde. 'Every word'. Sp2 O6 Sp3 Wr read Of each word, reflecting the fact that Eche a, 'every' was no longer in current use. Neither the OED or MED record any instance of its use after c1456.

1284. O6 note 'I would God of his mercy would grant it were so'.

1287-8. It is very curious that the Pellican should tell the Plowman narrator to expect payment for his travayle(1.1286) from the very people who would be most hostile to the poem: 'these who have put God up for sale' - i.e. the clergy. The force of solde could simply be 'betrayed' (see OED sell B 2), but is more likely to mean 'sold' in the financial sense, in view of the juxtaposition with 1.1288.

1297. Either 'These repay goodness with evil' or 'These behave wickedly instead of well'.

1303. 'For they (the Griffon and the clergy on the one side) are similar'. Sk reads For they two ben (of kind), lykly, apparently with the sense 'For they are two of a kind, in all probability'. However lykely is best taken as an adjective meaning 'similar'. G has Pelycan in the margin opposite 1.1305 instead of opposite 1.1303. Other texts which make this mistake are Th1 H Th2 St Sp1.

1304. robben. Sp2 O6 Sp3 Wr read roven. There is no noticeable improvement in sense as a result of this reading.

1305. foule. The bird-like part of the Griffon.

1308. acylted Goddis grace. O6 suggests as one translation, 'he made light account of Gods mercy ... '. The sense of acylted is rather 'he offended against' - see MED acylten 1. The verb, though recorded once in a work dated 1500 and also in Palsgrave (1530) - see OED acylt - is not otherwise noted after 1450.

1311-12. O6 suggests 'so these men are driven out of all hope of saluation, and also shenden, hurt others, to make them in like estate to themselues'. The OED does note despair sb.3 used just by Wyclif

to mean 'False or mistaken hope' (see also despair v.4.). Such a sense seems less appropriate, however, than that suggested by 06.

1313-14. 'They wish that souls (i.e. people) who are sick with sin should kneel before them, alas'. The G reading: He culleth hem, knele therfore alas, presents difficulties chiefly because of the break which it imposes on the sense in the middle of the line. Up to hem the sense seems clear: 'The souls which (or who) are sick with sin, he kills them'. However the remainder of the line is very puzzling - who is being addressed? The Pellican is speaking - why should he tell the narrator to kneel? Sensing this difficulty, Sp2 Sp3 Wr punctuate the line ... kneele: therfore alas, which scarcely improves the overall sense. It is, in any case, unusual in the Ployt for a line to have so clear a break in the middle. The emendations adopted in the present edition accept that alas is a line-filler introduced for the purpose of the rhyme, but attempts to treat the remainder of the two lines as a complete sense unit without a break.

1315. Sk translates 'Because bribery may break God's prohibition'. The present editor prefers the 06 translation 'For bribery (i.e. theft, robbery) they do that, which God hath forbidden'.

1317. hwnder naria. i.e. of the Griffon. See 1.1305.

1319. erthe adowne. 'here below'. See QED ^{adown} / A adv.2 - no example after 1501. Generally, adowne seems to have fallen out of use by the middle of the fifteenth century, apart from isolated archaistic uses by Spenser and eighteenth and nineteenth century writers such as Scott and William Morris.

1321-4. Some emendation is necessary to G in order to reconcile the inconsistencies between fereth this foule (sing.), and they people chase (pl.), and between As a lyon proude (sing.) and God amende hem (pl.). The present edition has emended in such a way as to narrow the inconsistency down to a single feature - chase which is plural, whereas all the emended forms are singular. Perhaps its position as a rhyming word determined the number of the verb in the original.

1325. He. 'The Pellican'. G has Pellycan in the margin opposite 1.1325. Most other texts also have this feature - either in the margin or at the head of the stanza.

1329. It would be possible to read to-mull as two separate words: 'he had decided to despoil, rob, plunder the Pellican'. However in view of the Griffon's threat to use physical violence (1.1272) the present editor is inclined to take to-mull as one word, in the sense of 'to tear to pieces'.
1335. asadred wole. O6 note reads 'Eithir well prouided, assembled, or, I know not what it meanes'. It is not surprising that the annotator was baffled - the QED records the FlowT as the only example of asadred, 'gathered, assembled'.
1338. molles. The present editor knows of no other instance of molle meaning a bird of prey, or indeed a bird of any sort. Skeat glosses the FlowT usage as 'birds of the kite or buzzard family ... (The exact sense is not known.)'. Sp3 glosses as 'kistrels'.
1339. The Lapwing's cunning ploy of luring an intruder away from its nest was proverbial - see M. P. Tilley, A Dictionary of The Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century, (Ann Arbor, 1950), p.368 (168). See also P. of E. 347.
1340. forzerde. Pret.ppl. form of MED forzeren, 'To lose or forfeit (something) through misconduct'. No example recorded of any form of the verb after 1400. Though the MED records no pret.ppl. forms with a d as in the FlowT, rather than with a t, the antonym MED zeren has both zard and zart forms.
1351. caste a . . . orve. See note to 1.1109.
- 1357-8. In G there is some confusion as to the identity of the person who speaks of my wrytynge (1.1358,1366,1379). As understood by Sk, the first two references are spoken by the Pellican, and the third by the narrator. Yet earlier in the poem (11.1280-4), the Pellican expresses the wish that someone will write down the debate which has taken place, and the Flowman offers to do so. Why, then, should the Pellican subsequently speak of my wrytynge? The emendations adopted in the present edition aim to remove this contradiction inherent in the Sk text. Thus axed I ryght: G reads axed ryght. The emendation enables 11.1358-80 to be taken as words directed to the Pellican by the (Flowman) narrator.

1359. or. G reads of. This emendation was first adopted by Sp2 and retained by O6 Sp3 Wr. Sk tried to make sense of the original reading: "The sense of of is here uncertain. Perhaps of flight means 'as regards my flight', and so 'to protect my flight.'" Such an explanation is unconvincing - flycht is best understood here to mean 'dispute, argue a case'. The collocation of fycht ... flycht is not unknown - see MED fliten 1a where examples are noted from Vegetius and Rolle.

1361. 'He that had a maiden as a mother'.

1367. witeth. G reads writeth. An emendation which was first suggested by Bradley. The line may now be understood: 'Blame the Pellican for this writing' - i.e. it was only undertaken at his request. Note l.1373 where the phrase wyteth the Pellwoane confirms the likely correctness of the present emendation.

Colophon reads 'Printed at London by Thomas Godfray. Cum Priuilegio'. The absence from the colophon of the additional phrase 'ad imprimendum solum' deprives an editor of certain evidence that the book was printed after November 15th, 1538. On that day a Royal proclamation ordered the future use of the phrase in books in order to make quite clear that the king was setting his approval merely to the grant of a printing monopoly to a particular printer, and was not indicating his agreement with the ideas expressed in the work for which the monopoly had been granted. It is likely, though, that Godfray, as a printer of official material, would have adhered to the demand for the addition of the new phrase after 1538 - thus the absence of that phrase from the colophon represents some (though not conclusive) evidence in favour of a date of printing before 1538. See W. W. Greg, 'Ad Imprimendum Solum', The Library, 9 (1954), 242-7; reprinted in The Collected Papers of Sir Walter W. Greg, ed. J. C. Maxwell (Oxford, 1966), pp. 406-12. The varying interpretations of the phrase seem to have submitted to Greg's definitive statement.

Glossary.

It is the intention of the Glossary to record all forms of all words in the poem. Occurrences are indicated by line references to the text - in cases where the word occurs frequently in the same sense and form, only three references are given, unless the word indicates a theme of particular importance in the poem, in which case all references are given. The forms are generally arranged in the standard order of grammatical descent. Variation between i and y is disregarded, with y occupying the same alphabetical place as i. A word which is followed by (b) represents the second such word in a particular line - followed by an (a), the first such word is referred to.

The following abbreviations have been used in the Glossary:

absol.	absolute(ly)	interj.	interjection
acc.	accusative	interr.	interrogative
adj.	adjective	L.	Latin
adv.	adverb	masc.	masculine
art.	article	n.	noun
attrib.	attributive(ly)	neut.	neuter
aux.	auxiliary	pleon.	pleonastic
comp.	comparative	ppl.	participle
conj.	conjunction	pl.	plural
dat.	dative	pred.	predicative
def.	definite	prep.	preposition
excl.	exclamation	pres.	present
F.	French	pret.	preterite
fem.	feminine	pron.	pronoun
fig.	figurative(ly)	subj.	subjunctive
gen.	genitive	superl.	superlative
imp.	imperative	sing.	singular
indef.	indefinite	vb.	verb
inf.	infinitive	vbl.	verbal

a, indef.art. a, 8,21,48(b) etc.; one, the same, 54; an, an, 26,143, 226 etc.; eche a, every, 1282

abbottes, n.pl. abbots, 64

abideth, 3 sing.pres. awaits, 977

abye, inf. suffer, 1232; atone for, pay for, 1199

about, adv. about, around, 17,21; prep. around, 897, 919; over, 694; round about, 903

above, adv. above, 546,1255,1336; aboven, above, higher in rank, 221,222; above, 423

absolutioun, n. absolution, 347; absolution, 671; absolutyon,987

acale, pret.ppl.adj. cold, 71

accydent, n. accident, 1222

accomptes, n.pl. accounts, 778

accorde, inf. rhyme, 477

accordyng, adv. according(to), 1020

admyrall, n. leader, 194

adowne, adv. here below, 1319

adversary, n. adversary, enemy, 494; adversaries, pl. 267

advysed, pret.ppl. advised, informed, 376, 1369

aferde, pret.ppl.adj. afraid, 433

affray, inf. frighten, 859

after, prep. after, 153; behind, 714; conj. after, when, 597

agadred, pret.ppl. assembled, 1335

agayne, adv. again, 1327, 1342; in return, 35

agaynst, prep. instead of, 502,503,505 etc.; contrary to, 514

agylted, 3 sing.pres. sinned against, affronted, 1308

agramed, pret.ppl. angered, 343

agryse, inf. be afraid, 360,841,1216; 3 pl.pres.subj. (should) fear, be afraid, 961

aye, n. egg, 862

ayen, prep. see ayenst

ayenst, prep. contrary to, 200,254,822 etc.; instead of, 504,509,511 etc.; against, 526,633 etc.; in opposition to, 826,835; ayen, against, 578

ayleth, 3 sing.pres. troubles, worries, 1301

ayre, n. air, 1309

alas, interj. alas, 117,203,357 etc.

ale, n. ale, 144,432

Alexaunder, n. Alexander, 335

all, adj. all, 66,115,132 etc.; every, 1000,1102; throughout, 672, 982; the whole(of), 351,973,1007; pron. everyone, 221,423,510 etc.; everything, 238,409,610 etc.; adv. completely, entirely, 14, 75,80 etc.; throughout, 288; all about, everywhere about, 17

almesse, n. alms, 301,513

almighty, adj. almighty, omnipotent, 620,628,636 etc.

alowe, 3 sing.pres,subj. may he forgive, 1379

also, adv. also, 703,724,754 etc.; conj. also...as, as...as, 743

- alway, adv. always, 22
- am, 1 sing.pres. am, 26,27,50 etc.
- amende, inf. reform, amend, 484,508,548 etc.; 3 sing.pres.subj. 492, 500,516 etc.
- amendes, n.pl. amends, 1091
- amerced, pret.ppl. fined, 1023
- anyse, adv. wrongly, 232
- amonge, prep. among, 553,845,983; amongest, 311; ever among, 155 - see ever
- and, conj. and, 3,4,5 etc.; if, 350,624,713 etc.; even if, 389; yet, but, 35
- angell, n. angel, 226
- angerlyche, adv. angrily, 646
- angre, n. anger, 504
- angry, adj. angry, 382,1015
- anone, adv. immediately, at once, 394; anone right, 975
- another, pron. another, 215,479
- answere, n. reply, argument, 646
- answere, inf. answer, reply, 410,1173,1176; answerde, 1. sing.pret. 1285
- Antichrist, n. Antichrist, 191,194,493,541,552,813,815,847,920;
Antichristes, gen.sing. 923,956
- any, adj. any, 647,1198,1286 etc.; pron. anyone, 311; any one, 1204,1280
- apende, inf. belong, 666
- aperte, adv. openly, 452

apostels, n.pl. apostles, 208,437,613 etc.

appayrelled, pret.ppl. dressed, 854

apple, n. apple, 862

array, n. attire, 329,817; aray, 760; araye, splendour, 134

aroyde, pret.ppl. dressed, attired, 75, 938

ars, n. buttocks, 939

art, 2 sing.pres. art, are, 25

as, adv,conj. as, like, in the way that, 31,37,158 etc.; as if, 184,256,1158 etc.; as sure as, 538; while, 81; as if (he were), 998; as...as, 91,119,124 etc.; as...as, as...as if, 899; as...so, just as...so, 1069,1223,1295 etc.

asken, n.pl. ashes, 943

asken, inf. ask for, 941

assayle, 3 pl.pres. assail, attack, 1083

assent, n. agreement, assent, 257; assente, 654; by one assent, with one accord, 824

assigne, inf. send, 344

assyse, n. way, code (of living), 843

asscyle, inf. absolve, 866

astarte, 3 pl.pret. escaped, 1350

astray, adv. astray, 673

at, prep. at, 41,50,139 etc.

attende, inf. pay attention, heed, 690

attyred, pret.ppl. dressed, 192,195

avayle, inf. offer help, 1080

avaunce, n. advancement, 215

avowe, n. promise, 29

avowe, inf. accept responsibility, 1374

axe, inf. ask, 884; axed, 3 sing.pret. 25,1357

backe, n. back, 586

badde, 3 sing.pret. commanded, told, 226,247,248 etc.

baye, n. bay; at baye, compelled to turn and face (its) pursuers, 139

balefull, adj. malignant, destructive, 120, 1234

balke, n. boundary, limit, 488

Ball, n. Ball (horse's name), 402

ball, n. horse, 258

bare, 3 sing.pret. carried, 13,616

baselardes, n.pl. daggers, 918

bateyle, n. battle, 111

baudrike, n. belt, sash, girdle, 918

be, inf. be, 33,42,101 etc.; ben, 211,723,958 etc.; 2 sing.pres. are, 1249;
1 pl.pres. 1113; bene, 32; 3 pl.pres. 189,920; ben, 5,56,58 etc.;
be, 55,57,177 etc.; have, 756; be, 3 sing.pres.subj. 336,341,
346 etc.; ben, 3 pl.pres.subj. 1194; pret.pl. 495,1041

beate, pret.ppl. beaten, 682

bede, 3 sing.pret. commanded, 1229

beestes, n.pl. beasts, cattle, 3,528

- befall, inf. befall, happen to, 60,68,76 etc; 3 sing.pres.subj. 188
- before, adv. already mentioned, 1058; already, previously, 1065; before, in front of, 1314
- began, 3 sing.pret. began, started, 93,989,1346
- begets, pret.ppl. begotten, born, 1030
- begge, inf. beg, 1094
- begyle, inf. deceive, 980; 2 sing.pres. 1156; begylen, 3 pl.pres. 806
- behelde, pret.sing. looked, 17
- behynde, adv. further on, 480; behind, 600
- bell, n. bell, 166,1241; belles, pl. 40
- Bellyall, n. Belial, 234
- bende, 3 sing.pres. bends, 586
- bendes, n.pl. bonds, restrictions, 537
- Benet, n. Benedict, 993,1011,1049,1055; Benette, 1020,1038,1053
- bere, n. bear, 139,648
- bere, inf. bear, carry, 586; bereth, 3 sing.pres. 97; beren, 3 pl.pres. 865; bere, 419
- beseche, 1 sing.pres. beg, entreat, 49
- besette, pret.ppl. afflicted, 1040
- besyde, prep. beside, 82
- best, suprl.adv. best, 742,849,1082
- bestedde, pret.ppl. situated, 403

beta, 3 sing.pret. beat, 1353; betyn, pret.ppl. 560

beted, pret.ppl. baited, 648

beters, n.pl. see markette-beters, 871

betokeneth, 3 sing.pres. signifies, 1305

betray, inf. betray, 848; betrayed, 3 sing.pret. 615; betrayde, pret.ppl. 940

better, comp.adj. better, 657, 1146

betwene, prep. between, 240; bytwene, 447

beware, inf. take care, 698

by, prep. by, close by, beside, 19,20,37 etc.; by means of, 213,359, 456; through, 425; with, 824; in, 643,776; by (devouring), 1310

bydde, inf. ask, petition, 1094; byddeth, 3 sing.pres. commands, 703; bydden, pret.ppl. ordered, 554

byddyng, pres.ppl.n. command, 50; teaching, 496

bygge, inf. buy, 475 (2)

bynde, inf. bind, 237

byrde, n. harlot, 977

byrde, n. bird, 1309; byrdes, pl. 1296,1310

bysshoppe, n. bishop, 402,945,985; bysshoppes, pl. 391,405,685,829; gen.pl. 353

bytche, n. bitch, 889

byte, inf. injure, wound, 576,715; 3 pl.pres. ill-treat, 1028

bytter, adv. cruelly, harshly, 682

bytwene, see betwene

blacknesse, n. blackness, 120

blame, n. blame, 1358, 1363

blede, inf. bleed, 351

blende, pret.ppl. blinded, 852; blent, 771

blesse, inf. 96, 915; 3 pl.pres. 173; blessed, pret.ppl. 173

blessyng, pres.ppl.n. blessing, 182

blynde, adj. blind, 32

blysse, n. happiness, joy, 233, 611

blode, n. blood, 297, 1121, 1219, 1271, 1296

blowen, inf. blow, 890

bochoure, n. butcher, 584

body, n. body, 1160, 1217

boystous, adj. ferocious, savage, 139; humble, simple, 1052

boke, n. book, 166, 863, 1241 etc.; gospell boke, 595

bolde, adj. presumptuous, arrogant, 369, 705; daring, brave, 879

bonde, n. bondage, 681

bondmen, n.pl. serfs, bondmen, 1009

bone, n. bone, 6

borowe, inf. borrow, 1094

bosardes, n.pl. buzzards, 1337

- boster, n. braggart, 401
- bothe, adj. both, 1113; conj. 94, 168, 249 etc.; both, 5, 13, 161 etc.
- bought, pret. ppl. bought, 1213
- bounden, pret. ppl. bound, 560
- boure, n. dwelling, 120
- bowe, inf. bow, submit, 1094, 1377
- bowyng, pres. ppl. n. bowing, homage, 227
- brayeng, pres. ppl. adj. chiming, ringing, 166
- breed, n. bread, 13, 203; brede, 1220
- breke, 3 pres. pl. break, 1315
- brende, pret. ppl. burned, 634, 674, 682; brent, 827, 1234; ybrent, 18
- bribry, n. stealing, thieving, 323, 1315
- bright, adj. bright, 969
- bryng, inf. bring, 1166; brynge, 272, 1372; bringest, 2 sing. pres. 1148; bryng, 5 sing. pres. subj. may (God) bring, 1264
- brinke, n. used attrib. see helle brinke
- broches, n. pl. brooches, bracelets, 904, 1006
- brode, adj. large, wide, 166, 917; broad, 182; adv. widely, 530, 743
- brought, 3 sing. pret. founded, established, 993; brought, 1343
- buckelers, n. pl. shields, 917
- buckette, n. bucket, 298

buylden, inf. build, 120; buylde, 3 pl.pres. 743

but, adv. only, merely, 127,274,438 etc.; conj. but, yet, however, 32,68,76 etc.; unless, 289,474,584 etc.; except, 277,494,576 etc.; but if, unless, 1056

caytyffes, n.pl. wretches, 71; caytyves, 291

call, n. head-dress, 338

call, inf. call, 90,117,154 etc.; called, pret.ppl. 1115; call, 466

came, 2 sing.pret. were descended, 1074; 3 sing.pret. came, 995,1327

can, 1 sing.pres. can, am able, 478,614; canne, 1057; canst, 2 sing.pres. 45,717,1137 etc.; can, 1146; canne, 1266; can, 3 sing. pres. 397,734,739; canne, 3 pl.pres. 415; can, 474; canst, 2 sing.pres. know(est), 990,1073; canne, 3 pl.pres. know, 413

candels, n.pl. candles, 40

canons, n.pl. canons, 310,1062; chanons, 717,830,1062

cardynall, n. cardinal, 314,456,1225; cardynals, pl. 62,310,829

care, 3 pl.pres. care, 729

carectes, n.pl. marks, characteristics, 542

carke, inf. be anxious, worry about, yearn for, 250, 1123

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yvell, n. wrong, evil, 521,1297,1307; yvel, punishment, harm, 228

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Appendix A.

The Piers Plowman Tradition.

The plowman in most Reformation polemical tracts is an emblematic figure characterised by Christian piety, humility and simplicity, whose counsel was intended to carry the weight of authority associated with those qualities. Plowmen had not always been thus represented in medieval and Renaissance writing. In medieval England the Peasant's Revolt of 1381 had been a traumatic experience for many and had ensured that, in the eyes of conservatives like John Gower, the image of the plowman or peasant figure, whose hardships as formerly set out in a poem like The Song of the Husbandman¹ might once have elicited a measure of sympathy, was now regarded largely as a rebellious and unruly churl who 'desire[s] the leisures of great men'². Though Gower does concede that there are a number of well-behaved serfs whose lives are made more difficult by the activities of their recalcitrant colleagues,³ he in no way suggests that the plowman is spiritually equipped to offer counsel to the rest of society. By the end of the fourteenth century Aelfric's idealised picture of the plowman was no longer universally accepted.⁴

The vogue for describing the foundation of the three estates produced several unflattering accounts of the birth of the labouring classes. Alexander Barclay's fifth Eclogue, a translation of a poem by Mantuan, sets out one such account in which Eve hid from God's sight those of her children who were not 'fayre and of their stature right'⁵, whilst those who were favourably endowed were presented

and rewarded with honours and dignities. Seeing these favours bestowed, Eve hastened to bring her other children from their hiding place under a hayrick. These children were unkempt and wretched in appearance, and such was God's displeasure at their aspect that he consigned them to the estate of:

... plowmen and tillers of the ground,
 To payne and labour shall ye alway be bounde,
 Some shall kepe oxen, and some shall hogges kepe,
 Some shall be threshers, some other shall kepe shepe,
 To digge and to delue, to hedge and to dike,
 Take this for your lot and other labour like,
 To drudge and to driuell in workes vile and rude,
 This wise shall ye liue in endlesse seruitude.

(11.365-72)

However, whilst unfavourable portrayals of peasants in general, and (sometimes) of plowmen in particular, persisted into the sixteenth century, there can be little doubt that the native literary image of the plowman most familiar to the early sixteenth century reader would be that derived from ballads, from Chaucer's Prologue to the Canterbury Tales, from Langland (particularly Piers as portrayed in the Visio), and from poems like Pierce the Ploughman's Crede, and God spede the Plough⁷. Chaucer's picture:

With hym ther was a PLOWMAN, was his brother,
 That hadde ylad of dong ful many a fother;
 A trewe swynkere and a good was he,
 Lyvyng in pees and parfit charitee.
 God loved he best with al his hoolle herte
 At alle tymes, thogh him gamed or smerte,
 And thanne his neighbor right as hymselfe.
 He wolde thresshe, and thereto dyke and delve,
 For Cristes sake, for every povre wight,
 Withouten hire, if it lay in his myght.
 His tithes payde he ful faire and wel,
 Bothe of his propre swynk and his catel.
 In a taberd he rood upon a mere.

(CT, I, 529-41)

presents the idealised plowman, dutiful in the performance of his work and the fulfillment of his obligations, humble in his clothing and demeanour, always mindful of God, and living in the highest state of virtue - 'parfit charitee'. The Crade picture seems to emphasise his physical appearance rather than his moral and spiritual qualities:

His cote was of a cloute þat cary was y-called,
 His hod was full of holes and his heer oute,
 Wiþ his knopped schon clouted full þykke;
 His ton tofeden out as he þe londe treddede,
 His hosen ouerhongen his hokchynes on eueriche a side,
 Al beslombred in fen as he þe plow folwede;
 Twey eytenes, as mete maad all of cloutes;
 Þe fyngers weren for-ward and ful of fen honged.
 Þis wight waslede in þe fen almost to þe ancle,
 Foure roþeren hym by-forn þat feble were worþen;
 Hes myȝte reknon ich a ryb so reufull þey weren.
 His wiif walked him wiþ wiþ a longe gode,
 In a cutted cote cutted full hayȝe,
 Wrapped in a wynwe-schete to weren hire fro weders,
 Barfote on þe bare iis þat þe blod folwede.
 And at þe londes ende lay a litell cros-bolle,
 And þeron lay a litell childe lapped in cloutes,
 And tweyne of tweie ȝeres olde upon a-noþer syde,
 And alle þay songen ȝ songe þat sorwe was to heren;
 Þey crieden alle o cry a carefull note.
 Þe sely man sizȝe sore, and seide 'children, be stille!

but the picture of his evident poverty allied to his patience and humility would have been sufficient to indicate to any medieval reader who was familiar with the high esteem in which poverty was held amongst medieval theologians and devotional writers ⁸ that here indeed was a saintly figure. One of the qualities commonly associated with the state of patient poverty was truthfulness of counsel, and this association was carried into the sixteenth century both by Langland's poem, and also by works such as Alexander Barclay's translation of

The Ship of Fools.⁹

During the early years of the sixteenth century, this native literary image of the plowman figure was supplemented by the use made of the peasant figure in continental polemical dialogues. The 1520's in particular saw a flowering of this dialogue form in Germany, following the example of the works of writers such as Ulrich von Hutten. Describing the literary situations which initiated the debates, C.H. Herford speaks of:

The champion of Reform [as] commonly a peasant, an artizan, a citizen, a schoolmaster; that of the Church most often a priest or monk. A priest and a Schultheiss meet in a tavern; a peasant at work in his garden sees his priest pass by and questions him 'ettlicher Artikel halben'; a shoemaker, bringing a pair of shoes home to his precentor, is drawn into theological disputation; a weaver and a priest fall in together on the road towards Augsburg, and engage in amicable altercation; a monk lies starving at the roadside, because the old supply of wine and cheese once so willingly given by the peasantry is now cut off, a peasant passing by takes pity on him, brings him to his house, seats him at his table and seasons breakfast with the inevitable argument.¹⁰

With the development of the Reformation controversy, and the growth of literary relations between England and the Continent as a result of the clandestine importation of Lutheran works, it was inevitable that the native and continental traditions of the emblematic peasant figure should fuse together and give rise to the series of tracts on which attention must now be focussed.¹¹

This fusion can best be seen in tracts in dialogue form. A goodly dialogue betwene Iyers plowman, and a ponysh pryest (concernyng the supper of the lorde), is one of a series of dialogue tracts on

this subject. Though the Piers Plowman figure is native in origin, the form of the tract clearly reflects continental influences. Moreover Piers' position as regards the sacrament clearly reflects the commemorativist view held by many sixteenth century continental reformers. Piers is called a 'ranke heretyke' (Sig.A.iii), for refusing to believe that the same body of Christ which was conceived by the Virgin Mary is present at any stage of the mass. For Piers the sacrament is 'only a remembrance and is not eaten carnalle or fleshye' (Sig.A.v), and he denies that Christ 'is at the alter in the forme of breade' (Sig.A.v.). The clerical hostility to a humble layman like Piers holding opinions which differed from the teachings of the church is clearly expressed by three priests who have listened to the debate between Piers and one of their number:

If these hobbes and rusticals be suffred to be thus busy, in readyng of Englysh herey and to dyspute after this maner wyth us, which are sperytual men we shalbe fayne, to learne some other occupacion or els we are lyke to haue but a colde broth. (Sig.A.viii)

Piers' retort echoes the words of all Lollard and Reformation supporters of vernacular scriptures and theological writings:

It were a very godly and necessary matter to be reasoned and communed of for by thys meanes myght the symple people learne to be ware of the lesuuen of such pharyses.

(Sig.A.viii)

The title-page of this particular volume contains a quotation

(1 Corinth. i. 27-9) which indicates the way in which the author of

the tract conceived of the emblematic function of Piers in the dialogue:

God hath chosen the weake thynges of the worlde to confounde thynges whyche are myghtye. yea thynges of no reputacyon for to bryng to nought thynges of reputacion, that no flesh shuld presume in his sight.

The controversy over the sacraments of the altar concerned both English and continental reformers. The combination of plowman figure and dialogue form was also turned to specifically domestic issues. A Proper Dyalogue betwene a Gentillman and a Husbandman¹² was printed at a time (1530) when the laity were still lamenting their own impoverishment relative to the wealth of the clergy - the longed-for amendment had not yet taken place. So it is that the Gentleman notes that lands which had formerly belonged to his ancestors are now occupied by the clergy (pp.133-5), whilst the Husbandman complains about the clerical policy of enclosing land prior to letting it at extortionate prices (pp.138-9), thereby depriving the peasantry of their holdings. It is not long, however, before the tract begins hinting at its fundamental theme which, as set out by the Husbandman (p.142), concerns the necessity for making scripture in the vernacular accessible to ordinary folk. If this were to be done, the variety of clerical sins - including those relating to their excessive ownership of property - could be clearly seen when set against the apostolic ideal as revealed in the New Testament. Both speakers are agreed in their condemnation of the clergy for their past neglect of

and even hostility towards the scriptures, a neglect which is said by the Gentlemen to have begun during the reign of Henry V (p.147) and to have resulted in defeat in France followed by Civil War at home. It is with the need established for vernacular scriptures to act as a standard of judgement that the tract returns to its opening theme of clerical ownership of property and is able to use an 'olde treatyse' in support of its contention that such ownership is totally unjustified, and should be amended without delay, by means of secular action.

In monologues which are also put in the form of complaints and exhortations by a plowman, it is possible to separate native from foreign influences in the choice of the plowman as a narrator. In the case of Pyers plowmans exhortation unto the lordes, knyghtes and burgoyses of the Parlyamenthouse (STC 19905), the late date of the treatise - it deals with the economic consequences of the destruction of the monasteries - makes it likely that the use of the Piers Plowman figure was a reflection of the popularity which that figure had enjoyed in earlier printed polemical tracts in England, notably the Flowe, rather than a conscious imitation of a continental literary genre. The tract is particularly interesting for it illustrates just how far economic analysis had developed by the Tudor period - the compulsive medieval urge to engage solely in moralistic social analysis had been left far behind. The tract explains that the problem posed by the destruction of the monasteries was that the ensuing increase in the working population - the former residents of

monasteries, together with the children from their new marriages (Sig. Av) - had not been matched by a commensurate increase in available land resources on which these people could support themselves. Indeed exactly the opposite had happened, for the lords were converting existing land from cultivation - which required labour and hence gave employment - to pastureland for sheep, which ultimately meant that an increased population now had to earn its living from the decreased acreage of land which was available for cultivation. Two remedies are suggested by the plowman. Firstly, land should be reclaimed from marshes and from woods and other waste ground (Sig. A viii-viii^v). Secondly, a system of import levies should be imposed so that goods which could be manufactured in this country were not imported but were in fact manufactured in England, thereby offering increased opportunities for employment to the native population (Sig. A viii^v). So it was that this tract, dated ?1550 by SPU, provides a sobering commentary on the hopes expressed at the beginning of A Proper Dyalogue.

The other Piers Plowman monologue - The Fraier and Complaynte of the Plowman unto Christe¹³ - was almost certainly not written, as its 1531 editor claims, 'not longe after the yere of our Lorde a thousand and thre-hundred' (p.93). Its subject matter, with its listing of the ten commandments and its subsequent analysis of a whole range of ecclesiastical malpractice from the pope through the hierarchy to the regular orders in the light of the commandments,

gives it the appearance of a late fourteenth century Lollard tract. If this were accepted as the likely date of composition, then the ascription of the piece to the plowman may be seen as a reflection of native, medieval influences, unaffected by later continental uses of the peasant figure. Allusions in the text - notably:

And so, Lorde,oure hope ys, that thou wilt as sone y-here
a plowman's prayer, and he kepe thyne hestes, as thou
wilt do a man's of religion; thouz that the plowman maye
not have so much sylver for his preyer as men of religion ...

(p.101)

would have given the sixteenth century editor a hint for the title, if the tract did not have one when it was first discovered.

It has not been possible to demonstrate an indisputable connection between any of the tracts so far discussed, and the PlowT. The early date of both The Praier and Complaynte and A Proper Dyalogue means that both these works were probably in print before the PlowT had been converted into its final sixteenth century form by the addition of the Prologue which identified the plowman as the narrator of the tale. Indeed the choice of the plowman as narrator of the PlowT, whilst conceivably influenced by any one or more of a series of other factors - the widespread knowledge of Piers Plowman, the absence of a tale told by a plowman in the OT, the tradition associating good counsel with the humble plowman, the influence of continental dialogues - could also have been influenced by the existence in print by 1535 of two other polemical tracts associated with the plowman figure. As regards Eyers plowmans exhortation, it is clear

by its date that it could not have influenced the FlowT in any way, but there is no compelling reason to suppose that the identification of the narrator in the tract owes anything to the FlowT exclusively rather than to any of the other influences noted above.

There is one tract, however, in which the discernible influence of the FlowT can be plotted. The tract (STC 19903a) proclaims itself on the title-page:

I playne Piers which can not flatter
 A plowe man men me call
 My speche is fowlle, yet marke the matter
 Howe thynges may hap to fall

and is interesting for a number of reasons. It contains a great many more dateable contemporary allusions than do most Reformation tracts, which tend on the whole to be characterised by the timelessness of their subject matter. Secondly, much of it is basically a poem, but is printed entirely as prose.¹⁴ Even more remarkable is the fact that towards the end, the tract silently incorporates extensive sections of the FlowT, sometimes paraphrased and altered, other times quoted verbatim, though printed as prose.¹⁵

The tract can be shown to post-date the publication of the FlowT. The STC assigns the work to N. Hyll's press, c1550. In fact, an analysis of the dateable internal references suggests that a slightly earlier date would be more accurate. There are sympathetic references to Richard Hunne (Sig.B.iv.), whose murder in the Lollards' Tower did much to stir up anti-clerical feeling after 1516; to the executions of Blynay, 1531 (Sig.E.iii.); More and Fisher, 1535 (Sig.B.ii^v); Tynedale,

1536 (Sig.E.ii.) and Forest, 1538 (Sig.B.ii^v); to the restoration in 1536-7 of the seven sacraments after their previous reduction to three (Sig.C.i.-i^v); to the Act of Six Articles, 1539 (Sig.C.ii.); to the enforced exile of Coverdale, between 1540-8 (Sig.E.ii.); to the imprisonment, in 1543, of eight printers for printing unlawful material (Sig.C.ii.)¹⁶; to the burning of books at Paul's Cross, September, 1546 (Sig.D.iiii), which was the most notable conflagration at Paul's Cross in the years immediately after 1543.¹⁷ There are also references to Cardinal Pole in Rome (Sig.E.i.) - Pole was in Rome between 1532 and 1553; and apparently to the recantation of Nicholas Shaxton (Sig.E.ii.^{v.10}) in 1546. In addition to these particular references which, in total, point to a date after 1546 but before 1548, the overall tone of embittered resentment at the persecution of those who, in the writer's view, were teaching the true faith, and at the restrictions placed on the reading of vernacular scriptures, is the tone that one can reasonably associate with a radical reformer suffering in the more guarded religious atmosphere that characterised Henry's last years. Such a tone is rather less likely to be found in the reign of Edward VI. Thus a date c1546-7 seems likely for I playne Piers.¹⁸

By such a date, at least two editions of the FlowT had been printed, and so the incorporation of lines from the poem is easily understandable. However, a reader of I playne Piers would have had to know the FlowT before recognising the source of the extracts included in the tract, for there is no indication that the lines are

not the work of the I playne Piers author. This is certainly curious. One would have thought that the author would have been only too ready to indicate to his readers that the views expressed earlier in the tract find support in the (supposed) work of Geoffrey Chaucer, himself. It is hard to believe that the I playne Piers author expected the reader to recognise the lines unaided. At all events, the lines were included anonymously and blended in as part of the verse-as-prose format of the text.

Two short extracts will serve as illustration of the strange format of which the Flowt found itself part. Each extract will be set out as printed in the black letter edition, except for the addition of a / marking each line of poetry:

I Piers plowman
 following plou-
 ghe on felde,/ my
 beastes blowing
 for heate, my bo-
 dye requyrynge
 rest,/ gapyng for the gayne my
 labours gan me yelde,/ vpon the
 plough beame, to syt me thou-
 ght it beste,/ agayne the hayle I
 leued, my face to heauen I cast,/
 to that greate Lorde aboue, my
 buckeler and my shelde,/ who al-
 ways after labours sendeth ea-
 se at the laste,/ because I tell you
 playne without rest nought can
 endure ...

(Sig.A.ii.)

and the same characteristic can be found, with intermittent breaks, throughout the tract - thus, near the end we find:

where we poore wretches in
 heate and colde,/ do suffer paynes
 and mani a wrong,/ they of our la-
 bours do heape vp gold,/ against
 theyr foundera they make them
 stronge,/ we did found them, they
 confounded vs,/ with their dispen-
 sacyons,/ with their non residence
 they clerely robbe vs,/ by pluraly-
 tes tot quotes and impropracions.

(Sig.E.vi^v)

The Plow material occurs near the end of the tract in the following places:

Sig.E.iiii ^v	11.573-9,705-7
Sig.E.v.	11.709-16
Sig.E.v ^v	11.285-6,293-8,525-6,882
Sig.E.vi.	11.851-2
Sig.E.vi.-vi ^v	11.791-6
Sig.F.iv.-iv ^v	11.797-813,825

Notes to Appendix.

1. See Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries, ed. R.H. Robbins (New York, 1959), pp.7-9.
2. The Major Latin Works of John Gower, translated by E.W. Stockton (Seattle, 1962), p.209.
3. Op.cit., p.209.
4. Quoted in John Addis, 'Chaucer's Ploughman and Piers Ploughman', N & Q, Fourth Series, XI (1873), 280-1.
5. The Eclogues of Alexander Barclay, ed. Beatrice White, REES, OS 175 (1928, for 1927), 192,1.297. Other references are given after quotations (from the fifth Eclogue) in the text.
6. See especially MLN, 19 (1904), 37; and Anglia, 36 (1912), 104 (Poem 15), for two such ballads. Both poems are concerned with the daily life and tasks of the plowman rather than with his spiritual significance.
7. In Skeat's first edition of the Crede (REES, OS 30 (1867)), he includes (pp.69-72) a poem entitled God spede the Plough, which he dates, somewhat uncertainly, c1500. In it a husbandman complains about all the calls - many of them unjustified - which are made on his meagre resources. He has to pay tithes (ll.17-18), dues to lords (ll.33-4), money to beggars (ll.41-4), to king's purveyors and summoners (ll.65-72), to lawyers (ll.81-4), and to various representatives of the mendicant orders (ll.49-64), and the secular clergy (ll.73-6). The parallel with the Crede is not a strong one, however. The point of God spede the Plough is that demands are made on the plowman from all corners of society - the poem is not simply an attack on the mendicants.
8. See G.Leff, Heresy in the Later Middle Ages, 2 Vols. (Manchester, 1967), I, 51-233 for an account of ^{the} extent to which thirteenth and fourteenth century ecclesiastical thought was dominated by the debate over the rigorist application of Franciscan teachings as regards poverty. Even those who asserted the impracticability of too rigorous an application of these teachings, did not reject the value of poverty, correctly and realistically defined, in the life and observance of a christian community.

9. The Ship of Fools, translated by Alexander Barclay, ed. T.H. Jamieson, 2 Vols. (1873, reprinted 1966), II, 99-107, esp. the descriptions of Curius and Socrates, with their 'wysedome' combined with their poverty (pp.104-5).
10. C.E. Herford, Studies in the Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century (1886, reprinted 1966), pp.28-9.
11. A non-polemical tract such as How the plowman lerned his pater noster, whose story derives from a source independent of both native English Piers Plowman tradition, and Reformation continental influences, is not discussed. See N. Köhler, 'How the Plowman Larned his Pater Noster', Anglia, 2 (1879), 388-94, for a discussion of the analogues and different versions of the story. The poem is printed in Reliquiae Antiquae, ed. T. Wright and J.O. Halliwell, 2 Vols. (1845), I, 43-7.
12. Printed in English Reprints, ed. E. Arber, 28 (1871), 129-69.
13. Printed in The Harleian Miscellany, 10 Vols. (1808-13), VI, 92-117. References are given after quotations in the text.
14. Noted briefly by W.C. Hazlitt, Hand-book to the Popular and Dramatic literature of Great Britain (1867), p.473; see also J.F. Collier, A Bibliographical and Critical Account of the Rarest Books in the English Language, 2 Vols. (1865), II, 166f.
15. This feature of the tract has not been previously been noted - by Hazlitt, Collier, or even by the two writers who have examined the Reformation Piers Plowman tradition - Kitty Marx, Das Nachleben von Piers Plowman bis zu Bunyan's 'The Pilgrim's Progress', Doctoral Dissertation, University of Freiburg (Königsberg, 1931) - see pp.22-3; Helen C. White, Social Criticism in Popular Religious Literature of the Sixteenth Century (1944, reprinted New York, 1965), pp.1-40.
16. See J.F. Mozley, Coverdale and his Bibles (1953), pp.284-5.
17. See J.F. Mozley, Coverdale and his Bibles (1953), pp.287-8.

18. Thus late a date precludes the possibility that the author of the tract was Friar William Roy - a suggestion made by both Heber and Hazlitt (see W.C. Hazlitt, Hand-Book to the Popular, Poetical and Dramatic Literature of Great Britain (1867), p.473. The DNB notes that both More and Foxe state that Roy was said to have been executed by burning in Portugal in either 1531 or 1532.

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Appendix B.

The Plowman's Tale and Edmund Spenser.

It has rightly become a commonplace in Spenser criticism to stress the respect for and influence of Chaucer's works visible in Spenser's poetry. Amongst many points of similarity between the two poets which have been noted by scholars, one of the more curious is that which seeks to argue in favour of a significant influence having been exercised over The Shepheardes Calender by a work which, in the minds of sixteenth century readers, was regarded as amongst Chaucer's most significant statements of his religious position - the PlowT. This influence has two principle aspects and it is necessary to begin an examination of them at the end of the Calender.

The Envoi to the poem includes lines which, at first sight, seem little more than examples of the rhetoric characteristic of many medieval epilogues:

Goe lyttle Calender, thou hast a free passeporte,
 Goe but a lowly gate amongste the meener sorte.
 Dare not to match thy pype with Tityrus hys style,
 Nor with the Pilgrim that the Ploughman playde awhyle¹

The last line quoted here has perplexed generations of scholars, but for some it has been the starting point for investigations as to the possible connection between Spenser and the PlowT.

Thomas Tyrwhitt was the first critic to suggest such a connection. Rejecting Thomas Warton's theory² that the line alludes to Piers Plowman, Tyrwhitt states that 'the author of the Visions never, as I remember, speaks of himself in the character of a Ploughman'.³ Since the

eighteenth century there has been no shortage of support for Tyrwhitt's position. Purves believed that the 'Pilgrim' referred to was:

Probably Chaucer - among whose Canterbury Tales formerly stood a poem of great length, full of attacks on the clergy like those made in Spenser's fifth, seventh and ninth Eclogues and called The Ploughman's Tale ... In Spenser's day it was probably considered genuine, and its burthen and tone may naturally have given it an especial prominence at a time when the great and bitter controversy between Catholicism and Protestantism was by no means at an end in England.⁴

Skeat was another of those who supposed that Spenser's allusion 'may well' refer to the author of the PlowT rather than to William Langland. 'It was natural', he declared:

that Spenser should mention him along with Chaucer because their productions were bound up together in the same volume; a volume which was, to Spenser, a treasure-house of archaic words.⁵

C.H. Whitman states simply that the Envoi line is 'a reference to the Ploughman's Tale, a sixteenth century satire',⁶ and W.L. Renwick's explanation of the allusion holds that:

Tityrus is Chaucer, presumably, as before, but Spenser probably included Virgil with him under the one name. The other reference might be to Langland, but is more probably to The Plowman's Tale, the phrase meaning 'The Pilgrim, which was the role the Plowman played for a time,' during which time he told that tale.⁷

Renwick concludes, interestingly, that 'If this is so, Spenser recognized that The Plowmans Tale was not Chaucer's.'

As the degree of hesitancy in some of these explanations suggests, critical opinion has for a long time been less than unanimous in accepting the identification of the FlowT as the solution to the allusion. The alternative suggestion was that the line alludes to Piers Plowman and the initial advocacy of this view by Warton was taken up subsequently by E.A. Greenlaw⁸ and H.S.V. Jones.⁹ The most recent editor of the Calendar, Anna Maria Crino is amongst the latest to subscribe to this same conclusion. In a note on the line, she states:

alcuni commentatori pensano che si tratti di un'allusione al Plowman's Tale; pero, dato che in quel tempo quest'opera era generalmente attribuita al Chaucer, cosa che qui evidentemente non avviene, preferiamo seguire quei commentatori che vedono in questo verso un'allusione a The Vision of Piers the Plowman del Langland, che lo Spenser dimostra di avere molto familiare, come abbiamo rilevato, porgendosene il destro, nelle note.¹⁰

An attempt to fuse together both explanations of the allusion was made by C.L. Wrenn. He states that:

the reference may well be to Langland even though there is good evidence that it was The Plowman's Tale rather than Langland's Visions that had been the real influence on Spenser at this stage.¹¹

From the earliest times, then, scholars have arrived at conflicting explanations of the allusion, largely as a result of the manifest ambiguity of the line 'Nor with the Pilgrim that the Ploughman playde awhyle'. Is the subject of playde, the Pilgrim or the Ploughman? What is the force of playde? What is implied by

Ploughman? Skeat, in the course of time had two explanations for these difficulties. Initially he took playde to mean 'piped'¹² - hence '[the] pilgrim (i.e. Langland, in Skeat's explanation), who sang of the Ploughman'. His second explanation reveals a significant shift in his position:

what Spenser meant to say was - 'the Ploughman that the Pilgrim playde awhyle'; which expresses the fact. The subject is 'the Ploughman', and 'that' means 'whom'.¹³

Here playde is apparently given the force of 'played the part of' and the Ploughman clearly refers to the actual character taking part in the pilgrimage whose tale was told. It was, as has been noted, in this sense that the line was understood by Benwick. Skeat's first theory is unacceptable to Herford - "'Playde' can hardly be (as Skeat suggests) 'piped'" - his own explanation states that:

The 'Pilgrim' must be Langland, the author of Piers Plowman's Vision, but the expression suggests rather the Plowman's Tale ... Spenser probably identifies Chaucer's Pilgrim Ploughman with the author of Piers Ploughman who obviously uses Piers as the mouthpiece of his own views and may thus be said to 'play' the Ploughman. 14

In order to resolve the uncertainty surrounding the allusion, one must first assume that Spenser believed the FlowT to be an authentic Canterbury Tale. Whilst it is not clear which edition of Chaucer's works was used by Spenser, the likelihood is that it would be one which contained the tale amongst Chaucer's other pieces. There is no evidence that Spenser entertained any doubts as to the authenticity of the work and there is no reason to assume that he was in possession of

the one mind before 1721 which was to cast doubt on the poem's Chaucerian authorship. This being so, it is hardly likely that Spenser would commend Chaucer (Tityrus) in one line and then select one Canterbury Tale for special commendation in the very next line, unless he believed that this tale was not of Chaucerian origin and hence not covered by the praise of the previous line. This, as has been suggested immediately above, is an unacceptable idea. Much more probable is it that Spenser sought to suggest, in the lines, a broad spectrum of those English poets who would be regarded as amongst the most ancient and most venerable. Such a spectrum could be said to be representative of late sixteenth century tastes if it included both Chaucer and William Langland. Thus the 'Ploughman' line is an alternative to the compliment paid to Tityrus; it is not merely a particularised extension of it.

This explanation seems, to the present writer, conclusive and certainly gains nothing from the extra evidence, cited by Greenlaw, in its support. He states that :

The second line almost certainly refers to Piers Plowman, not only because it does not fit with any exactness the Tale as printed by Thynne, in which no very direct use is made of the fact that it is the plowman who tells it ...

(p.445, n.2)

about which one can only say that just as the plowman is not shown clearly to be the narrator of the PlowT, so with Piers Plowman it is manifestly clear that the plowman is not the narrator. Similarly, Greenlaw quotes lines from Piers Ploughman which 'explain admirably

Spenser's use of the word 'playde' by which he means 'to act a part'; the 'apparel' adopted by Piers illustrates the fact that he is not a professional 'pilgrim', it is happily *isromptu* ...

(p.445, n.2)

whilst it is true that lines in Piers Plowman such as:

'And I shal apparaille me,' quod Perkyn, 'in Pilgrimes wise,
and weade with zow I wil til we fynde Treuthe'

(P.Pl.B.59-60)

do fit the sense of Spenser's line (as understood by Greenlaw), so surely do lines from the FlowT Prologue:

He toke his tabarde and his staffe eke,
And on his heed he set his hat,
And sayde he wolde saynt Thomas seke,
On pylgremage he goth forth platte. (11.9-12)

So it is that the explanation of the allusion which sees the lines as an attempt to represent the whole range of medieval literature against which Spenser's 'pipe' should not be 'matched' seems, to the present writer, sufficiently satisfactory as to render the citing of other evidence in its support both unnecessary and, in the case of Greenlaw's material, unconvincing.

It was Greenlaw who was also responsible for extending the investigation into the possible connections between the FlowT and The Shepheardes Calender beyond an *odd* line or two in the Envoi.

No-one can doubt that he is right to emphasize that 'To Spenser, Chaucer was not only the poet of love and the master of verse narrative, but also the poet of Puritanism' (p.441), yet it is not easy to concede

to Greenlaw his claims that 'it is in the Flowmans Tale that we have the most important native influence on the ecclesiastical eclogues ...' (p.442), or that it was in the FlowT that Spenser found 'the model for his own attempt (at writing a controversial religious dialogue)' (p.444). It is even more difficult to accept Greenlaw's thesis that Spenser sought to copy Chaucer not only in literary form and, on occasions, in diction but also in his actual ideals and beliefs:

It is in the fact that Spenser endeavoured to copy what he considered to be the ideals and teaching of Chaucer that we find the reason for his discipleship, not in matters of detail. (p.441)

Taking this last point first, it is surely unlikely that a writer as politically and religiously conscious and alert as Spenser would allow his ultimate narrative position in a poem to be dictated by what Chaucer thought to be true rather than by what he, Spenser, regarded as important in the religious and political struggles of his own age. There were, of course, occasions when Spenser was able to achieve a complete identity of view with the FlowT poet - in his primitivist yearning for a renewed state of innocence within the organisation of the church, for instance - yet it is difficult not to believe that such an identity was in a sense fortuitous, the result of two not dissimilar minds viewing two not dissimilar religious situations, rather than the result of a concerted effort on the part of Spenser to 'model' his opinions on those which were, in his mistaken belief, Chaucer's.

Nor is Greenlaw's analysis of the similarities of form between

the two works any more convincing. The parallels which he draws seem to result from his failure to understand the real nature of the FlowT, for his account of the work is studded with inaccuracies:

This Tale ... consists largely of a debate between a Pelican and a Griffon on the subject of religion ... (p.442)

In fact the tale does not consist 'largely' of any debate between the two birds, but rather of a monologue which, though ostensibly spoken by the Pellican, contains no indication, after the introductory lines, that it is part of any fable. The 'strong fable interest' (p.443) of which Greenlaw speaks and which one might be tempted to believe in view of the prominence which it assumes in his account, in fact amounts to some fourteen lines (ll.81-94) at the beginning of the poem and a further hundred lines (ll.1269f) at the end. Certainly at no stage in the poem does the fable element assume the same prominence that it does in the eclogues - May for instance - with which it is compared and likened. The debate between the birds is, in itself, a relatively short section of the poem (ll.1073-1276).

Greenlaw, too, is quite mistaken in equating the FlowT with the ecclesiastical eclogues as pieces which bear 'evidence that [their] author[s] sought to conceal what [they] knew to be dangerously direct satire under the form of a fable' (p.443). Pattenham's definition of pastoral, quoted by Greenlaw, as:

rude speeches to insinuate and glauce at greater matters,
and such as perchance had not bene safe to have bene
disclosed in any other sort ... (p.443)

is certainly applicable to the Calender, but can scarcely be regarded as relevant in a discussion of the FlowT. There is a great difference between a work whose sentence is veiled behind a consistent pastoral framework and a work which almost half-heartedly begs at the end to be taken 'as a fable' (l.1376) but whose content and tone throughout is that of sustained and uncompromising invective and whose meaning is, from the start, plain for all to comprehend.

It is not only in theme and use of fable that Greenlaw draws a parallel between the two poems. The FlowT is, he claims, 'surprisingly similar to the eclogues in metre and style' (p.442). The particular eclogues which are under discussion appear to be those for February, May, July, September and October, but it is difficult to deduce the exact nature of the metrical and stylistic similarities to which Greenlaw draws attention. It must be assumed that he read the FlowT either in the Thomas Wright edition of 1842 or, perhaps more likely, in Skeat's edition of 1897. Both of these editions offer texts which have been emended in such a way as to conform to preconceived notions of their metrical regularity: in these editions the FlowT may be read as a poem written in a more or less regular octosyllabic line. Is this what Greenlaw understood as the poem's metre? If so, it is hard to understand his comparison with the Spenserian eclogues which are characterised by a very considerable degree of metrical variety and experimentation.¹⁵ A more meaningful comparison might have been made with Piers Plowman which not only matches the FlowT as a possible source for the alliteration used in the eclogues, but far surpasses it

(certainly as far as Greenlaw could have known) in its irregularity of stress.

What Greenlaw sought to show was the 'direct influence of an unmistakable type' (p.425) of the Flowr on the Calender. In this aim it cannot be said that he was successful - the parallels cited are insufficiently precise to be conclusive. There is, however, some evidence which, though not mentioned by Greenlaw, argues in favour of the belief that Chaucer was conscious of the Flowr when he wrote the Calender, even though he cannot be said to have modelled the work upon it. The evidence consists of a series of similarities of expression which are to be found between the two works:

	<u>Shepheardes Calender</u>		<u>Flowmans Tale</u>
Feb.149	Vnto his Lord, stirring vp sterne strife	53	A Sterne stryfe is stered neve
Apr.99	Albee forswonck and forswatt I am	14	He was forswonke and all forswatte
May.267	For with long traucile I am brent in the sonne	18	And sawe this man was sunne ybrent
Jul.177	Ygyrt with belts of glittersand gold	134	In glytterande golde of great aray
Jul.201	Sike wister men bene all misgone	756	Suche myster men ben all sygo
Sep.174	He is so meeke, wise, and mercieble	96	And meke and mercyable gan blesse
Nov.154	Of mortal men, that swyncke and sweate for nought	29	To swete and swynke I make avowe

When considering medieval poetry it is usually hazardous to argue in favour of direct borrowing from one work to another of phrases such as

those listed above. Medieval poets had at their disposal an extensive range of conventional tags and expressions, particularly alliterative ones, from which they constantly drew. Two poets who used the same phrase reflected their indebtedness to this common stock of phrases rather than to each other. Spenser however was not in a position to draw on these verbal resources independently; such expressions of this nature as he used were, in the main, derived directly from Chaucer. Thus whereas the lines above would not necessarily serve to indicate the dependence of one medieval poet upon another, they are sufficient, in the opinion of the present writer, to indicate Spenser's indebtedness, in phrase at least, to the Flowr.

Notes to Appendix.

1. The Works of Edmund Spenser, ed. E. Greenlaw, C.G. Cagood, F.M. Padelford, and R. Heffner, 10 Vols. (Baltimore, 1932-57; repr. 1958-66) Minor Poems, I, 120.
2. See The works of Edmund Spenser, ed. H.J. Todd, 8 Vols. (1805), II, cxxxiv.
3. Quoted in Spenser, ed. Todd, I, 68.
4. Quoted in Spenser, ed. Greenlaw etc., Minor Poems, I, 427.
5. Skeat, Supplement, p. xxxv.
6. C.H. Whitman, A Subject-Index to the Poems of Edmund Spenser (New Haven, 1918), p. 188.
7. Quoted in Spenser, ed. Greenlaw etc., Minor Poems, I, 428.
8. E.A. Greenlaw, 'The Shepherds Calender', PMLA 26 (1911), 445. Subsequent references to this article will be given in the text.
9. H.S.V. Jones, A Spenser Handbook (New York, 1930), p. 66.
10. The Shepherdes Calender, ed. Anna Maria Crino (Firenze, 1950), p. 367. See, too, A.C. Hamilton, 'Spenser and Langland', SP, 55 (1958), 533.
11. C.L. Wrenn, 'On Re-reading Spenser's Shepherdes Calender', Essays and Studies, 29 (1943), 38. Wrenn believes that the handling of the discussion in the Calender is more like the FlowT than P.Pl., and speculates interestingly (but, of necessity, inconclusively) as to the possible relationship between the FlowT and Spenser's lost poem The Dying Pelican (p. 36).
12. Some Specimens of English Literature, ed. W.W. Skeat (Second Edition, 1879), p. 480.

13. Skeat, Supplement, p. xxxv, note 1.

14. Shepherd's Calender, ed. C.H. Herford (1895), p.194.

15. See W.L. Renwick, Edmund Spenser: An Essay on Renaissance Poetry, (1925, reprinted 1933) p.98.

believe that there might be a clear relationship (and a useful, literary relationship) between parts of the Shepherd's and the Shepherd's. Several other characteristics not previously noted have been included in the notes

the Shepherd's and Shepherd's (see notes) the Shepherd's and Shepherd's

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Appendix C.

The Plowf and Pierce the Ploughman's Creds.

The words and phrases listed below represent a considerable part of the evidence which has, in the past, persuaded some scholars to believe that there exists a close relationship (even a common authorial relationship) between parts of the Plowf and the Creds. Certain verbal similarities not previously noted have been included in the list:

At marketts and myracles we medle } we nevere	<u>Creds</u> 1.107
Markette beters and medlyng make	<u>Plowf</u> 1.871
For we bulde } a burye a brod and a large	<u>Creds</u> 1.118
And buyde also brode as a cyte	<u>Plowf</u> 1.743
Pat note ben portreid and paynt and pulched ful clene	<u>Creds</u> 11.121, 192
How it was pilered and paynt and portreyd well clene	<u>Plowf</u> 2.135
Ipaynted and portred all in pride	
And also y sey coucittise catel to fongen	<u>Creds</u> 1.146
To catche cattell as covytous	<u>Plowf</u> 1.385
Crist acide, ' by her fruyt men shall hem ful knowen'	<u>Creds</u> 1.151
Men may knowe hem by her fruite	<u>Plowf</u> 1.710
And weridliche worshypp wilne } in erthe	<u>Creds</u> 1.371
All worldly worshypp defye and flee	<u>Plowf</u> 1.115
[1] sei } a sely man as by opon }e plow hongen	<u>Creds</u> 1.421
They must have honged at the plowe	<u>Plowf</u> 1.104, 2
Men myte reknen ich a ryb so reufull }ey weren	<u>Creds</u> 1.432
Men might have sene through both his chekes	<u>Plowf</u> 11.115-6
And every wang toth and where it sat	
In a cutted cote cutted full haye }	<u>Creds</u> 1.434
Cuttet clothes to sewe her howe	<u>Plowf</u> 1.929
And all pouere in gost God him-self bliasse }	<u>Creds</u> 1.521
The poore in spyrite gan Christ blesse	<u>Plowf</u> 1.915
And also }is myster men ben maysters icalled	<u>Creds</u> 1.574
Maisters to be called defended he tho	<u>Plowf</u> 1.1115

First to brene þe bodye in a bale of fiir Crede 1.667
 Thou shalbe brent in balefull fyre Flowr 1.1234

þei schulden nouȝt after the face neuer þe folk demen Crede 1.750
 They nolde nat demen after the face Flowr 1.181

Of double worstede y-dyt to þe hele Crede 1.228
 With double worsted well ydight Flowr 1.1002

But all my kere is to comen for y can not my Crede Crede 1.8
 Suche that came nat her Crede Flowr 1.413

There is nothing here which insists upon the notion of common authorship for both poems, but nothing which precludes the possibility that the Flowr poet(s) knew the Crede and had been influenced by it. Whilst it is possible for several of the similarities to be the chance results of two similar poets writing on two similar subjects, the extent of the verbal parallels does seem to indicate that at the time of the composition of the Flowr, the Crede was known to the author(s).

APPENDIX D.

The Plowman's Tale Translated.

Modernisation and translation have long played an important role in the literary and critical activities associated with Chaucer. Efforts have constantly been made, by Chaucerian scholars and enthusiasts, to overcome the ever increasing estrangement between the reading public and Chaucer's writings caused by the antiquity of his language. Continental readers have not been forgotten in this popularising process, particularly during the nineteenth century when German readers could avail themselves of Carl Kannegiesser's translation of the Canterbury Tales,¹ and enthusiasts in France were catered for by the efforts of Jean-Baptiste de Chatelain (1801-1881), a naturalised English subject who settled in London in 1842 and produced many translations over the next forty years.

The PlowT does not seem to have figured prominently on those lists of Chaucerian works which were to undergo the eternizing process, largely, it would seem, because of its gradual excision from the canon of Chaucer's works, though its somewhat contentious spirit may not have served to commend it to those devotees who were engaged in modernisation and translation. Consequently only once was the poem translated - by Chatelain² - and even in this one instance it is clear from the dedication that the translator was motivated by an extraordinary and fanatical Protestantism rather than by any sense of literary responsibility. Addressing Pope Pius IX, whom he calls 'Très Cher Frère en Christ, a cette anomalie agonisante que vous faites appeler

en plein XIX siècle, par une modestie peu digne des Apôtres, VOTRE SAINTETE', Chatelain proceeds to dedicate his translation:

Il ne plait à moi, sans permission, et malgré l'excommunication dont Vous, l'auteur, du dogme impie de l'Immaculée Conception, m'avez frappé, de Vous dédier ma traduction du Plowman, l'un des plus beaux poèmes du grand Chaucer.

Dans cette œuvre admirable Chaucer a maudi vos prédécesseurs, Vous et votre Mégie, avec une force et une logique radieuses de vérité. (p. vii)

In his Introduction, Chatelain believes that the Plow has been inaccessible for too long, partly because 'les éditeurs plus récents des Contes de Chaucer ont écarté de leurs éditions le Flowman (p. xiii), but also because those editors who did print it failed to 'prendre la peine d'en expliquer le langage' (p. xiii). He recognises the difficulty which scholars themselves have had with the language and speaks of those who 'ne peuvent la lire qu'entourés de glossaires qu'il leur faut consulter à chaque instant' (pp. xi-xii, note). He does not claim to have overcome, in his own translation, all the problems and complexities (the results, he believes of scribal corruption) associated with the language:

Nous croyons avoir compris un assez grand nombre de passages obscurs, mais il est tels mots qui ont persisté à rester pour nous à l'état de nébulosités. (p. x, note)

As regards the practice which he has adopted in working on the translation, Chatelain claims to have translated:

strophe par strophe, imprecation pour imprecation, nous avons été quelquefois obligé d'omettre, à notre grand regret, une pensée;... de modifier ou d'adoucir une expression trop peu chaste; nous plaçons guilty dans ces sortes de cas fort rares d'ailleurs; (p. xi, note)

and if the translation can never hope to be more than 'le revers d'une tapisserie', Chatelain believes it preferable to have 'l'envers de l'étoffe plutôt que de n'avoir pas l'étoffe du tout' (p. xii, note). His treatment of the Prologue serves well to illustrate his relative success in translation, within the limits that he recognises as inevitable.

Prologue du Laboureur.

Le Laboureur remisa sa charrue
 Quand le milieu de l'été fut venu,
 Car, se dit-il, je n'ai pas la berlue,
 Mes animaux ont besoin, c'est connu,
 D'un long repos; car le bœuf et la vache
 Sont épuisés, et bien maigre est leur cou. 5
 Il fit tomber le soc et son attache,
 Puis accrocha le vieux harnais au clou.

Lors s'entourant de son tabard rustique,
 Dessus sa tête il posa son chapeau, 10
 Disant je vais adorer la relique
 De Saint Thomas, là bas vers son tombeau.
 Et puis il mit du pain dans sa besace,
 Et des poireaux; ce brave laboureur
 Avait hâlé et bien maigre la face, 15
 Et de son front descendait la sueur.

Notre hôte sus! des pieds jusqu'à la tête
 Vous le toisa, jugeant par son museau
 Cuit au soleil, l'étoffe de la bête,
 Son vêtement troué n'était pas beau. 20
 Notre hôte vit bien que le pauvre hère
 N'était d'un cloître habitant par ma foi,
 Qu'il ignorait en un mot la manière
 De saluer; - aussi sans plus d'émoi:

"Quel est-tu? Dis! l'homme?"..."Je suis, Messire," 25
 Repondit-il, "paysan, laboureur,
 Et tous les jours, je vais, je puis le dire,
 Avant dîner, à force de sueur
 Gagner mon pain; car pour nourrir ma femme,
 Et mes enfants de travail ai fait vos u; 30
 Si j'en savais un peu plus sur mon âme
 Je charcharais encore à servir Dieu;

"Mais da les clerics disent dans leur grimoire
 Que nous devons nous trouver trop heureux
 De travailler pour leur fournir à boire, 35
 A se goinfrer, sans rien recevoir d'eux.
 D'après leurs lois ils peuvent nous maudire,
 Et nous lancer au fin fond de l'enfer,
 Nous souffrons da par eux un vrai martyre,
 De nos profits, oui, c'est là le plus clair! 40

"Au tintement de leurs nombreuses cloches
 Ils nous sont serfs, ils trasiquent de nous,
 Pour eux le blé, mais pour nous les reproches
 Et le travail; on nous traite de fous
 Si par hazard nous défendons en somme!" 45
 "Quoi! "dit notre hôte, "honnête laboureur,
 Saurais-tu donc prêcher?..Viens ça, brave homme!"
 - "Non pas," dit-il, "mais d'un prédicateur

"En chaire un jour, j'entendis plus d'un dire..."
 "Parle, "dit l'hôte, "et nous t'écoutons quoi!" 50
 - "Adonc je suis à vos ordres, Messire,
 Si d'écouter me baillez votre foi!" (pp. 1-3).

Most clearly lacking is the economy and the succinctness of much of the original as well as the force which it derives from the alliterative phrase. The translation seems, in comparison, dilute and frequently incapable of dealing with the concentration of detail within the confines of the eight line stanza. A French reader would, nevertheless, take from the translation something of the vigour and much of the propaganda content which is to be found in the English work. To that extent, Chatelain's work was not in vain, though it is to be doubted

whether many of his contemporaries were moved as a result of reading the translation, to espouse the Protestantism to which he was so fervently (not to say frenetically) committed.

The Latin original... do not occur in the original... express the... with interest and... were translated as a...

Notes.

1. C.L. Kannegiesser, Gottfried Chaucers Canterburysche Erzählungen 2 Vols (Zwickau, 1827).
2. Chevalier de Chatelain, Les Contes de Cantorbery [sic] 3 Vols. (1857-60). The Plowt is to be found in the third volume, 1-50. All references in the text are to this volume. Some details of Chatelain's life may be found in DNB.

Appendix B.The Marginal Glosses on G.

The Latin marginal glosses are a distinctive feature of G - they do not occur in any other extant printed text. Whilst many of the glosses reproduce the Vulgate text accurately, some introduce or omit material and alter the word order so as to render the gloss more meaningful as a comment on the particular lines to which it relates. With each of the glosses set out below, the Vulgate reference, and the relevant part of the FlowT text which accompanies it are given. Most abbreviations have been expanded, and eccentricities of word order and division in the glosses as printed in G have been silently corrected so as to accord with a modern Vulgate text.

<u>FlowT</u>	<u>Vulg.</u>	<u>Gloss.</u>
98	John.1.29.	Ecce agnus dei.
101	John.13.15	Exemplum dedi vobis.
103-4	Math.23.11	Qui maior vestrum.
105-6	Math.6.19	Nolite thesaurizare
109-11	Math.5.40	Qui voluerit tecum contendere in iudicio.etc.
112.	Luk.14.10	Cum vocatus fueris ad nuptias recumbe in nouissimo loco.etc.
115-6	Luk.14.11	Qui se exaltet humiliabitur.
117-20	Luk.22.25	Reges gentium dominantur eorum ne que dominantes in cleris .
121-4	Math.5.20	Nisi habundauerit iustitia vestra plus quam scribarum et phariseorum.

125		Non in eōs bellicosus.
142-5	Ezech.34.2	Ve pastoribus Israel qui pascabant semetipsos. Ezech. xxxiiii.
149f.	Isiah.5.12	In cithara et lyra et tympano et tibia et vinum in conuiuiis vestris: et opus domini non respicitis nec opera manuum eius consideratis. Isiah. v.
198-201.	Math.7.15	In vestimentis eorum intrinsecus autem sunt lupi rapaces.
209-11	2 Thes.2.4	Extollens se super omne quod dicitur deus.
229	Good Friday Liturgy	Sanctus deus sanctus fortis.
239-40	Luk.11.17	Omne regnum in se deuisum desolabitur.
245-8	Math.10.16,26	Nolite timere eos qui occidunt corpus estote prudentes.
249-52	Math.10.16	Sicut serpentes et simplices sicut columbe.
255-8	Isiah.10.1-2	Ve qui conducunt leges iniquas vt opriment pauperes in iudicio.
304-7	Isiah.59.14	Corruit in platea veritas. Isiah. lix.
317-8	1 Cor.13.4-5	Charitas non querit quae sua sunt.
335-7	Math.18.7	Ve homini illi per quem scandalum venit.
478-9	Math.12.30 Luk.11.25	Qui non est mecum contra me est.
486-7	"	qui non est. etc.
565-6	Luk.22.38	Eccc gladii duo hic.
573-84	Gal.6.1	Vos qui spirituales estis instricto alicui in spiritu lenitatis iuscitabo pastorem stultum q̄ dispersa non coliget. Sed oves pingues consetet et habebit gladium in brachio dextro et gladium in oculo sinistro.
589-93	Ezech.34.3	Lae comedebatis et lenis cooper ebamini et quod pinguis erat occidistis.

600-2	Math.16.21	Tunc dixit Jesus discipulis suis quia oportet eum ire.
605-11	Math.16.21-3	ierosolimam et multa pati. Respondit petrus. Nequaquam erit tibi hoc Jesus dixit petro: Vade post me sathanas.
614-17	John.12.6	Fur erat et oculos habebat et ea que mittebantur portabat.
622-3	Mark.14.1 (approx.)	Ut dolo caperant et occiderent.
646-9		Lex neminem iudicat nisi prius audierit ab eo qui dixit.
677		Omnes filii hely poluerunt domini sacrificium. etc.
685	Phil.3.18-9	Paulus inimicos crucis [Christi] quorum finis interitus qui terrena sapiunt.etc.
698-9	Isak.22.25	Reges gentium dominantur eorum.
701-6	Deut.18.1-2	Non habebant hereditatem sacerdotes et leuite inter fratres eorum ego autem pars et hereditas eorum.etc.
709-12	Acts.4.32	Nec quisquam eorum quam possidebat aliquid suum esse dicebat.
712-4	Math.7.16	Ex fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos.etc.
714-6	Psalms.48.13,21	Homo cum in honore esset non intellexit.etc.

Appendix F.

The Pilgrim's Tale: Poet, Printer, Propaganda, Prophecy and Prohibition.

A. Poet.

There is good reason to believe that Thomas Gibson is correct in ascribing the Court of Venus and, by implication, the Pilgr to Robert Shyngleton (or Singleton), for everything that is known about Singleton seems to accord with the characteristics of the Pilgr. To begin with, Wood in his account of Singleton in Athenae Oxoniensis¹ states that he was a Lancastrian, which makes the presence in the poem of several distinctive Northern forms of great interest. As well as several instances of awn meaning 'own' in unrhymed positions (e.g. ll.303, 427, 740, etc.), there are two interesting Northern forms in rhymes - vnsawn meaning 'uncown' (l.401), and in-brast meaning 'entered forcibly' (l.220). Additionally, there are two words which seem to be found only in Northern areas - ask meaning 'a lizard', and slechy as in slechy podell meaning 'muddy' (l.707).

Wood's second point is that whilst he is not sure whether Singleton finally graduated or not, he has no doubt that he was a student at Oxford. The Pilgr narrator, when asked by the priest in the story whether he was a Cambridge man replied that he was an 'oxonian' (l.676). Going on to list Singleton's written works, Wood names the Comment on, or Explanation of, certain Prophecies as one of them, although Bale does not mention it by name. No copy of this book appears now to be extant, but if Wood is to be believed, his

information is clearly of crucial importance, for, at very least, it illustrates Singleton's interest in and knowledge of some prophecies. Those given to more extensive speculation may be tempted to wonder whether the volume described by Wood is not in fact the Pilgr. At all events, Singleton's interest in prophecy certainly accords with the use of prophetic material which is a feature of the Pilgr, a fact which renders even more plausible the likelihood that Singleton was in fact the Pilgr poet.

A last point made by Wood is equally significant though it requires a little more comment. Singleton is said to have been 'a frequent preacher' who 'took occasion to reflect on the times, and certain persons in his sermons'. We know from the one extant sermon of Singleton's that his 'reflections on the times' were made from a point of view in accord both with official attitudes and with the attitudes expressed in the Pilgr. We also know that the sermon as printed in 1536 (STC 22575) by Thomas Godfray, one of Cromwell's official printers, and that it was Cromwell who on at least two occasions during that same year received letters from Robert Singleton who appears to have been acting in the capacity of an informer.² Cromwell's knowledge of Singleton's literacy and attitudes must have coincided with his realisation that the publication in the previous year of the Flowr, and its ascription to Chaucer had been a most effective propaganda coup. It is surely not beyond the realms of possibility that, either of his own volition or as a result of Cromwell's direct encouragement, Singleton came to produce a

propaganda poem similar to the FlowT in form, which was also to appear in a volume with Chaucer's name on it - a volume, moreover, whose publication and circulation would receive either active or tacit assistance from Cromwell. There is no conclusive way of proving such speculation, but the combination and interrelation of factors - Cromwell, Singleton, Godfray, current success of the FlowT, interest in prophecy - all point in the same direction.

B. The Printer.

The identification of Thomas Gibson as the printer of the Pilgr which has been arrived at as a result of typographical analysis is supported by other circumstantial evidence. Firstly, of the five other books which the STC cites as bearing Gibson's imprint, four contain material which, in one way or another, reflects official government thinking in the 1530's. Thus The Sum of the Actes and decrees made by diuerse biashops of rome (STC 21308), describes, in a Preface quite possibly the work of Gibson, the Popes (or more accurately, the Bishops of Rome) as:

misty Angels of Satan that Paule warneth vs of, which transfigureth themselves into the similitude and Image of the Aungels of lyght. (Sig.A.i^v)

It also lays great stress on the need to read the scriptures which ought, in church services, to have precedence over such 'dow patringes' (Sig.A.ii.) as characterise more traditional church ceremonies.

The particular scriptural commentary by Lancelot Ridley which

Gibson chose, or was chosen, to print is An exposition in the epistell of Jude (STC 21042). Its Preface declares the piece to be concerned to draw attention to the 'pseudapostle', and to 'their deceyuable doctryne' (Sig.A.ii.), and the work indeed proves to be a very appropriate stick with which to beat the Roman church.

The remaining two books are both concerned with the provision of vernacular scriptural material. One of them printed in 1539, is a translation of Joannes Campensis's A Paraphrasis vpon all the Psalms of Dauid (STC 14620), whilst the other, printed four years earlier, is a New Testament Concordance (STC 3046), which was compiled, in Mozley's judgement,³ by Miles Coverdale.

The favouring of vernacular scriptures, the anti-papalism, and the concern to expose false teaching which characterise Gibson's printed works are, of course, characteristic emphases of much Cromwell-inspired propaganda in this period. The clear identity of view suggested here between Gibson and Cromwell makes all the more interesting a letter which was sent to Cromwell by Gibson in 1538.⁴

Part of its description in Letters and Papers states:

[the writer - Gibson] Has gathered certain prophecies of a king that 'shall win the Holy Cross and also divers realms.' As such things have been done to advance the glory of the emperor Charles, the writer has ventured to attempt it to show that Henry VIII is the king meant, and that he will ultimately overthrow his enemies the papists ...⁵

Here is the printer of material sympathetic to the Cromwellian/Henrician cause, offering to provide further material - this time

from his knowledge of prophecy - in support of the king. There are at least two poems written about c1537 which also cite prophecies in support of the royalist position. One is Wilfrid Holme of Huntington's The fall and euill successe of Rebellion (STC 13602),⁶ which was concerned to condemn the Pilgrimage of Grace. This poem was not printed until 1572, but another - the Pilgr - which also uses prophecy, which is basically anticlerical and which also, in passing, attacks the Pilgrimage, was printed c1537 by - surely - Thomas Gibbon, whose interest in and recognition of the potential propaganda value of prophecy could well have been the result of his initial acquaintance with the poem as its printer.

C. Prophecy.

One last point should be made in this connection. We have noted elsewhere that it may well have been the use of prophecy in the Pilgr which led to the withdrawal of royal favour from the poem after 1541. The reason for prophecy losing favour in the eyes of the king is hinted at in the two poems mentioned above. Prophecy could only be regarded, in official circles, as a valuable propaganda weapon bequeathed by antiquity if it admitted of only one interpretation. If the references to any of the symbols or events proved to be ambiguous, then the prophecy had not only lost its usefulness, but could prove to be positively harmful. So it is that Holme notes that 'A thousand suche wayes in propheties are contriued' (Sig.I.ii^v), and is able to cite, as evidence, the way in which the Northern rebels

contorted Merlin's prophecy of the Six Kings⁷ until the sixth king with whom the prophecy was concerned was not, as had been intended originally, Henry IV but instead was Henry VIII, who was in fact the twelfth king after Henry III. That he could be implicated was because the rebels 'skippe at pleasure/To take heere one [king] and there one ... [their] purpose to defende' (Sig.I.i.).

This same concern with the distortion of prophecies is exhibited in the Pilgr:

it is a pray pount to mark the crafty wyttis
that on both the partis hath set there delittis
to soue the people to ther awn part,
where them-selue dyd most apply there hert;
for sum sought antechristes distruction,
and sum agayne of the contrary opynyon
dyd lyes inuent, and set them out in prophesy,
in hope to alure the people therby;
therow which vndowtyd many hath beyn slayn
and haue put trust in suche fablis wayn;
and thes that folow suche niffels and fablis
they cary them in bowsuns, and writyn in tablis; (11.425-436)

The priest-narrator, having stressed the danger of misapplied prophecy, proceeds to affirm that Merlin's prophecies, in so far as they confirm what is set out in the scriptures, are to be believed, for the meaning of both the scriptures and the prophecies - whether of Merlin or Bede - is the same:

for all the desayr and policy
was to dryue it in-to hedis witty,
that the pope was antichrist and the howr of babylon,
and shold haue a fall and destruction;

(11.667-70)

The Pilgr post, though conscious of the dangers involved in citing prophecy in support of his beliefs, nevertheless clearly believes

that its potential value when properly explained and understood outweighs these difficulties which arise from distortion. By 1541 however, the king apparently had come to believe that its abuse was causing more embarrassment than its positive worth justified, and it was this belief which promoted the legislation against prophecies which was enacted in that year.⁸

D. Prohibition.

It is likely, however, that if the Pilgr did in fact fall foul of the 1541 legislation, this was not the only reason for its loss of royal favour. When it was first composed, the Pilgr was in many ways an amalgum of much that had characterised Henrician propaganda during the 1530's, for it offered material in support of three of Henry's most important causes. Firstly, there was the need continually to assert and justify the assumption of royal supremacy, a need which the poem recognises by its emphasis on the divine origin of the king's authority (ll.248,338), which makes obedience and subsmissiveness to him, even by the episcopacy, an absolute requirement (l.266f.). Secondly, the poem assists in the task of continually justifying the dissolution of the monasteries. The first third of the poem is built around the contrast between, on the one hand, the worthy precepts of the founders of the various orders and the faithful adherence to these precepts which was once a characteristic of the regular orders in England, and, on the other hand, the later departure from these precepts which had justified the action taken

against the monasteries. Hard work and humility (l.37f.) had been replaced by envy, jealousy and arrogance amongst the rival orders which had sprung up (l.127f.), and the vow of chastity was abused (l.164f.). The picture of the ruins which once were abbey buildings (l.21f.), is a reflection also of the decay of monastic ideals. Thirdly, the Pilgr recognizes the need, following the Northern rebellion, to condemn all seditious and rebellious activity. What other interpretation can be placed on a passage which, though ostensibly addressed to Satan 'owr old enemy' and which deals with that 'fyrst rebellyon' (l.463), contains references to the 'false pretens of gratiuse pilgramage/fer the comyn-welth which is the destroyer' (ll.456-7), and to 'our rebellious' (ll.481,572), 'thes rebellious' (l.484), and 'the rebellious' (l.472).

If all this material was as relevant and acceptable to Henry in 1541 as it had been in 1537, there are other references which changed royal attitudes would now have found unacceptable. The references concern the Lutheran doctrine of Justification by Faith which during the 1520's and 1530's had achieved some currency in England. The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church speaks of Justification as:

the act whereby God, in virtue of the Sacrifice of Christ, acquits a man of the punishment due to his sins and in His mercy treats him as though he were righteous. M. Luther held that such justification was granted to men in response to the disposition of faith alone (sola fides) and that it brought with it the imputation to the sinner of the merits of Christ.⁹

For as long as Cromwell was in power, and for as long as it seemed as if an alliance between England and the Schmalkaldic League was a

possibility, the Doctrine of Justification by Faith was largely immune from total official hostility. Though the corrections made by Henry to the draft of The Bishops Book in 1537 reveal that he basically rejected the Lutheran doctrine,¹⁰ A.G. Dickens has said that:

the King carefully refrained from giving it [The Bishops Book] his authority and used it instead to test the theological appetite of the nation.¹¹

It was only in 1543 in The Kings Book that the Lutheran position is rejected officially and more explicitly than hitherto.¹² The years between the publication of the two books, then, represented a gradual hardening of the official attitude towards this particular doctrine with the result that a book which implied an author's belief in it in 1537 might well have gone unchallenged (particularly if, like the Pilgr it was so favourable to the royal cause in other ways). By the early years of the 1540's the same book might come under the severest scrutiny.

This has a direct bearing on the fate of the Pilgr. The priest-narrator whose attitudes everywhere else in the poem are set out as the ones with which the reader is clearly expected to agree, is said to have 'playnly' confessed:

that mans work was wrechydnes;
 & to the corintheans he could rehers,
 that in mans work we shold not relye;
 for paul his selue wold haue yet known
 that mans work is our own;
 for wether it be he, cephas or apollo,
 that is our awn what euer we do,
 which is nought whan we do best,
 exceptyd only our faith in christ.
 the thing for good that we pretend,
 takis no effect as meritorious end;
 therefore merit in vs is non,

but in our redeemer christ alon.
 Abraam, Isaac, & Iacob,
 samuel, ely, ner patient Iobe,
 for ther workes lay in pryson fast,
 tell the kyng of glory in-brast,
 & fecchyd them out wer as they ley.
 we must [be] delyuered by the same key,
 & not by man, ner in his inuention,
 for there ruell is but confucion; (ll.204-224)

Here is an expression of the belief in the all-sufficiency of faith, complete with a reference to St. Paul, whose teachings were at the heart of Luther's position on Justification. Such a statement could not forever go unchallenged in a realm whose king:

did not explicitly deny the role of grace, but ... seems ... instinctively [to have] thought of an order of human, unaided good works which, because they are naturally good, merit grace ... and this may easily become a doctrine of human works which share the labour of sanctification with divine grace as an equal partner.¹³

So it was that by 1541, the Pilgr's particular caste of prophetic ambiguity and theological radicalism rendered it unsuitable for circulation at a time of, if not reaction, then at least reasserted caution in matters political and theological, particularly when a poem like the Flow was at that time available for inclusion in the 1542 Chaucer. Nor was the time long delayed before Singleton, now as unacceptable to the authorities as the poem which he had written six years earlier, was executed at Tyburn on March 7th, 1543.

Notes to Appendix F.

1. A.Wood, Athenae Oxonienses, ed. P.Bliss, 4 Vols.(1813-20), I, 144.
2. See L & P, x. Items 612, 640.
3. See J.F.Mozley, Coverdale and his Bibles (1953), pp.336-9.
4. Gibson must have been known to Cromwell by this time. An interesting letter from Bishop Hugh Latimer to Cromwell, dated July 21st.1537, mentions Gibson as 'an honest, poor man' who can be relied upon as an official printer to 'set it [a book] forth in good letter, and sell it good cheap: whereas others do sell too dear, which doth let many to buy' - Sermons and Remains of Hugh Latimer, ed.G.E.Elwes, Parker Society (Cambridge, 1895), pp.380-1.
5. L & P, xiii.ii.1242.
6. Discussed by A.G.Dickens, Lollards and Protestants, pp.114-31. See, too, his article, 'Wilfrid Holme of Hunnington: Yorkshire's First Protestant Poet', The Yorkshire Archaeological Journal, 39 (1956-8), 119-35.
7. R.Taylor, The Political Prophecy in England (New York, 1911), pp.48-50. Taylor makes no reference to the Pilgr or to Thomas Gibson.
8. Statutes of the Realm, III, 850.
9. The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, ed.F.L.Cross (Oxford, 1958), p.756.
10. J.J.Scarisbrick, Henry VIII (1968), p.408.
11. A.G.Dickens, The English Reformation, p.176.
12. Dickens, English Reformation, p.185.
13. Scarisbrick, Henry VIII, p.408.

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2. Separate editions of the FlowT.
3. Other editions of the FlowT.
4. Other editions of Chaucer consulted.
5. Medieval Texts related to Lollardy or to the FlowT.
6. Reformation Texts related to Lollardy or to the FlowT.

B. Secondary Sources.

7. The Medieval Historical and Intellectual Background.
8. The Medieval Literary Background.
9. The FlowT and the Reformation : Historical and Intellectual Background.
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11. The FlowT and the Chaucer Canon.
12. Works relating to the transmission of medieval MSS and their first appearance in print.
13. Catalogues, Handbooks and other works of Bibliographical reference.
14. Works of General reference.
15. Other works.

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- , ed. W.Thynne (?1545-50)	Th2
- , ed. J.Stowe (1561)	St
- , ed. T.Speght (1598)	Sp1
- , ed. T. Speght (1602)	Sp2
- , ed. T.Speght (1687)	Sp3
- , ed. J.Urry (1721)	U

2. Separate Editions of the FlowT.

University of Texas Copy of <u>STC</u> 5068 (a 1532 Chaucer with the <u>FlowT</u> added in MS.)	MS
<u>FlowT</u> , printed by T. Godfray (c1535)	G
<u>FlowT</u> , printed by W.Hyll (c1547)	H
<u>FlowT</u> , printed by G.E[ldes] (1606)	06

3. Other Editions of the FlowT.

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R.Anderson, <u>The Works of the British Poets</u> (Edinburgh, 1793; London, 1795).	A
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